



**AGENDA**  
CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN  
MERIDIAN TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION  
February 23, 2023 (Special Meeting) 6:00 p.m.

---

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER
2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA
3. COMMUNICATIONS
4. PUBLIC REMARKS
5. COMMISSION DISCUSSION
  - A. Climate Sustainability Plan (Discussion)
  - B. Master Plan Goals and Objectives (Discussion)
6. PROJECT UPDATES
  - A. None
7. REPORTS / ANNOUNCEMENTS
  - A. None
8. NEXT MEETING DATES
  - A. Planning Commission Meeting February 27, 2023
  - B. Transportation Commission Meeting March 16, 2023
9. ADJOURNMENT

**IN PERSON MEETING**

**Town Hall Room**

**5151 Marsh Road**

---

Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids or services should contact Director of Community Planning and Development Tim Schmitt, 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864 or 517.853.4506 - Ten Day Notice is Required.  
Meeting Location: 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864

Providing a safe, welcoming, sustainable, prime community.





**To: Transportation Commissioners**  
**From: LeRoy Harvey, Environmental Programs Coordinator**  
**Date: December 8, 2022**  
**Re: Meridian Climate Sustainability Plan Feedback**

---

The Environmental Commission (EC) is seeking your ideas and input as we revise and update Meridian's Climate Sustainability Plan. I have attached the Transportation Section to this memo. Ideally, the EC would appreciate your suggestions and comments within the next month or two. William McConnell, Chair of our EC has offered to provide discuss this further with you at an upcoming meeting. In the meantime, please don't hesitate to call or email me if I can provide assistance.

Please note that comments are welcome on the entire document as well. The document can be found here: <http://bit.ly/3uBdcQG>

Thanks,

LeRoy Harvey, 517-853-4466, [harvey@meridian.mi.us](mailto:harvey@meridian.mi.us)

## Transportation

Transportation produced 27% of greenhouse gases in 2020<sup>3</sup>. Public and non-motorized alternatives can reduce the impacts from these greenhouse gases. The most accessible alternative to petroleum is often overlooked -- walking and biking. Transportation fuel use reduction measures decrease emissions, save the Township and residents money, enhance environmental quality, and promote public health. The Township will focus on its own fleet, walking and biking, and land use decisions. Land use decisions that lead to infill development and a greater use of public and non-motorized transportation can significantly impact petroleum use.

### Past and Current Progress:

A Complete Streets Ordinance was adopted by the Meridian Township Board on Sept. 18, 2012. The ordinance is intended to provide safe, convenient, and comfortable routes for multiple modes of transportation including but not limited to walking, bicycling, personal vehicles and public transportation.

The Township has 20 miles of trails and 80 miles of pedestrian/bicycle paths. The development and maintenance of the trails and pathways are funded through the Park Millage and Pedestrian/Bicycle Pathway Millage. They are maintained by Township Parks and Grounds Maintenance Staff. The purpose of the pedestrian/bicycle pathway system is to provide a network of interconnected pathways throughout Meridian Township that connect destination points including schools; libraries; parks; public buildings; commercial areas; and connecting routes outside the Township.

Since the adoption of the Climate Sustainability Plan in 2017, major accomplishments include safety conversions of Lake Lansing Road, Central Park Drive, and Jolly Road, and the installation of safe mid-block pedestrian crossings on M-43.

The Meridian Transportation Commission began meeting in January 2017. The purpose of the commission is to review transportation services, both public and private, within the township as to their efficiency, sufficiency, and costs and make recommendations, if necessary, for improvements.

### **Objective 1: Encourage Township employees and citizens to be smart commuters year round.**

#### Strategies

1. Continue to expand and close gaps in the bike and pedestrian pathways network. Promote the bike and walkways.
2. Incentivize and encourage employees to be smart commuters year round.
3. Partner with Capital Area Transportation Authority and others to promote "Clean Commute" options and identify efficient paratransit and Redi-Ride efficiency improvements.
4. Encourage bike/ebike transportation by offering secure parking at local stores/restaurants.
5. Consider engineering safe, separated/protected bike lanes to link residential areas to commercial districts.

---

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.epa.gov/ghgemissions/sources-greenhouse-gas-emissions> downloaded 5/19/22

6. Consider closing down lanes to bike/pedestrian traffic only on a periodic or permanent basis to encourage bike/pedestrian use and recreation.

## **Objective 2: Decrease the use of petroleum in the Township vehicle fleet.**

### Strategies

1. Purchase at least one electric vehicle for use in the Township fleet in 2024.
2. Perform necessary electric upgrades and install at least one charging station for Township use in 2024.
3. Choose the cleanest and most fuel-efficient vehicle that meets the department's needs.
4. Convert 47 of the township's fleet to electric vehicles by 2035. Use electric or hybrid vehicles whenever possible.
5. Implement the installation of charging infrastructure necessary to achieve these goals.
6. Identify and seek funding for alternative fuel vehicles and electric charging infrastructure.
7. Use efficient trip-planning to reduce the use of fuel.

## **Objective 3: Use land-use planning to reduce vehicle miles traveled and petroleum use.**

### Strategies

1. Continue implementation of the Township's Complete Streets policy to ensure that entire roadways are designed and operated with all users in mind - including bicyclists, public transportation vehicles and riders, and pedestrians of all ages and abilities.
2. Use the Urban Services Boundary to reduce vehicle miles traveled and encourage infill and redevelopment.
3. Encourage cluster developments, mixed use and other compact residential choices closer to shopping, public transit and other services.
4. Offer incentives for sustainable developments.

## **Objective 4: Provide educational opportunities on transportation alternatives that can reduce petroleum use.**

### Strategies

1. Provide educational opportunities concerning public transit, car sharing, smart commuting, and transportation-efficient communities.
2. Provide educational opportunities on biking, walking, and driving safely, especially around bikers and walkers.
3. Continue membership in and partnerships with Greater Lansing Area Clean Cities (<http://michigancleancities.org>) and providers of efficient vehicles, equipment, and fuels.
4. Provide web sites and apps that identify charging stations for electric vehicles. Map locations of public charging stations. Identify funding and opportunities for electric car charging stations.
5. Promote the employee and volunteer bike-sharing program.



**To:                    Transportation Commission**

**From:                 Brian Shorkey, AICP, Senior Planner**

**Date:                 February 23, 2023**

**Re:                    2023 Master Plan Update**

---

On February 13, 2023, the Planning Commission reviewed the goals & objectives in the current Master Plan.

Planning Staff is providing the Transportation Commission one more opportunity to provide feedback before Staff begins drafting the updated goals and objectives. Staff continues to take feedback at:

<https://www.meridian.mi.us/about-us/departments/community-planning-development/master-plan>.

The Planning Commission welcomes the input of the Transportation Commission to help guide the goals and objectives for the next five years and all comments are welcome at this time.

## 1

## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

## Preserve and Strengthen Residential Neighborhoods

### A Maintain a community of desirable, attractive residential neighborhoods.

## STRATEGIES:

1. Prevent inconsistent uses from encroaching into residential areas.
2. Continue to support the designation and preservation of historic neighborhoods and residences.
3. Designate appropriate neighborhoods as special land use areas and adopt zoning specific to their needs.
4. Encourage cluster developments, mixed use and other compact residential choices closer to shopping, public transit and other services.
5. Ensure that the Future Land Use Map has a range of residential densities that will result in a diversity of housing that meets the needs of various income levels and household types.

### B Ensure new residential developments meet high standards of visual attractiveness, health and safety, and environmental sensitivity.

## STRATEGIES:

1. Minimize erosion and the intrusion of roads, pathways, houses, and driveways into wetlands and floodplains in residential developments.
2. Continue to require the planting of trees along rights-of-way, and the replacement of trees when they are damaged, destroyed, or diseased.
3. Encourage residential design that enhances use of outdoor areas for recreation, community walkability and integration with public transit.
4. Lay out new residential developments to accommodate public transit, for example, by providing pedestrian connections to bus stops and by designing for convenient curbside bus stops.
5. In all subdivisions and residential developments, encourage layouts that maintain maximum green space and/or common open space.

## 2

## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

## Preserve Open Space and Natural Areas

### A Adopt policies and programs that maximize the preservation of open spaces, natural areas, other undeveloped areas, and agricultural land uses in the Township.

## STRATEGIES:

1. Continue to develop and implement Township policies regarding the protection of open space land and natural areas via zoning, the public purchase of land, conservation easements, development rights, and other appropriate techniques.
2. Encourage landowners to donate natural areas or open spaces to the Township, and to place their properties under the protection of the Farmland and Open Space Preservation (Part 361) or the Conservation and Historic Preservation Easement (Part 21) of PA 451 of 1994 Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, where appropriate.

3. Encourage landowners to donate land or development rights to non-profit land trusts.
4. Continue to coordinate efforts with the Park Commission to support and promote the preservation of open space and environmentally sensitive lands in Meridian recreation areas through donations of land with natural, open space, and ecological and/or historical significance.
5. Preserve the ecological integrity of the Red Cedar River through zoning, voluntary agreements with landowners, donation of land to the Township, or the purchase of land, scenic easements, and development rights, where appropriate.
6. Develop a tree preservation ordinance to protect significant mature trees.
7. Work with the Park Commission, Department of Public Works and Engineering, and the school districts, where appropriate, to encourage developers and builders to maximize the amount of land left in a natural state as common open space.

### **B Conserve wetlands, floodplains, and other water retention areas.**

#### STRATEGIES:

1. Identify all wetlands, floodplains, and other water retention areas.
2. Continue to communicate and coordinate with the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality on activities affecting lakes, streams, and wetlands.
3. Discourage development within wetlands, floodplains, floodplain fringe areas, and water retention areas.
4. Support the Environmental Commission's educational efforts to minimize infiltration of salt, fertilizer, herbicide, and pesticide.

### **C Link open spaces and natural areas into a network of continuous greenways throughout the Township.**

#### STRATEGIES:

1. Continue to use the Greenspace Plan as a guide for determining how natural areas can be linked into continuous greenways throughout the Township.
2. Work with the Land Preservation Board and Park Commission to continue the establishment of continuous greenways along the Red Cedar River through the identification of additional parcels of land that are important to the ecological and visual integrity of the Red Cedar River.
3. Utilize land planning methods, purchases of land and development rights, and plat, site plan, and other review processes to create and maintain continuous greenways.
4. Encourage the Environmental Commission to develop educational programs about the importance of protecting endangered animals and plants, ecosystems, and other unique or sensitive natural features.

### **D Protect groundwater recharge areas in the Township.**

#### STRATEGIES:

1. Support regional efforts to protect groundwater recharge areas.
2. Continue to educate citizens about the importance of protecting groundwater recharge areas.
3. Use zoning and other appropriate land management techniques to protect important groundwater recharge areas.

### **E Preserve greenbelts, open spaces, and natural areas and create pathways by encouraging the use of planned unit development or other suitable zoning strategies for new residential developments.**

## 3

## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

## Enhance the Viability of Township Businesses

### A Upgrade commercial areas.

**STRATEGIES:**

1. Participate in regional efforts to redevelop the Grand River corridor, such as the Grand River Corridor Improvement Authority, and incorporate results where appropriate.
2. Improve and enhance the Haslett Road commercial area while maintaining its traditional character.
3. Encourage redevelopment of the downtown Okemos area using the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) Integrated Plan as a guide.
4. Evaluate opportunities for walkable urban design in commercial areas, including wayfinding solutions that improve usability.
5. Encourage the use of the commercial planned unit development ordinance.
6. Identify specific areas where the form-based code technique may be appropriately applied.

### B Develop the Township's mixed use core into a viable and vibrant district.

**STRATEGIES:**

1. Explore the viability of upper floor(s) residences in the mixed use core.
2. Continue to engage the public in deciding the direction for development in the mixed use core.
3. Explore options for public-private partnerships to revitalize the Township's mixed use core.

### C Improve the attractiveness of the Township's entrances and transportation corridors.

**STRATEGIES:**

1. Investigate grant-based funding opportunities to improve landscaping along major thoroughfares.
2. Create well-designed entrances along the main roads entering the community.
3. Promote opportunities for public art.

### D Promote economic development.

**STRATEGIES:**

1. Communicate with and utilize the resources of the Economic Development Corporation, Downtown Development Authority, Meridian Area Business Association, and Meridian Asset Resource Center to encourage economic development.
2. Provide businesses with the information necessary to invest in the community.
3. Continue to adopt Township ordinances and zoning practices to facilitate efficient decision-making and to incorporate greater flexibility where appropriate.

## 4

## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

## Maintain and Expand a Diverse Park System

**A** Continue to expand the Meridian Township park and recreational system to meet the recreational needs of residents into the future.

**STRATEGIES:**

1. Pursue acquisitions that target current and future demands of residents.
2. Employ acquisition strategies that leverage available dollars to secure maximum property for the value.
3. Support Pedestrian/Bicycle Pathway linkages to parks and recreation facilities.
4. Provide accessible facilities and leisure opportunities for persons of various physical and socio-economic capabilities.
5. Develop a Wayfinding Program to support park and trail connectivity, and improve usability while implementing the Township Brand strategy.

**B** Develop and support Meridian Township park development and recreation programming that is diverse, widely distributed, fiscally responsible, and represents community needs.

**STRATEGIES:**

1. Support the Park Commission's continuing efforts to pursue public input in determining park and recreation development needs.
2. Utilize cooperative methods of providing recreation facilities by working with local recreation associations, schools, businesses, neighborhood groups and associations to provide diverse recreation programs.
3. Increase coordination between the Township Board, Park Commission, and Land Preservation Advisory Board to maximize the potential benefits and enhance stewardship of open space, natural areas and park lands.
4. Encourage developers to incorporate parks and recreation amenities in new developments to complement the efforts of the Park Commission.
5. Continue to promote fiscal responsibility through partnerships and collaborative opportunities, grant support, sponsorships and donations, and encouraging volunteerism.
6. Provide resources to deliver a high quality of life for our community residents and necessary support for maintenance and operation of these amenities.

## 5

## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

**Maintain Essential Public Services**

**A** **Ensure that any future growth is consistent with the Township's present or planned capacity for sewage treatment, public water, and other utility systems.**

**STRATEGIES:**

1. Focus growth into an urban services district to ensure efficient and fiscally responsible use of public services.
2. Routinely assess the demands on the utility systems from developments to determine available capacity for future development based on demographics.
3. Routinely inventory water, sewer, and other utility systems capacity.
4. Maintain and upgrade the infrastructure (water, sewers, roads, community facilities) of the Township through the Capital Improvements Program's systematic scheduling of infrastructure construction, maintenance, and renovation.
5. Continue to use Special Assessment Districts to finance infrastructure projects.
6. Incorporate appropriate recommendations from Tri-County Regional Planning Commission's Wellhead Protection Audit for regional best practices to protect the public water supply.

**B** **Maintain police, fire, and ambulance service to all areas of the community.**

**C** **Maintain quality library service for the community.**

**D** **Use land use policies to assist the public school districts, which are a valued community asset that makes Meridian Township a unique and desirable place to live.**

**STRATEGIES:**

1. Continue and/or initiate land use policies that attract families with students.
2. Support the Park Commission's agreement with the School Districts to coordinate park facilities and programs.
3. Support street and pathway improvements that provide safe access routes for school children.

**E** **Promote cooperation between adjoining communities, school districts, and appropriate agencies.**

# 6

## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

# Provide and Support an Efficient, Safe, and Environmentally Sensitive Multi-modal Transportation Network

- A Evaluate the existing transportation network and identify problems, including traffic congestion, safety, environment, and aesthetics, which can be solved at acceptable cost.**

### STRATEGIES:

1. Cooperate with county, regional, and state entities to develop strategies to improve traffic flow.
2. Consider zoning and other design strategies such as Complete Streets as effective means of ensuring safe and efficient travel for all modes of transportation.

- B Maintain local roads.**

### STRATEGIES:

1. Support improvements to local streets when a special assessment district request has been received from local residents.
2. Review reconstruction and expansion of local non-subdivision streets through the Capital Improvements Program process, when 50 percent of the improvement's funding will be paid for by the Township or its residents through special assessment districts.

- C Support the Township's Complete Streets Ordinance.**

### STRATEGIES:

1. Share the Township's vision and work with transportation and road authorities.
2. Review current policies to identify inconsistencies and impediments to implementing the Complete Streets ordinance.
3. Conduct planning, regulatory, and physical audits of current street designs as needed and financially feasible.
4. Coordinate the Pedestrian/Bicycle Pathway Plan with Safe Routes to School policies and other Township plans.

- D Expand and improve the Pedestrian/Bicycle Pathway Plan.**

### STRATEGIES:

1. Continue to implement the requirement for sidewalks as determined necessary.
2. Continue to implement the pedestrian/bicycle pathway system through site plan review.
3. Continue to support the pedestrian/bicycle pathway millage for construction and maintenance of the Township's pedestrian/bicycle pathway system.
4. Investigate alternative surfacing materials to reduce the amount of impervious surface materials used in the construction of the pedestrian/bicycle system.
5. Continue to investigate strategies for safe and efficient travel for bicyclists and pedestrians.
6. Coordinate the Pedestrian/Bicycle Pathway Plan with parks, schools, preserves, Greenspace Plan, neighborhoods, and other destinations.

**E Encourage the use of public transportation.**

**STRATEGIES:**

1. Encourage and promote public transportation service to any new developments and in conjunction with redevelopment via site plan review.
2. Institute design standards for site plan review to ensure public transportation access to all segments of the population but particularly those with physical disabilities.

**F Coordinate Meridian Township's transportation planning with regional planning efforts administered by the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission and recorded in the 2035 Regional Transportation Plan.**

**STRATEGIES:**

1. Coordinate transportation planning and road improvements for all non-local streets with the region's long-range plan.
2. Advocate and promote the Township's needs and interests in transportation improvements with transportation and road authorities.



**GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

**Promote efficient and sustainable growth practices**

**A Implement sustainable energy and environmental practices throughout the Township by utilizing the most current best practices.**

**STRATEGIES:**

1. Budget funds to have Township buildings assessed for energy efficiency a minimum of once every five years.
2. For Meridian Township procurement purposes, when equivalent products or services are available, preference should be given to the more sustainable services or products.
3. Encourage electric car charging stations.
4. Establish a minimum level of LEED certification or the equivalent for all projects undertaken by the Township.
5. Establish ordinances providing incentives for development that emphasize redevelopment, infill development, alternative energy, and building material reuse.
6. Increase the use of alternative transportation modes for commuting and recreation by encouraging the use of mixed use planned unit developments and implementing the Greenspace Plan.
7. Explore methods, through ordinances or by providing incentives for existing businesses, to upgrade their parking lots and landscaping to increase tree cover and shade, to be energy efficient, and environmentally friendly.
8. Explore incentives for new or redeveloped projects to be LEED certified or equivalent.
9. Work with developers to consider alternative energy use in site plan and construction of new development.
10. Encourage the use of alternative energy throughout the Township and develop a coordinated, integrated vision to incorporate renewable energy into the energy mix.

11. Pursue the tenets established in the Meridian Township Climate Sustainability Plan such as energy efficiency, renewable energy, water and waste management, and public education to illustrate a commitment to being a “green” community, maintaining a healthy ecosystem, and reducing the Township’s carbon footprint.

**B Develop Township policies to balance and manage growth.**

**STRATEGIES:**

1. Integrate information technology including geographic information systems to facilitate continuous improvement of the Master Plan.
2. Use the Self-Assessment of Sustainability Toolkit as a guide to evaluate growth in the Township.

**C Maintain open spaces and natural features in suburban and rural areas of the Township.**

**STRATEGIES:**

1. Continue to develop zoning standards and Township policies.
2. Continue to encourage and support voluntary citizen land conservancy efforts that maintain the Township’s open spaces, natural features, and rural areas.

**D Define an urban services district to promote walkable community development and dynamic community improvement through redevelopment.**

**STRATEGIES:**

1. Promote land use policies that emphasize compact infill development.
2. Investigate opportunities to maximize the use of existing infrastructure through development and redevelopment within the urban services district.
3. Investigate additional strategies to provide incentives for development and redevelopment within the urban services district.

**E Encourage development in Meridian Township that leads to sustainable land use.**

**STRATEGIES:**

1. Engage all stakeholders to study new techniques for the control and management of development.
2. Review the legality and suitability of these techniques for Meridian Township.

**F Prepare and implement a redevelopment strategy.**

**STRATEGIES:**

1. Eliminate inflexible or obsolete zoning regulations.
2. Identify priority redevelopment sites.
3. Expand public participation.
4. Prepare annual reports to the Township Board reporting progress towards the stated benchmarks and recommending any needed changes.