
April | '19

City of Meridian Strategic Plan 2016-2020

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Introduction: *New Opportunities, New Horizons*

For more than two consecutive decades, the City of Meridian has been the fastest growing City in the State of Idaho. The City's population tripled between 1990 and 2000 and then doubled again between 2000 and 2008. In 2014, Meridian arguably became the second largest City in the State of Idaho and the 10th fastest growing City in the Nation.

The City's population explosion has necessitated the expansion of services, the addition of staff, and the need to better visualize, organize, and plan its future. While growth has been a positive, influencing factor in Meridian's success, the City must do more to guide growth and the expansion of its services. For the past few years, the City has been conducting surveys of its citizens and employees to gather information regarding its management and planning efforts. These inputs have been a valuable contribution in the development of the City's Strategic Plan.

To truly become the premier place to live, work, and raise a family, the City must be purposeful and visionary in the establishment of financially sound growth goals and the identification of community service expectations. It must then align its fiscal and human resources to achieve those goals. This document endeavors to set, organize, and place a plan into action to accomplish those goals.

Strategic Planning: *Purpose and Intent*

Strategic planning is one of the most important responsibilities of the leadership of any organization. It is the activity that establishes a clear vision for the organization and sets appropriate strategic objectives to guide fulfillment of the vision. It also aligns appropriate resources and deployment decisions to achieve the strategic objectives and establishes measures that ensure attainment of those objectives within specified time frames.

Like all cities, Meridian is continually faced with a myriad of challenges and opportunities. The demands of growth on budgets, infrastructure, and staffing underscore the need for a comprehensive and clear strategic plan. Because cities must reconcile the needs of a community with a diverse service offering, it is challenging to focus citizens, leaders, and staff in one direction. The role of this strategic plan, therefore, is to provide that focus, facilitate the successful growth of the community, and provide a platform to purposefully advance the City as an organization.

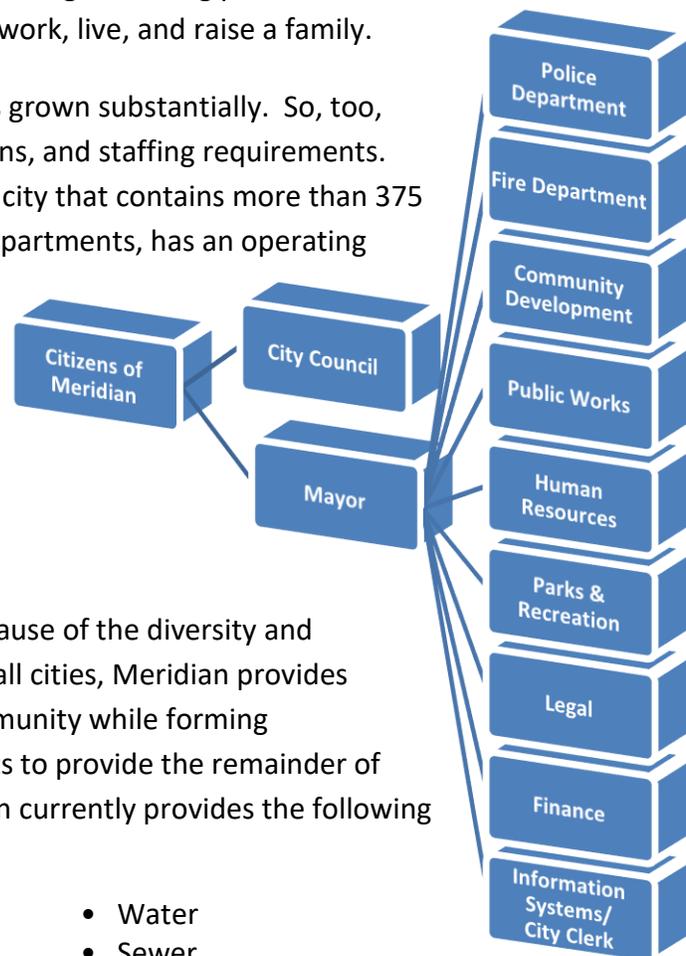
This strategic plan will serve as a roadmap for the City's success over the next five years. It will also serve as a tool to communicate the City's intentions to the community, focus the direction of its financial resources and employees, and ensure that short-term goals and

objectives are met in a timely fashion to ensure attainment of the City’s overall vision. This plan defines specific results that are to be achieved, outlines a course of action for achieving them, and details measurements to ensure the outcomes of those results. Additionally, this plan will ensure that the most important City priorities are identified, communicated, and achieved with direction and effective planning so that all may know what is expected and how to achieve success. The City will be diligent in focusing its efforts on strategic objectives that it can control and influence within the scope of its mission and vision. The implementation of this plan and the decision making around it will align with the City values.

Municipal Organization

The City of Meridian lies at the heart of Idaho’s Treasure Valley. Meridian is one of the fastest growing cities in Idaho and it is a magnet for people looking for a family-oriented community in the Intermountain West. A long and vibrant heritage in agriculture has given way to homes and businesses that share a common goal - being part of a diverse and vibrant community that is a great place to work, live, and raise a family.

Over the past 25 years, the City has grown substantially. So, too, have its responsibilities, service expectations, and staffing requirements. Today, the City of Meridian is a full service city that contains more than 375 staff members distributed between ten Departments, has an operating budget of more than \$90M, and currently serves a population of more than 90,000 residents. This document represents the City of Meridian’s first formalized Strategic Plan.



City Services

Cities are unique organizations because of the diversity and complexity of their service offerings. Like all cities, Meridian provides many primary services directly to the community while forming partnerships with other governmental units to provide the remainder of services to its citizens. The City of Meridian currently provides the following services directly to the community:

- Police
- Fire and Medical Response
- Land Use, Planning and Building
- Parks and Recreation Services
- Water
- Sewer
- Economic Development
- Administrative Services

Working closely with government and private partners allows citizens to also receive, among other services:

- Recycling and trash collection through a franchise agreement
- Roads via the Ada County Highway District
- Libraries via the Meridian Library District
- Pools via the Western Ada Recreation District
- Downtown development via the Meridian Development Corporation
- Criminal Prosecution Services through the City of Boise

Ada County, the State of Idaho, and the Federal Government also directly serve the citizens of Meridian.

Strategic Planning:
The Process

Strategic planning is an iterative but logical process. It involves conducting an environmental scan or SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) of the organization, defining or refining the organization’s mission, vision and value

statements, developing goals, establishing objectives, operationalizing and implementing the plan, and monitoring for results.



| Strategic Planning Team | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Leader | Title |
| Tammy de Weerd | Mayor |
| Tom Barry | Director of Public Works |
| Bruce Chatterton | Director of Community Development |
| Jaycee Holman | Director of IT / City Clerk |
| Stacy Kilchenmann | Director of Finance |
| Jeff Lavey | Chief of Police |
| Bill Nary | City Attorney |
| Mark Niemeyer | Fire Chief |
| Patti Perkins | Director of Human Resources |
| Steve Siddoway | Director of Parks & Recreation |
| Robert Simison | Mayor's Chief of Staff |

To establish the City’s strategic plan, the City chose *Leadership Advisors Group* to facilitate its planning process. The City then developed a Strategic Planning Team comprised of the Mayor and the Executive Leadership Team. The Strategic Planning Team is responsible for the development and articulation of the overall direction of the organization. As Chief Elected Officer, the Mayor will be accountable for the performance and administration of the Strategic Plan.

To guide the planning process, the Team was first trained on the Dimensional Strategy® framework. This framework helps leaders to navigate their organization’s complexity to create a unifying, compelling, and achievable strategic plan. Using this framework, the Team participated in an organization-wide Strengths Assessment. The Strengths Assessment helped to measure the City’s planning readiness and overall management strength, as well as identify potential risks during the strategic planning process. Then the Team conducted a SWOT analysis. This analysis was used to identify the key internal and external factors seen as influencing or impacting the City organization. Internal factors (strengths and weaknesses) are controllable by the organization. External factors (opportunities and threats) impact organizations but are not controllable by the organization. From this exercise, the City gained insights that were carried into the strategic planning process.

Several Team meetings culminated in the revision of the City’s Mission statement, an update to its Vision statement, and the review and affirmation of its organizational values.

Our Mission:

We love Meridian; it’s our town and our mission is to cultivate a vibrant community by delivering superior service through committed, equipped employees dedicated to the stewardship of our community’s resources.

Our Vision: Where we see ourselves as an organization and community in the future.

By 2035, Meridian will be the West’s premier community in which to live, work, and raise a family.



- Proactive City policies and well-educated, capable employees will, together, create a compelling economic advantage yielding robust family-wage jobs that will nourish our welcoming, **vibrant, and diverse business environment**.
- Our **strategic growth** will ensure an orderly development that balances resources and leverages partnerships to create a sustainable and financially viable community.
- A **flexible and responsive government** will ensure that services meet demand with financial prudence and excellence while safeguarding our community's **health and safety**.
- Community members will enjoy a vibrant downtown and a myriad of diverse **arts, cultural, and recreational** offerings to have meaningful experiences.

Our Values: The core principles that guide our treatment of one another, our customers, and our decisions.

At the City of Meridian, we **CARE**. That means:

- Providing the best **Customer Service** to our community, colleagues, and partners by listening and responding in a timely, friendly, professional, and solution-oriented manner.
- Exemplifying **Accountability** by understanding our role in the organization, knowing our jobs, and accepting that each of us is responsible for our own work, choices, and actions. Acting as stewards of the community's resources, our environment, and our relationships.
- Showing **Respect** by being trustworthy and courteous. We honor, accept, and include people with diverse opinions and backgrounds.
- Demonstrating continual **Excellence** through professionalism, going beyond the parameters of our job while being creative, innovative, flexible, and adaptable to multiple needs.

Next, the team met with the City Council to discuss the SWOT analysis results, share the mission, vision, and value statements, and brainstorm future strategic initiatives, focus areas, and goals for the City. This strategy session helped the Team narrow the City's strategic focus areas into five broad categories. By identifying and prioritizing these focus areas, the City has effectually defined the targets into which the City will invest its time, energy, and resources to advance.

| Strategic Focus Areas | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Focus Area | Description |
| Strategic Growth | Good growth fuels a city. Meridian will promote growth that enhances its vision and is family-focused, properly planned, financially viable, and diverse. |
| Economic Vibrancy | Jobs make a City vibrant. Meridian will recruit family-wage jobs and promote the growth of existing organizations in employment zones that put work and life together. |
| Responsive Government | The successful government of the 21st century is service driven, approachable, and responsive. Meridian will embody those qualities by improving efficiency, enhancing transparency, utilizing technology, and investing in our employees. |
| Safe, Healthy, and Secure | For a community to prosper, it must be safe, secure, and healthy. Meridian will invest in activities and services that enhance public safety and community health to build a stronger community and promote the quality of life that its citizens and employees expect. |
| Arts, Culture & Recreation | A premier community embraces cultural diversity and promotes an abundant offering of arts, entertainment, and recreational opportunities. Meridian will invest in services, facilities, programs, and partnerships to establish itself as an active and vibrant community that fulfills the diverse cultural and recreational needs of its people. |

Alignment: *Goal Formulation*

Three existing plans also played a role in forming this strategic plan. While the strategic plan will be the overarching organizational and community agenda, the plan is informed and enlivened by the City’s Comprehensive Plan, Capital Improvement Plan, and Economic Development Plan.

Comprehensive Plan: Establishes the vision for the City’s development future, including key elements such as the land use plan and Area of City Impact.

Capital Improvement Plan: Identifies capital projects and equipment purchases, provides a planning schedule, and identifies options for financing the short-range plan (usually five to ten years).

Economic Development Plan:
Provides targets for attracting, retaining, and expanding businesses in Meridian.



The graphic to the right reflects the inter-relationship of the various plans. The other major aspect of the City that must be reconciled to the strategic plan is the City’s

budgetary plan. The City’s budget must reflect the strategy. The interchange between the above plans and the new strategic plan is intended to be complementary.

In addition to the aforementioned plans and the City Strategic Plan, each Department will need to develop a Department Plan that correlates to the Goals and Objectives of the



Citywide Strategic Plan at a tactical/operational level. Since this is the first strategic plan for the City of Meridian, the connection to the City’s budget will be done via existing and future Department Plans. This means that, as each Department refreshes its plan, the focus areas and goals established within this strategic plan will be evident in the Department’s budget.

Execution: *Strategic Plan Management and Accountability*

A plan poorly implemented is like having no plan at all. As part of the City’s strategic planning process, the Strategic Planning Team identified and invited several key staff members from each of their Departments to participate in a Change Management workshop. The purpose behind the workshop was to prepare and train key staff on managing change - in this case, providing staff the perspectives and tools to help implement the Strategic Plan.

The responsibility for the development and execution of the City’s Strategic Plan is vested with the Mayor. Since the Strategic Plan represents the core agenda of the organization, it is incumbent upon the Mayor to oversee its development and shepherd its execution. Now that the Plan has been developed, the administration of the Plan and the accountability for its execution are paramount. To guide those two aspects (administration and execution), the following set of responsibilities has been developed:

| <u>Frequency</u> | <u>Activity</u> | <u>Responsible Party</u> | <u>Reporting Audience</u> |
|----------------------|---|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| <u>Quarterly</u> | Review strategic goal measurements and execution progress | Mayor | City Leadership Team |
| <u>Semi-annually</u> | Execution progress report | Mayor | City Council |

| | | | |
|----------|--------------------------------------|----------------------|---|
| Annually | Review and refine the strategic plan | Mayor | City Council and the City Leadership Team |
| Annually | Review and refine Department plans | Department Directors | Departments and Mayor |

This Plan is intended to transcend changes in the political environment. Organizational constancy is critical in maintaining momentum and achieving the desired results. However, it is important to recognize that major changes in elected leadership, City Council composition or modification to Council policies, strategies, plans, budget initiatives, etc., may impact the content, implementation, and successful attainment of this Strategic Plan.

While this Plan itself serves as a guide that describes the strategic and tactical activities of the City of Meridian, the measure of success for the City in its strategic pursuits will be marked by the goal achievement contained in the Plan. Just as important will be the extent to which the City reviews and updates its strategic plan based on changing conditions and circumstances. In the end, strategic planning is a process, not an event, and it is that process that will define and ensure a competitive and purposeful organization.

Next Steps: *Operationalizing the Plan*

Tactical Plan Development

The first phase of the City’s approach to developing its strategic plan involved conducting an environmental scan, aligning its mission, vision, and values statements, organizing its resource inputs, developing strategic focus areas, and identifying key goals and objectives to align and advance the City’s resources toward the pursuit of its vision. What must follow is the development of Department-level tactical plans which align and support the City’s Strategic Plan. These tactical plans will need to define the activities, resources, timeframes, and costs required to advance the identified objectives in the City’s Strategic Plan. Performance measures and routine performance audits will ensure that each Department is appropriately engaged and aligned in advancing the City’s vision.

| Example Tactical Summary | |
|---|--|
| TACTIC: | Tactic #: Title of the Tactic |
| GOAL RELEVANCE: | Insert Goal Title This Tactic Supports |
| SUPPORTING OBJECTIVE: | Insert Objective Title This Tactic Supports |
| Priority: Select between 1=Highest and 5=Lowest | Estimated Cost: Select Between \$=Lowest and \$\$\$\$=Highest |
| Anticipated Start Date: Identify Start Date | Completion Date: Identify Completion Date |
| Lead Staff: Insert Tactic Lead | |
| Support Staff: Insert Support Groups(s)/Individual(s) | |
| External Support: Identify Those Outside Your Division/Department Required To Advance The Tactic. | |
| Tactical Summary: Insert Brief Tactical Summary Here. | |
| Activities: List All Activities Required to Complete This Tactic in Logical/Chronological Order Below: | |
| a) | |
| b) | |
| c) | |
| d) | |
| e) | |
| f) | |
| Performance Measure(s): List all Performance Measures to be Used. | |
| a) | |
| b) | |
| Status Update: | |
| Provide status updates here. | |

Meridian's Strategic Plan: *Goals and Objectives*

1. Strategic Growth

Good growth fuels a city. Meridian will promote growth that enhances its vision and is family-focused, properly planned, financially viable, and diverse.

Goals:

- A. Facilitate the development and growth of Meridian's downtown culminating in a strong and diverse community core.
 1. Support downtown development and the execution of the Destination Downtown Plan by the Meridian Development Corporation.
 2. ~~Evaluate and, if appropriate, expand the Urban Renewal District.~~ (Completed)
 3. ~~Reform the Meridian Development Corporation to maximize its use in developing downtown.~~ (Removed Council 7/11/17)
- B. Create a growth management system to foster the growth goals of the City in alignment with the Comprehensive Plan.
 1. Define and articulate the City's growth goals.
 2. Identify priority growth areas and incentivize growth and development. (HIGH Priority)
 3. Complete rezoning in targeted growth areas to direct types of development in alignment with the City's growth goals.
 4. Promote and guide desired growth with investments in utility infrastructure and services ahead of growth.
 5. ~~Develop and implement a sustainable growth management system that includes the Fiscal Impact Model to inform service levels, staffing, and General/Enterprise Fund impacts.~~ (Inactive Revisit – 04/03/18)
- C. Preserve and protect land use and zoning plans to promote certainty and predictability for future development within the adopted Area of City Impact.
 1. Ensure area City Impact Boundaries are consistent with infrastructure plans, service boundaries and growth goals.
 2. Align Future Land Use Map with the City's growth goals.
 3. Identify and assess the feasibility of areas within the Area of City Impact that could be preserved for open space, historical significance, or cultural heritage. (HIGH Priority)
- D. Develop and sustain the connections that shape and serve our community.
 1. Develop, promote and realize a Master Mobility Plan, ensuring that residents and visitors have safe and efficient mobility options into the future.

2. Economic Vibrancy

Jobs make a City vibrant. Meridian will recruit family-wage jobs and promote the growth of existing organizations in employment zones that put work and life together.

Goals:

- A. Influence the location and retention of family-wage jobs in close proximity to where people live.
 - 1. Identify, develop, and utilize the tools needed for successful attraction and retention of jobs.
 - 2. ~~Develop and maintain the broad spectrum of partnerships needed to cultivate diverse businesses and jobs.~~ (Completed)
 - 3. Promote job growth by identifying and attracting businesses that are aligned with the Comprehensive Plan's Industry Analysis.
 - 4. Create a variety of housing options, open spaces, and amenities in order to provide living choices for a diverse workforce.
- B. Partner with others to develop a qualified workforce that meets the needs of targeted industries.
 - 1. ~~Promote opportunities for and access to entry level and advanced education for targeted industries.~~ (Completed)
 - 2. Promote internal cultural and workforce diversity.
- C. Promote a diverse and sustainable economy.
 - 1. Identify targets and gaps in available goods and services.
 - 2. Promote identified special business districts.
 - 3. Pursue key catalyst projects.

3. Responsive Government

The successful government of the 21st century is service driven, approachable, and responsive. Meridian will embody those qualities by improving efficiency, enhancing transparency, utilizing technology, and investing in our employees.

Goals:

- A. Elevate the engagement of the community with local government.
 - 1. ~~Evaluate and define the objectives of, and adapt new strategies to elevate participation in, City activities.~~ (Completed)
 - 2. Improve citizen access to government.
 - 3. Develop partnerships allowing the City to become an access point to other government.
- B. Establish a comprehensive workforce development and retention program for the City.
 - 1. ~~Develop a cost effective and competitive benefit plan.~~ (Completed)
 - 2. Identify position specific training needs.
 - 3. Develop a succession planning program.
 - 4. ~~Develop an employee engagement program.~~ (Completed)

5. Develop and maintain a competitive compensation program that enables quality recruitment and rewards and encourages high performance.
- C. Ensure flexibility, adaptability, and resiliency of government during times of crisis and recovery.
 1. ~~Develop a local Incident Management Team to respond during and after times of community crisis.~~ (Completed)
 2. Fully deploy and adequately train staff to meet all objectives of the City of Meridian Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP).
 3. ~~Develop and implement technological and communications contingency plans and programs for continuity of City operations.~~ (Completed)
- D. Improve operational efficiency and organizational excellence.
 1. Align resources, systems, and employees to meet strategic objectives and priorities.
 2. Develop and deploy a City-wide performance measurement, monitoring, and reporting program.
 3. Develop and deploy a City-wide continuous improvement program.
 4. ~~Evaluate the need for centralized, professional administrative and operational oversight for City functions.~~ (Removed Council 07/11/17)
- E. Enhance transparency and decision-making of City government.
 1. ~~Establish clearly defined roles and responsibilities of City leadership up to and including Elected Officials.~~ (Completed)
 2. ~~Conduct a priorities of government exercise to identify community expectations and desired level of service standards.~~ (Removed and combined with 3.E.4. Council Approved 07/11/17)
 3. ~~Align community programs, City policies/ordinances, and staffing resources based on community expectations and desired level of service.~~ (Removed Council 04/03/18)
 4. Implement a cost of government program in order to evaluate and establish a Priority Based Budgeting system for the City of Meridian.

4. Safe, Healthy, and Secure

For a community to prosper it must be safe, secure, and healthy. Meridian will invest in activities and services that enhance public safety and community health to build a stronger community and promote the quality of life that its citizens and employees expect.

Goals:

- A. Establish Meridian as a premier safe community.
 1. Identify and Evaluate Natural Threats and Hazards, employ standards and establish benchmarks for the Safety Profile of Meridian.
 2. Identify and Evaluate Human Caused Threats and Hazards, employ standards and establish benchmarks for the safety profile of Meridian.
 3. ~~Align City ordinances, codes, policies, and resources based on the adopted Safety Profile.~~ (Removed Council 04/02/19)
 4. Deploy programs and identify gaps to enhance the community's perception of public safety.
 5. ~~Become the Safest City in Idaho regardless of size.~~ (Completed)
- B. Establish Meridian as a premier healthy community.

1. Use industry standards and benchmarks to develop and communicate the Health Profile of Meridian.
 2. Compare adopted Health Profile to current processes, identify gaps and deploy programs and services that meet the adopted Health Profile.
 3. ~~Align City ordinances, codes, policies, and resources based on the adopted Health Profile. (Removed Council 04/02/19)~~
 4. Build and maintain a broad spectrum of partnerships to create a healthy community and improve access to health care services.
 5. ~~Become among the Top 100 "Healthiest Cities" nationally. (Removed Council 04/03/18)~~
- C. Promote and connect social services that strengthen the socio-economic well-being of the community.
1. Define the educational, financial, food, housing, transportation, and healthcare environment to assist in determining the Socio-Economic Profile within the community.
 2. Set targets and identify gaps in programs and services to elevate the Socio-Economic Profile of the community.
 3. Build and maintain a broad spectrum of partnerships to create a secure community and improve the education of and access to social and support services.
 4. ~~Deploy programs and services that address social and support services deficiencies. (Removed Council 07/11/17)~~
 5. ~~Align City ordinances, codes, policies, and resources based on the adopted Socio-Economic Profile. (Removed Council 04/02/19)~~
- D. Establish a comprehensive Health and Safety Program for the City of Meridian.
1. Develop a comprehensive Risk Management program inclusive of risk identification, mitigation, safety, training, and proper resourcing.
 2. ~~Develop a comprehensive family focused Health and Wellness Program for City employees. (Completed)~~
- E. Advance sustainable and environmentally healthy practices throughout the City.
1. ~~Promote green building designs, practices, and materials that improve indoor air quality and overall health. (Removed Council 07/11/17)~~
 2. Develop and implement citywide internal sustainable programs.
 3. Participate in and foster community based sustainable programs, projects, and services.

5. Arts, Culture, and Recreation

A premier community embraces cultural diversity and promotes an abundant offering of arts, entertainment, and recreational opportunities. Meridian will invest in services, facilities, programs, and partnerships to establish itself as an active and vibrant community that fulfills the diverse cultural and recreational needs of its people.

Goals:

- A. Spur development of quality, regionally significant facilities for recreation and entertainment in Meridian.
 1. Establish partnerships that foster development of mixed or single use facilities for performing arts and conferences.

2. ~~Identify desired public sports facilities or complexes and establish partnerships that foster their development.~~ (Completed)
 3. Evaluate available tools for financing recreation and entertainment facilities.
 4. Foster development of Discovery Parks that uniquely blend arts, entertainment, and culture.
- B. Develop, maintain, and foster a portfolio of activities and events that serve the diverse needs of the citizens of Meridian.
1. ~~Determine, attract, promote, and maintain a “signature” event for the City.~~ (Removed Council 07/11/17)
 2. ~~Determine the viability of and, if feasible, develop a “farmers market.”~~ (Completed)
 3. Foster development of vibrant downtown entertainment options to meet the needs of various generations.
 4. ~~Set targets, identify gaps, and deploy programs, activities, and events that provide family-centered recreational opportunities.~~ (Complete)
- C. Foster the infusion of arts in our community.
1. Research and identify a catalog of long-term funding mechanisms and contributors for supporting arts and culture.
 2. Develop a plan to infuse art in public spaces.
 3. ~~Connect to the artisan community and promote the education of all art forms and their historical significance/value in our community.~~ (Complete)