What is Annexation?

Annexation is a process whereby land that is in the county, outside a municipality, can be brought into the municipality with all of the rights afforded any other city property. Annexation is how cities grow in size and shape. Annexation is a legislative act of the city government accomplished by the enactment of an ordinance. Those who pursue this land use action do so recognizing the City of Meridian is able to provide a large menu of urban services. An individual can initiate annexation through the petition method or the City can initiate the process according to the provisions of State Statute.

More on Idaho State law regarding annexation can be found under State Statute, Title 50, Chapter 2, and Section 50-222. [https://goo.gl/hrMqKh](https://goo.gl/hrMqKh)

Land in Ada County is frequently brought into Meridian through petition of the land owner. Annexation is usually requested because the applicant desires to take advantage of Meridian's public sewer and water services. The availability of sanitary sewer is important to the development of the community due to the fact that the Central District Health Department requires developers in Ada County to develop on large lots in the absence of public sewer to accommodate the placement of on-site septic tanks. Urban development requires sanitary sewer and water connection.

As a matter of public policy, and to protect its ratepayers, the City of Meridian will generally not provide sewer and water connection outside the city limits unless the property owner agrees to annex their property into the City when that parcel is eligible. The Blackrock developer and HOA agreed to this when the subdivision was first developed, and was memorialized in a number of ways, including a County recorded Memorandum of Understanding and the Blackrock CC&R’s.

Citizen Initiated Annexation vs. City Initiated Annexation

Citizen Initiated Annexation

The most common method of annexation is the petition method whereby an individual makes application to bring their land into the City. A person can request annexation into the City if their property is contiguous to the City and if it lies within the Area of City Impact. In Meridian, the petition is accomplished through the submittal of an application with the Community Development Department.
**City Initiated Annexation**

The City of Meridian can initiate an annexation pursuit by ordinance provided the property is within the Area of City Impact and is contiguous or adjacent to the municipality, depending upon the provisions of the annexation category it falls within (see Idaho Code Title 50-222). When the City initiates an annexation effort, the basis for that pursuit is typically related to economic development, orderly growth, health, safety and welfare issues, and assisting a property owner to acquire public services such as sewer and water.

State law was recently amended to ensure that private property interests are protected as part of a municipality’s effort to annex land. Accordingly, Idaho cities must now follow a more in depth annexation process based on procedures applicable to the annexation classification the land falls within. All City initiated annexation request will not only follow the provisions for annexation outlined in City Code but also the established criteria established by State Code.

**What is the Area of City Impact?**

The Area of City Impact is an area around the City established for planning purposes – an area that the City intends, over time, to annex into the municipality. The determination of what area should be included in the Area of City Impact is a joint determination between the City and Ada County. Together, these entities construct a planning boundary based upon trade areas, geographic facts, land use activity and the City’s capital improvement plans.

**What does it mean to be contiguous?**

Contiguous simply means touching or contacting. One of the criteria for annexation is that the property be contiguous or adjacent to the current City limits.

**Choosing the Appropriate Zone Classification**

When a parcel of land is annexed into the City, it will assume a city zone classification. Accordingly, a specific zone must be indicated on the application in correlation with the City’s Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map. This zoning designation should represent the general purpose of the land use on the property.

Upon annexation, the City of Meridian will attach a zone to the subject properties that are as similar as possible to the land use. In the case of Blackrock, the City zoning designation has been determined to be R-4 (Medium-low density residential). These properties are currently zoned R4 (4 dwelling units per acre) in Ada County.
What does annexation mean for me?

**Taxes & Services**
The biggest distress when annexation is discussed typically involves taxes. While like properties in the City of Meridian typically pay less taxes than in neighboring cities, rural County taxes are less than Meridian’s urban taxes. When a property is annexed, taxes are still paid to the County, in addition to the City’s levy rates. For more information on taxes and levy rates, contact the Ada County Assessor’s office. [https://adacounty.id.gov/Assessor](https://adacounty.id.gov/Assessor)

**Utility Services**
The subject property is currently receiving sanitary sewer and water service from the City of Meridian, because it agreed to be part of the City in exchange for services, when it became contiguous. This service will continue uninterrupted.

**Fire Service**
The subject properties currently lie within the jurisdiction of the Meridian Rural Fire District. Once the subject properties become part of the City of Meridian, it will be under the jurisdiction of the City of Meridian Fire Department. This is merely a formality, as the Meridian Rural Fire District contracts with the City for fire service. In reality service will continue uninterrupted, and the only change will occur on property assessment notices. The subject properties will no longer pay levies for a separate Fire Taxing District, and instead pay City of Meridian levies (which include Fire service).

Fire and Emergency Medical Services will be provided by the City of Meridian Fire Station #3, approximately 2.5 miles away located on Eagle Road.

**Police Service**
The subject lands currently lie within the jurisdiction of the Ada County Sheriff’s Office. Once annexed, these properties will be serviced by the Meridian Police Department (MPD). MPD services will extend to the properties without significant adjustment to current staffing levels or organizational structure.

For questions regarding Police Department, or more information on Code Enforcement, Animal Control and Licensing, or other Police Department services, see the Police Departments website at: [http://www.meridiancity.org/police.aspx](http://www.meridiancity.org/police.aspx)

**Roadways**
The roadways adjacent to the subject lands, like all public roads in Ada County that are not State of Federally owned, are maintained by the Ada County Highway District (ACHD). This will not
change with annexation. For more information on ACHD, see their website at:
http://www.achdidaho.org/

**Schools**
The subject lands are currently serviced by the West Ada School District (WASD), and no school boundaries will change. For more information on the WASD, see their website at:
http://www.westada.org/

**Libraries**
The subject lands are currently serviced by the Meridian Library District. This service will not change.

**Other Levies**
The subject lands are currently subject to levies for Western Ada Recreation, Mosquito Abatement, and Pest Extermination. Pest Extermination is not assessed within City limits, but Western Ada Recreation and Mosquito Abatement will continue.

**Trash Services**
Weekly trash collection will be required within the City limits. Republic Services will continue to provide trash services to the subject area. However, the level of service may change.

**Representation & Service**
Upon annexation, residents within the subject lands will be eligible to vote and run for City office and may be appointed by the Mayor to serve on City Commissions and Boards. For service opportunities, see the “City News & Meetings” on the City of Meridian homepage.
www.meridiancity.org

**Preparation for the Public Hearing**
Annexation is subject to two public hearings. The first hearing is before the Planning & Zoning Commission and the second hearing is before the Mayor and City Council. The purpose of these public hearings is to apprise interested citizens of the annexation request and afford them an opportunity to comment. Another reason for this process is to create a public record. A third reason is to determine whether the requested annexation is in the best interest of the City and its citizens.

Prior to the first public hearing the City will send out letters to all directly impacted property owners. The City will also publish a Public Service Announcement. Lastly, if there are less than 200 property owners within a 300-foot radius of the annexation boundary, notifications will also be sent to those property owners as well.
Planning and Zoning staff will evaluate the annexation for merit and offer a staff recommendation to the legislative authority for their consideration. City staff, the Planning & Zoning Commission, and the City Council review the facts and circumstances outlined in Meridian City Code 11-5-B3 when evaluating an annexation request.

**At the Public Hearing**

The Planning & Zoning Commission hearings are generally held the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of each month at 6:00 p.m. City Council hearings are generally held every Tuesday (not 5th Tuesday) at 6:00 p.m. The hearings take place at Meridian City Hall, 33 E. Broadway Ave. The public hearing proceedings are conducted according to Robert’s Rules of Order, which is an established form of etiquette.

The hearing procedures are as follows:

- Staff will first present a report on the application
- The applicant or the applicant’s representative will then present a summary of the request.
- Testimony from those in support is received, followed by testimony from those in opposition to the proposal. NOTE: While various individuals are providing testimony, the reviewing body may ask questions of anyone providing testimony, staff, or the applicant.
- The applicant or their representative is afforded an opportunity for rebuttal.
- After the applicant’s rebuttal, testimony is closed and no new oral or written testimony is allowed unless the members vote to re-open testimony.

**Additional information**

For more information, contact Meridian City staff at 208-884-5533 or visit the website at [www.meridiancity.org/planning](http://www.meridiancity.org/planning).