



MEMO TO CITY COUNCIL

Request to Include Topic on the City Council Agenda

From: Brian McClure, Community Development **Meeting Date:** 04/20/2021
Presenter: Brian McClure **Estimated Time:** 30 minutes
Topic: Community Development: Fields Sub Area Plan Update

Recommended Council Action:

Provide thoughts, suggestions, and requests related to topic.

Background:

In February, staff provided a memorandum update on work to-date for the Fields sub area plan. This sub area plan was originally approved in April of 2020 as a means to continue the work of the Comprehensive Plan for the 4 (four) square miles of northwest Meridian. The Fields area is bordered by Ustick, McDermott, Chinden, and Can-Ada Roads. **This project is not intended or planned to revisit the future land uses approved as part of the new Comprehensive Plan (Comp Plan), but rather to enhance the level of consideration and functional integration and development of the built and recreational environment, especially as it relates to the areas around the mixed-use core near the Star and McMillan intersection (area of focus).**

Since the last update memorandum on February 19th, the project team has completed a broader public engagement effort which mailed postcards to every property owner in the planning area and culminating in an interactive online meeting. At the Council workshop, the consultants will give an overview of what was heard specific to this project, and request some additional direction from Council in preparation for the sub area plan adoption process.

Intro to Discussion Topics

Originally and when this project was initiated, it was hoped that the City would be able to get ahead of development. While there have been some entitlements north of and including the Owyhee High School, the ½ mile area immediately west of McDermott (and East of Owyhee Storm Blvd) is the end of the sewer service area. Everything west of Owyhee Storm Blvd must be serviced by a new regional lift station. With the attractiveness of the high school, planned Fire and Police Station, and prioritized funding for new sewer infrastructure, investment and development interest in the area has accelerated. Competition for land has have been increasing for future property development.

Since initiation of the project, and as noted in the previous update, identifying additional funding sources for public infrastructure has been an objective of the effort. With the unique challenges and opportunities in the area, there was an awareness that the status quo may be undesirable in these conditions. The project consultants have identified funding tools and mechanisms to both level and elevate the playing field, but is this the right approach?

The project team would like to discuss Council's preference and interest in funding options, to narrow the sub area plan's implementation approach, before submitting an application for public hearing. For example, should the City be in the business of paying premium rates for land, when said land is not ready for development and the City is potentially fronting the costs for infrastructure?

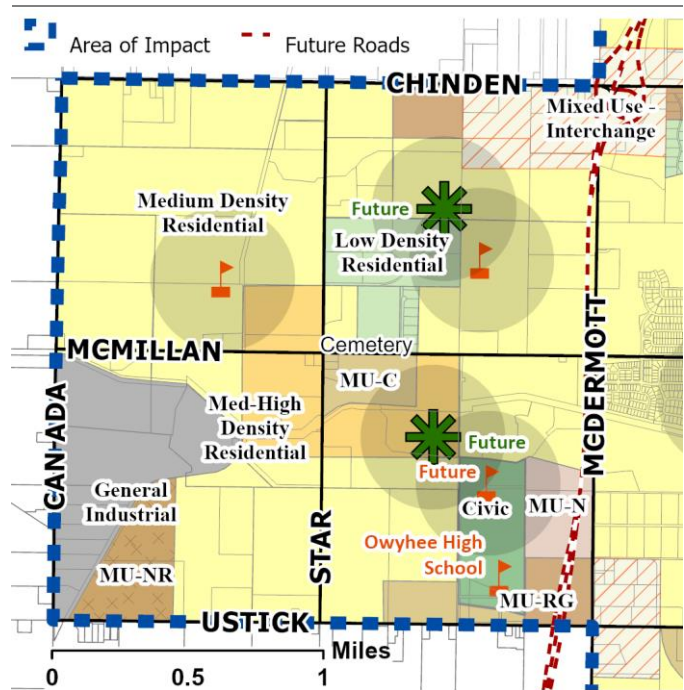
The project team will be overviewing a few options during the work session with the aim of catering the final plan towards a preferred level of realistic next steps. Broadly, the options for discussion will include:

- Traditional Plan, no other funding sources and limited City partnership. Potential for no City park.
- Traditional Plan, focused and limited City partnership around the neighborhood core (e.g. pathway and linear open space).
- Enhanced efforts to realize the City vision including the neighborhood core and City park.

Philosophically, the conditions in this area and the location in the City likely require more effort to retain the sense of Meridian, and to achieve the same success elsewhere in the City. Doing better, and making use of the conditions, will require another level of effort (and funding). The project team believes that there is an opportunity here for utilizing other funding sources, such as Community Improvement Districts, to not just catch up but also raise service levels.

Next Steps

After the workshop discussion with Council, the project team will prepare a formal draft and submit an application for a Comprehensive Plan text amendment, to adopt this sub area plan. For other questions or concerns, please feel free to reach out to me at bmcclore@meridiancity.org.



Focus Area Map: Adopted Future Land Uses