

IMAGINE ART HERE! MERIDIAN

WORKSHOP REPORT

On October 9, 2025, community members gathered for the Imagine Art Here! workshop to help shape a vision and identify opportunities for public art in Meridian. Organized by the City of Meridian and the Meridian Arts Commission (MAC) and facilitated by Public Art Master Plan consultants Via Partnership, the workshop generated ideas that will inform the recommendations in the Public Art Master Plan. Participants included staff from City departments; MAC members; local artists and arts professionals, and civic stakeholders.

Workshop Format

The workshop began with a welcome from Cassandra Schiffler, Arts & Culture Coordinator for the City of Meridian. Meridith McKinley of Via then made a presentation about the public art master planning process and the importance of creating a vision for public art. Participants were invited to use Mentimeter to respond to the following question and build a word cloud: What one word would you like to be able to use to describe the experience of seeing Meridian's public art?

McKinley then made a brief presentation to set up the first breakout session, sharing examples of public art in the types of places or settings that would be relevant to Meridian:

- Community Facilities
- Parks
- Downtown Meridian
- Streets and Corridors

Participants were then invited to take part in the first breakout. Each breakout table of approximately 5-6 people was assigned one of the places outlined above and were asked to **brainstorm possible locations and approaches for art in this place / family of places.**

Following the first breakout, McKinley made a second presentation on different types or approaches to public art that may be relevant in Meridian:

- Art + Youth and Family Life
- Art + Community Building
- Art + History and Heritage
- Art + Nature and Ecology
- Art + Beautification and Design

Participants were then invited to take part in the second breakout. Each breakout table of approximately 5-6 people was assigned one of the above approaches and were given the charge to **discuss ideas and places related to this approach to public art.**

Facilitators helped guide the conversation and record the responses for both breakouts on flipcharts and maps.

In addition to the breakout discussions, workshop participants contributed input by filling out an exit questionnaire that allowed participants to elaborate on ideas or concerns they have about public art in Providence.

Themes

Across the discussions and breakout sessions, there were several themes that surfaced. The overarching message is that participants want public art to transform Meridian into a place with its own vibrant identity—one that honors its roots while creating engaging, beautiful spaces for current and future residents.

- Public art can help bolster Meridian's **identity**. Participants repeatedly emphasized that public art should help Meridian develop its own distinct personality and character, differentiating it from neighboring Boise. Many comments express desire for art that creates "sense of place" and helps answer "what do we want to be?"
- Participants are interested in artwork that is **interactive and family-friendly**. There was a strong emphasis on art that people can physically engage with—climbable sculptures, play structures, musical elements, and educational components. There's consistent focus on serving families with children and making art accessible to youth.
- Participants want art that honors Meridian's **agricultural past** (dairy farming, irrigation canals, Oregon Trail). Suggestions included using old farm equipment, wagon sculptures, references to dairy farming, highlighting the importance of irrigation, and pathway storytelling to celebrate this aspect of Meridian's heritage.
- Art can draw attention to Meridian's **natural environment**. There were frequent references native plants, bird migration, wildlife, conservation, and environmental themes. Suggestions include kinetic art in ponds, pollinator-themed pieces, and integration with natural landscapes.
- Many participants would like to see one or more "**you are here**" moments, including gateways into Meridian, gateways into downtown, and iconic "placemakers." Several participants mentioned the water tower and making it more of a placemaking opportunity, as well as bringing something equally as iconic to downtown.
- Several participants mentioned **functional art**, including benches, bike racks, planters, and other utilitarian objects that are also beautiful
- Public art should be **accessible and visible**. Art should be visible to both drivers and pedestrians, with pieces scaled appropriately for their context.
- There were multiple mentions of needing **more resources**, exploring partnerships, grants, and developer contributions.

Vision Question Word Cloud

What one word would you like to be able to use to describe the experience of seeing Meridian's public art?



Breakout #1 Notes

What follows is a transcription of the notes generated in the first breakout session about places in Meridian.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

- Library
 - Not a city building
 - We can have partnerships
 - Can use MAPS funds
 - Rotating Art
 - Cherry Lane Library Renovation Project offers wall spaces for mix media & 3d sculpture especially in main entrances
 - Goal: Value historic preservation
- Community Center
 - Art plan in place
 - History
 - Education
 - Interactive
- Fire Station
 - 8 locations
 - Identify the ones w/o public art
 - Focus on outside art
 - Fire community education
 - Image: Insignia Lattice
- Water Tower

- Art on floor level (educational, interactive)
 - Add lighting effects
- New Meridian Gateway Sign
- Senior Center @ Kleiner Park
 - Needs some art
- Successful Projects in Meridian
 - Historical & Heritage
 - Educational
 - Audience includes families and seniors
 - Interactive
 - Functional
- Wastewater treatment for nature/environment piece (near Rita Husky Park?)
- Nature Themed Art in Fuller Park

PARKS (TEAM A)

- Goals:
 - Park identifier
 - Accessible
 - Interactive
- Why aren't schools a place for public art?
- Settlers Park
 - Theming Art at exits and entrances FY28
 - Community center art murals
- Tammy St. Park
 - 3-7 age play structure 2026
 - Interactive art
- Stacey Park
 - Interactive Art in the back
- Lakeview Golf
 - Murals on RR buildings
 - Monarch Butterfly
 - At each tee over time
 - Interactive financial support
- Fuller
 - Kinetic art in the pond
- West Meridian Regional Park
 - Gateway Art East West Street, Fairway/Cherry
- Bear Creek Park
 - Climbable art
 - Story Walk
 - Planets/solar system interactive
 - Engaging
- Hillsdale Park
 - Art in around the Hillsdale Family

- Tiny Park
 - Signage Art
- Downtown community-engaged art project on street, alley or other paved space – could be temporary (image: Seed the Change)
- Interactive/climb on @ parks (image: turtle park)
- Along some pathways? Art that fits into nature / fits with context (image: Riverine)
- It would be so cool to have one of the Thomas Dambo Trolls in Meridian!!
- Gateways needed E&W on Cherry/Fairview (image of leaf gateway)
- Gateways @ main entrances to meridian (image: Sunflower Gateway)

PARKS (TEAM B)

- Unique Parks
 - Each of them different
 - Not cookie cutter
 - Specific to the space/area
- Golf Course
 - Functional
 - Lots of space/room for art
- What is the history of the space?
- For parks – where is the line between nature and us? Native plants, animals. Incorporate/merge them.
- Locations:
 - West Meridian Regional Park – develop this
 - New Community Center @ Settlers Park
 - Storey Park - Art/decorative fencing (motorists)
 - Bear Creek Park - #1? Adult supports, families
 - Renaissance Park
 - Hillsdale Park – partnership with St. Lukes? Something tall?
 - Roundabout on Amity Road between Linder and Meridian Road
 - Irrigation tools as art

DOWNTOWN MERIDIAN

- Arches in Reno
- Functional art
 - Seating
 - Family Friendly
- Alleyways
 - Murals
 - Inviting
 - Plants
- Lighting
- Temporary Installations
- Kiosk Updates

- Piece like the Meridian Watertower but downtown
- Special events banner
- Poets
- Arch/Pedestrian Bridge at Main & Fairview
- Arch at Main between State and Pine
- Arch at Main & Bower
- Green triangles at Meridan Road curve between King and Bower

STREETS AND CORRIDORS

- Transit shelters – Records Drive (2) – Kleiner Park
- Pine
 - Corridor – bikes, buses
 - Narrower & Slower
 - Intersection of transit stop & pathway
 - Nearby trailhead
- Car Centric culture/infrastructure = big art
- Activity centers/human scale
- Trail hub Meridian Road and Five Mile Creek
- Pathways & waterways
- Middle-mile roads/collectors – narrower, slower, friendlier – art like pathways
- ACHD redevelopment – Linder Road linear parkway with art
- Future bus service on Linder Road
- Stormwater basins & art – canal crossings/bridges, SW area?
- Rail trail & rail service
- Transit in future on Lake Hazel Road
- Differentiate Boise and Meridian with gateway on Fairview and/or Ustick
- Gateway at Linder south of Amity
- Gateway at Linder north of I-20
- Clusters of smaller pieces – human scale
- Accessibility for pedestrians
- ACHD & City Partnership
- South Meridian YMCA – bus service/shelter
- Avoid words or other designs to prevent focus while driving
- Fields area (NW Meridian) – mixed use & pathway/waterway
- SH-16 – new development (ITD)
- Signage @ gateways – eagle road
- Traffic calming
- Roadside planters
- Street level interest
- Large scale for gateways and roadways (image: silverton)
- Use to slow traffic – protect pedestrians and biked and create interest (image: Euclid Street Planters)
- Form liner for canal crossings (image: Vicki Scuri Arlington)

- Smaller roadways (image: leaf gateway)
- Image: underpass mural

Breakout #2 Notes

What follows is a transcription of the notes generated in the second breakout session about types or approaches to public art in Meridian.

ART+YOUTH & FAMILY LIFE

- Community building (image: Adrienne Outlaw bottlecap dome)
- Fun (image: turtle)
- Easily understood
- Variety of media
- Community builder
- QR code see art to keep parents engaged
- Interactive. Uses Imagination (image: Westmoreland Nature Play)
- Interactive & Functional (Sports collective)
- Musical sounds interactive
- Maps as fingerprint of community (image: Roberto Delgado)
- Family hands on events, becomes an exhibit, take names
- Interactive
 - Linetae Swim
 - See yourself in art
 - 18 mural
 - Kids talk about
 - Play on it
 - Learn from
 - Engagement
- Park ownership in the community
 - "It is our park"
 - Art in support of the good uses
- Art cones for traffic projects?
- Borum Property – 47 acres
 - Farm land

NATURE & ECOLOGY

- Aspects of Meridian
 - Waterways
 - Irrigation
 - Farming & water
- Historical
- Education & Interactive
- Fire
- Wetland Preservation

- Native habitats – wildlife, plants
- Air quality/pollution
- Conservation
- Diversity of works of art (size, style, media, etc.)
- Earth forms
- Dairy Heritage (more cows)
- Ag Architecture
- Bird Migration
- Pollinators
- Irrigation waterways interact with pathways
- Corridors w/transit - AQ
- Location
 - Corridors
 - Waterways
 - Pathways
 - Fuller Park
 - Wastewater Treatment
 - “Landfill Learning Center”
- Impact
 - Education
 - Conservation
 - Use more native plants
 - Spectacle – ‘big moment’
 - Nature materials
 - Upcycling/recycling

COMMUNITY BUILDING

- Community Center as a place to foster/nurture arts
- Downtown as a focus for Art + Community Building
- More temporary/ephemeral works downtown – supported by city. Rotating murals or sculptures.
- More arts events like “art party,” “quick draw,” etc.
- Mapping theme “initial point” heritage – topo lines and historic map with farms/features labeled “what was here before?”
- How can we document, commemorate what was here in the past?
- But also... looking ahead. As we grow and change into the future – what is our identity? What do we want to be?
- Signature / representative works where a lot of people will see/interact with.
- Incubator spaces / mentoring of artists – like “mural school”
- Schools/kids – art party mural block is good example. Libraries, too. Unbound. Construction fencing.
- How do we get more artists engaged, a collective of artists? Residencies? “Art” hall – artist & maker spaces.

- More creative art funding programs. % for art for developers/projects. Contributions/donations.
- “quick draw” like Boise – auction off art works to raise funds.
- Can we be open and accepting of ‘nice’ guerilla art works? Like Banksy. Like Budapest small bronze artworks. Etc.

DESIGN + BEAUTIFICATION

- Roundabouts
- City Hall Plaza
 - Functional art – benches
 - Lighting
- Explore funding sources
 - Grants
- Creative signage
 - Welcome to Meridian
- Arches – gateways
- Footbridges w? creative design
- Signs @ freeway exists
- Bike racks & corrals, benches
 - Downtown
- Generations plaza – tilework/mosaic
- Weather resistant
- Pathway & roadway intersections
 - Benches
- Story walk from school to library
- Artsy wayfinding
- Quick, easy projects
- Railroad corridor
- Streetscape/landscape buffers in commercial areas
- Family-friendly art in changing areas
- Creative placemaking to turn a bar area into a community space
- High-contrast, colorful
- Tied to Meridian’s history
- Artsy garbage cans

HISTORY & HERITAGE

- Learning about history/heritage as you walk on a linear pathway
 - Farm equipment display
 - Oregon Trail Wagon Sculpture
- Oregon Trail History
 - Alley murals in downtown
 - Wagons

- Interactive sculptures
- Historical figures
 - Sculptures/statues
 - 6-8 people to commemorate – artists, farmers, farmworkers
- Meridian History
 - Walking story sculptures at parks
 - Focused on youth and families
- Dairy history – outer Meridian
- Agriculture
 - Sculpture in roundabouts
 - Artifacts in public (history center, city hall)
 - Out of commission machinery (plows, tractors)
 - Wagons
- New York canal and other canals
- Meridian Speedway
- Historical buildings (old town)
- Locations
 - Pathway between 8th & Tully
 - Kleiner Park
 - Pathways/Sidewalks
 - Downtown
 - Roundabout
- Types of Public Art
 - Sculpture/Statues
 - Old artifacts
 - Out of commission machinery
 - Alley murals
 - Interactive art

Exit Questionnaire Responses

Why do you think it is important for the City of Meridian to support public art?

- It's our connection to each other, this place, and our sense of community and identity.
- To enhance our identity and build a stronger sense of who we are as a community.
- To create identity and spaces where residents can engage and build community, collaboration and spark through inspiration and conversation.
- It touches our humanity.
- It builds community! It engages and connects us!
- Public art gives a sense of community and identity.
- For pride in your community and community building.
- Community engagement
- To create a sense of place and identity in Meridian
- Helps cultivate a community identity
- Public art humanizes a community

- Public art engages viewers, creates connections, sparks imagination, and helps define communities.
- Gives character to a neighborhood and provides significance to a specific place.
- Art is vital to any community as it keeps things vibrant and enticing for visitors and residents.
- To create identity through art.
- Community building
- Culture
- It creates a more vibrant, interesting, fun and engaging place.
- It elevates a city. It shows a level of investment in community
- Meridian needs a personality and art provides one.
- I think it could help Meridian's identity – it is a great way to engage and educate families.

What are you looking forward to most about public art in Meridian?

- Making it more accessible to you, both creation and consumption. They should shape the pace that will become theirs!
- Really taking a deep dive into the arts – all arts – art becomes a mainstay of our identity here.
- Getting the community involved in the decision-making process.
- I want to incorporate more art into my events.
- Seeing more of it.
- Being engaged in the process of more pieces being exhibited.
- Growth and vibrancy
- Being able to identify Meridian just by its art.
- Art supporting the inevitable growth of our community.
- Public art in a renovated Cherry Ln
- I believe a robust public art program can generate tourism, as well as active underutilized areas throughout the city.
- That it is provocative
- The artistic visions that are waiting to be born
- Natural integration of aesthetic and beautification to day to day life.
- Seeing it happen.
- Public engagement
- History and culture plaques(?).
- Discovery
- More!
- Seeing photos of people bragging about art they discover in Meridian.
- I'd love to see a LARGE, ICONIC placemaker.

What was the most exciting idea you heard this evening?

- Partnership between a park, school and artist to take inspiration from the students to make public art at the park.
- Create a nurturing / cultivating set of programs to support emerging artists – with residencies, incubator spaces, classes, labs, etc.
- There is stable funding for public art in the City.
- The water tower is the biggest opportunity for activation + lighting installation, landscaping, etc.

- Muralfest!
- Muralfest.
- Partnering w/businesses/developers to get more art up.
- Temporary/rotating art.
- More art focused events.
- Fuller Park art addition and capitalizing on the old trees.
- Just the fact that you are asking the community.
- Sculpture-based history walk along pathway bet. Tully & 8th Street Park.
- I liked the concept of “storytelling” along our linear pathways. Using static displays to explain the transformation from a transportation corridor (i.e. Oregon Trail), to the development of the canal system and agricultural industry.
- Oregon Trail in Meridian
- Multiples – ideas for public art on pathways
- Potential for art / linear park along Linder from Pine to Ustick.
- Funky benches.
- Archways welcoming you to downtown Meridian
- Water tower, sidewalks and pathways locations.
- Wood pile art / playground piece.
- Leaning into locations where lots of things come together.
- I liked the community built bottlecap domes.
- Embracing historical roots instead of being embarrassed about them.
- People engaged and thinking BIG – it was great.
- More cows! I think meridian should embrace anything “embarrassing.” Just own it.

What image of a public art project from today's presentation will stay with you?

- Troll art
- Water filtration art
- Community engagement built works – permanent and temporary.
- Natural interactive art in parks and public spaces.
- The idea that there is a small group who are passionate.
- Functional large green “bench”.
- Interactive and functional art.
- The circular, concrete sitting piece that looked like a ribbon.
- Interactive.
- Natural core sample with layers of earth
- Using old farm equipment at roundabouts.
- I think it was possibly the potential for public art @ lakefield
- Smaller items like benches, landscape features that can be mixed in without significant cost or effort.
- The one that’s a wave bench
- Interactive and functional art for families and youth (large turtle).
- Large iconic pieces
- The arch over the roadway.
- Large/ out of scale pinecones
- The Trail of Death gathering/remembering piece.
- Flying cows.

Please share any questions, suggestions or concerns you might have about public art in Meridian that weren't addressed at today's workshop.

- Some voices dominated conversation
- We need to fund art at a higher level. \$.50/person is too low. Set up donations / fee in lieu of/ percent for arts programs; find benefactors and sponsors, cultivate local arts & artists
- Art that thrives here
- Good luck and thank you!
- We need more funding and more staff.
- How do we grow our artistic community as we grow our economy and development?
- Money. Financial support.
- It was wonderful to be a part of this and share ideas and listen to others.
- Give us money and we will give you art!
- Its great to use art to solve problems, too. Great job tonight.