



Historic Preservation Plan

Goals, Objectives, and Strategies Alignment



Agenda

- Historic Preservation Plan Overview
- SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats)
- Survey and Public Outreach
- Preservation Goals, Objectives, Strategies
 - City Comprehensive Plan Policies
 - Proposed Preservation Plan Goals, Objectives, Strategies
 - Question: Are these goals aligned with City priorities?

Questions:

- Is council interested in pursuing historic preservation tools such as 1. history related design guidelines, 2. a landmarking program, or 3. conservation overlay historic districts?
- Is council interested in maintaining the role of the Historic Preservation Commission as a more educational and celebratory commission to one that is a more formal part of the development processes?

If yes, then:

- Would council be supportive and prepared to allocate City resources to do things like creating historic building design guidelines, and exploring zoning mechanisms for historic preservation?





Preservation Plan Overview

The Meridian Historic Preservation Commission received a grant from SHPO (State Historic Preservation Office) to update the 2014 Meridian Historic Preservation Plan.

Planning Process Overview:

- Contracting with a professional historic preservation consultant (Sheri Freemuth with J-U-B)
- Historic resource and program evaluation
- Public outreach and engagement
- Goals, Objectives, and Strategy Setting
- Drafting the preservation plan and adopting the plan



HPC SWOT ANALYSIS

(STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, THREATS)

Historic Preservation Commission

SWOT Analysis

◦ Strengths (things we do well):

- - 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

◦ Weaknesses (areas for improvement):

- - 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 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 to preserve buildings
- - No distinct "look" for historic area
- - Not a large inventory of historic buildings

Historic Preservation Commission

SWOT Analysis

◦ Opportunities (for growth):

- - Engage P & Z/Mayor, Building Department and Council in historic preservation
- - Could participate in development review process
- - Room for improvement in technology to walking tours
- - Partnering: Ada County HPC, SHPO, Meridian Library District, 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

◦ Threats (to success):

- - New construction/growth.
- - No regulatory tools for HPC.
- - Serve at pleasure of Mayor/City Council.
- - Lack of funding (SHPO/HPC grant money are 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 history
- - Cost of preservation
- - Main URA district will sunset soon
- - Historic property owners may not be interested in preservation
- - Doing nothing!

Survey Summary


Open from April 11, 2025 – May 12, 2025

Total Respondents: 114 (91 respondents from Meridian)



Photo: Broadway & E. 1st (Service Station) and E. 1st & Idaho (Hotel); circa 1920; Source: Meridian Hotel & Super Service Station", Mayes Gray Collection, Meridian Library District



 Scan to take the survey!

*For more information about the Historic Preservation Plan update
and to take the survey, scan the QR code or visit bit.ly/MeridianHPP
Please complete the survey by **May 8, 2025**.*



Public Outreach Event

April 19, 2025 with Walking Tour and Open House at Hidden Gem Events



2025 HPC
Survey Results

A large majority of respondents (87%) believe the biggest benefit to preservation is “sustaining authentic community character,” followed by “providing educational opportunities to historic sites users/visitors” (71%).

The opinion of what is the biggest priority for historic preservation in Meridian is mixed, with the two top-voted options being “Celebrate the city’s heritage” (45%) and “Identify and document historic properties in the city” (44%).



2025 HPC
Survey Results

Respondents shared that they would be most interested in learning about “historic districts and how they work” (52%), along with “Historic designation (local or national) and what it means to you” (39%).

This correlates to later responses of how historic preservation in the community is viewed, as an equal number of respondents (39) believed that it is viewed as “positive for the community” but at the same time “not well understood.”



From the responses, three main historic areas/property types were identified by respondents to be most vulnerable to demolition:

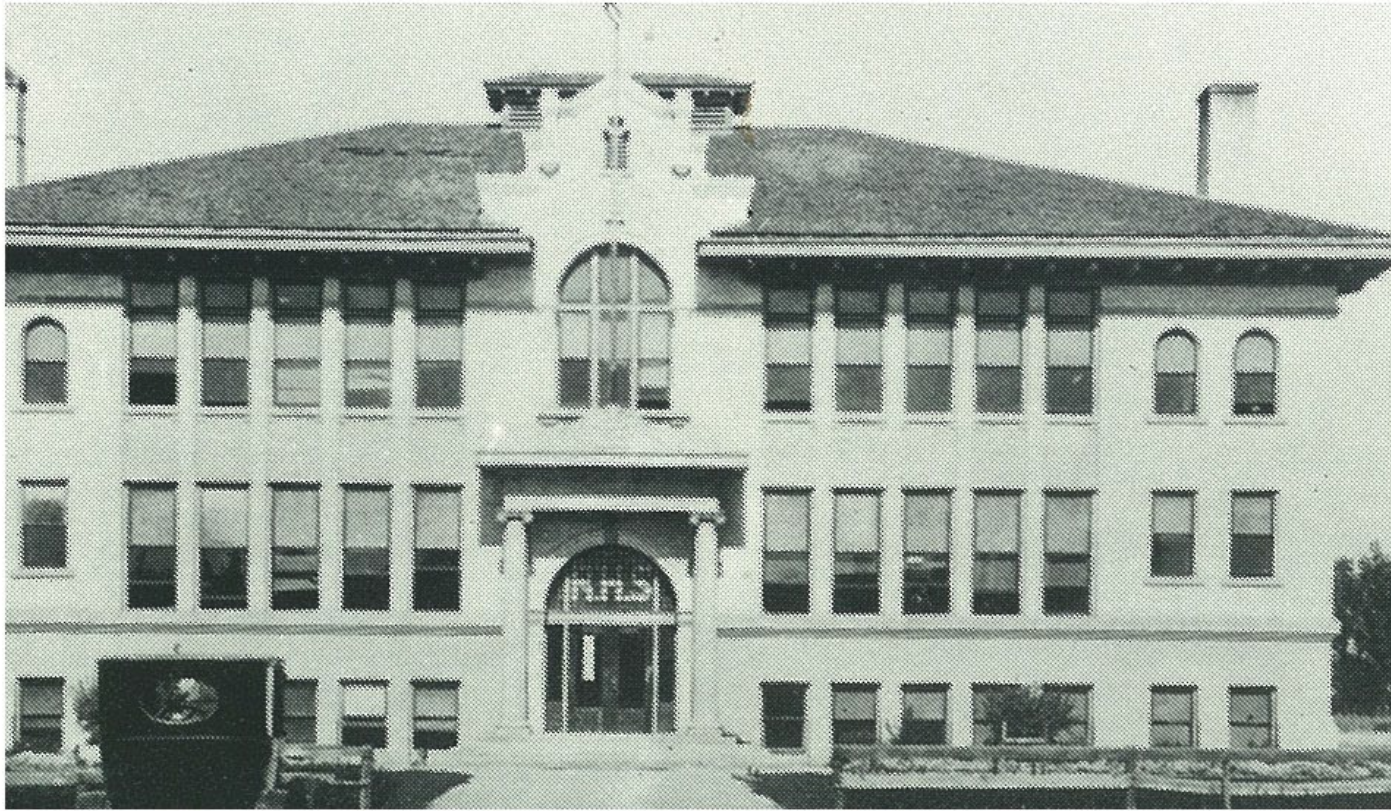
1. Agricultural buildings (75%)
2. Downtown and other commercial areas (58%)
3. Houses and Neighborhoods (52%).





Historic Preservation Outreach Event

June 21, 2025 at the Main Street Market



Historic Preservation Goals, Objectives, Strategies

City of Meridian **Comprehensive Plan:** **Selected** Historic Preservation Policies

ID	Policy	Section	Priority	Lead	Support	Comments
5.02.00	Celebrate Meridian's historical, cultural, and agricultural heritage.	Historic Preservation		PR	CD, FI, MO	
5.02.01	Enhance and restore the historical quality of Old Town.	Historic Preservation		PR	CD	
5.02.01A	Maintain and implement design and building standards for historically significant buildings and resources in Old Town.	Historic Preservation	Medium	PR	CD	The City has not adopted any design/building standards for historically significant buildings for Old Town. HPC is interested in this effort.
5.02.02	Preserve and enhance historic and cultural resources.	Historic Preservation		PR	CD, FI	
5.02.02A	Coordinate with the Meridian Historic Preservation Commission to recommend use, restoration, and preservation of historical structures and sites throughout Meridian.	Historic Preservation	On-going	PR	CD	There is currently no formal process to review historic properties for HPC input. HPC seems interested in this effort.
5.02.02H	Incorporate, into the development review process, a way to determine any impact on unique geological, historical, and archeological sites; preserve and protect as appropriate.	Historic Preservation	On-going	PR	CD	There is currently no formal process or development process to flag historic properties for HPC input.
5.02.02J	Develop policies to preserve and protect or document and memorialize historic and culturally significance structures and sites.	Historic Preservation	On-going	PR	MO	There are currently no policies. This goal has been primarily accomplished through listing properites in the National Register of Historic Places, which is an honorific program.

Historic Preservation Goals, Objectives, Strategies

Goal 1

Identify and document historical, cultural, and archeological resources within the City of Meridian and the city's area of impact.

Goal 2

Sustain Meridian's authentic community character by preserving and protecting our historic cultural resources.

Goal 3

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

Goal 4

Strengthen the operation and administration of the Meridian Historic Preservation Commission.



Historic Preservation Plan:

Selected Proposed Historic Preservation Objectives and Strategies

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 prepare and update the city's design guidelines for historic buildings within Old Town.



Historic Preservation Plan: Selected Proposed Historic Preservation Objectives and Strategies

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

Objective	Strategies
2.2: Protect vulnerable historic sites and structures from demolition.	<p>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 TAG reconnaissance survey.</p> <p>2.2.b: Follow up with local district designation for any National Register of Historic Places districts.</p>

Reconnaissance Survey

In 2023 with our consultant TAG, HPC completed a reconnaissance-level survey of 256 properties in the North Main Street area of Meridian. The objective of the survey was to identify eligible, or potentially eligible, properties for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

Two districts were found to be potentially eligible for the NHR:

East Idaho Avenue Block

North Main Street Area





Historic Preservation Plan: Selected Proposed Historic Preservation Objectives and Strategies

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

Objective	Strategies
2.3: Incorporate the preservation of important historic, cultural and agricultural resources into City planning and development processes.	<p>2.3.a: Develop a formal process through the Planning Division for development application review of potential historic sites where development may negatively impact historic features.</p> <p>2.3.b: Explore adoption of a demolition review ordinance or local landmark provisions</p> <p>2.3.c: Collaborate with Code Enforcement regarding violations on historic properties.</p>



Historic Preservation Plan: Selected Proposed Historic Preservation Objectives and Strategies

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

Objective	Strategies
2.4: Develop a Meridian Register of Historic Places to recognize sites of local significance.	<p>2.4.a: Follow up on the local landmark memo (2024) with appropriate next steps.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>2.4.c Develop incentives and protection measures for sites included on a local register.</p>



Historic Preservation Project: Landmarking Program Research

- Idaho Code allows local Commissions to create Landmarking Programs
- Would allow for HPC to review and make recommendations on changes to landmarked properties, and time to negotiate with the owner or other parties in an effort to find a means of preserving the property
- Advantages for Meridian (over a local historic district):
 - Landmarking can be noncontiguous properties *THROUGHOUT* the city
 - Less regulatory or restrictive than a historic district with design guidelines or standards
 - Create a formal way to celebrate and preserve identified local historic properties
- Next Steps:
 - Long-term planning project, HPC would need to do more research and create recommendations which properties would be included, what criteria would be used, how properties would be designated, what activities might trigger review; HPC would need a clear purpose and criteria for review



Historic Preservation Plan:

Selected Proposed Historic Preservation Objectives and Strategies

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

Objective	Strategies
4.2: Collaborate with other City Departments and Commissions.	4.2.a: Coordinate with the Planning Division to explore and pursue zoning mechanisms to support historic preservation.
4.3: Ensure that there are sufficient resources for the Historic Preservation Commission to fulfill their duties.	4.3.d: Consider assigning a liaison from the Planning Division to participate jointly with the Parks & Recreation staff liaison.

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If yes, then:

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THANK YOU

