

AGENDA

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
Economic Development Corporation

February 2, 2023 7:30 am
5151 Marsh Road, Town Hall Room

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER
 2. MISSION: Set the standard in creating an entrepreneurial culture; be the example for revitalization of our business districts and be the leaders in building sustainable public/private partnerships.
 3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA
 4. CONSENT AGENDA
 - A. Minutes –Meeting January 6, 2023
 - B. Financial Report December
 - C. Financial Report January
 - D. Development Projects
 5. PRESENTATION- Director Schmitt Sign Ordinance Update- High Level Overview
 6. PUBLIC REMARKS
 7. OLD BUSINESS
 - A. 2023 EDC Officer Election
 - B. Corridor Improvement Authority TIF Update
 - C. RRC Recertification Economic Development Strategy Update
 8. NEW BUSINESS
 - A. March is Women in Business Support- March 10th 2023
 - B. Small Business Recognition and Promotion Program
 9. TOWNSHIP REPORTS
 - A. Township Board
 - B. Township Manager
 - C. Planning Commission
 - D. Chair
 - E. Staff
 10. COMMUNITY REPORTS
 - A. Meridian Mall
 - B. MABA
 11. OPEN DISCUSSION/BOARD COMMENTS
 12. PUBLIC REMARKS
 13. NEXT MEETING DATE
 - A. March 2 , 2023, 7:30am
 14. ADJOURNMENT
-

Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids or services should contact the Meridian Township Board by contacting:
Township Manager Frank L. Walsh, 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864 or 517.853.4258 - Ten Day Notice is Required.
Meeting Location: 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864 Township Hall

Providing a safe and welcoming, sustainable, prime community.



Charter Township of Meridian
Meridian Economic Development Corporation
Meridian Township Hall Room
5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864
Thursday, January 5, 2023--DRAFT

Members

Present: Phil Deschaine, Kathy Sundland, Kimberly Thompson, Brenda Chapman, Adam Carlson, Shawn Dunham, and Dave Ledebuhr,

Members

Absent: Manager Frank Walsh, Henry Kwok, Trisha Bird, and Tom Conway

Others

Present: Neighborhoods & Economic Development Director Amber Clark, Assistant Township Supervisor Patricia Herring Jackson, and Planning Commissioner Peter Trezise

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chair Kimberly Thompson called the meeting to order at 7:30am

2. **MISSION:** Set the standard in creating an entrepreneurial culture, be the example for revitalization of our business districts, and be the leaders in building sustainable public/private partnerships.

3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

MOTION BY MEMBER DUNHAM TO AMEND THE AGENDA TO MOVE NEW BUSINESS TO OLD BUSINESS TO ALLOW THE GREATER LANSING CHINESE ASSOCIATION THE OPTION TO SPEAK ABOUT LUNAR NEW YEAR CELEBRATION SUPPORT. MOVE TO APPROVE THE AMENDED AGENDA. SUPPORTED BY MEMBER LEDEBUHR. MOTION PASSES 6-0.

4. CONSENT AGENDA

- a. Minutes-Meeting November 3, 2022
- b. Development Projects

MOTION BY MEMBER DUNHAM TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA. SUPPORTED BY MEMBER CARLSON. MOTION PASSES 6-0.

5. COMMUNICATIONS – Communication from Conner Bailey Haslett resident

6. PUBLIC REMARKS
NONE

7. NEW BUSINESS

A. LUNAR NEW YEAR CELEBRATION SUPPORT

- i. Members of the Greater Lansing Chinese Association were present to request local support of the Meridian Economic Development Corporation for the January 29, 2023 Lunar New Year celebration to be hosted at Meridian Mall. Parks Department and Director LuAnn Maisner is also contributing to the event, assisting with coordination and getting tables for the festival. Previous years the Meridian EDC has supported the Lunar New Year festival with a financial contribution. The request for support allows for the contributor to have branding opportunities for logos and promotion of their business. In exchange the sponsorships help the GLCA fund the celebration. The festival includes traditional Chinese New Year cultural celebrations like a Lion dance, ceremonial observances and the engagement of the Chinese American community. Meridian Township boosts a concentration of Chinese Americans in our community and the Meridian EDC see the support of this event as enhancing awareness of culture in Meridian Township. The added benefit to Meridian Mall to host an attraction could persuade attendees to stay at the Mall, celebrate and patronize.

GLCA explained they have about \$1500 to cover for the festival to launch for 2023. Meridian EDC has previously sponsored including the two years of COVID-19. Now that COVID-19 is over the plan is to relaunch the event starting this year. The number of sponsors and patrons of the festival have lowered in recent years. Support from Meridian EDC will go far.

Member Ledebuhr made a motion with a second by Member Chapman to support the 2023 Lunar New Year celebration. Member Ledebuhr asked GLCA if they were confident they could cover the remaining \$500 for the festival. GLCA is confident the funding necessary will be received.

MOTION MADE BY MEMBER LEDEBUHR TO SUPPORT \$1000 FOR THE 2023 LUNAR NEW YEAR CELEBRATION BY THE GREATER LANSING CHINESE ASSOCIATION. MOTION DIRECTS STAFF TO COMMENCE PAYMENT TO GLCA. SUPPORTED BY MEMBER CHAPMAN. MOTION PASSES 6-0

B. MABA 2023 MEETING CALENDAR

NO ACTION REQUIRED- FYI FOR BOARD MEMBERS

C. NEW AND ESTABLISHED BUSINESS AWARDS 2022

- i. Director Clark discussed the 2022 New Business of the Year selected by MABA each year was Nothing Bundt Cakes and the Established Business of the Year is “Beewax Barrn”, formally Ralya House Beeswax. Meridian EDC partners each year with MABA to publicly award two businesses, one for each category. The businesses must be within the boundaries of Meridian Township. MABA at their November 2022 meeting held an open voting option with the MABA members to select a business for each category. Meridian EDC members were more in favor of a community wide selection process which allows more residents to be engaged on selecting a business they appreciate. Director Dunham asked if the Township could do a “best of town” award. Director Dunham discussed how important a business will feel to have the community select them. The two awards from MABA and the Meridian EDC are great start, an enhanced business award would promote other businesses that may get left out. Could Meridian Township create a business awards platform to select businesses

to promote based on industry and voting. For example: “best of town restaurant” “best of town automotive repair shop” “best of town landscaping” Different awards for categories of business industry and work with the Communications department to host these awards.

Director Clark suggests a quarterly award based on specific parameters. March is Women in Business, this would be a good time to feature business and host a survey. Then another in June, September and December. Director Clark should come back to the group in February with a list of things we want to do.

8. OLD BUSINESS

A. Meridian Township 2023 Goals

This item was accidentally left out of the packet. The Meridian Township Board in December voted to approve the Township’s annual goals for the community. There are three main goals that the Township will focus on this year:

1. MSU to Lake Lansing Trail Phases 1 and 2 which will be the last remaining steps to complete for the finalized trail system. This is a project that has taken several years to plan and coordinate. In the end we will have a non-motorized pathway system from Lake Lansing to MSU campus off of Hagadorn. This intergovernmental connection will allow pedestrians and bikers to gain access to the entire Ingham County region without the use of a car. As urban development continues to gain traction post COVID-19 the adjustment for communities to be resilient will be even harder. Having amenities in our community that are supported through our general tax revenue is a great economic plus for the Township.
2. Communications and Community Enhancement is a goal for 2023 the Township will prioritize. The 2022 construction year allowed Township staff to engage the general public on a regular basis. Meridian Township’s goal to enhance communication is a tactic that will allow for greater synergy in the community.
3. Meridian Township to create a taskforce to determine the feasibility of a Senior Community Library Center in Meridian.

9. TOWNSHIP REPORTS

a. Township Board

Trustee Sundland reported the following:

The Township Board adopted 3 main township goals (see above) for 2023. The Board discussed the MSU to Lk Lansing pathway as a major achievement for Meridian Township and supports the effort to establish equity in all places including development. Communications for the Township was stellar in 2022 especially related to the Grand River Ave. and Okemos Bridge construction. The community appreciates open communication and there are ways to improve our engagement among the residents. Not all utilize Social Media.

The Township Board approved the use of ARP funds to several different categories of use: Funding in support of Affordable Housing, Digital Plan Review, Wind Screens, Police Department Locker Room Update, 2023 Local Road Fund, Senior Community Feasibility, Meridian Historical Village Update.

Township Board created Capital Projects Fund in support of Township facility updates as Necessary. Approved Grand Reserve SUP for projects over 25K sq. ft.

b. Planning Commission

Planning member Peter Tresize spoke about approving the sign ordinance. Working through the approvals for Grand Reserve and updating the zoning regulations for

Marihuana establishments in Meridian Township. This update does not include permitted recreational retail use. The zoning updates removed grow/processor operations from permitted uses, which removed two overlay district areas. The Economic Development Department is in favor of the removal to preserve the available industrial for other economic development. The limited supply of large industrial parcels, makes it very unlikely an operation would come to the Township. The Planning Commission will make a determination on the updates and submit to the Township Board for review.

Treasurer Deschaine asked Member Ledebuhr if he would share his professional opinion on any negative effects Marihuana retail establishments have on surrounding parcels. Director Ledebuhr said in his experience the retail establishments are much like any other. How a community regulates their commercial parcels is shown by sign requirements, landscape requirements, regulating hours, parking, accessibility, green space etc. If properly regulated it should look and blend in with the communities other retail establishments. Other members spoke of their experience utilizing any Marihuana retail locations regionally. The regulation of development and not the market, will ensure any retail establishment is an enhancement of the community.

- c. Chair Kimberly Thompson advised everyone that 2023 is the year to select a new Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary. If anyone would like to nominate themselves or anyone else please send those comments to Director Clark. The position serves two consecutive years before elections run again.
- d. Staff reported they are working on March is Women in business month celebration with a local business. That may be the first top of town selection for the community is a woman owned business. Juneteenth plans are underway and the committee will meet on Saturday. A three day festival is planned and should run right up to 'celebrate meridian' which will hopefully tie together nicely. No ribbon cuttings set for this month but Rally House on Grand River and Valley Wing on Jolly will open soon!

10. COMMUNITY REPORTS

- a. Meridian Mall- Shawn Dunham updated the committee that the Mall attendance numbers are dropping back to 2019 numbers which were lower than post COVID numbers. Some of the incubator spaces are being utilized and it is allowing for small businesses to stay open longer. Atomic Tacos signed a longer lease for their new space as well as Bubble Tea. Director Clark asked if the Mall was working with LEAP for the incubator space and the Shawn said that had been the case previously but not in recent years.
- b. MABA- Director Clark updated the group first meeting is Friday January 13th at MSUFCU Farm Lane Community Room 9:15 am.

11. OPEN DISCUSSION/BOARD COMMENTS

- Member Ledebuhr recommends for Conner Bailey should be responded to. The letter should be sent to the Township Board for their review and inclusion in pursuit of the Snr Comm Center. A response from the Meridian EDC should also come, thanking the resident for their comments.

- Member Ledebuhr asked for Planning department staff to provide an in person explanation of the Sign ordinance and subsequent changes. Director Clark said she would speak to the Planning department about providing that at the next meeting.
- Brenda Chapman reviewed PA 338 of 1974 the Act that enables EDC's in Michigan. She stated part of our mission is support of agricultural development. What about the local farmers? What can we do to assist them? Director Clark stated there aren't many farmer's within the boundaries of the Township due to zoning. Rural Residential is the agricultural zone in Meridian however only MSU has an actual farm. The other "farming" done in the township would be considered more urban farming. Director Clark will work on a program to support a local farmer having a spot at the farmer's market to advocate farming.

12. PUBLIC REMARKS

NONE

13. NEXT MEETING DATE

- February 2nd, 2023 at 7:30am

14. ADJOURNMENT

9:07am Chair moved to adjourn all in favor

Yas: all

Nays: None



230 W Main St
Ionia, MI 48846

Statement Ending 12/31/2022

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN

Page 1 of 2

Account Number: XXXXXXX2419

>001029 7179892 0001 93443 10Z

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORP
MERIDIAN TOWNSHIP EDC/ACCOUNTS PAYABLE
5151 MARSH RD
OKEMOS MI 48864-1104

Managing Your Accounts



Okemos



800.355.0641



IndependentBank.com



Also enclosed with your account statement are various documents containing important information. If you should have any questions regarding this information, please contact our Customer Experience Hub at 800.355.0641, Monday-Friday 8 am-8 pm and Saturday 8 am-5 pm (ET). We appreciate your business.

With our Holiday Wrap-Up loan, you may be able to tie up any loose ends from the holiday season, and start the year anew! Enjoy great rates when you consolidate holiday debt, gift yourself what you really wanted, take a much-needed vacation getaway, and much more! This loan runs January 1-February 28, 2023, and you can learn more and apply online by visiting IndependentBank.com or contacting your local branch.

Summary of Accounts

Account Type	Account Number	Ending Balance
BusinessFlex TM	XXXXXXXX2419	\$55,279.28

BusinessFlex TM-XXXXXXXX2419

Account Summary

Date	Description	Amount
12/01/2022	Beginning Balance	\$50,614.42
	3 Credit(s) This Period	\$10,164.86
	11 Debit(s) This Period	\$5,500.00
12/31/2022	Ending Balance	\$55,279.28

Interest Summary

Description	Amount
Annual Percentage Yield Earned	0.33%
Interest Days	31
Interest Earned	\$14.86
Interest Paid This Period	\$14.86
Interest Paid Year-to-Date	\$76.28
Average Ledger Balance	\$53,775.71

Other Credits

Date	Description	Amount
12/02/2022	Deposit	\$150.00
12/15/2022	Deposit	\$10,000.00
12/31/2022	Credit Interest	\$14.86

Checks Cleared

Check Nbr	Date	Amount	Check Nbr	Date	Amount
1061	12/14/2022	\$500.00	1068	12/14/2022	\$500.00
1062	12/19/2022	\$500.00	1069	12/27/2022	\$500.00
1063	12/23/2022	\$500.00	1070	12/12/2022	\$500.00
1064	12/19/2022	\$500.00	1071	12/19/2022	\$500.00
1065	12/22/2022	\$500.00	1072	12/14/2022	\$500.00
1067*	12/16/2022	\$500.00			



0000/1000 517900 950300 249494 42010

BusinessFlex TM-XXXXXXXX2419 (continued)

* Indicates skipped check number

Daily Balances

<u>Date</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Amount</u>
12/01/2022	\$50,614.42	12/15/2022	\$58,764.42	12/23/2022	\$55,764.42
12/02/2022	\$50,764.42	12/16/2022	\$58,264.42	12/27/2022	\$55,264.42
12/12/2022	\$50,264.42	12/19/2022	\$56,764.42	12/31/2022	\$55,279.28
12/14/2022	\$48,764.42	12/22/2022	\$56,264.42		

Interest Rate Changes

Interest Rate As Of Date	Interest Rate
12/01/2022	0.3000%
12/24/2022	0.4000%



230 W Main St
Ionia, MI 48846

#545
Statement Ending 11/30/2022

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN

Page 1 of 2

Account Number: XXXXXXX2419

Managing Your Accounts

- Okemos
- 800 355 0641
- IndependentBank.com

>001096 5667978 0001 93443 10Z

01145418
P311

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORP
MERIDIAN TOWNSHIP EDC/ACCOUNTS PAYABLE
5151 MARSH RD
OKEMOS MI 48864-1104



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Summary of Accounts

Account Type	Account Number	Ending Balance
BusinessFlex TM	XXXXXXXX2419	\$50,614.42

BusinessFlex TM-XXXXXXXX2419

Account Summary

Date	Description	Amount
11/01/2022	Beginning Balance	\$47,288.13
	2 Credit(s) This Period	\$3,361.94
	1 Debit(s) This Period	\$35.65
11/30/2022	Ending Balance	\$50,614.42

Interest Summary

Description	Amount
Annual Percentage Yield Earned	0.30%
Interest Days	30
Interest Earned	\$11.94
Interest Paid This Period	\$11.94
Interest Paid Year-to-Date	\$61.42
Average Ledger Balance	\$48,403.61

Other Credits

Date	Description	Amount
11/21/2022	Deposit - MABA + Julie Bixie Donaten	3250 + 100 = \$3,350.00 ✓
11/30/2022	Credit Interest	67323 \$11.94 ✓

Other Debits

Date	Description	Amount
11/30/2022	External Withdrawal HARLAND CLARKE CHECK ORDER BILLING - CHK ORDER - ASKED Phil Recorded 67342 - Check stub order	\$35.65 ✓

Daily Balances

Date	Amount	Date	Amount
11/01/2022	\$47,288.13	11/21/2022	\$50,638.13
		11/30/2022	\$50,614.42

Interest Rate Changes

Interest Rate As Of Date	Interest Rate
11/01/2022	0.3000%



12/20/2022 08:59 AM
User: FAULKNER
DB: Meridian

BANK RECONCILIATION FOR MERIDIAN TWP
Bank EDC (EDC CHECKING ACCOUNT)
FROM 11/01/2022 TO 11/30/2022
Reconciliation Record ID: 545

Beginning GL Balance:		
Add: Cash Receipts		47,288.13
Less: Journal Entries/Other		3,350.00
		<u>(23.71)</u>
Ending GL Balance:		50,614.42
Ending Bank Balance:		50,614.42
Add: Deposits in Transit		0.00
Less: 0 AP Outstanding Checks		
Less: 0 PR Outstanding Checks		
Adjusted Bank Balance		50,614.42
Unreconciled Difference:		0.00

REVIEWED BY: _____

DATE: _____

Amber Clark Neighborhoods &
Economic Development Director
Meridian Township
Economic Development and Projects
February 2023

New Businesses Opening/Relocating

- Rally House- 1802 Grand River Ave
- Tripps Auto & Collision
- Valley Wings

Under Construction

- American Homes Meridian 1673 Haslett Road (previously called Pine Village)
- Copper Creek Haslett Road
- Silverstone Estates Powell Road
- Silverleaf Estates Bennet Road
- Woodward Way Sirhal Drive units are addressed

Approved/Not Commenced

- Consumers Credit Union- waiting on approvals for the Drain office
- Trader Joe's Northwind Drive across from Whole Foods
- Newton Ponte Apartments Multifamily mixed use Newton Road and Saginaw Hwy
- Village of Okemos 4661 Okemos Road Commercial/Residential development
Approved EGLE Brownfield, Meridian Redevelopment Fund
- Giguere Homes Nest Loft Farms Six New Single Family Homes
- Haslett Village Concept 2.0 1655 & 1621 Haslett Road
Approved MUPUD 290 units, Brownfield and Commercial Rehabilitation Exemption
- Lake Court drive 5-8 Single Family Homes
- Grand Reserve Public Hearing SUP at PC October 24
- 2421 Grand River Ave – Retail location coming soon!
- 4880 Marsh Road Outback Steakhouse is planned to be redeveloped

Other Township Happenings:

- Lunar New Year January 29th
- Preparations for March is Women in Business Month
- Juneteenth three day festival event for 2023 Planned Friday June 16, Saturday June 17th and Sunday June 18th



To: Meridian Economic Development Corporation
From: Amber Clark Director Neighborhoods & Economic Development
Date: February 2, 2023
Re: Officer Elections

Summary

The bylaws of the Economic Development Corporation require elections to be held biennially at a regular meeting at the beginning of each year unless there is a vacancy. Kimberly Thompson joined the EDC in January of 2017 and for the last two years has served as the chair of the EDC. We are very grateful for the hard work she has put into the advancement of this commission and accept with regret her resignation from the board. Her vacancy as chair will need to be filled.

Nominations for Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary can be made at this time. Your current officers are as follows:

Kimberly Thompson Chair

Brenda Chapman Vice-Chair

Frank Walsh Secretary/Treasurer

This commission also holds a liaison position on the Brownfield Development Authority. Currently this position is held by:

Brenda Chapman

We can adopt the two following motions:

Motion: Motion to approve _____ as chair, _____ as Vice Chair and _____ as Treasurer/Secretary of the Meridian Economic Development Corporation from January 1, 2023 to January 1, 2025.

Motion: Motion to approve _____ as the liaison for the Brownfield Redevelopment Authority of Meridian Township from January 1, 2023 to January 1, 2025.



To: Meridian Economic Development Corporation

From: Amber Clark Director Neighborhoods & Economic Development

Date: February 2, 2023

Re: Corridor Improvement Authority TIF Update

Summary

At the January 24th meeting of the Township Board, the Board approved the amendment to the resolution establishing a Corridor Improvement Authority in Meridian Township. In the resolution the Township Board restricted the CIA from pursuit of a tax increment financing. To date the CIA has no formal funding mechanism and therefore cannot finance any projects or improvements to enhance the corridor. The authority is focused on creating programs and projects that invigorate the streetscape and build partnerships among corridor property owners. Our recommendation to the Township Board is to amend the resolution to provide the CIA with the financial ability to carry out their mission.

History

April 17, 2016 the Township Board adopted a resolution establishing the Corridor Improvement Authority. After several public meetings and public hearing the Board established the CIA to address the Township goal of encouraging thriving economy, preservation of commercial areas, and increase coordination between municipalities for the Grand River corridor. This was heavily related to the Tri-County discussion to establish a Bus rapid transit. The BRT was not supported by enough voters and the conversation has lessened. To date Grand River Ave remains the dominant commercial area in the Township.

Retail establishments pursue Grand River; many focused on sites east of Park Lake. Meridian Township established a CIA that expands Grand River from E. Brookfield Drive to Cornell. In addition it includes the Meijer complex and north on Marsh Road to Kelly's Consignment. This is our largest commercial district in the Township. The goal at establishment was to create an opportunity to formally coordinate the vision of the Tri- County Planning Commission. In addition it would continue support of our most active commercial retail area, and Meridian Mall. 2022, post pandemic we are now focused on public improvements for Grand River which may include adequate drainage solutions and support of redevelopment of Meridian Mall. Our relationship with CBL Property Management grants us the opportunity to prepare any available incentives to address redevelopment of the site. Meridian Mall's future will be to adapt to the new economy. Shoppers do not utilize the Mall as a place to hang out and window shop. Most of us do that online. The Mall in order to accommodate the new world must adapt their space to something flexible and with multiple uses. It is the opinion of the CIA body and Economic development director that the best resource to active the CIA is a TIF. This is the best step to be prepared to assist the Meridian

Mall with a new concept. It will allow the CIA and Township access to funding to finance public pedestrian improvements and support additional drainage updates if necessary.

PA 280 of 2005 and PA 57 of 2018 require compliance criteria for a CIA. The Municipality agreeing to allow for mixed use that includes high density residential, and modify the Masterplan to provide for walkable nonnotarized interconnections throughout the development area.

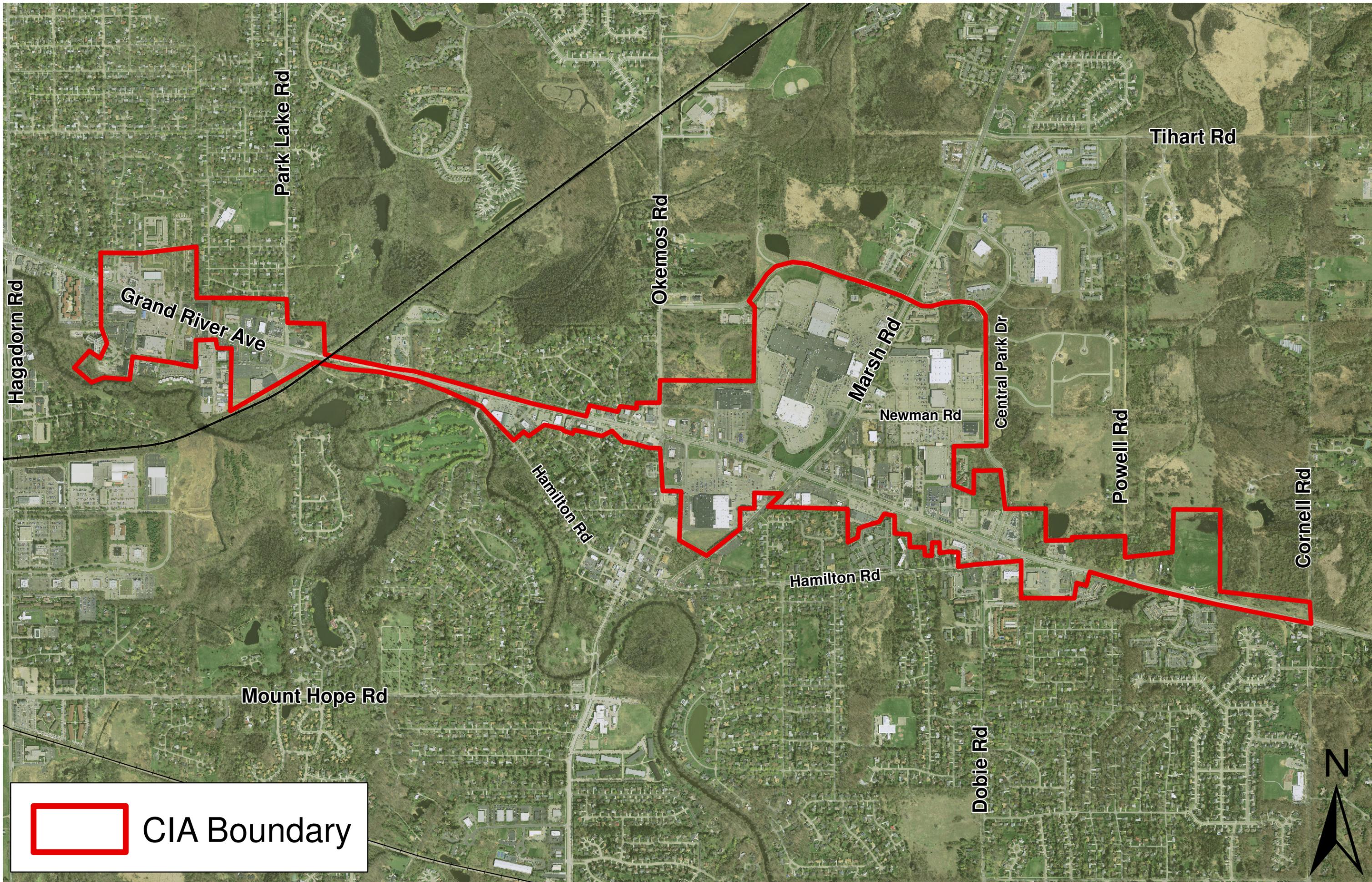
Budgetary Considerations

Tax Increment Financing is a public financing mechanism that supplements development, infrastructure and improvements in a specified area. The “tax” is diverted from public taxing jurisdictions like County, CATA, CADL, Capital Region Airport, local schools, Meridian Township, and LCC. These entities forgo tax growth in order to invest in public improvements that will increase the overall activity, value and economy of the area. The TIF is established for a period of time no longer than 20 years (unless extended). Should the Township and the other tax jurisdictions support the creation of a TIF, the CIA would have access to funding in support of public improvements. The CIA would create a TIF plan, a formal plan specifying how the captured tax increase will be invested in the district. An annual report is created and publicly reviewed before submitted to the State. Much like a DDA the CIA can operate, the difference with the CIA is the allotment of local school taxes in the captured revenue.

Attachments:

Adopted Resolution Establishing Corridor Improvement Authority
CIA District Map





Hagadorn Rd

Park Lake Rd

Tihart Rd

Okemos Rd

Grand River Ave

Marsh Rd

Central Park Dr

Newman Rd

Hamilton Rd

Powell Rd

Cornell Rd

Hamilton Rd

Mount Hope Rd

Dobie Rd



CIA Boundary





To: Meridian Economic Development Corporation

From: Amber Clark Director Neighborhoods & Economic Development

Date: February 2, 2023

Re: RRC Recertification Update- Economic Development Strategy Discussion

Summary

The Michigan Economic Development Corporation's (MEDC) Capital Assistance Team connected with Meridian Township staff several times beginning in July 2020 to present regarding the status of Redevelopment Ready Communities in Meridian. Redevelopment Ready Communities (RRC) is a progressive development program offered by the MEDC to align communities in Michigan with modern and efficient development processes. The efficiency of the development process helps market our communities competitively for quality developers and projects across the nation.

Status

MEDC would like to see our best practices aligned with their online program by November 2023. We are 61% aligned with the “essential” practices. These would administrative responsibilities of staff like Incentives Policy, Economic Development Strategy, Access to Information, Annual Reports, Goals, etc. These are annual updates that are required to be posted to MEDC for verification that we are aligned with the RRC program. An advantage for the Economic Development Director is the hands-on approach to the development boards and commissions for executing these reports.

We are 43% aligned with CERTIFIED Level practice which includes items the Township Board must adopt. One of those major items is the adoption of the Masterplan which is on track for 2023. Orientation and organization of onboarding documents for all boards and committees on the website are crucial for CERTIFIED level status. MEDC hopes to ensure members of the community and stakeholders are aware of development projects and where to find key information. Housing Diversity by right is also a major sticking point to the CERTIFIED level for MEDC. The meetings our department held with our RRC Specialist indicate Meridian should not have received RRC status without this condition. It remains a condition for maintaining our active status in RRC.

Economic Development Strategy Discussion

The backbone of the document is included with the packet. It includes the ‘essential’ elements of an EDC strategy, however it could be supported with additional data to create our best practices to implement the plan. Stakeholders, public participation and communication are key to ensuring members of the public are included in the process. Attached is a letter of commitment drafted for stakeholders to sign as their promise to dedicating time to adequately plan and propose an updated Strategy. In addition the EDC will be a major component to implementing the strategy over the next years. In 2018 a Market Housing Study was performed for Meridian Township with a focus in Haslett. We are asking the EDC to again consider and discuss requesting additional market studies

to support the data used to define the Masterplan, Economic Development Strategy and their coinciding implementation plans. Director Clark is prepared to seek our vendors with expertise capable of providing informative studies.

Attachments

- Letter of Commitment
- 2018 Adopted Strategy
- Draft 2023 EDC Strategy
- Status of RRC Recertification levels





[Partner/ Organization Letterhead]

[Date]

Re: Meridian Township Economic Development Strategy

This letter affirms, ___(name)_____ will provide assistance as a representative of ___(organization)_____ in partnership with the Meridian Economic Development Corporation. The commitment is to assist with the creation and implementation of the 2023 Economic Development Strategy of 2023. The focus of the strategy will be empowering business, residents, and organizations to establish themselves with resilient economic foundation for a lasting future in Meridian Township. We aim to achieve this through the provision of programs and services that support the following pillars: economic resiliency, entrepreneurial advancement, public/private partnerships, and revitalization. We commit to the following: developing and implementing a plan to promote and expand economic mobility; formalizing participation of community stakeholders; determining gaps in current programs; and outlining specific goals for Meridian Township.

We commit to working with federal agencies, state and local governments, non-profits, faith-based organizations, private corporations, and other community-based organizations to leverage resources for the benefit of individuals and families living in our community. Our community currently holds an active status in the MEDC Redevelopment Ready Communities program. Established localized incentives for infill development areas, capitalize on layer incentives statewide. All to enhance our prime community.

I commit to providing my professional and personal expertise to the implementation of the plan as described above.

Sincerely,

[Name]

[Organization]



CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN

MERIDIAN TOWNSHIP ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

History: Where we've been, where we are and where we are heading.

For decades, Meridian Township has been conflicted between development and remaining a rural community. The proximity to the Capitol and Michigan State University, coupled with wooded lots, a dynamic park system, great schools and freeway access made Meridian truly a natural choice for residents of Mid-Michigan, who seek a great place to live, to find much of what they were looking for. The Meridian Mall opened its doors in 1969, and with it, Grand River Avenue in Meridian Township became a commerce center to serve the needs of the rapidly growing population. Between 1960 and 1970, Meridian's population grew a whopping 71.5% and continued growing over 20% by 1980 and again by 1990. Long-term community members spoke out about the township's need to control the growth and preserve what Meridian Township had long meant to its residents – a peaceful place away from the city. Economic growth was happening to Meridian Township and something needed to be done to ensure the changes were supplementing the great community, not detracting from it. Five years ago, this long debate culminated in a new determination to adopt and implement an updated Master Plan.

In November 2017, the Meridian Township Board adopted a new Master Plan. The plan calls for a balance between preserving what the community has long stood for while implementing a tactical strategy to improve the areas the residents deemed not up to community standards. Meridian enjoys an established series of highly desired subdivisions, excellent parks and land preservation programs, nationally recognized public school systems, strong trails for bicycles and pedestrians, and quality public services like libraries and transit. The areas requiring improvement include the eroding, once village-like commercial hubs of downtown Okemos, the four-corners of Haslett and the Carriage Hills shopping centers. These shopping destinations have failed to evolve in the changing world of retail and struggle to maintain occupancy of relevant tenants. Similarly, the Meridian Mall, once a thriving hub for the capital region, also faces significant occupancy challenges. Grand River Avenue, while it has many long-term commercial and professional office tenants, craves connectivity, vibrancy and an infrastructure upgrade to allow for safe and convenient use regardless of whether a citizen arrives by car, transit, bike or foot.

As the Master Plan was being developed, the Township Board was taking bold steps to implement a strategy to fix the largest problem most municipality's face – underfunded pension debt. It would be impractical to consider economic development the primary objective without addressing this looming crisis. In August 2017, the voters approved the strategy that will allow Meridian Township to become a debt-free community within ten years. On the heels of this achievement, the Township Board enacted an action plan for the Fourth Quarter 2017 to not only adopt the Master Plan, but to implement the plan and deliver what the residents requested.

In the fall of 2017, the Township Board adopted a 2018 budget that allowed for the establishment of a Redevelopment Fund and hire an Economic Development Director. The Township created a Brownfield Redevelopment Authority and enrolled in the Redevelopment Ready Communities program via the Michigan Economic Development Corporation. The Economic Development Director, along with elected officials, staff and citizen input, is charged with executing the following economic development strategy as it relates to the Master Plan. Below is a summary of long-term goals for the Township to achieve primarily through the efforts of the Economic Development Director. These goals are meant to be long standing, but will be reviewed annually. The implementation strategy will be a series of annual objective to be completed to accomplish each goal. The Economic Development Director will provide the Township Board and annual summary of objectives met, and suggest new objectives for the coming calendar year.

Economic Development Strategy

Goal: Public Relations & Advocacy

It is critical to engage as many community stakeholders as possible when determining the future of the Township. Master Planning will occur every five years at a minimum where every effort will be made to engage stakeholders on all levels; residents, land owners and business owners, to ensure that the updated vision for the Township reflects the desires of as many community members as possible. As new projects come forth, developers are encouraged to engage with neighbors who are impacted by their proposed development to garner feedback and support before they invest significant time, money and effort to their plans. Township staff will assist when requested or as needed. Public engagement should help the Township and the developer produce a more welcome development project in a more timely fashion with less friction.

The following action steps will be necessary in achieving this goal:

- Utilize our public participation strategy to disseminate information to a wide variety of stakeholders
- Engage with Developers, Land Owners, Business Owners and Realtors to earn the trust required to be looped in early as development projects are considered.
- Work closely with developers in the early stages of projects and connect them to local homeowners associations, business owners and land owners.

Goal: Business Retention, Expansion and Attraction

To have the economic development success we expect, it is critical to retain the businesses we have, advocate for those who are succeeding to reinvest in the Township through renovation, expansion or relocation, and attract new businesses to select Meridian as the community they choose to expand into. If grand openings replace those going out of business, we are simply stagnant which perpetuates the reputation of a community with a transient business base.

In order to achieve this goal, it is critical we execute the following:

- Implement a plan to visit with existing business owners to solicit feedback as to whether their business trend projects them to grow, shrink, close, or stay status quo and react accordingly.
- Uncover obstacles the Township has created that are preventing the business community from having the success they otherwise could have. Advocate for adjustments where practical.
- Engage with the residents of the Township to gather an ongoing wish list of desired commercial, retail, office and dining options not currently available in the Township and solicit those uses to come to Meridian.

Goal: Redevelopment the PICA districts as defined in the Master Plan and assist all of our business districts in remaining vibrant assets in our community (The Mall, Grand River Ave, Okemos & Jolly, Saginaw Business Loop, Hannah Plaza and Haslett Road)

The Master Plan calls for the redevelopment of our potential intensity change areas (PICA) which are defined as Downtown Okemos, the Haslett Four Corners and the Carriage Hills shopping center. Each space is unique, but the common theme is that these once-vibrant districts have fallen into disrepair and are under occupied. The Township has many business districts, but these three are specifically ripe for redevelopment into quaint village-like uses. We are proposing mixed-use in each so the residents of these villages will have many of the desired services and entertainment options within a convenient walk or bike ride. Also, these villages will become destinations for residents living in

nearby subdivisions where they can arrive by transit, car, bike or foot and spend the day. Similar to the redevelopment of the PICA's, our other business districts will require consistent focus, proactive ordinance review and development attraction. The mall will need nearly constant support to evolve from its current form to a more relevant and economically sustainable design. The Grand River Corridor will require implementation of policy that are found in The Capitol Corridor publication of 2014 and the Shaping the Avenue vision of 2017-2018.

For this vision to be achieved, it will be imperative to take the following action:

- Share the vision with developers, commercial realtors, land owners and business owners.
- Utilize the Meridian Redevelopment Fund, the Brownfield Redevelopment Authority and Redevelopment Ready Communities certification, where applicable, as resources to allow for the best possible development projects.
- Facilitate the dialogue between the developer, the Township, utility partners and the Ingham County Road Department and/or MDOT to ensure we maximize quality and accessibility of the development project.
- Review the associated ordinances that govern these critical areas and propose amendments to policy that prohibits or slows development that we've encouraged in the Master Plan.

Goal: Protect what is referred to in the Master Plan as the "eastern third" of the Township from dense and transformational development.

The feedback provided by the citizens of Meridian Township made a strong argument for development in our existing core districts, but asked for the rural character of this area to remain. The focus of Economic Development is to be on infill, not sprawl. As development projects and rezoning applications come through the approval process, we must remain vigilant in this cause.

Goal: Ensure Meridian is complimentary, congruent and competitive with Mid-Michigan economic development initiatives

Meridian Township has a significant role to play in the revitalization of the tri-county region. It is imperative to remain aware of initiatives in surrounding communities so the region can move forward together as a whole. Similarly, Meridian should share its plans with its neighbors to gather feedback and confirm there are limited duplicated efforts. To achieve this goal, the Economic Development Director and certain elected officials and staff should be assigned to attend various regional meetings and trainings to gather and share information.

Goal: Market the Township's community assets and competitive advantages

As more development and employment opportunities arise, Meridian needs to consistently advertise its brand (A Prime Community) to share the story Meridian Township has to tell. While physical involvement in local and regional meetings is critical, in the world of social media and websites, Meridian's story needs to be "findable". One of our best tools to court future businesses and residents can be our digital footprint. We must maximize all communication efforts to share the greatness that IS Meridian Township.

Goal: Follow the process in, and meet the deadlines of, the Master Plan implementation plan

Best Practice 1: Plans and Engagement

Best Practice 1.1 | Master Plan

STATUS: IN PROGRESS WITH PLANNING DEPT. PLANNING COMMISSION, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT, CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENT AUTHORITY, & DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY.

“The governing body has adopted a master plan in the past five years”.

The Township is approaching a five (5) year review and potential update of their Master Plan (2017), as mandated by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (PA 33 of 2008). It is recommended that the Township evaluate the goals, objectives, and strategies established in the Master Plan for ones that are more actionable and implementable. The restructuring of the goals, objectives, and strategies will then lend themselves to an updated Implementation Plan that should include responsible parties and projected timelines for each strategy, an aspect that is currently missing from the Master Plan.

STATUS: CURRENT TO 2022

Further, Best Practice 1.1 includes an expectation of annual review. To maintain Certification, the Township will need to demonstrate progress on the implementation of the Master Plan annually. As of 2021, the Township is not currently meeting this expectation.

Best Practice 1.3 | Capital Improvement Plan

“The governing body has adopted a capital improvements plan”.

STATUS: CURRENT AND UPDATED 2022 ON WEBSITE FOR GENERAL PUBLIC

While the current Annual Budget (2020) prepared by the Township includes a small section dedicated to annual capital investments, the Township needs to prepare a separate and comprehensive Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). Standard CIPs span six years of planning and are conducted annually with the municipal budgeting process.

Best Practice 1.4 | Public Participation Plan

“The community has a public participation plan for engaging a diverse set of community stakeholders”.

STATUS: (PENDING) UNDER REVIEW WITH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPT. TO BE ADOPTED WITH MASTERPLAN 2023D

The Township established their Community Engagement Plan in 2018 to meet their initial Certification. To meet recertification expectations, it is recommended the next iteration of the Community Engagement Plan include more details regarding which populations in the Township are not typically at the visioning table and how the Township plans to engage those populations.

STATUS: (PENDING) 2023 ANNUAL REVIEW IT WILL BE THE FIRST YEAR OF A NEW POLICY SO NO REVIEW NECESSARY

Further, Best Practice 1.4 includes an expectation of annual review. To maintain Certification, the Township will need to demonstrate that the results of the community engagement efforts are reported to the Township Board annually. As of 2021, the Township is not currently meeting this expectation.

Best Practice 2: Zoning

Best Practice 2.1 | Alignment with Master Plan

“The governing body has adopted a zoning ordinance that aligns with the goals of the current master plan”.

STATUS: CURRENT (PENDING) ANNUAL IMPLEMENTATION REPORTS ARE TO BE SUBMITTED WITH COMMENTS OR MINUTES FROM PLANNING DEPT. PLANNING COMMISSION, ECONOMIC

DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT, CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENT AUTHORITY, & DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY.

It is recommended that the Township progress in making changes to the Zoning Ordinance as recommended by the current and any future Master Plans. Specifically, it is recommended that the Township provide an update on their ability to realize the revisions in the 'Recommendations for Revisions to the Zoning Ordinance and Map', Master Plan section.

Best Practice 2.3 | Concentrated Development

"The zoning ordinance provides for areas of concentrated development in appropriate locations and encourages the type and form of development desired".

STATUS: COMPLETE WITH REVISED MUPUD ORDINANCE 2022- PICA DESIGNATIONS FALL IN OUR HIGHEST DENSITY AREAS. MIXED USE IS ALLOWED BY RIGHT IN A POTENTIAL INTENSITY CHANGE AREA.

Mixed-use development is permitted within Sec. 86-440 (MUPUD) of the Zoning Ordinance, but to be deemed Redevelopment Ready, it is expected to allow mixed-use development permitted by-right, in areas of concentrated development.

STATUS: COMPLETE WITH REVISED MUPUD ORDINANCE 2022- PICA DESIGNATIONS FALL IN OUR HIGHEST DENSITY AREAS. MIXED USE IS ALLOWED BY RIGHT IN A POTENTIAL INTENSITY CHANGE AREA.

Additionally, it is clear that the 'Architectural Standards' outlined in the Master Plan only apply to the MUPUD District (Sec. 86.440(C)(2)(e)(1)). It is recommended that the Township incorporate similar placemaking elements to zoning districts in the Township's concentrated areas of development. Specifically, grade-level transparency and build-to lines could help the Township in meeting Certified expectations.

Best Practice 2.4 | Housing Diversity

"The zoning ordinance allows for a variety of housing options".

STATUS: UNDER DISCUSSION AT TOWNSHIP BOARD

Unfortunately, the Township does not currently permit applicable diverse housing typologies in any zoning district. To maintain Certification, the Township should permit three (3) diverse housing typologies, by-right. To exceed expectations, the Township could permit these diverse housing types near their areas of concentrated development, to support vibrant and walkable neighborhoods.

Best Practice 3: Development Review

Best Practice 3.6 | Fee Schedule

"The community maintains a fee schedule".

STATUS: CURRENT AND UPDATED 2022 ON WEBSITE FOR GENERAL PUBLIC. 2023 FEE SCHEDULE IS YET TO BE PUBLISHED

It is recommended that the Township post the updated Building Permit, Commercial Fire, and Planning fee schedules onto the Township website. Additionally, it is recommended that development-related fee schedules be updated and included in the Township's Guide to Development (Best Practice 3.8).

STATUS: PENIDNG 2023 REVIEW

Further, Best Practice 3.6 includes an expectation of annual review. To maintain Certification, the Township will need to review and update the development-related fee schedules annually. As of 2021, the Township is not currently meeting this expectation.

Best Practice 3.7 | Payment Methods

"The community offers clear methods of payment".

STATUS: (PENDING) ARP FUNDING SUPPORT PROJECT OF DIGITAL PERMITTING BUILDING, FIRE PLAN REVIEW. APPROVED BY TOWNSHIP BOARD NOV 2022.

It is recommended that the Township identify what methods of payments an applicant can use to pay for development-related fees on the Township's website. Additionally, it is recommended that the Township accept credit card payments, either solely in-person or also online.

Best Practice 3.8 | Access to Information

"The community maintains a guide to development that explains policies, procedures, and steps to obtain approvals".

STATUS: (PENDING) FINAL BRANDING APPROVAL FROM COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT. UPDATED AND REVIEWED BY ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY PLANNING DEPARTMENTS. READY TO SUBMIT ONLINE WHEN COMMUNICAITONS IS COMPLETE.

The Development Process Overview document, developed by the Township in 2018 is a great start. The integration of wetland delineation/verification processes, as well as the incorporation of associated fees on the various review processes, are very useful to applicants. With RRC 2.0, there are a few areas where the Township could supplement their Development Process Overview to become better aligned with Certified expectations:

- Relevant contact information: The existing document (as well as several other documents on the website) have Peter Mesner as the primary contact.
- Relevant meeting schedules: It would be helpful for applicants to see the regular meeting times of all development-related boards and commissions.
- Conceptual meeting procedures: The Township has already prepared this document, but once the Township makes the appropriate updates to this document, it is recommended that it be integrated it into the Development Process Overview.
- Site plan review requirements and application: This item already lives on the website; it is recommended to integrate it into a comprehensive guide to development.
- Clear explanation for site plans that can be approved administratively: You do have this differentiated in your Development Process Overview, but I wanted to discuss these regulations because they don't necessarily align with what is written in Sec. 86-155 that states all site plans can be reviewed administratively. Additionally, there is no differentiation on whether it is a new development or minor modifications.
- Rezoning request process and application: This item already lives on the website; it is recommended to integrate it into a comprehensive guide to development.
- Variance request process and application: This item already lives on the website; it is recommended to integrate it into a comprehensive guide to development.
- Special land use request process and application: This item already lives on the website; it is recommended to integrate it into a comprehensive guide to development.
- Fee schedule: The Township has provided associated fees throughout the document. However, it is recommended the Township ensure these prices are up to date. Additionally, if the Township deems it helpful, the Township could also add the relevant fee schedules into the comprehensive guide to development.
- Financial assistance tools: If any are offered by the Township, it is recommended the Township publicized then in the comprehensive guide to development.
- Design guidelines and related processes: If the Township decided to develop design guidelines, incorporating or referencing them within the guide to development would be helpful.
- Building permit requirements and applications: This item already lives on the website; it is recommended to integrate it into a comprehensive guide to development.

Best Practice 3.9 | Project Tracking

"The community has a method to track development projects".

**STATUS: CURRENT AND UPDATED 2022 ON WEBSITE FOR GENERAL PUBLIC
REGULARLY UPDATED**

It is recommended the Township provide documentation of the community's tracking system for development applications, from submissions to permitting.

Best Practice 3.10 | Continued Improvement

"The community solicits feedback and regularly reviews the development review experience".

The Township provides an excellent Development Process Feedback Survey on the Township's website to solicit details about applicants' experience with the Township's development processes.

STATUS: CURRENT AND UPDATED 2022 ON WEBSITE FOR DEVELOPERS

Best Practice 3.10 includes an expectation of annual review. To maintain Certification, the Township will need to provide details on how the Township assess their development review process annually, based on the responses garnered from the survey. As of 2021, the Township is not currently meeting this expectation.

Best Practice 4: Boards and Commissions

Best Practice 4.1 | Recruitment Process

"The community has a clear recruitment and appointment process".

STATUS: UNDER DISCUSSION AT TOWNSHIP BOARD

The Township provides a Public Service Application Form online for residents interested in applying to a board or commission. To meet Certified expectations, it is recommended that the Township post either a document, statement, or quick blurb on what the typical process of appointment is. This could include:

- What happens after an interested community member applies?
- How often are applications reviewed?
- What are the current vacant seats?

Best Practice 4.2 | Expectations & Interests

"The community sets expectations for board and commission positions".

STATUS: UNDER DISCUSSION AT TOWNSHIP BOARD

The Township provides a very helpful Appointed Officials Ethics Statement on the Township's website, that outlines ethical expectations of board and commission members (e.g. no taking of gifts, no financial gain, serve with integrity). To meet this Best Practice, it is recommended that the Township incorporate additional expectations around attendance records, typical meeting schedule, duties to be performed, and term limits. Additionally, newer to RRC 2.0, to make the application process easier to understand for residents, highlighting associated interests and/or background experience that would best suit each type of board and commission position is an expectation.

Best Practice 4.3 | Orientation

"The community provides orientation material to all appointed and elected members of development-related boards and commissions".

STATUS: UNDER DISCUSSION AT TOWNSHIP BOARD

Documentation of the orientation materials the Township provides to newly appointment officials is needed. It is recommended the Township provide this information for all development-related boards and commission, including the Township Board, Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals,

Downtown Development Authority, Corridor Improvement Authority, Brownfield Redevelopment Authority, and Economic Development Corporation.

Best Practice 4.4 | Bylaws

"The community has bylaws for boards and commissions".

STATUS: UNDER DISCUSSION AT TOWNSHIP BOARD

It is recommended the Township make the bylaws for each development-related board and commission, easily accessible on their respective webpages.

Best Practice 4.5 | Planning Commission Annual Report

"The community issues a planning commission annual report".

STATUS: CURRENT AND UPDATED 2022 ON WEBSITE FOR GENERAL PUBLIC

REGULARLY UPDATED- 2023 TO BE POSTED SOON

Best Practice 4.5 includes an expectation of annual review. To maintain Certification, the Township will need to prepare the annual Meridian Township Report. As of 2021, the Township is not currently meeting this expectation.

Best Practice 4.6 | Training Strategy

"The community has a documented training strategy".

STATUS: UNDER DISCUSSION AT TOWNSHIP BOARD

Best Practice 4.6 is a new expectation under RRC 2.0. Communities need to create a training strategy document for all development-related boards and commissions in the Township. This includes addressing the Township's view on regular training for its elected/nominated officials, suggested training opportunities, how these training opportunities will be funded, and how participants will share out their training experiences.

Best Practice 4.7 | Joint Meetings

"The community shares information between elected and appointed officials and staff".

STATUS: CURRENT AND UPDATED 2022 ON WEBSITE FOR GENERAL PUBLIC

REGULARLY UPDATED- 2023 TO BE POSTED NOVEMBER

Best Practice 4.7 includes an expectation of annual review. To maintain Certification, the Township will need to provide documentation that a joint meeting among development-related boards was held at least once a year. As of 2021, the Township is not currently meeting this expectation.

Best Practice 5: Economic Development and Marketing

Best Practice 5.1 | Economic Development Strategy

"The community has approved an economic development strategy".

STATUS: (PENDING) UNDER DESIGN WITH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN, MARKETING PLAN, MASTERPLAN, DEVELOPMENT GUIDE AND INCENTIVES POLICY ARE ALL UNDER DESIGN REVIEW. FINAL PRODUCTION WILL ALIGN WITH MASTERPLAN TO HAVE ALL DOCUMENTS SUPPORT THE SAME COMMUNITY VISION. FINAL TO BE SUBMITTED TO COMMUNICATIONS FOR BRANDING.

The Township provides an excellent Economic Development Strategy (2018) on its website. Best Practice 5.1 includes an expectation of annual review. To maintain Certification, the Township will need to provide documentation that the implementation of the Economic Development Strategy is accessed annually. As of 2021, the Township is not currently meeting this expectation.

Best Practice 5.2 | Incentives Policies

"The community has adopted policies to guide economic development incentives".

STATUS: (PENDING) UNDER DESIGN WITH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN, MARKETING PLAN, MASTERPLAN, DEVELOPMENT GUIDE AND INCENTIVES POLICY ARE ALL UNDER DESIGN REVIEW. FINAL PRODUCTION WILL ALIGN WITH MASTERPLAN TO HAVE ALL DOCUMENTS SUPPORT THE SAME COMMUNITY VISION. FINAL TO BE SUBMITTED TO COMMUNICATIONS FOR BRANDING.

Best Practice 5.2 is a new expectation under RRC 2.0, aimed at equipping communities with the tools to be attractive to developers. The Township will need to clearly outline the incentives available to developers and in what situations they will be considered. This can live in a stand-alone document or within the comprehensive Guide to Development (Best Practice 3.8). Some commonly used local incentives include:

- Tax Abatements (Industrial, OPRA, Commercial Rehab, etc.)
- Facade Improvement Programs
- Local Small Business Support Loans
- Local or County Brownfield
- Land disposition policies which allow for a reduced sale price
- Waived local fees (development review, utility connections, etc.)
- PILOTs (Payment In Lieu Of Taxes)

Incentives do not necessarily need to consist only of tax abatements. The Township can also consider other smaller incentives, like site plan application fee waivers, density bonuses, and expedited processing.

Best Practice 5.3 | Marketing Plan

"The community has a documented marketing plan".

STATUS: (PENDING) UNDER DESIGN WITH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN, MARKETING PLAN, MASTERPLAN, DEVELOPMENT GUIDE AND INCENTIVES POLICY ARE ALL UNDER DESIGN REVIEW. FINAL PRODUCTION WILL ALIGN WITH MASTERPLAN TO HAVE ALL DOCUMENTS SUPPORT THE SAME COMMUNITY VISION. FINAL TO BE SUBMITTED TO COMMUNICATIONS FOR BRANDING.

The Township has an established Marketing and Promotion Strategy (2018) and a separate Brand Standards Quick Reference Guide. To ensure Township staff, applicants, and residents have access to a comprehensive resource regarding the Township's marketing efforts, it is recommended the Township incorporate the branding standards document into the Marketing and Promotion Strategy.

Conclusion and Next Steps

Meridian Charter Township's current Certification status remains in effect until November 16, 2023. The preceding Redevelopment Ready Communities® Recertification Brief was prepared two (2) years in advance of Meridian Charter Township's recertification date. RRC understands that the Township is at the precipice of updating several planning and development documents and desires to use this Recertification Brief as a tool to ensure continued alignment with the RRC Best Practices. As the Township works to align with all the Best Practice expectations, RRC is open to Township staff offering alternative ways the Township can meet the intent of the Best Practice criteria. Additionally, as a Certified RRC community in good standing, the Township has continued access to a range of RRC technical assistance tools. These

tools—which include a network of RRC community contacts, Best Practice examples, and guidance documents—can help Meridian Charter Township adapt to the updated RRC Best Practice expectations. It is expected that Meridian Township will continue to see exciting redevelopment opportunities in the years to come and Redevelopment Ready Communities® looks forward to formally recertifying the Township in 2023.



To: Meridian Economic Development Corporation

From: Amber Clark Director Neighborhoods & Economic Development

Date: February 2, 2023

Re: March is Women in Business Support

Summary

The Meridian EDC adopted goals to support programming efforts to enhance the experience, and engagement of the small business community. Particularly to put effort into support of the commercial areas most impacted by the 18 month major construction projects in 2022. This occurred after the two years of the COVID-19 pandemic. The request for the Meridian EDC today is to grant financial support for up to 10 women in business owners to have the ability to attend a collaborative event sponsored by TinkrLab- "Women Em-Powerment Knowing Your Home" series where women can attend an evening class at TinkrLab and learn how to make simple home improvement updates. This is a new series offered by TinkrLab to provide women access to a safe learning environment, focused on providing opportunity for those that may not be well versed in home improvement, mechanical tools and do-it-yourself projects.

Director Clark with the assistance of other local businesses like Home Depot, Do-Well Remodel and other sponsors have planned a "Women Em-Powerment Do it yourself drywall series" Interested participants can sign up at Eventbrite and the event is open to the general public. The Meridian EDC will sponsor no more than 10 female business owners for the 2 hour class session to be held at TinkrLab Friday March 10th starting at 7:30 pm.

Budgetary Considerations

The cost of the event ticket is \$35/per person. Our recommendation is to provide up to 10 tickets for women entrepreneurs of Meridian Township to attend as our guest. The class will start at 7:30 pm and we hope to gain some afterhours partners for lite social after the event. The request of the EDC is to sponsor no more than \$500 for the March 10th "Women Em-Powerment Knowing Your Home" event.

Motion: Move to approve up to \$500 in support of the "Women Em-Powerment Knowing Your Home" event series scheduled for March 10th, 2023.

To: Meridian Economic Development Corporation

From: Amber Clark Director Neighborhoods & Economic Development

Date: February 2, 2023

Re: Small Business Recognition and Promotion Program

Summary

The Meridian EDC at their last meeting discussed the need for more local businesses of Meridian to have an option to be promoted for additional milestones, celebrations and overall effect on the Meridian public. A suggestion has been to run several “best of town” voting options for members of the entire Meridian Township public to discuss which business are the “best” at a particular category. Research supports small business awards as a way to provide additional marketing of a business for staff recruitment, sales and overall PR. Some companies use the granting of a trophy as a way to create additional sales for a business. The mission of the Meridian EDC will be to create a “Best of” award series to be run annually.

History

Annually a collaborative effort from the Meridian Area Business Association and Meridian EDC to provide annual business awards. The award is granted to a new business and established business of the year as determined by the public and MABA members. Members of the EDC are interested in discussing additional award options. A recommendation is to have the EDC members set the parameters of eligibility of the awards and categories. 2023 Director Clark has accepted the position as Vice President of the Meridian Area Business Association. In discussion with the MABA board, they apologized for the lack of follow up back with the Meridian EDC to finalize the Meridian Annual awards as is typical for our organizations. There could be support from the MABA board to collaborative at a higher intensity to ensure the award nomination period and selected business is publicly circulated more. In the past, MABA has asked for current MABA members to vote during the last regular MABA member meeting of the year. The tallies of the votes for new and established businesses are the awarded companies. If the Meridian EDC is interested in providing more opportunities for awards, MABA could be of assistance.

Recommendations

Salt Lake City, UT started a localized [“Best of” business award](#) program. Other articles speak on the awards as they relate to providing more promotion and marketing opportunities. Awards can fall into several different categories like, product, team, environment, work life balance, etc. Here is a article through [Nerdwallet.com](#) that categorizes small business national awards and the potential for a small business to gain access to the award. Then the best of small business awards has several categories including modernized categories, like creative payment options, Start up, CEO, Best app, Product etc. This is an open discussion to establish the primary focus for the EDC’s new business awards.