



City of Meridian Historic Preservation Plan





Table of Contents

1 Introduction	5
A. The Importance of Historic Preservation	6
B. The Historic Preservation Plan	6
2 Preservation Programs and Regulations	9
A. National Preservation Program	10
i. Governmental Agencies	11
ii. Non-Profit Organizations	12
3 Meridian History and Historic Properties	13
A. Indigenous History in Southern Idaho	14
B. Irrigation: The Making of Meridian.....	15
C. Transition From Rural Center to Urban Community	16
D. Meridian's Origins in the Dairy Industry.....	17
E. Modern Meridian.....	17
F. Historic Properties	18
4 Meridian HPC.....	23
A. Establishment of the Meridian HPC	24
B. Meridian HPC Programs.....	25
i. Education, Community Engagement, and Outreach	25
ii. National Register District Survey	26
iii. Local Landmarking	26
5 Goals, Objectives, and Strategies for Future Preservation Efforts	28
A. Goals, Objectives, and Strategies.....	30
B. Implementation	34
6 References.....	36
7 Appendices	37
Appendix A Public Involvement Summary	
Appendix B Public Survey Results	
Appendix C Laws and Regulations	
Appendix D List of Historic Surveys	
Appendix E City Code and Plans Review	



Acronyms Used

Ada County Dairymen's Association (ACDA)
Ada County Historic Preservation Council (ACHPC)
Certified Local Government (CLG)
Historic Preservation Fund (HPF)
Historic Preservation Plan (HPP)
Idaho Cultural Resource Information System (ICRIS)
Idaho State Historical Society (ISHS)
Meridian Development Corporation (MDC)
Meridian Historic Preservation Commission (HPC)
Meridian Library District (MLD)
Nampa and Meridian Irrigation District (NMID)
National Alliance of Preservation Commissions (NAPC)
National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA)
National Park Service (NPS)
National Register of Historic Places (NRHP)
Secretary of Interior (SOI)
State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)
Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT)
Tribal Historic Preservation Office (THPO)



Acknowledgements

City of Meridian

Mayor

Robert Simison

City Council

Luke Cavener, President

Brian Whitlock

Liz Strader

Doug Taylor

John Overton

Anne Little Roberts

Historical Preservation Commission

Blaine Johnston, Chair

Patrick Gittings, Vice-Chair

Ken Freeze

Heather Giacomo

Harold Gregory Wilson

Hailey Stewart

Debra Pitts

James Abdel-Monem (Youth Commissioner)

Jack Keller (Youth Commissioner)

City Personnel

Cassandra Schiffler, Arts and Culture Coordinator

This project has been conducted with the support of the National Park Service (via Idaho State Historic Preservation Office CLG Grant). The activity that is the subject of this publication has been funded in part with Federal funds from the National Park Service, Department of the Interior, and administered by the Idaho State Historical Society. However, the contents and opinions do not necessarily reflect the views or policy of the Department of the Interior or the Idaho State Historical Society. This program receives Federal funds from the National Park Service. Regulations of the U.S. Department of the Interior strictly prohibit unlawful discrimination in departmental Federally Assisted Programs on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, religion, or handicap. Any person who believes he or she has been discriminated against in any program, activity, or facility operated by a recipient of Federal assistance should write to: Chief, Office of Equal Opportunity Programs, United States Department of Interior, National Park Service, 1849 C Street, NW, MS-2740, Washington, D.C. 20240



1 | Introduction





Historic Preservation Plan

Meridian's rich history is illustrated in many buildings and sites that possess architectural and historical interest. Whether they are 19th-century and early 20th-century farmsteads or early 20th-century downtown or residential buildings, these historic resources make an important contribution to Meridian's sense of place and economy. The Meridian Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) seeks to preserve historically significant areas and structures within the City of Meridian to honor and preserve its heritage for future generations.

A. The Importance of Historic Preservation¹

Historic preservation addresses the conservation, adaptive reuse, renovation, and/or interpretation of buildings, structures, neighborhoods, and landscapes that help relate the story of Meridian. Appreciation of the history of the community, along with an understanding of how it became what it is today, will help to ensure a bright future grounded in the authentic past. The City of Meridian has already identified the preservation of historic resources as part of the Comprehensive Plan's goal² to maintain Meridian's small-town character.

The ability to foster a strong sense of place is widely recognized as one of the key motivations for historic preservation. Historic buildings, landmarks, and sites play a vital role in shaping the identity of cities and counties across the nation. While adherence to Federal, State, and local regulations remains a fundamental reason to study, document, and protect these resources, there are also deeper social and cultural benefits. Historic structures often serve as beautiful gathering spaces, meaningful personal landmarks, and tangible representations of our collective history.

Some of these benefits may be summarized as follows:³

- Historic rehabilitation is a cost-competitive and environmentally sustainable alternative to new construction.
- Preservation is a proven element to revitalizing historic downtowns for residents and visitors, adapting abandoned buildings for new uses, and providing ideal spaces for small businesses.
- Preservation creates jobs employing craftspeople to reuse existing buildings through repair and renovation.
- Properties within historic districts experience value increases in strong markets and retain value in slower markets.
- Small businesses and start-ups gravitate to historic buildings for their size and charm.

B. The Historic Preservation Plan

The HPC has been utilizing the Historic Preservation Plan (HPP) since 2014. It was "intended to provide the City of Meridian and the Historic Preservation Commission with goals and objectives and provide the step-by-step guidance to achieve them." (City of Meridian, 2014)

Based on changes in the community over the past decade, and a recommendation from State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) to update plans approximately every ten years, the HPC

¹ 2014 City of Meridian Historic Preservation Plan

² City of Meridian Comprehensive Plan (2019) Section 5.2

³ Rypkema, D. D. (2005)



determined that a new HPP was in order. In early 2025, the HPC initiated a planning process with a preservation consultant, with discussions regarding the purpose and objectives of the process and the proposed timing of the outreach opportunities.

During the planning process, a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) Workshop was held on February 27. The purpose of the workshop was to establish primary issues and concerns with members of the Commission and selected members of the community who are active in preservation efforts. A summary of feedback is depicted in **Table 1**, and meeting notes are provided in the Public Involvement Summary (**Appendix A**).

On March 20, a website went live that allowed residents to stay up to date with the HPP process and receive notifications for public events. A survey was created and uploaded to the website on April 8 and ended on May 12, with 114 responses received (refer to **Appendix B** for full survey results).

The city sent out a press release in April informing the public about HPP-related events such as the public survey, a community-based historic walking tour, and a public open house. This press release provided a link to the Meridian HPP website.

The city hosted a public outreach event and historic walking tour on April 19 at Hidden Gem Events/Tolleth Home from 11 am to 1 pm, which attracted 23 participants. The event allowed the public to ask questions about the plan and the process, as well as complete the online survey on laptops provided at the venue. A walking tour was conducted prior to the event as an opportunity to see some of the historic resources present in Meridian and to provide context on the importance of historic preservation.

On June 4, an HPC special meeting was held to review survey results and discuss draft Goals, Objectives, and Strategies.

The second public outreach event was held on June 21 at the local Main Street Market. A booth was reserved where participants could review the draft Goals, Objectives, and Strategies. At this booth, participants could add a sticker next to the draft goals and strategies that represented whether they support, do not support, or are neutral. Post-it notes were provided for participants to leave comments or to suggest additional objectives.

The HPC provided the Goals, Objectives, and Strategies to the SHPO and reviewed them internally with the Planning Division and at a City Council workshop. The City Council workshop was hosted on September 9, and comments received from the Council were reviewed at the HPC meeting on September 25. Council feedback showed support for historic preservation, with an emphasis on finding a balance between preservation and future development. There was a preference among Council members for the HPC to remain an advisory body, not a regulatory one.

On October 16, a draft copy of the plan was provided to SHPO for review. At the same time, the draft plan was uploaded to the City's HPP website to provide the public with the opportunity to review the Draft HPP. The website was also utilized to announce the public workshop with the HPC on November 14 to discuss the Draft HPP. The HPC moved to adopt the plan on December 12, 2025 and plans to move forward with adoption by City Council at a future City Council meeting.

Historic Preservation Plan



Table 1: HPC SWOT Analysis Results Summary

Strengths (things we do well):	Weaknesses (areas for improvement):
-Residents love Meridian's historic buildings - HPC members are diverse, dedicated, and engaged - HPC receives funding and superb staff support - Good online resource information (city webpage) - Existing 2014 Historic Preservation Plan - HPC communicates and works well together; commissioners are engaged - Good use of City and State funds - Walking tours: iPhone and Android App + in-person tours - Walking Tour Pamphlet - Dedicated historic core "Old Town" - Mix of old and new residents - Successful projects (recent property survey, Speedway listing, Orchid award) - Good press	- There are no regulatory measures for saving historic buildings. - City ordinances/processes do not encourage new development to be compatible with historic buildings. - Not enough engagement with the public (historic building owners). - HPC does not participate in City land use application reviews. - City ordinances do not allow/require HPC engagement. - HPC burnout (loss of Commission members) - Things take a long time (grants, projects, processes) - There is no funding for private development of historic properties - Cost of preserving buildings - No distinct "look" for historic area - Not a large inventory of historic buildings
Opportunities (for growth):	Threats (to success):
- Engage P & Z/ Mayor, Building Department, and Council in historic preservation - Could participate in the development review process - Room for improvement in technology for walking tours - Partnering: Ada County HPC, SHPO, Meridian Library District, Meridian Development Corporation (MDC) - Could use \$\$ to support historic renovations - Could use \$ to advertise/promote events - Develop a communication plan (for more education, for storytelling, outreach) - Develop ways to support individuals interested in Historic Preservation - MDC façade program - Define what we want for design style - Work together to identify design objectives - Develop a list of resources - HPC involvement on pre-app meetings	- New construction/growth. - No regulatory tools for HPC. - Serve at pleasure of Mayor/City Council. - Lack of funding (SHPO/HPC grant money is not secure). - Availability of funding is uncertain, not guaranteed - Suburban development = threat to historic agriculture farm ground and infrastructure resources - Newcomers do not appreciate Meridian's history - Cost of preservation - MDC main Urban Renewal Agency (URA) district will sunset soon - Historic property owners may not be interested in preservation - Doing nothing!

2 | Preservation Programs and Regulations





Historic Preservation Plan

A. National Preservation Program ⁴

The cornerstone of our nation's program to protect historic, cultural, and natural resources is the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA). The NHPA establishes that the government will provide leadership in the preservation of historic resources and will administer a national preservation program on federally owned lands, in partnership with states, Indian tribes, and local governments. In addition, the Act establishes that Federal policy should contribute to the preservation of non-federally owned historic resources and provide encouragement to organizations and individuals undertaking preservation by private means (ACHP 2008).

The NHPA also authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to maintain the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), which recognizes historic properties of national, state, and local significance. It is composed of districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects significant in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture. The National Register is the nation's official list of historic properties that have been determined worthy of preservation. Listing in the NRHP is an honorary recognition, recognizing the importance of a historic resource without placing any obligations or restrictions on the resource owner. Listing does not give the Federal government any ownership rights or regulatory controls with respect to a property.

To support the work outlined in the NHPA, the Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) was established in 1977. Funding is provided from oil and gas lease revenues (not tax dollars) and Congress annually appropriates monies to States and Territories, Tribes, local governments and non-profits to address numerous historic preservation priorities.

The Certified Local Government Program (CLG) was created under the NHPA to ensure that local governments will be eligible to receive technical and financial assistance to strengthen their local historic preservation efforts and expand their historic preservation activities. The program is jointly administered by the National Park Service (NPS) and State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), who work with each local community, through a certification process to become recognized as a CLG. The local commissions then become an active partner in the Federal historic preservation program and eligible for grant monies through the HPF. CLGs agree to enact and enforce historic preservation ordinances by the appointment of boards of historical and architectural review or historical commissions, and by commenting on National Register nominations within their jurisdiction. In addition, they agree to provide an annual report of their preservation activities.

Federal and State laws that form the backbone of historic preservation as we know it today originated with the passage of the NHPA. As described above, the NHPA established a partnership between the federal government and state, tribal, and local governments that is supported by federal funding. The NPS provides matching grants-in-aid from the Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) to SHPOs, Tribal Historic Preservation Officers (THPOs), and CLGs. **Appendix C** presents brief descriptions of relevant federal, state, and local laws.

⁴ 2014 City of Meridian Historic Preservation Plan



i. Governmental Agencies

The **Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP)** was established under the NHPA. It is the only entity with the legal responsibility to encourage federal agencies to factor historic preservation into federal project requirements. The mission of the ACHP is to promote the preservation, enhancement, and productive use of our nation's historic resources and to advise the President and Congress on national historic preservation policy. A key role of the ACHP is to guide the Section 106 (of the NHPA) process that requires Federal agencies to take into account the effects of their undertakings on historic properties. The Council is comprised of designated Cabinet members as well as political appointees and ex officio representatives.

The **National Park Service (NPS)** is a part of the U.S. Department of the Interior and is the primary federal agency administering the national historic preservation program. In addition to preserving unimpaired natural and cultural resource values of the National Park system, the NPS collaborates on many other programs, including National Trails, National Historic Landmarks, Heritage Areas, Federal Historic Tax Credits, and the NRHP. The NPS provides technical assistance to sites, communities, and non-profit organizations to protect natural and cultural resources. With the adoption of the NHPA, a system of statewide agencies -- SHPOs -- was created to co-direct and administer programs of the NPS. The Secretary of the Interior is a member of the ACHP, and the National Conference of SHPOs also has an ex-officio role on the ACHP.

The **Idaho SHPO** is a division of the Idaho State Historical Society, a state agency. The Idaho SHPO offers technical assistance on survey and inventory of cultural resources, the NRHP, Federal tax incentives for rehabilitation of historic buildings, State review of Tribal, Federal, and State projects (Section 106 review), planning and outreach. The SHPO also administers the CLG program. As described above, this program enables cities and counties to form local commissions, adopt relevant ordinances, and assume the responsibility for identifying and preserving important cultural resources within their communities. They are also encouraged to apply for funding to support these activities, from the SHPO (which they receive as part of the HPF). The Idaho SHPO is currently updating the statewide Historic Preservation Plan.

The **Ada County CLG** was established in 1988, along with the Ada County Historic Preservation Council (ACHPC). The goal of the ACHPC is to preserve Ada County's heritage by documenting structures and sites with historic value and to educate the general public on preservation activities. The Council has the authority to conduct surveys of local historic properties, cooperate with outside agencies toward historic preservation objectives, make recommendations, participate in local planning processes, and promote awareness of the importance of historic preservation through education and outreach. The ACHPC is currently updating their HPP.



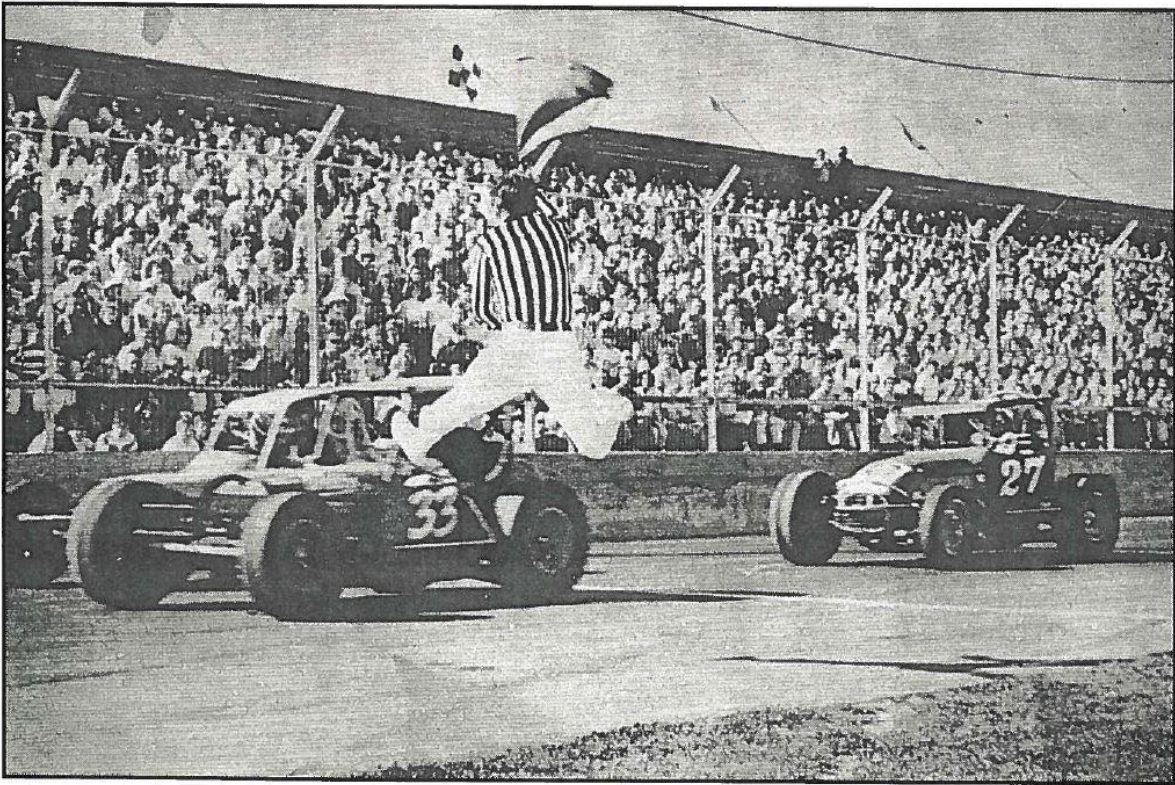
ii. Non-Profit Organizations

The **National Trust for Historic Preservation (National Trust)**, founded in 1949, leads the privately funded non-profit historic preservation movement in the United States. The National Trust works to "save America's historic sites, tell the full American story, build stronger communities and invest in preservation's future." In addition to operating historic sites across the country, the National Trust provides advocacy and legislative support, educational programs including the annual National Preservation Conference and awards program, research publications and member magazines, and a variety of grants that enable community organizations to undertake preservation activities (preservation planning, building assessments, educational outreach, etc.). National Trust subsidiaries and affiliates include Main Street America, National Trust Community Investment Corporation, National Trust Insurance Services, and National Trust Tours.

Preservation Idaho is a statewide non-profit historic preservation organization. Established in 1972 by a group of Idahoans concerned with the alarming rate at which historic sites were lost, the organization continues to encourage action by members in communities throughout Idaho to save their historic resources. The organization's mission is "to preserve Idaho's historic places through collaboration, education, and advocacy." The volunteer board of directors includes representatives from across the state, but the organization's part-time Programs Director is in Boise. Signature events include an annual Orchids and Onions awards program and regular summer Archwalks and Walk About Boise and Idaho Falls tours. Focus areas of advocacy include the Idaho Architecture Project, Idaho Modern, Idaho Heritage Barns, and a state Historic Tax Credit.

The **Idaho Heritage Trust (IHT)** was founded in 1989 as part of the Idaho Centennial Celebration "to preserve the historic fabric of Idaho, including historic buildings, sites, archaeological sites, and artifacts." Funding is largely earned from the proceeds of the iconic Idaho Centennial license plate design trademark, although they also receive private donations. In turn, IHT awards competitive matching grants of up to \$10,000 to worthy projects during an annual grant cycle. For over 30 years, they have supported preservation projects in every Idaho county. A professional executive director is based in Boise, staffing a statewide board made up of volunteer regional representatives and supported by regional committees. Technical assistance is also provided by historic architects and archivists outside of the grant cycle to support project development and execution.

3 | Meridian History and Historic Properties



Meridian Speedway - 1968
Bob Broadwater, flagman



Historic Preservation Plan

The City of Meridian's history is rooted in Ada County's early homesteading and railroad eras. Since the town was incorporated in 1903, it prospered with the enhancement of irrigation across the Boise Valley, growing slowly and steadily through most of the 20th century, adding houses, schools, churches, and shops. With the construction of Interstate 84, the city expanded quickly; more than doubling in population between 1970 and 1980 and more than tripling between 1990 and 2000. This exponential growth has included expansion of the city limits and continues to outpace past population increases during the first quarter of the 21st century.

This chapter includes the history sections of the 2014 Historic Preservation Plan, as well as segments of a pre-history prepared by Antonia Hedrick for the City of Meridian. Properties that are currently listed in the National Register, as well as those eligible for listing, are also identified at the conclusion of this chapter.

A. Indigenous History in Southern Idaho⁵

Archaeological evidence dates humans inhabiting a nearby lava bubble, Wilson Butte Cave, from 425 years to 15,000 years ago. Shoshone oral history speaks of *"a serpent (who) was angered by the lightning of the thunderbird, coiled around a mountain and squeezed it until liquid rock flowed. Fire shot from cracks, and the mountain exploded. As the rock cooled, the snake was caught in the lava, where it remains today."*⁶

Newenew (The People) are the ancestors of the Shoshone, Bannock, and Paiute peoples who have lived here since time immemorial. Over thousands of years, Newenew culture, languages, and technologies became precisely adapted to the land. Intimate biological, ecological, and geographical knowledge was key to flourishing here. With this traditional knowledge, Newenew moved seasonally throughout their territories, harvesting, gathering, hunting, and fishing for all their needs.⁷

Newenew had numerous *bo'i* (trails) extending all along the Snake River from its headwaters rich in big game, connecting to all the great *agai* (salmon) fisheries, and camas prairies. Roads meeting here also extended northward to the Salmon River country and southward to the Pinyon Pine nut habitats. The "Oregon Trail"—like all emigrant trails—is a recent name given to an ancient *bo'i*. The Treasure Valley was called *Sehewoki'i* or *"Willows Standing in a Row"* by Newenew. They were drawn to the clear rivers (Snake and Boise) flanked by green trees. They followed ancient *bo'i*—Shoshone for "trail." *Bo'i* extend in all directions, connecting the Boise and Snake rivers from their headwaters to the great salmon fisheries, root grounds, mineral and hunting areas.⁸

An agreement was reached in 1866 on the Bruneau treaty between the Shoshone and Paiute people and Caleb Lyon, the second governor in the Idaho Territory. Although a verbal accord was reached, this treaty, like the 1864 Fort Boise Treaty, was never ratified. As migrants moved

⁵ Hedrick, A.

⁶ Gruhn, R. "The archaeology of Wilson Butte Cave"

⁷ Gruhn, R. "A collection of artifacts from Pence-Duerig Cave"

⁸ ISU, Digital Geology of Idaho



Historic Preservation Plan

in, mined and homesteaded, tensions grew, and Sehewoki'i Newenewee—Treasure Valley People—were forcibly removed from this valley.

The Shoshone and Bannock people were removed to the Fort Hall Indian Reservation in Idaho. Other Shoshone and Paiute people were removed to the Duck Valley Indian Reservation in Idaho and Nevada. More Paiute people were removed to the Malheur Indian Reservation in Oregon. And more Paiute and Shoshone people were removed to the Fort McDermitt Indian Reservation in Oregon and Nevada. The Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs were removed to the Warm Springs Indian Reservation in Oregon. Tribal members on those reservations are living descendants of the original people, Sehewoki'i Newenewee—The Treasure Valley People.⁹

B. Irrigation: The Making of Meridian¹⁰

Meridian's history, like the history of many southwestern Idaho towns, is linked directly to irrigation and the development of productive farmland from arid lands. The first settlement in the area was near Five Mile Creek, the closest source of water. Enough people were in the area by 1885 to open a school. The Idaho Central Railway constructed a line from Nampa to Boise in 1887. The following year, the U.S. Postal Service established a mail drop on the railroad at a point midway from Nampa to Boise. The drop was named "Hunter," after John Hunter, who was superintendent of the Idaho Central. A trading center began to develop at the railroad, and in August of 1893, C. G. Zenger filed a plat for a new town, to be named "Meridian," after its location on the Boise Meridian line. (In 1867, a north and south survey line) was established as the basis for the State's land survey.) The post office name was changed to Meridian in April 1894.¹¹

Irrigated agriculture was key to Meridian's development. The Settlers Ditch Company was established on October 30th, 1884. The original locators of the canal and water rights were Christian R. Purdum, Adolphus Purdum, and William H. Smith. They made their filing on October 17, 1884, claiming water to irrigate land west of Boise City. The canal began on the south side of the river at a point at the head of the Government Hay Reservation, now known as Ann Morrison Park. According to the Settlers Irrigation District, today the canal measures approximately 20 miles in length with 95 miles of laterals. Water deliveries for the main canal begin at North Mitchell Street in Boise and end approximately one-half mile west of Black Cat Road, dumping into the Five Mile Drain. Water deliveries for the south side of the Settlers Canal begin west of Five Mile Road and south of Ustick Road, eventually dumping into a Nampa and Meridian Irrigation District (NMID) drain below Black Cat Road.

Although the Settlers Ditch Company was organized in 1884, it was not until 1886 that the ditch began to take shape. Initially, the ditch was to be constructed by the farmers who were settling in the western part of Ada County. Unfortunately, the farmers were unable to complete the work themselves. In 1885, they signed a contract with Alexander McGee and James Stewart, organizers of the Phyllis Canal Company. Under the terms of the contract, McGee and Stewart

⁹ The Shoshone-Bannock Tribes

¹⁰ 2014 Meridian Historic Preservation Plan

¹¹ History of Meridian, City of Meridian website



Historic Preservation Plan

would continue construction of the ditch. When McGee and Stewart failed to complete the work, the farmers took the ditch back. They were able to persuade a few local businessmen to purchase stock in the canal company. In 1887, John Lemp took over direction of the Settlers Ditch, which then became known as the Lemp Canal.

Under Lemp's ownership, the main canal was completed in 1891, extending approximately eight miles from the head gate. A system of laterals was constructed to provide water to the farmers. By 1896, so many settlers had taken up land under the Lemp Canal that even running to its full capacity, it was no longer able to supply the water demand. In 1901, Lemp sold the project to the newly organized Settlers Canal Company Ltd. which continued its operation. The name of the main canal was changed back to the Settlers Canal.

C. Transition From Rural Center to Urban Community

The Nampa Meridian Irrigation District (NMID), established in 1904, is also important to Meridian's agricultural history. The Farmer's Lateral is associated with the Ridenbaugh Canal system, which was the largest pre-federal irrigation project in the Boise Valley. In 1877, William B. Morris, an early Boise City settler, claimed over 17,000 acres under the Desert Land Act on the first bench above the south bank of the Boise River. He then sold part of his interest to other settlers who needed an irrigation system. He hired these future farmers to begin construction on a large canal that would not only serve irrigation purposes but also transport lumber and provide power for a sawmill. Seven miles of canal were completed when Morris died in 1878. After his death, the capital to expand the canal system evaporated, and his widow, Lavinia and their nephew, William Ridenbaugh, to whom ownership of the canal had passed, could only afford to oversee the seven miles of canal that had already been built. However, farmers who had purchased land from Morris wished to keep their property and to do so needed to provide water to their acreage under the Desert Land Act. They continued to expand the canal in small increments until Ridenbaugh sold the canal and water rights to the Central Canal and Land Company in 1889.

This company invested \$67,000 over the next two years but became discouraged with the limited capital return and sold the canal to the Boise City and Nampa Irrigation Land and Lumber Company (BCNILLC) in 1890. The Ridenbaugh canal system was sold again in 1894 for \$123,149.00 to the Boise City Irrigation Land and Lumber Company. By this time, the main canal was 51 miles long and supported 271 miles of secondary canals and laterals. Additional facilities included 23 large gates, 109 check gates, 296 taps, 280 weirs, 33 culverts, two flumes 500 feet long, and several smaller flumes. By 1903, the estimated construction cost of the Ridenbaugh system was more than \$405,000. The financial burden of maintaining the canal network eventually became too great, and the Boise City Irrigation Land and Lumber Company sold the Ridenbaugh Canal to the NMID in 1906.

NMID was formed in 1904 following the enactment of House Bill 266 by the Idaho Legislature five years earlier. The legislation provided for the organization of irrigation districts that would manage water delivery systems throughout Idaho. The act gave each district the authority to construct, purchase, or otherwise obtain the necessary water rights, irrigation works, canals,



Historic Preservation Plan

and ditches, including those built or in the process of construction by private owners, and to provide landowners with sufficient water for irrigation.

NMID is the source for most of the irrigation in the immediate area. Meridian (old town) is all served by the Hunter Lateral, which extends from the Ridenbaugh Canal northwest through Meridian Cemetery and continues to the north where it meets the Settlers Canal.

Irrigated agriculture encouraged settlers from Missouri, Iowa, and other areas to settle in Idaho, taking up land surrounding Meridian and establishing farms. Around the turn of the 20th century, settlers established fruit orchards and built fruit packing businesses and prune dryers along the railroad tracks. Local orchards produced many varieties of apples and Italian prunes. Production continued through the mid-1940s, when it was no longer profitable and the packing businesses closed.

D. Meridian's Origins in the Dairy Industry

As the population of southwestern states grew in the early 20th century, so did the demand for dairy products. The increased demand came at the same time as the introduction of concrete silos and other technological advances, which in turn brought more farmers to dairy production. Meridian's location near both the Oregon Short Line and the interurban track system (connecting communities from Boise to Caldwell) was a great benefit to the dairy industry. Farmers used both the railroad and the interurban lines to ship their milk to creameries and cheese factories. Meridian was the site of a creamery as early as 1897, when the Meridian Creamery was incorporated, and a cheese factory was established in 1913, part of an agricultural boom which continued into the years of World War I. When the war ended, prices fell dramatically for grain, cattle, and sheep, but farmers persevered. Respected and long-time Meridian historian Lila Hill noted that the Ada County Dairymen's Association (ACDA) creamery was the center of the area's economy from 1929 to 1970. Buildings related to the ACDA creamery formed the core of downtown Meridian.

World War II brought another boom to Meridian. Some returning veterans used the loan programs of the Serviceman's Readjustment Act of 1944 (popularly known as the GI Bill) to purchase existing farms where they raised cattle feed for their dairy herds and sold milk. By the mid-1950s, in addition to being a thriving agricultural center, Meridian was also home to several industries: the ACDA creamery, two lumber processing plants – Brock Lumber and Meridian Moulding--and the Storey Hatchery. Agricultural and industrial growth also led to a housing boom. Five new subdivisions were added to the city between 1948 and 1950.¹²

E. Modern Meridian

In 1944, Julius M. Kleiner purchased land from the Morrison Knudson Company and changed it from a storage yard into a dairy farm, which operated until the 1970s. Kleiner was an influential community member and owned a significant amount of land, including the areas known today

¹² *Scenic Idaho*, Vol. 5, 1950 pp. 30-31. and Vol. 11-2-1956. Pp. 4-5.



Historic Preservation Plan

as Julius M. Kleiner Memorial Park and the Village shopping center. Gene Kleiner donated the property to the City in 2010 and two years later the City created Memorial Park.

Meridian Speedway, built in 1950 and one of the city's most recent additions to the National Register of Historic Places, has been a gathering place for residents and visitors for generations. In 1966, Interstate 84 was constructed in Idaho, providing a new entry to Meridian. Within a few decades urban development would extend to areas near and around the freeway.

With the population steadily growing and the need for housing increasing, the city slowly began moving from being agriculturally dominated to a more urban mix of residential, industrial, and commercial uses. Large sections of land that were previously farms were slowly molded into commercial strips and hubs. As employment centers grew in both Meridian and Boise, the need for housing continued with one of Meridian's largest population booms occurring in the 1980s.

As the city expands, historic agricultural buildings, structures, and landscapes will continue to face the possibility of demolition. The city continues to grow; the population in 2025 has risen to approximately 147,340¹³. The city has grown from a dairy farm town to an economic hub but has not forgotten its roots. Historic buildings are concentrated in the old town, and agricultural buildings remain where the city has yet to expand.

F. Historic Properties

Within the city limits, there are several properties listed in the NRHP. The NRHP is a program of the NPS, and as stated in the National Register Bulletin 16A preface, "is the official Federal list of districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects significant in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture. **Table 2** presents the properties in the city that are currently listed in the NRHP. **Figure 1** presents the inventory of NHRP listed, NRHP eligible, not eligible, and unevaluated historic resources. For a full list of completed historic surveys conducted in Meridian, see **Appendix D**.

When survey of historic properties is conducted, the qualified preservation specialist evaluates the eligibility of each resource (or group of resources) according to the criteria established by the SOI and the SHPO. This requires documentation of construction date, original building use/function, and building form/architectural style. Furthermore, the properties are evaluated for significance and integrity. The former is the importance of a property to the history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, or culture of a community, state, or nation. To be listed, properties must have significance in one of the following areas:

- Criterion A: association with events, activities or broad patterns of history,
- Criterion B: association with the lives of people significant in our past,
- Criterion C: embody distinctive construction characteristic(s) etc.
- Criterion D: have yielded or be likely to yield information in prehistory or history.

The property exterior is also evaluated for integrity; that is, a site must retain physical characteristics or elements that convey the period for which they are considered significant. Some of these elements include location, design, setting, materials, and workmanship.

¹³ Community Planning Association of Southwest Idaho.



Table 2: Listing in the National Register of Historic Places

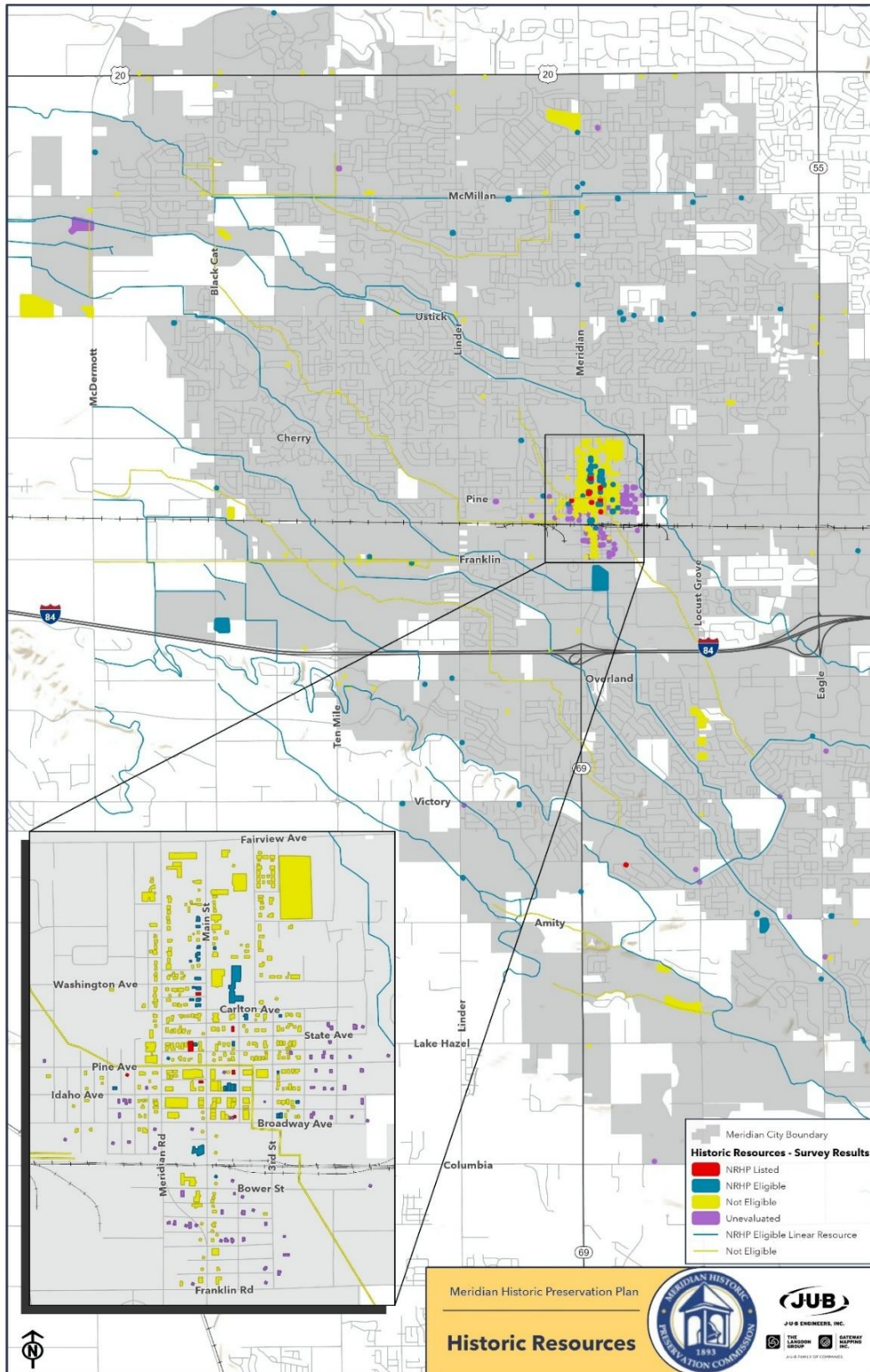
National Register Number	Name	Address
05001599	R.H. and Jessie Bell House	137 E. Pine Street
05001600	Clara Hill House	1123 N. Main Street
82000210	E.F. Hunt House	49 E. State Street
82000223	Meridian Exchange Bank	109 E. 2nd Street
03000122	Mittleider Farmstead Historic District (<i>non-extant</i>)	575 Rumble Lane
08000905	Mountain States Telephone and Telegraph Company Building	815 N. Main Street
82000227	Halbert and Grace Neal House	101 W. Pine Street
96001506	Tolleth House	134 E. State Avenue
100008284	Meridian Speedway	335 S. Main St

In addition to the properties listed in the NRHP, past surveys have yielded valuable information regarding other properties within and near the City of Meridian. **Figure 1** presents the inventory of NHRP listed, NRHP eligible, not eligible, and unevaluated historic resources as determined by these previously conducted surveys, listed in **Appendix D**. Since some of these surveys have occurred over a decade ago, some of the resources listed as NRHP eligible (**refer to Table 3**) may no longer be extant. A cursory review indicates that many of the resources, particularly the farmsteads, have been lost. Future studies or survey efforts could confirm and update this information.

Historic Preservation Plan



Figure 1: Historic Resources Map



Historic Preservation Plan



Table 3: Eligible NRHP Properties

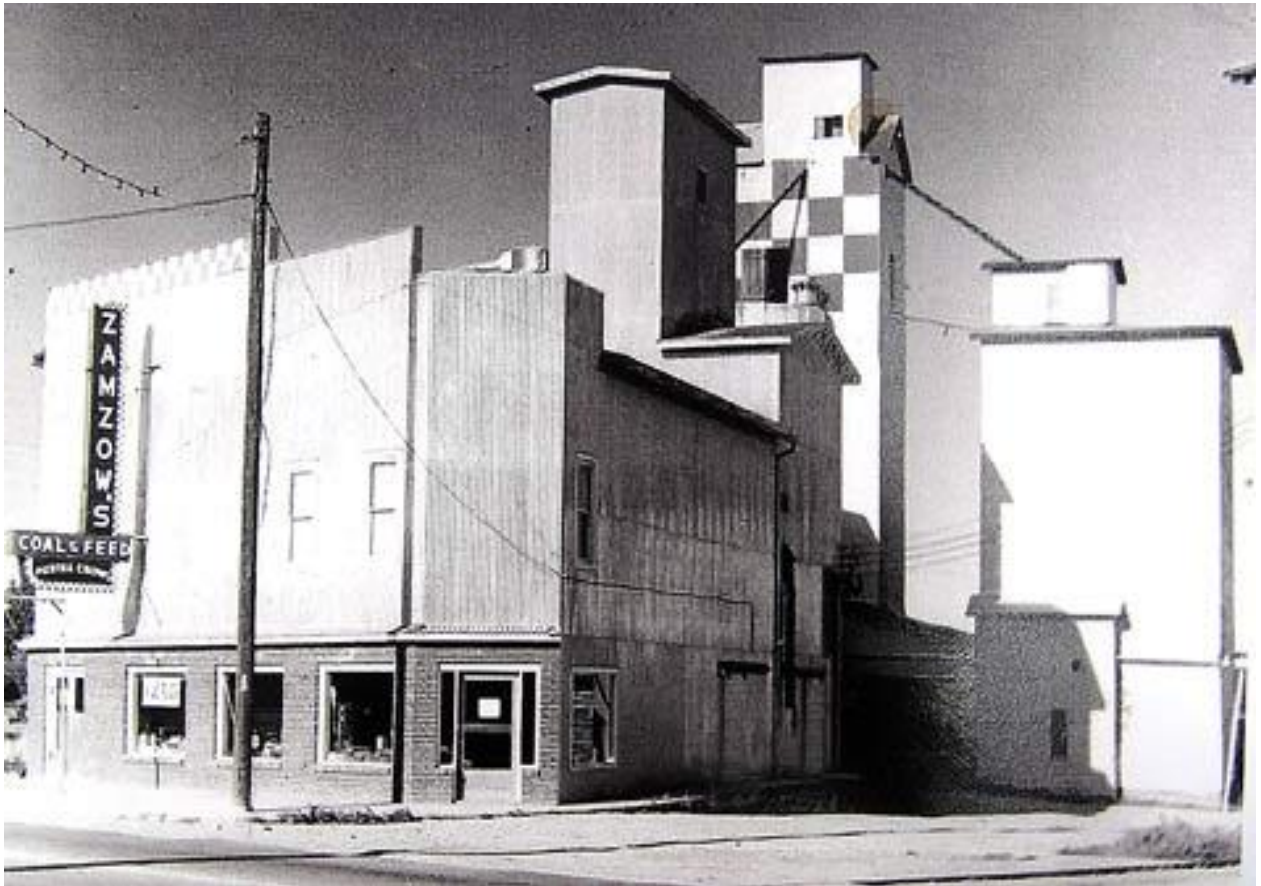
IHSI #	Name	Address	Year
01-25573	Portfolio	1409 N. Main St.	1954
01-25570	Marguerite And Carl Patch House	1311 N. Main St.	1936
01-25569	Accent Funeral Home	1303 N. Main St.	1937
01-25568	Saucerman Construction	1233 N. Main St.	1954
01-25566	St Frances Cabrini Catholic Church/Meridian Cycles	1203 N. Main St.	1930
01-25541	House	1028 NE 3rd St.	1932
01-25511	Pauly's Bar Room	130/132 E. Idaho Ave.	1915
01-25510	Truffles	126 E. Idaho Ave.	1915
01-25482	Holy Transfiguration Antiochian Orthodox Church	211 E. Carlton Ave.	1941
01-23110	Overland Rd., Farmstead	1690 W. Overland Rd.	1913
01-22107	N. McDermott Rd.,--Farmstead	5390 N. McDermott Rd.	1940
01-22057	W. Cherry Ln. House -	735 W. Cherry Lane	1956
01-21873	N. Main St. House -	1310 N. Main St.	1941
01-19822	Hill Family Farmstead	5875 S. Eagle Rd.	1890
01-19811	O. Haga/Doris Frost Farmstead	2435 S. Meridian Rd.	1910
01-19806	Harry Warrick Barn	2350 E. Amity Rd.	1920
01-19805	Paul Warrick Farmstead	2445 E. Amity Rd.	1941
01-19801	Jim Griffin House	2385 S. Eagle Rd.	1890
01-19799	Henry Reimann Farmstead	2430 S. Linder Rd.	1920
01-19797	Stanley Jackson/Harold Stanford Farmstead	2365 W. Victory Rd.	1950
01-19795	W. Victory Rd. Farmstead	835 W. Victory Rd.	1910
01-19787	Maxine Amend Farmstead	2015 Overland Rd.	1890
01-19779	Eggers Farmstead, Eggers/Moore Barn And Farm	820 S. Black Cat Rd.	1915
01-19778	Sol Nelson/Bernad McFadden Farmstead	970 N. Black Cat Rd.	1920
01-19770	Clarence And Mark Calnon Farmstead	2215 W. Franklin Rd.	1916
01-19769	Don Bowers Farmstead	2770 W. Franklin Rd	1920
01-19763	Brenniger House	4345 Linder Rd.	1900
01-19761	Meridian Road Farmstead	4273 Meridian Rd.	1915
01-19760	Meridian Road Barn And Farmstead	3615 Meridian Rd.	1900
01-19759	Barnett Barn And House	3745 Meridian Rd.	1900
01-19757	Country Knit And Crochet	4635 & 4715 Locust Grove	1920
01-19754	George Leighton/Tom Davis Farmhouse And Icehouse	2740 (2742) E. Ustick Rd.	1915
01-19753	Johnson Farmstead	1570 E. Ustick Rd.	1920
01-19752	Borup/Rivera House And Barn	1135 & 1131 Ustick Rd.	1900
01-19751	Tyler/William & Leni Snider Barn (1948)	840 E. Ustick Rd.	1900
01-19750	Verna Davis & Ray Blades Farmstead	540 E. Ustick Rd.	1890
01-19749	Ed Davis Farmstead	745 E. Ustick Rd.	1920
01-19745	Jack Morgan & Katherine Anderson Farmstead	3093 N. Christian Way (former 5325 W. Ustick)	1890
01-19740	N. Meridian Rd. Barn - 4990	4990 N. Meridian Rd.	1920
01-19739	John Lemp/Dwayne Wolf Farmstead	4895 N. Meridian Rd.	1920
01-19731	W. McMillan Farmstead	985 W. McMillan Rd.	1920
01-19730	E. McMillan Farmstead	555 E. McMillan Rd.	1925
01-19729	John & Jean Tolk (Earl) Farmstead	2205 E. McMillan Rd,	1932
01-19727	Elias & Margaret Aldape Farmstead	7570 Basco Lane	1912
01-15264	Cecil Luke House	3290 Amity Rd.	1920
01-15244	Linder Road House	S. Linder Rd.	
01-13690	Wechbaugh Elevator	611 N. Main St.	1909
01-13676	House	304 E Broadway Ave.	1915

Historic Preservation Plan



01-13675	Salon 310	310 E Broadway Ave.	1915
01-13673	House	333 E. Idaho Ave.	1900
01-13640	House	305 E. Pine Ave.	1925
01-13639	Sharp Harness Shop	124 E. Idaho Ave.	1929
01-13638	Idaho Building	136 E. Idaho Ave.	1913
01-13637	Bank Of Meridian	140 E. Idaho Ave.	1915
01-13628	House	128 W. Idaho Ave.	1910
01-13605	House	135 E. State Ave.	1915
01-13604	Clement and Eliza Hedges House	16 E. Pine Ave.	1903
01-13600	55 E. State Ave. House	55 E. State Ave.	1923
01-13583	W. Pine Ave. House	506 W. Pine Ave.	1900
01-13576	Gold Express/Integrated Security Resources	1403 N. Main St.	1934
01-13573	Meridian Rural High School	200 E. Carlton Ave.	1912
01-13572	Dr. Henry J. and Cora Coggins House	1131 N. Main St.	1920
01-13570	Epi's Basque Restaurant	1115 N. Main St.	1916
01-13569	J.C. & Mary S. Beam House	1103 E. Main St.	1916

4 | Meridian HPC



Historic Preservation Plan



The City of Meridian has an active historic preservation program that has been an important part of the city for over 25 years. **Appendix D** summarizes relevant code and plan sections and other information relevant to the HPC.

A. Establishment of the Meridian HPC

Meridian City Code Title 2, Chapter 1 established the Commission and outlines its duties and powers. The commission was established to promote the educational, cultural, economic and general welfare of the public of the city through the identification, evaluation, designation, documentation, and protection of those buildings, sites, areas, structures, and objects which reflect significant elements of local, state, and national historic architectural, archaeological, and cultural heritage.

The Meridian HPC consists of six members serving three-year terms, and one youth member serving a one-year term. The members include at least two appointed members with professional training or experience in the disciplines of architecture, history, architectural history, urban planning, archaeology, engineering, law, and other historic preservation-related disciplines. The Parks and Recreation Department provides a city staff liaison to the HPC, who is also responsible for art programs and special events. The HPC provides annual reports to the City Council regarding their accomplishments and activities. Funding for HPC activities comes from the city's general fund or from NPS, HPC, and SHPO CLG grants.

Under the provisions of Idaho Code section 67-4612, the city may provide special conditions or restrictions for the protection, enhancement, and preservation of historic properties by ordinances. The Meridian City Code (2-1-3: Historic Preservation Commission) also states that the HPC may conduct surveys, recommend preservation procedures, and promote and conduct educational programs on historic preservation. Specific pivotal projects that have occurred over the years are listed below:

1985 - SHPO Ada County Rural Sites Survey

1987 - Establishment of the Meridian Historic Preservation Commission

1987 - Meridian Reconnaissance Survey (IHSI Survey Report #132)

1989 - Belinda Davis and Barbara Perry Bauer Comprehensive Survey

1998 - Renewable Technologies, Inc. Survey

1999-2000 - The Arrowrock Group, Inc Survey for Ada County Historic Preservation Council

2005 - Meridian Reconnaissance Survey Phase 1 (IHSI Survey Report #307).

2007 - Meridian Impact Area Re-survey (IHSI Survey Report #361)

2008 - Meridian Historic Center opens

2011 - TAG Historical Research and Consulting Windshield Survey

2014 - Meridian Historic Preservation Plan adopted



Historic Preservation Plan

- 2015 – Preservation Idaho Orchid Award for Cultural Heritage Preservation for the Meridian Historic Walking Tour
- 2017 – Preservation Idaho Orchid Award for Contribution to Historic Preservation the Vault (formerly Bank of Meridian) – Josh Evarts for restoration and revitalization for Downtown Meridian
- 2021 – CLG Evaluation
- 2021 – HPC facilitated the transfer of the former Meridian Historical Society's collection of records, documents, and artifacts at City Hall to the Meridian Library District
- 2023 - North Main Street Reconnaissance-level Survey
- 2023 - Preservation Idaho Orchid Award for Excellence in Historic Preservation - Hidden Gem Events/Tolleth Home restoration
- 2024 - Local Landmarking Program memorandum
- 2024 - Meridian Speedway Listed in the National Register of Historic Places
- 2025 - Walking Tour Revamp and Informational Binders Created
- 2025 - Historic Preservation Plan update prepared

B. Meridian HPC Programs

The Meridian HPC “works to preserve the character and fabric of historically significant areas and structures within the City to honor and preserve its rich heritage for future generations.” (City of Meridian). Since its inception, the HPC has focused on the education and promotion of preservation activities and the study of the City’s historic resources. While the local preservation ordinance allows the HPC to make recommendations to improve planning processes, including the adoption of ordinances for the purposes of preservation of historic resources, the commission has not undertaken any local designations or design review programs.

i. Education, Community Engagement, and Outreach

The Meridian HPC provides multiple ways for the community to explore local history. Their principal public offering is the Meridian Walking Tours, which highlights the city’s historic structures and sites. Residents can access these tours through several convenient methods:

- Printed booklets available at City Hall.
- An interactive mobile app for self-guided excursions (Meridian Historic Tour on the App Store)
- An online version on the city [website](#).

The Meridian HPC also provides in-person guided tours for special events.

Another key educational resource, supported by the HPC, is the engaging video "Settlers Make the Desert Bloom," a condensed version of a presentation by the late historian Lila Hill. The



Historic Preservation Plan

video is easily accessible to the public on the city's website, YouTube channel, and displayed in the [Meridian History Center](#).

The Meridian History Center, which is managed by the Meridian Library District, is currently located off the City Hall lobby, providing materials for the public to view on a self-guided tour. The library also complements this resource by offering digitized versions of historic documents.

The HPC actively engages in major community efforts, notably the conservation of the Eggers Farmstead silos in 2023. When new development threatened this unique resource—which holds recognized importance to Ada County's agricultural history and the last remaining dual silo structure in the Treasure Valley—the HPC served in an advisory capacity to conserve the structures. As a result of these efforts, the dual silos were successfully disassembled and are slated for reconstruction in a suitable location.

The HPC has also upheld a tradition of celebrating National Preservation Month (May). Annual activities include offering walking tours, hosting speakers, receiving a proclamation from the mayor, and communicating all activities on social media.

ii. National Register District Survey

Among the studies and surveys enumerated in **Appendix D**, one recent survey effort is noteworthy. In September 2023, TAG Historical and Research Consulting concluded a two-phase reconnaissance-level survey of North Main Street for the HPC (maps and discussion provided in **Appendix E**). Over 250 properties were considered with the objective of identifying eligible or potentially eligible properties and districts for listing in the National Register. Two small areas, East Idaho Avenue and North Main Street, were determined to be potentially eligible as NRHP districts. While a National Register listing alone does not provide any protection of the historic properties, a local historic district could be formed (with the same boundaries or a variation), an ordinance and design guidelines prepared and adopted, that would provide for review by the HPC for changes within the district. At present, the draft survey is being revised following comments by the Idaho SHPO, and no determinations have been made regarding the National Register designations.

iii. Local Landmarking

In 2024, the HPC commissioned a study to consider and summarize the viability of a local landmarking program. As part of this analysis, HPC staff (in the Parks and Recreation Department) coordinated with the Meridian Planning Division to utilize a map layer of potential historic resources that had a known Idaho Historic Sites Inventory (IHSI) form associated with the property to provide for a "History Check" datapoint to the maps maintained by the department. In the future, the coordination of GIS information with SHPO's Idaho Cultural Resource Information System (ICRIS) to provide updated information to the GIS layer would be helpful, but this information is currently not transmissible. [ICRIS](#) is a statewide system that provides public access to the inventory of historic buildings, sites, districts, structures, objects, and archaeological sites in Idaho.

This is like the informal program used by Ada County during their demolition permit review process; however, the City of Meridian demolition permit is currently an over-the-counter

Historic Preservation Plan



process with no wait time. That process could be adapted in the future to enable a review period that would provide an opportunity for closer review and possible notification of the Meridian HPC.

Unlike the local historic district process, the landmarking process may be applied to sites that are located *throughout* the city, rather than concentrated in one geographic area. This describes the presence of Meridian's resources, encompassing former farmsteads, individual residences, and prominent civic buildings, that occur in a diffuse array across the city. While local historic districts are possible, the district tool is intended to serve specific contiguous areas.

The Local Landmarking process involves 1) the designation of the sites to be landmarked, and 2) a determination of what the landmark process might entail. For example, the HPC could simply advise property owners considering demolition. Or the HPC might review applications for exterior changes to the property that require a building permit. Criteria for design and development review would be necessary if the HPC opted for the latter. Currently, the HPC is not pursuing local landmarking, but this HPP considers it to be a possible strategy to employ in the future as a tool to celebrate and preserve historic resources.

5 | Goals, Objectives, and Strategies for Future Preservation Efforts





Historic Preservation Plan

The role of a historic preservation commission is to further the work of the local government as it relates to preserving the community's heritage. That is typically done by undertaking a series of activities or projects, funded in part by the SHPO with National Park Service funding, as discussed in Chapter 2. The purpose of the historic preservation plan is to guide these efforts based on a comprehensive review of the community that identifies issues and concerns, needs, and opportunities.

By engaging with the public during this planning process, the HPC learned that residents value historic preservation because it sustains authentic community character and provides educational opportunities to historic site users and visitors of historic sites. Meridian community members consider the top priorities to be to celebrate, document, and protect historic resources.

To that end, the HPC prepared the following goals or purpose statements for the future of historic preservation in Meridian:

- A. Identify and document historical, cultural, and archaeological resources within the City and the Area of Impact.
- B. Sustain Meridian's authentic community character by preserving and protecting our historic and cultural resources.
- C. Inform and engage residents and visitors about historic preservation programs and opportunities in our community.
- D. Strengthen the operation and administration of the Meridian HPC.

Objectives, or discrete steps towards achieving goals, were articulated for each of the goals. These are followed by action items or strategies that support the achievement of the objective and the realization of the goals. The objectives and strategies were also prepared from the insights gathered through the public engagement process. Meridian residents are concerned about the following:

- Preserving Meridian's historic houses and neighborhoods, as well as the area's agricultural heritage.
- Enhancing Old Town and protecting historic buildings while permitting new development
- Improving historic preservation processes, activities, and outreach.

Residents have also expressed an interest in learning more about historic preservation, including grants for historic building repair and rehabilitation, potential tax incentives for historic property owners, public outreach/education, and heritage tourism programs. Strategies presented in the next section include reference to possible community training events on these topics.

The following sections (A. Goals, Objectives, and Strategies; B. Implementation) create a work plan that can assist the City of Meridian and guide the HPC to preserve Meridian's heritage.



A. Goals, Objectives, and Strategies

Goal 1: Identify and document architectural, historical, cultural, and archeological resources within the City of Meridian and the city's area of impact.	
Objective	Strategies
1.1: Continue to conduct historic inventories.	1.1.a: Evaluate and prioritize sites and districts to be studied and surveyed, including but not limited to: • Properties previously evaluated for NRHP listing (HPP Table 3) • Small, hipped-roof cottages built in the early years of the 20th century (e.g. Sears Catalog homes). • West side of NW 1st street that was noted in the 2023 TAG report • Agricultural resources (homesteads, outbuildings, granges, processing, and storage) 1.1.b: Pursue the development of National Register of Historic Places nominations for eligible properties 1.1.c: Collaborate with ACHPC, SHPO, and other agencies regarding historic contexts to coordinate efforts and leverage resources to conduct mutually beneficial surveys and inventories. 1.1.d: Collaborate with SHPOs to update city GIS layers with historic resources on ICRIS.
1.2: Evaluate potential for studying mid-century modern neighborhoods and other recent past resources.	1.2.a: Evaluate parcels within the Meridian Impact Area to identify properties that were constructed prior to 1985. 1.2.b: Consider identification of sites that represent roadside architecture, such as service stations and drive-thru restaurants (e.g. <i>The Hungry Onion</i>).

Historic Preservation Plan



Goal 2: Sustain Meridian’s authentic community character by preserving and protecting our historic cultural resources.

Objective	Strategies
2.1: Promote preservation of Old Town to enhance its historical quality.	2.1.a: Collaborate with the Planning Division to identify measures to support preservation within Old Town, including consideration of district boundaries. 2.1.b: Collaborate with the Planning Division to review and make recommendations on the city's design guidelines for historic buildings within Old Town. 2.1.c: Collaborate with MDC and inform their Destination Downtown Plan’s future vision for Old Town.
2.2: Conserve vulnerable historic sites and structures from demolition.	2.2.a: Proceed with the State Historic Preservation Office to ensure designation of both potential National Register of Historic Places districts as outlined in the 2023 survey. 2.2.b: Continue to work with the TAG and Idaho SHPO to revise potential NRHP district survey and follow through with NRHP designation with one or both districts as established from documentation provided by the 2023 TAG survey, as appropriate. 2.2.c: Consider local district designation for any NRHP districts.
2.3: Incorporate the preservation of important historic, cultural, and agricultural resources into City planning and development processes.	2.3.a: Explore the development of a formal process through the Planning Division for development application review of potential historic sites where development may negatively impact historic features. 2.3.b: Explore adoption of a demolition review ordinance or local landmark provisions 2.3.c: Collaborate with Code Enforcement regarding violations on historic properties.
2.4: Develop a Meridian Register of Historic Places to recognize sites of local significance.	2.4.a: Follow up on the local landmark memo (2024) with appropriate next steps. 2.4.b: Propose potential sites and develop criteria to create a local inventory list to include on a register of historic places in Meridian. 2.4.c: Explore and recommend incentives and protection measures for sites included on a local register.

Historic Preservation Plan



Goal 3: Inform and engage residents and visitors about historic preservation programs and opportunities in our community.

Objective	Strategies
3.1: Provide the public with educational programs to increase citizens' awareness of Meridian's heritage and the economic and aesthetic value of historic preservation.	3.1.a: Support and promote Idaho Archaeology and Historic Preservation Month in May. 3.1.b: Nominate exemplary historic preservation achievements by individuals, businesses, and organizations for recognition by the ACHPC Treasure Awards or Preservation Idaho's Orchids and Onions Awards. 3.1.c: Consider a program to recognize preservation activity for the Historic Preservation Commission, and promote it in the local paper, city-affiliated websites, and social media outlets.
3.2: Improve preservation education efforts for various audiences.	3.2.a: Collaborate with the Meridian Library and the History Center to develop historic preservation-specific initiatives 3.2.b: Continue to develop public presentations, walking tours, brochures, social media outreach, and website digital information. 3.2.c: Identify opportunities to expand historic markers and interpretive signage as part of development and redevelopment projects.
3.3: Increase community understanding of historic preservation resources, procedures, and districts.	3.3.a: Review the HPC website and augment with links and other relevant information for public reference. 3.3.b: Partner with the SHPO, Preservation Idaho, NAPC, and the Idaho Heritage Trust on educational workshops such as: • Historic Districts and how they work • Historic designation (local or national) and what it means to you • Rehabilitation Techniques (windows, masonry, carpentry, etc.) • Historic Tax Incentives

Historic Preservation Plan



Goal 4: Strengthen the operation and administration of the Meridian Historic Preservation Commission.

Objective	Strategies
4.1: Adopt and implement the 2025 Historic Preservation Plan.	4.1.a: Present the HPP to the City Council and coordinate adoption of the Historic Preservation Plan with the Comprehensive Plan. 4.1.b: Conduct an annual meeting of the HPC to evaluate whether Historic Preservation Plan goals, objectives, and strategies are being met. 4.1.c: Develop a program of survey and inventory, based on the initial work of the HPP.
4.2: Collaborate with other City Departments and Commissions.	4.2.a: Collaborate with the Planning Division to review design guidelines in Old Town, demolition permits, and development processes that may impact historic features. 4.2.b: Coordinate with information technology personnel to: archive reports, surveys, and inventories; to provide easy access to City departments; coordinate with internal databases; as well as provide a portal to the public as appropriate. 4.2.c: Identify all city-led projects that may have a nexus with historic resources and consider potential for assistance through grant applications or educational opportunities.
4.3: Ensure that there are sufficient resources for the Historic Preservation Commission to fulfill their duties.	4.3.a: Prepare and present an annual report of HPC activities to the City Council, aligned with the City budget cycle; continue to request annual funding to ensure that basic HPC activities (support of documentation and educational activities) can proceed without relying on CLG funding. 4.3.b: Ensure that HPC members, city staff, and city leadership have access to annual training with the SHPO, the National Alliance of Preservation Commissions, or other preservation-related workshops or conferences. 4.3.c: Consider assigning a liaison from the Planning Division to do historic preservation planning and serve as the Historic Preservation Commission staff liaison or participate jointly with the Parks & Recreation staff liaison.



Historic Preservation Plan

B. Implementation

This section presents the strategies or action items, listed by goal and objective in Section 5.A of this Plan, in Table 4. They are listed in order of priority using the following timeframes:

- **High Priority** – immediate action within the next 1 to 5 years
- **Medium Priority** – follow-up action to high priority items (or 5 to 10-year target)
- **Continued Collaboration** – ongoing strategies

The responsible entity for these strategies is the HPC, but some strategies refer to appropriate partner agencies or groups.

Table 4: Prioritized Strategy Items

High Priority Strategies
1.1.a: Evaluate and prioritize sites and districts to be studied and surveyed, including but not limited to: ○ Properties previously evaluated for NRHP listing (HPP Table 3) ○ Small, hipped-roof cottages built in the early years of the 20th century (e.g. Sears Catalog homes). ○ West side of NW 1st street that was noted in the 2023 TAG report ○ Agricultural resources (homesteads, outbuildings, granges, processing, and storage)
1.1.b: Pursue the development of National Register of Historic Places nominations for eligible properties
1.1.c: Collaborate with ACHPC, SHPO, and other agencies regarding historic contexts to coordinate efforts and leverage resources to conduct mutually beneficial surveys and inventories.
1.2.a: Evaluate parcels within the Meridian Impact Area to identify properties that were constructed prior to 1985.
1.2.b: Consider identification of sites that represent roadside architecture, such as service stations and drive-thru restaurants (e.g., The Hungry Onion)
2.1.a: Collaborate with the Planning Division to identify measures to support preservation within Old Town, including consideration of district boundaries.
2.1.c: Collaborate with MDC and inform their Destination Downtown Plan’s future vision for Old Town.
2.2.b: Continue to work with the TAG and Idaho SHPO to revise potential NRHP district survey and follow through with NRHP designation with one or both districts as established from documentation provided by the 2023 TAG survey, as appropriate
2.3.a: Explore the development of a formal process through the Planning Division for development application review of potential historic sites where development may negatively impact historic features.
4.1.a: Present the Historic Preservation Plan to the City Council and coordinate adoption of the Historic Preservation Plan with the Comprehensive Plan.
4.1.c: Develop a program of survey and inventory, based on the initial work of the HPP.
4.2.a: Collaborate with the Planning Division to review design guidelines in Old Town, demolition permits, and development processes that may impact historic features.
4.2.c: Identify all city-led projects that may have a nexus with historic resources and consider potential for assistance through grant applications or educational opportunities.



Medium Priority Strategies

- 2.1.b:** Collaborate with the Planning Division to review and make recommendations on the city's design guidelines for historic buildings within Old Town.
- 2.2.c:** Consider local district designation for any NRHP districts.
- 2.3.b:** Explore adoption of a demolition review ordinance or local landmark provisions.
- 2.3.c:** Collaborate with Code Enforcement regarding violations on historic properties.
- 2.4.a:** Follow up on the local landmark memo (2024) with appropriate next steps.
- 2.4.b:** Propose potential sites and develop criteria to create a local inventory list to include on a register of historic places in Meridian.
- 2.4.c:** Explore and recommend incentives and protection measures for sites included on a local register.
- 3.1.c:** Consider a program to recognize preservation activity for the Historic Preservation Commission, and promote it in the local paper, city-affiliated websites, and social media outlets.
- 4.2.b:** Coordinate with information technology personnel to: archive reports, surveys, and inventories; to provide easy access to City departments; coordinate with internal databases; as well as provide a portal to the public as appropriate.
- 4.3.c:** Consider assigning a liaison from the Planning Division to do historic preservation planning and serve as the Historic Preservation Commission staff liaison or participate jointly with the Parks & Recreation staff liaison.

Continued Collaboration Strategies

- 1.1.d:** Collaborate with SHPOs to update city GIS layers with historic resources on ICRIS.
- 2.2.a:** Proceed with the State Historic Preservation Office to ensure designation of both potential National Register of Historic Places districts as outlined in the 2023 survey.
- 3.1.a:** Support and promote Idaho Archaeology and Historic Preservation Month in May.
- 3.1.b:** Nominate exemplary historic preservation achievements by individuals, businesses, and organizations for recognition by the ACHPC Treasure Awards or Preservation Idaho's Orchids and Onions Awards.
- 3.2.a:** Collaborate with the Meridian Library and the History Center to develop historic preservation-specific initiatives.
- 3.2.b:** Continue to develop public presentations, walking tours, brochures, social media outreach, and website digital information.
- 3.2.c:** Identify opportunities to expand historic markers and interpretive signage as part of development and redevelopment projects.
- 3.3.a:** Review the HPC website and augment with links and other relevant information for public reference.
- 3.3.b:** Partner with the SHPO, Preservation Idaho, NAPC, and the Idaho Heritage Trust on educational workshops such as:
 - Historic Districts and how they work
 - Historic designation (local or national) and what it means to you
 - Rehabilitation Techniques (windows, masonry, carpentry, etc.)
 - Historic Tax Incentives
- 4.1.b:** Conduct an annual meeting of the HPC to evaluate whether Historic Preservation Plan goals, objectives, and strategies are being met.
- 4.3.a:** Prepare and present an annual report of HPC activities to the City Council, aligned with the City budget cycle; continue to request annual funding to ensure that basic HPC activities (support of documentation and educational activities) can proceed without relying on CLG funding.
- 4.3.b:** Ensure that HPC members, city staff, and city leadership have access to annual training with the SHPO, the National Alliance of Preservation Commissions, or other preservation-related workshops or conferences.



6 | References

Ada County HPC (2025). Historic Preservation Plan for Ada County Cultural and Historic Resources

Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (2018). Measuring economic impacts of historic preservation. <https://www.achp.gov/sites/default/files/guidance/2018-06/Economic%20Impacts%20v5-FINAL.pdf>

Beal, M. D. (1962). Intermountain railroads: Standard and narrow gauge. Caxton Printers

City of Meridian (2014). Historic Preservation Plan. Prepared by TAG Historical Research & Consulting for the Meridian Historic Preservation Commission

City of Meridian (2025). History of Meridian, <https://meridiancity.org/arts-culture-history/history/>

Community Planning Association of Southwest Idaho. (2025). Historic population estimates by city limits: Ada, Canyon, and Boise counties. [PDF file]. https://compassidaho.org/wp-content/uploads/Population_estimates_2025.pdf

Gruhn, R. (1961). A collection of artifacts from Pence-Duerig Cave in south-central Idaho. *Tebiwa: The Journal of the Idaho State College Museum*, 4(1), 1–15. https://ia804501.us.archive.org/15/items/sim_tebiwa_1961_4_1/sim_tebiwa_1961_4_1.pdf

Hedrick, A. (2025). Geology, archaeology and Indigenous history in Southwest Idaho. Prepared for the City of Meridian.

Idaho State Historic Preservation Office (2025). Idaho Cultural Resource Information System (ICRIS). Idaho State Historical Society. <https://history.idaho.gov/shpo/icris/>

Idaho State University. (n.d.). *Digital Geology of Idaho.* <https://www.isu.edu/digitalgeologyidaho/>

Rypkema, D. D. (2005). The economics of historic preservation: A community leader's guide (2nd ed.). National Trust for Historic Preservation

Scenic Idaho, Vol. 5 (1950). pp. 30-31. and Vol. 11-2-1956 pp. 4-5

U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service (1997). National Register Bulletin 16A: How to Complete the National Register Registration Form. Retrieved May 7, 2025, from <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalregister/upload/NRB16A-Complete.pdf>



7 | Appendices

Appendix A: Public Involvement Summary

Appendix B: Public Survey Results

Appendix C: Laws and Regulations

Appendix D: List of Historic Surveys

Appendix E: City Code and Plans Review