

Meridian City Council Work Session

August 26, 2025.

A Meeting of the Meridian City Council was called to order at 4:32 p.m. Tuesday, August 26, 2025, by Mayor Robert Simison.

Members Present: Robert Simison, Luke Cavener, Liz Strader, John Overton, Doug Taylor, Anne Little Roberts and Brian Whitlock.

Other Present: Chris Johnson, Bill Nary, Caleb Hood, Bill Parsons, Brian McClure, Shawn Harper and Dean Willis.

ROLL-CALL ATTENDANCE

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Liz Strader	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Brian Whitlock
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Anne Little Roberts	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> John Overton
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Doug Taylor	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Luke Cavener
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mayor Robert E. Simison	

Simison: Council, we will call this meeting to order for the record it is August 26, 2025, at 4:32 p.m. We will begin this afternoon's work session with roll call attendance.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Simison: Next item up is adoption of the agenda.

Cavener: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: I move we adopt the agenda as presented.

Strader: Second.

Simison: Have a motion and a second to approve the agenda. Is there any discussion? If not all in favor signify by saying aye. Opposed nay? The ayes have it and the agenda is agreed to.

MOTION CARRIED: ALL AYES.

CONSENT AGENDA [Action Item]

- 1. Approve Minutes of the August 12, 2025 City Council Work Session**
- 2. Approve Minutes of the August 12, 2025 City Council Regular Meeting**

3. **Compass Charter School Gymnasium Water Main Easement No. 1 (ESMT-2025-0087)**
4. **Little Creek Subdivision No. 2 Sanitary Sewer and Water Main Easement No. 1 (ESMT-2025-0094)**
5. **W. Villaggio Way Black Cat Connection (Grand Mogul) Water Main Easement No. 1 (ESMT-2025-0101)**
6. **Oil Changers Water Main Easement No. 1 (ESMT-2025-0103)**
7. **Final Order for Pickleball Court Subdivision (FP-2025-0017) by The Land Group, Inc., located at 4050 W. McMillan Rd.**
8. **City of Meridian Financial Report - July 2025**
9. **Resolution 25-2533: A resolution adopting an Administrative Policy of the Meridian Police Department regarding approved server training programs**

Simison: Next up is the Consent Agenda.

Cavener: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: I move we approve the Consent Agenda as presented. For the Mayor to sign and the Clerk to attest.

Strader: Second.

Simison: Have a motion and a second to approve the Consent Agenda. Is there any discussion? If not, in favor signify by saying aye. Opposed nay? The ayes have it and the Consent Agenda is agreed to.

MOTION CARRIED: ALL AYES.

ITEMS MOVED FROM THE CONSENT AGENDA [Action Item]

Simison: There were no items moved from the Consent Agenda.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS [Action Item]

10. **Destination Downtown Discussion**

Simison: So we will go into Department Reports. First item up -- or the only item up is Destination Downtown discussion.

Danley: Good afternoon. I think we are good. Good afternoon, Mayor, Council. Pleasure to be back in front of you. Okay. I think we are good to go -- there we go. Okay. We are back and thank you for having us. Appreciate it. Just again Chris Danley, Vitruvian planning project manager for Destination Downtown. And with me is Aaron Qualls. Aaron will come up in a moment and you will get a chance to know him. He is with SCJ Alliance, who wrote the design standards that is mostly of topic this evening. So, again, appreciate the opportunity to be before you again. So, what is our purpose today? Our purpose is to do a couple things. Really we want to make sure to go over a bit about Old Town specifically, because that's where and why the design standards were created. So, this is a very symbiotic relationship between the two; right? So, if we are comfortable with most of what Old Town's vision is, then, the intent is that the design standards need to make the vision happen and vice-versa; right? And making certain that all of that works hand in glove and, then, to certainly answer any questions that you may have, certainly address any comments and be able to make and maximize the most of our time today. So, I want to start off a little bit about how we got here. So, the design standards started off -- and some of you understood -- or were here I believe to understand that there was a -- my understanding was that there was a building that was proposed that stood out. Let's just say that. And it was quite bright and vivid and so forth and it began a dialog about design standards, which, then, really ultimately led to a request of staff and sure of you all with leadership for this particular set of tasks to be in Destination Downtown. It was included in our scope of work and informed throughout the process through that input that was had at multiple levels. Staff comments were had also so, too, were many of yours who were submitted -- who submitted comments and we took those comments especially from staff and really worked to implement those into the revised set of design standards to move forward and other things to understand is to remember that the MDC board looked at this and approved with unanimous consent and we were here in front of you last fall with a good warm reception that was had. Certainly a desire to have further dialog, which is what we are doing here today. But overall a good warm reception. I kind of showed this to you last month. I'm just going to keep showing it to you, because I think it's important for you all to get that background and make certain where this stuff came from. It wasn't just coming from us, but it did come from all of the different bullets that you see before you. Everything from the individual and stakeholder meetings that were subject specific, through some of our public outreach, Dairy Days and so forth. Online surveys of the public and, then, multiple check ins with the board and so on and so forth. So, none of this stuff really towards the end should have come as a surprise. It was iterative as we went through the process and all of these things worked hard to inform it. So, I want to set the stage for the next handful of slides on Old Town and, then, I'm going to turn it over to Aaron and he will walk you through really, again, the design standards specific. So, what was the goal? The goal not only for the whole plan was to go, obviously, from spine for -- I always kind of refer to it as freeway to Fairview, but is to address these little sub areas as you saw last fall and specifically in terms of Old Town. What were we trying to achieve in Old Town? I think most of these are agreeable to you

and probably also replicated in your comp plan and so forth and trying to achieve things like thriving retail, making certain we take care of that existing neighborhood while also promoting a downtown that is inviting for new businesses and potential residential. Attractive streets and spaces and how do we continue to march toward the most appealing and humanized space, not just in Meridian but even in the valley. So, all of those things were very important the economic activity certainly we got to make sure to pay for it. Where are those dollars coming from and the revenues that are coming from it and all of those things were really important. But ultimately it's about making this corridor and this Old Town really continue to come to life in that next iteration. So, as a reminder for Old Town -- now, this in and of itself was an exercise, because Old Town means about 29 different things when you ask different folks from the city of Meridian, whether it's leadership at one -- in defining it, staff and documentation, the city -- you know, the residents and so forth, everybody had different versions of what that meant. So, we tried our best to truly define that and we did so by what you see in front of you, that traditional city core, which is a documented location within code. Looked at the -- what we call the neighborhood enhancement areas and I will get into a bit more the neighborhood -- or the railroad corridor and that -- what we call that traditional corridor two, which is south of the railroad corridor. What are we trying to achieve, you know, in some of this. I will touch on it a little bit more, but some of the things I mentioned to going -- vertical along the railroad corridor, in-fill and really also trying to revitalize some of those areas that maybe need a little bit of help. So, let's start with the middle. I will work towards the edges and, then, turn it over to Aaron. The railroad corridor, we certainly saw that and a lot of feedback on it that where density and where height was maybe more most -- most supported was along these particular parcels that front the railroad corridor on both sides and so the thought process was here to allow that to occur go a little bit higher. Your code already has some provisions to go up to a certain height. I think we are fairly aligned with that, just making a little bit more official, getting up to maybe closer to a hundred feet and so forth. Just point of reference. I believe -- and maybe staff remembers this, but I think Scheels is pretty close to about a hundred foot. I know when I took my daughter on the Ferris wheel on the inside and felt like we were up pretty high. So, I think we are about that. Trying to embrace that corridor, linear green spaces, you all have been working hard, hard, hard for years to get this rail with trail and if I'm not mistaken I think it's happening. I thought I saw in a construction document it's moving forward or funded at least. So, kudos to you. So, it's really again about enhancing that space as much as possible and really bringing that dream to life. The -- the next sections, that city core two and one beyond the railroad corridor is a step down. This is the transition that honors -- especially the next group of folks who are the residents and it's not trying to just box them out in terms of height, but also still maximizing some of those parcels as much as we can. So, an acceptable height that does get up closer to the 75 feet and that pretty much aligns with what you have seen in some of the more recent developments. We heard that pretty consistent, but I will tell you we had people tell us from two stories to 20 and it really ranged. So, we tried our hardest to find that middle ground as much as -- as we could. Trying to make it a pedestrian rich environment. I think you have heard us talk on that quite a bit. The festival street concept and other things that really, again, try to make these things continue to come to life and fulfill that ultimate vision and, then, the neighborhood

enhancement areas, that's what we are just kind of calling that, and so this isn't really about making any recommendations on big wholesale changes. This is -- these are established neighborhoods. This is where people live and so we were certainly sensitive to that and I think so, too, was all the input that we gathered on that. It's really about kind of enhancing it, you know, making it a little bit more unique where we can, where -- where there might be interest and so that's really what it was about. Did have some recommendations on some degree of in-fill, with things like ADUs, for example, taking advantage and really helping people maybe be able to stay in their home, frankly, because we know that the values have continued to go up so much, so, too, have their property taxes; right? So, maybe maximizing their units and their properties in ways that might be achieving a different housing goal, but also bringing a little bit of revenue into them possibly, things like that. So, I'm going to turn it over to Aaron. Aaron will introduce himself a little bit and, then, go through the design standards, where they came from, what are they trying to say and what are the objectives before we, then, turn it over to you for any Q and A. Aaron.

Qualls: Thanks, Chris. And good afternoon, Mayor, Council. It's great to be here down in the southern part of the state. I'm from Sandpoint, Idaho, and a little bit more about me. I have been with SCJ Alliance for about three years now. Before that I served as a planning commissioner, I served as an urban renewal board member and a council member, staff planner and planning director. Now, in addition to working with cities and counties throughout the state and in other states as well, we -- I occasionally even help developers through the entitlement process. So, I have been looking at this through a variety of different lenses. So, this picture I love of Old Town. I love it, because it's a -- it's really good urban form. It's a place that you would want to visit. I look at this picture and say I would like to walk around in this place; right? And it wasn't because of zoning codes or planners or consultants, it's because that's how people build cities for thousands of years; right? They built them for people and a successful downtown area is a place you want to go and see people and be seen, which is perhaps evident by -- if you look at what -- I think the driver is looking at in his rear view mirror. So, before we -- oh, thanks. Next slide. Before we get into the details what we find when we work with a lot of jurisdictions is that when you are talking about a vision and goals you generally find a lot of consensus, but when you start talking about how to implement those goals and policies, that's when debate happens, when you get into the details and that's where we are at while looking at some recommended design standards for consideration in your traditional city core. So, we have looked at a lot of the past efforts you have done, which has been some really good work on the -- by the city. Your historic preservation plan, your street cross-section master plan, the Comprehensive Plan in 2019, your strategic plan in 2021 and Destination Downtown in 2024 and the work that Chris has been doing. There is a lot of common themes that we found for downtown by looking at all these policy -- policy documents. People focused. Walkable and bikeable. Beautification. Community identity and active and vibrant. So, we looked at policy to see how we might implement it; right? And you have done some implementation. We found in your code with the public realm and this is what's shown on the right side of your screen there is a section from your own code that talks about that public realm where it tries to create that active environment sense -- that sense of

safety, comfort and interest for pedestrians in the downtown area. What we are talking about now is the other side of that. The private realm. And what we have tried to do in these recommendations is maintain your traditional urban form, make it people centric, help enhance the identity of your downtown and also help continue that vibrancy -- that trend of vibrancy that Chris was talking about. At the same time we are also -- and this is where the different lenses come in from -- from how I look at code is to help make it more streamlined, predictable, clear, balanced and flexible, which I think is all very important. This is not -- the recommendations that we provided are not an overhaul of your code, it's more of just a shoring up here and there based on your existing policy and based on the trends that have -- that are already established. So, first to set the stage, it's always important to talk about where these apply and what flexibility that there is built in from the onset. So, what we recommended is that -- this isn't required for any new construction wholesale, but a 50 percent increase of an existing building, then, the standards kick in and these are just considerations and, you know, things to work out through -- more through with your staff. That way you don't -- you don't want to create a real barrier to further development, but an appropriate standard for where they kick in. We also recommended some administrative approval criteria for -- you know, ten percent, like basically an administrative waiver of ten percent of a numerical standard, which would replace your alternative compliance provision, which I read through and found pretty subjective and in my experience as both a regulator and an applicant in certain situations putting that onus on staff to have that subjective power can -- can be really -- can be really onerous for staff and it can also subject you to liability. So, a clear numeric standard that staff can provide flexibility for without going through a public hearing process I think is an important consideration just in the practice of -- of administering code. But, then, anything beyond that, another relief valve for a design review, that could be a design review board, could be your planning commission, could be your city council, where a public hearing is triggered for anything more than that. Now, this is for a waiver not a variance and I think that's a really important distinction. Variances are really high bar in Idaho code where you have to really prove that there is a steep slope or, you know, maybe a waterway where you can't meet a setback. A waiver is something different. It's just an important distinction legally. So, a waiver has a little bit more flexibility, less criteria to meet to have a waiver, because these are design standards, not -- not something that you want forgiveness in code, but something built into code to provide that flexibility. Okay. Now, the stage is set on the computer, building orientation and civic space. Get a little bit of water here. I just got back from a vacation, so here we go, hitting the ground running with Chris. No surprise. Right now I think your code requires minimum 40 percent, you know, building fronting a street. In the downtown we are recommending at least bumping that up maybe 50 percent, so that you have development on the street frontage, you know, with a zero setback, unless there is a dining area, plaza area or public art, something to help create that vibrancy. There are some exceptions in your code now I think for drive aisles and parking areas and that can kind of break up that comfort level and pedestrian experience of creating a destination that people want to be. So, these are, again, small tweaks that could go a long way. Corner lots. Corner lots, bellowed corner -- I know this is very detail rich and feel free to interrupt me at any time if you have a specific question about any one of these recommended standards and this is kind of an a la

carte, but some of these standards kind of go together. There is sometimes a carrot and stick that kind of are married together through these. So, beveled corner, you can see in the top right image, that's a picture of a building from Italy somewhere, but it's not dissimilar from some of the development you see around downtown Meridian today, some of the older development. And if you walk around, which we did quite a bit, you can see that these design standards really are intended to preserve and continue that trend of what makes a downtown a downtown, a place where people want to go. So, primary building entries face a street or provide pedestrian connection to them. Okay? Architectural components and you do have some of this for clarity. This would -- in the areas that you decide to apply this, which we are recommending the traditional city core one and two and maybe there could be some variation between those two, because they are a little bit different. So, this would replace your ASM manual as it's known for just this area at least, where -- and we -- we built in some material standards where it's not a -- but we have tried to consider it so that there is some room for additional materials, but the -- at least 50 percent of the soft facade materials can match what's there, so that there is some cohesion with the traditional building materials used in one more of the older style buildings. That could be brick, wood examples, but it's not limited to those specific materials. There is lots of affordable material options to builders to make them look like it and you see examples of that if you walk around downtown, where materials are mixed up and it works. I think The Lofts is a good example of where, you know, those building materials are mixed up. So, some clear standards for that. Consistently spaced windows. So, maintaining that opaqueness for ground -- ground floor storefronts, which makes window shopping, which makes permeability and creates that sense of visual interest for folks walking downtown or just experiencing downtown with similar shaped windows up above. Pitch roofs with eaves or if a flat roof a cornice on top, we are not going so far as to require certain types of detail, you know, to match a historic theme of the era, but just detail and, then, when you get longer buildings, breaking up the vertical facades can help maintain that visual interest and create that sense of comfort for pedestrians as well. So, we have recommended for every -- you know, over 50 feet maybe break up by two -- two foot differentiation. Again there is still relief valves built into this, but those are the standards that we are recommending and, then, blank walls that can be visible from a public area. This will happen unless you put some standard in there. You do have some, but, again, shoring up that, well, it could be a change materials, it could be some landscape screening or a mural, something to create -- maintain that visual interest and, then, a lot of other related considerations, which take them or leave them. I went through a use table and I looked at, well, what uses might not be compatible with, you know, creating that downtown sector, that people centric experience. One of them is maybe consider prohibiting drive throughs or at least certain types of drive throughs, which can create a huge traffic impact; right? Drive throughs can create -- generate a lot of trips and they also can compete with that pedestrian oriented feeling that a successful downtown will have. Limiting low density development. Moving or removing off-street parking for building use changes or for certain types of commercial or even all commercial. A lot of downtown areas are eliminating off-street parking. It sounds, you know, bold, but for commercial uses in order to encourage that redevelopment or reuse of existing buildings really considering the parking requirements, which can be a barrier to creating

the sense of vibrancy that is called for in your policy. Something to consider. I know you guys have been down this road already with parking discussions and I know that that raises a lot of red flags, but it's -- there are other options to consider without just wholesale eliminating parking. You can -- you know, there is a lot of -- there is variations on the theme there, but it's something to consider. And, then, shoring up your landscape screening where you do have parking lots facing the street and there is another provision that we found, which would allow 220 feet I think by your existing code with that 20 percent just administered, again, by staff, which, again, puts a really big burden on your existing staff to make that call and clear predictable standards, but with opportunities for flexibility. That's really all and I will turn it back to Chris, unless there are questions. I know I threw a lot at you to think about.

Danley: Okay. Thanks, Aaron. So, just to wrap up, want to make sure we hit on a couple of points, but, again, the point of today and moving forward and so I know of a concern that was raised. What is it that we want; right? What is it that we want out of this exercise -- the previous exercise from last month. In this particular instance this -- this is definitely one of those -- the design standard is specifically that are administrated by the city; right? So, this is one that definitely needs to be blessed by you all in order for your code to reflect what we have discussed and reflect those visions that are, you know, adopted in the plan or put it forth in the plan and so we -- we go to get to that point if this document is to move forward that has been supported, especially for the last couple of years. So, that's really the end goal. In terms of the procedures with the time that we have left tonight, a half an hour whatever, happy to answer questions, happy to have robust discussion. Certainly I requested that Aaron be here in person to make sure we have, you know, all of that at our fingertips. Formally if there are comments that you want to put forth we ask that they go to staff, that staff be able to reconcile them, because I will just tell you I know my -- on my desk right now as we speak is still a stack of -- of comments that came from everything and there were definitely times when there were competing interests on the same subject. So, that reconciliation is important as much as possible. In addition to staff's comments as well, that, then, ultimately make their way to MDC and, then, us and MDC, because they are my client, work through those and -- and go forth in the document to make changes that are agreeable and, hopefully, get back in front of you for formal adoption and get this thing going. So, that's really more of the formal and informal for this evening and I think I just stated all that's on the screen. So, we are good. Happy to have just a discussion and answer any questions that we can do so.

Cavener: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Thank you. Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: Chris, Aaron, Ashley, Dave, appreciate the presentation. Appreciate the roadmap, too. Helps me kind of follow where we are going. So, you know, I think one of the reasons why we are taking on this one this afternoon is there are some places where MDC is a certain stakeholder, right, of our downtown, where maybe there is some alignment with our planning staff, which are our subject matter experts, but there

are other places where maybe there is some delineation between the two. So, can you, Chris, maybe walk us through what are some of the areas that you have seen that maybe you and staff are -- our City of Meridian planning staff are not on the same alignment when it comes to design standard recommendations?

Danley: Mayor and Council Member, honestly, I don't recall there being tremendous differences. Maybe you all have different recollection from that, but I don't -- I don't recall -- now, granted this was -- this exercise when we got comments was about a year ago, so I don't have all of those off the top of my memory, but I don't recall there being anything -- any comments from staff that were just massive game changers. There were some adjustments. There were some tweaks and revisions and I think that's only natural, especially with -- with the vastness that is this document as well as the visions and, of course, the standards, but I don't remember there being anything major.

Cavener: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: I guess maybe I would ask the same question, then, to our planning staff, if they are in concurrence, if there is areas where they have got some concerns.

Hood: Mr. Mayor, Council President Cavener, yeah, I don't -- tremendous -- I don't know. I mean there is a lot of good things in the plan. We certainly -- I think a lot of the tone of our concern about some of these things in here is -- and I know Chris touched on it again today -- is the outreach; right? We have the UDC focus groups, some of these standards -- we can call it standards -- there is a certain bar of outreach that we are expected to do as city staff before we just go and change code. So, I think a lot of our tone back to, again, Chris and -- and Ashley are what's the public involvement. I -- I was at some of those events, but I didn't facilitate them. So, I just don't know, you know, how did we notice the public, what -- what kind of stakeholder outreach happened. You know, I do have a list of some things that are questions; right? Not necessarily concerns, but that's I think at the heart of some of the series of discussions is this is an elephant with Old Town stuff -- I think there is a lot -- again a lot of good things, I just can't sign off on them without having sort of that -- again, the public outreach and input that makes me more comfortable. I'm not saying they did a bad job, just -- it's just different than what we would do if it were a city led effort and I can go through a couple of -- height, right, is another one even with this topic that, you know, it -- that we have a maximum of a hundred foot in our city core and, again, there is only one now. This plan calls for two. So, one, we haven't even established some of the districts that are called for and so, then, that even kind of conflicts with our -- our comp plan map, our zoning map and some of those things -- shouldn't say it conflicts. It's just not consistent; right? Again, it hasn't -- we haven't established that TCC-2. It doesn't exist, so -- but along the rail corridor even some of the things like -- the property owners on, Broadway if there is a hundred foot building across from some of those single family homes, I don't know what the outreach was there, would they be comfortable with that. I get the concept and I -- I think this is a major asset that we should look at redevelopment. But if we all of a

sudden allowed a hundred feet by right and not allowing them some -- some -- I know parking, you know, for some of those industrial users and things can be an issue. So, if we just allowed, you know, was Pro Build or any of those customers to just go -- just build a hundred foot tall building without some other conditional use permit or oversight, there is just some of the concerns with how this would actually work and if -- if we are even on the same page with the vision and the goals of some of these things and we talked about some of that conflict, right, as you move further down. That's really where I'm still at is are we on the same page with even some of the vision that's portrayed in this document? So, I'm not saying we can't get there, but there are some of the things there -- you know, the residential parking zones, that's also called for in this section of the plan. Is that something we want to adopt and implement? We have talked about that briefly a little bit last time, not -- not a ton, but that's something here, too. It talks about creating residential parking zones.

Danley: Can I just address the last piece real quick if I might, because I just -- I think it's important. I think it was brought up at the last hearing with regard to the residential parking permit. Just as also a reminder on that, in the details of that that's a residential led initiative point, you know, end of story. That in the recommendations of that it's not a -- an establishment thereof that comes from the city, it's more of a grassroots desire amongst -- I think the threshold was 75 percent of residents would need to come together in order to craft that. So, just as a point of clarity, because I think I missed that at our last meeting, so just to point that out.

Simison: And just to piggyback off at least what Caleb said, from my perspective -- you know, just my perspective if there is anything in here that is a change of code I would expect it to go through our own city processes. I don't see us, you know, adopting anything that doesn't at least follow our normal elements from my perspective.

Cavener: I guess, Mr. Mayor, what I'm hearing is that there is maybe not necessarily a -- then a conflict of recommendations, the conflict is in the process in which these recommendations would be approved. Is that -- is that your understanding? And, if so, then I guess what would be the best way to have a collaborative process that is, you know, following the city's way of doing business, but is paying respect to that work and effort that's went in from MDC as a downtown stakeholder to bring these recommendations to us.

Simison: And my two cents is if -- if you are in general alignment with the principles of this and you turn over to the planning department and let them go run their processes, because this is your starting point for your general community feedback and it may be a very quick process, because everyone says, you bet, one hundred percent, we are -- we are already bought and sold on these, what's taking so long, dumb city, you know. but it could be the first time they have heard or seen it. You don't know and -- by the time you get to it. But that's, you know, a very generic way that I have looked at it through this is -- and, yeah, to Caleb's point, I -- one of my very basic questions is is this eliminating the Old Town district in theory -- the Old Town zoning. Is this overlaying, repealing -- I mean there is process questions in there, especially if you start doing

some of that and I don't know that I have heard or seen the answer to some basic questions, let alone, you know, others. I'm not looking for an answer right now, I'm just --

Danley: For what it's worth I think that the Old Town zoning is great. In fact, I think some of my -- just is just Chris talking -- take the consultant hat off. I would love to see the city take Old Town from the freeway to Fairview. I think it would take away a lot of ambiguity and if that's the desire to be downtown, then, you have a zone that is pretty awesome at making that downtown. I think that the design standards certainly align even more so with the suggestions of what the vision for Old Town has been and maybe some of the modifications that have come through with this process through significant input, including yours last fall and through the process. But, ultimately, I think that that Old Town zone is -- is pretty good. One question, though, is as I mentioned from the outset is asking people what Old Town even is you get different answers. Legal answers. Historic answers. Cultural answers. Geographic, you know, answers. So, there is some challenge there.

Simison: So, maybe just to the simple one. I say simple -- height. I mean there is different standards for height in all these different areas. How do you apply that to Old Town? Is it a separate overlay that people have to go look at, they look at Old Town and, then, they have to realize that there is another layer of individual components or would you leave everything in Old Town, create separate areas and update all the standards? What's -- what would be the recommendation of either staff or yourselves or --

McClure: Mr. Mayor. So, I guess to Councilman Cavener's previous comment, I didn't have a lot of concerns with overall standards, the process to get there and Council support, on the other hand, is different. So, we were before you three years ago and we didn't have marching orders to do this so we -- we haven't done anything. I would want to hear Council say do this and -- Mayor and Council say to do this to standards and, you know, how we do this, Mr. Mayor said it spot on, like is it an overlay? What is it? We don't currently have alignment between zoning and future land uses or between zoning, future land uses, and some of the areas identified in this or the previous Destination Downtown documents. In order to put everyone on an equal playing field, i.e., not have someone do extra standards for Old Town and instead choose to do residential where you don't have any standards, you have to either do an overlay or you have to do a rezone. One of those two things has to be true. Does that answer the question about overlay or rezone? Those are your options if you want everyone on the same playing field and you don't want to disincentivize Old Town.

Strader: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Strader.

Strader: Maybe switching gears briefly. Reading the plan, the biggest theme that I think was missing from the plan or just something that I -- I think might deserve a bit more

thought or explanation is I think it's really important and what makes Meridian different is that we are a really family friendly community and I want to make sure that the downtown area is oriented toward families. You know, I think a lot of cities have done a good job. Copenhagen comes to mind. But I think there are others where like every plaza has an opportunity for a micro playground or a micro play structure or some kind of an experience that I think can draw families in and help them interact with the space better. That's just some feedback on something that I would have liked to see a little bit more -- I think is more of a family theme. You know, I -- I think it's natural that the urban environment is going to be geared toward younger professionals and it's going to be geared toward, you know, potentially older residents as well, they are looking to downsize and want kind of more vibrant life, but it also should be -- should be a place where families can feel comfortable, interact with the space, make it a really fun experience. So, that is just something I felt was missing that I would like to see a little bit more of. I also had some I guess questions about the process and it feels to me like at some point we should be having a public hearing, like that definitely feels like, yeah, it needs to be part of the process and, then, that gives opportunity for the business owners to come and weigh in and I agree I think you have had a lot of great -- like stakeholder engagement. I just think it may not have met the -- the typical level that we would see with like a city wide code change. So, that would be a suggestion. I'm very sensitive to the -- I guess the areas that you have marked for neighborhood enhancements and I kind of wanted to drill into that a little bit. So, what would the maximum height be in those neighborhoods under this plan? I wasn't really following that.

Danley: Thank you, Mayor and Councilman Strader. I don't think we even touched on the height changes in the neighborhood enhancement.

Strader: No.

Danley: There is no recommended changes in terms of height, I think we just simply said that the promotion of in-fill and going up to two story, which is already allowed, is ideal. I think if anything we went to maybe 35 feet, which two and a half stories, you know, maybe a third story, but, really, it's not even going to that point. It's mostly about in-fill, enhancing those areas to your point about -- especially your first point about the families and maintaining that presence. It's critical that we not necessarily, you know, do the very things that could force people away from the home that they have been in, you know. So, that's definitely part of the mantra there. So, we don't really touch that.

Strader: Yeah. I -- Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Strader.

Strader: That's where I think the public hearing process and more of a city led process I think could sort of tease some of that out, because I agree with the planning staff, I think if you have a situation where -- there aren't a ton of places where I think that interface would occur here, but it certainly could, where you may have a five story building pretty

close to, you know, single family residential or you might have a hundred foot building that's not that far. I can't think of a better way of running families out of town than having such a contrast and I think we need to think about how to transition to those neighborhoods, so that -- I just think that's something that we need to work through. I liked the human centered design elements. I liked the festival street concept. I have been a fan of that. I think that's beautifully done and thought there were a lot of good ideas there. I even -- I liked a lot of the details around beveled corners. I just -- I -- what I'm -- one thing I am concerned about, though, that I'm sort of trying to figure out is I think what you are asking for is a change to our typical processes as a city. So, you know, for example, getting rid of alternative compliance. That's a big change. And I have a hard time I think with doing that in just one area without considering if that makes more sense as a city wide initiative like for example. So, there are just some things where I'm struggling a little bit with having a different process for -- for this area specifically when it -- if it's a good idea it may be something that we should just consider; right? So, that -- that's something -- design review has become a big topic for us lately, especially in my district we have had just some acute situations that have come up. I think it honestly is -- is just circumstances, but, you know, a design review board, for example, that's an interesting concept to me, you know, but that's something that we could leverage I think to solve wider issues potentially. So, I'm really looking for our staff I think to try to take the plan, take our existing process and kind of give us a road map as to a way to marry them together. So, I'm interested in figuring out how we could accomplish that. Sorry. I'm kind of jumping around a little bit. But I guess that's just some initial feedback. I do think there are a lot of really good opportunities around, but there are things like the pedestrian infrastructure and bike lanes, for example. Like as a city our philosophy around biking specifically and how to handle that, we really embrace like detached multi-use pathways, for example. That might be more challenging in the downtown environment, but how can we, you know, make sure that we have buffered like separated bike lanes, for example, things like that. So, I just think there is more -- there is more to tease out and more to talk about, but for me the mean -- if there was one thing that I felt was a little bit missing it was that family focus. So, I guess I would challenge you a little bit to think about that. And I generally like the plan. I do want to say that. I generally like the plan. I felt it's moving things in a positive direction, but I just have real concerns about how to marry this plan up with our process and ideally I would like to not have a totally separate process for this one area. I just think that's very inefficient and ideally if we could avoid that. That might be best.

Hood: Mr. Mayor, if I can just real quick. I -- there is so much in the plan; right? I even was guilty of talking about parking, which we have already sort of covered that in this area, or design standards in that -- it's going to be different; right? I mean there is a bunch of things about enhancements that the parks department should -- like I'm not volunteering to say let me lead that effort about making downtown parks; right? So, there is so many things that other departments would even have to get into. If we are going to adopt the plan we need to -- and it's not just the planning department, I just want to put that out there. I'm not necessarily volunteering to go and update the parks, you know, master plan. There is a -- there is a lot of things in here and on the agenda today we are talking about design standards and that process. I guess I just want to

kind of put that a little bit back in context. Not that I don't appreciate all comments on this, so I'm going to be quiet here in a second, but I just want to put that out there. Really our comments back mainly should be about city code, the comp plan, the vision and those design standards that are -- that are called for in this plan. That's -- there is other things we need to talk about at some point, but today I think it's mainly about the design standards.

Strader: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Strader.

Strader: Maybe. But I have a different view. Sorry. I read the plan as kind of a theme, like so -- when I read this plan -- like everyone's different. You are -- no offense, but you are a planner and so it makes sense to me that you would focus on the design standards, whereas I read the plan and I care about the design standards, but I'm also saying, okay, are there themes of focuses I think are missing or that need to be more of a focus and so if I have a comment like I think, you know, ensuring that public plazas and public spaces include some type of a micro playground or some type of family friendly environment, whether it's planning leading the charge or whether it's parks that gets involved -- I mean there -- I think there needs to be a city wide effort for sure and I don't mean to say that like your department would be uniquely responsible, but I still think if we don't comment on those themes when would -- when would we?

Hood: That's a fair question and I will just say -- sorry, Mr. Mayor. It's a fair question. I think when we had the -- one of the first conversations with Council it's how do we start taking bites of this element? Is it by area? Is it by topic? Is it -- how do we -- you know. And so I just want to -- on the agenda today it says design standards; right? And, then, we are talking about Old Town and design standards, so I think, again, all comments for my -- are welcome. Like whatever information you want to share. But I just want to -- lumping them all under this umbrella of design standards and, then, planning running with that. So, I hear your questions. There is just a lot in the plan that I think we need to fully understand as we move to the next topic, that those things -- fully. Whatever that means.

Simison: Might go to -- Councilman Taylor, who is unmuted, assuming he had a comment on this topic.

Taylor: Yeah. Thank you, Mayor. I got a handful of comments. I do have one question, though, for -- probably Aaron a little bit and, then, I have some comments. But my question is about parking a little bit and I know we had this discussion last time, but to me this is an interesting topic, because I really embrace the concept of making this more of a walkable pedestrian friendly part of Meridian, as opposed to, you know, some of the other locations and I think that's going to be an important distinctive component of downtown Meridian. So, can you talk to me just a little bit more about the suggestion of removing off-street parking requirements? And I just wrote some notes down, so I might be missing part of it. Help me understand from your point of view to make downtown

Meridian a little bit more pedestrian friendly what you would recommend we do in terms of parking downtown. Not so much where to park, but how to kind of accommodate that pedestrian friendly parking and sort of, again, removing off-street parking requirements -- I'm not sure exactly what you are recommending with that, so if you could maybe elaborate just a little bit on that.

Qualls: Well, thank you for the question. You know -- and I will be honest, off-street parking requirements was a little bit of scope creep for me in the design standards, which has really been my lane. But they do have -- there is a real nexus between how much surface parking you require and the intent of the design standards, which is to create, as you said, that -- that pedestrian friendly environment. So, what I kind of baked in is just alternate, you know, additional considerations, just from my view of doing an audit of your code and listening to people at public engagement events, not necessarily a full blown exempt parking -- off-street parking requirements, you know, within an area, although a lot of cities have done that for their downtowns, not just for the -- to create a more pedestrian friendly environment, but also to maintain and enhance your tax base, because parking lots don't generate a lot of tax revenue. Buildings do. Improvements do and in my experience developers -- even if there aren't parking requirements, particularly for residential uses are going to want to provide parking, so that they can market their units. But for commercial uses specifically I noticed that a change of building use -- an existing building, you change it from an office to a restaurant, boom, you have to put in ten more parking spaces. That means either paying exorbitant fees if you have an in lieu fee or it means knocking down another building, which over time can diminish your -- what a downtown feeling is, which is, you know, a compact, dense, walkable environment. So -- and, really, you know, this -- this is just ideas to get the ball rolling, to get the wheels turning by your planning commission and you are absolutely right, it should be driven by your staff. It should be a city process and not only should there be a public hearing, but probably several workshops with your planning commission and staff driving this. That's how it should work and maybe even additional broader public outreach about this. So, you know, rehabbing existing buildings to create -- to incentivize repurposing buildings and investment in your downtown and to -- to maintain -- not just eliminating park or reducing eliminate -- reducing parking requirements, but also the standards by which you allow for surface parking to the side or behind with that street frontage, so that buildings are closer to the street, which slows down traffic, which makes it more comfortable for pedestrians and interesting, you know, which is paired with those, you know, details of breaking up floors and incentivizing canopies and pedestrian amenities. So, I don't know if I fully answered your question, but that's the thinking behind it. And Chris can add to that.

Danley: I just have an example that might illustrate the point on this issue. If McMenamins came to Meridian tomorrow and said Cole Valley Christian, that's an amazing, historic building, is something that we have our eye on and we would love to come to Meridian and be the first McMenamins in the state of Idaho if you are aware of McMenamins and what they do. An amazing company that does historic preservation and makes a place that was once an incredible thriving cultural valuable place alive

again; right? If they came to you tomorrow and said we love that building, we want to turn it into a small restaurant, 20 room hotel, whatever else; right? But the parking standards require that we have 50 off-street parking. We only have 40. What are we going to say; right? Are we going to force a part of that parcel to somehow be, you know, bulldozed if we have to in order to accommodate that? That's I think a way to illustrate that. I know in downtown here the church was -- I don't know what the status is, but the church was discussed as being for sale. What if that became a concert venue tomorrow? That's an amazing addition to downtown; right? But if that parking part of things trips us up, that's I think what Aaron's trying to illustrate is that what flexibility may we have in order to get some of the things that we know and want to have in downtown already family friendly; right? Talk about some of those types of things that could come with some of those adjustments.

Qualls: Can I just -- if I can real quick on the -- on the bike thing. I just want to remind everybody that as we were doing this process ACHD had their plan as well that was going concurrently and so we did work together to -- to ensure that both were informed. So, I just wanted to remind everybody of that.

Simison: So, are you saying you are going to deliver us a McMenamins area?

Qualls: That has been my dream from the beginning of this project. I love that and we were in Bend -- my family was in the one -- Bend not but a handful of months ago. And I think that would be an incredible place for the first in Idaho.

Simison: And I want to get back to Councilman Taylor. I don't want to take over his time, but in a response to another question when you get into it, like, okay, that's good for today, but what happens when you are in Washington DC around Adams Morgan and you have no place to put cars anymore? Well, what's your threshold for when you say, okay, we are going to take that standard away? But Councilman Taylor to you.

Taylor: Yeah. Thank you, Mayor and Aaron and Chris. That -- that is helpful, because I do think, again, that -- that parking strategy that we did ultimately need to sort of settle on -- as a city is going to be important when we are considering some of these design elements. Overall let me give some feedback. I actually really appreciated this document. I thought there were a lot of good suggestions. The way I read it in relation to how we as a city should interpret it, I feel like you are challenging us to think a little deeper about what we want to see; right? And I think maybe it was Brian had mentioned, you know, three years ago, you know, we -- there was no specific challenge for the city staff to necessarily start working on it, knowing some of this was happening and I see this as very helpful in the process of challenging our thinking what we want to see. I -- I do think what we are going to have to do between this document in the city is we are going to have to kind of sit down and really spend some time clarifying what we specifically want to see; right? Building heights along the -- you know, the rail corridor. An overlay or a rezoning change. All these things I think is actually going to take a lot more work and I agree with everything that was said previously by staff and Council Woman Strader mentioned it, too, like there has got to be a lot -- a little bit more of a

public process where we are inviting that information. But overall I really like this. I believe one thing that we really should focus on as a city that would be helpful is -- is creating really the -- having what we call -- I'm losing my word -- sort of a downtown street festival area. Maybe that's the wrong word. I'm losing my thinking here. But having something that draws people downtown I think would be very helpful and would really spur on that. So, I appreciate having you focus on that, but I -- again I think everything that was shared tonight is helpful. I'm very supportive of what I'm seeing, but I want to rectify that with a more robust public input into finalizing things. But I -- I think what you have done for us here has really accelerated a lot of our work and giving us a really good product. So, I do appreciate it. I think -- I think some of my specific questions will probably be better served for when we are actually getting down to, you know, what do we want for building heights. Is it a hundred feet? Is it 75 feet? I think -- yeah, I think that's probably my comments for now.

Simison: Councilman Overton.

Overton: Playing off the backs of the other comments that have already been said and some pretty good ones, first off I would like to commend Caleb for his comments about how we require our planning staff to vet out different things when it comes to standards, because the first thing I got concerned about when we were talking about the standards is I didn't hear that we have representatives from our development community, whether it was residential, business, industrial, you could have been in this room a week ago and that was incredibly valuable information that we got last week that if we hadn't had it we wouldn't have been able to make the decision that we made going forward with changes to our standards. So, it's very important that we hear from them, not just the homeowners, but we hear from that development community, they play a great role -- and we do require that when they do their meetings and they invite them and they come to the table.

Danley: Can I address that real quick, if I may, Mr. Mayor and Councilman Overton? We were -- we had a full on development subgroup and there were particular members of downtown who were part of the process all the way through, because they just wanted to be. So, they -- that whole concept of property owners, business owners and their staff was definitely a piece of the information gathering process specific to Old Town at a focus point and throughout. I didn't mention that. That's my fault.

Overton: Mr. Mayor. Not the owners. Developers, the ones that are going to be coming in here and making the changes. They are going to be bringing in something new. That's the ones -- what I -- what I don't want to do is -- is -- okay. I'm going to say it. No offense. But when I read this document I felt like I was playing Sim City. I was taking this incredible document and looking at this part of our city and saying, wow, what could I turn this into. But the problem is I have lived here too long. I remember what's there now. And in one of the first pages is respect Meridian's history. Define that for me. What do you mean when you say respect Meridian's history while promoting a modern downtown? Because that's a really good sentence, but I bet it means a lot different things to a lot of people.

Danley: If that's a question I would be -- I would love to answer it. So, that's the challenge and so to your point that's like -- for example I'm just going in a very specific detail, but to Aaron's point with the chamfered corner, as an example. That's been around for hundreds of years beyond Meridian; right? But respective of the existing neighborhoods and the history that's gone in there, certainly trying to maintain some of that -- I think some of the building materials that you might expect to see in downtown are indicative of that. At the same time there is the desire and need to modernize and to continue to grow into the directions that are acceptable and that what we heard from, you know, all the folks that were involved in this. So, you know, even -- another example outside of design standards and Old Town, as you move north there is definitely language in there with regards to the residential businesses and the -- the neighborhood commercial activity that takes place from the north part of Carlton up toward Fairview and the recognition of the value -- the EPIS of the world and all the others, that that is an amazing asset for downtown Meridian and should be preserved and it's why we kept that in terms of the recommendations of just, yeah, this is great, let's keep this type of a thing, because it is unique to you, you know. So, I think we tried our best to try to balance that, but also recognize those development pressures and -- and the modernization of approaches that we are -- we are seeing and even in cauterizing some of your plans. So, as much as we could.

Overton: Mr. Mayor, follow up. So, I appreciate that, because when I was reading part of the plan talking about the rail corridor and it talked about where our city hall was located and talking between our city hall and the rail corridor, it kind of eliminated Zamzow's and I get it, that's -- that's Meridian 75 years ago. But it's part of our history. I look at that and I -- I appreciate that. But, see, I remember when Clint Eastwood came to town and filmed a movie here. The Hungry Onion still stands where he shot the movie. The Speedway still stands where he shot part of his movie. We lost Farmers and Merchants State Bank where he filmed the bank robbery as part of that movie. But those were iconic things that happened in our city over time and I hate to see us discard some of our past and some of our history in the interest of modernization. I struggle to find where that common ground is between where you want to modernize and where we want to leave the way things were. I mean Meridian Meat and Sausage has been in this community for decades. It's not going anywhere. Renee just retired and turned the business over to his son and he plans on running that for another few decades and I would like to see that happen. So, I struggle with looking at your plan and how we are going to -- those beautiful pictures you show and some of even the streetscapes out of Kirkland, Washington, how -- you are going to do that here.

Danley: Yeah. And I don't know that even the last iteration of Destination Downtown was able to answer some of those questions, because it is a difficult one. Even in the concept of the Speedway there is so much discussion within the community of what happens with the speedway. It is historic, but for others -- and I'm not saying this, so don't hit me, but others would argue that it's a different thing, because of its noise and the activities that sometimes can come from it. So, historic preservation, as well as future growth and the planning that goes -- can often butt heads and it's painful and it's not easy. You know, I think that as much as we could try to preserve some of those

spaces, but recognize that the market forces and the property owners and developers also have a private property right to do certain things, are also part of that conversation and it is definitely not an easy line to walk. But we have given it a chance and that doesn't mean it's perfect and it doesn't mean it's not amenable to the types of things that I think were brought up tonight and maybe the next time we are here and after that.

Little Roberts: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Little Roberts.

Little Roberts: Mr. Mayor. First of all, Chris and Aaron, great project, great report. Thank you so much. Really tiny question compared to some of the things my fellow Councilman have brought up, but I was really surprised with the recommendation to go just for pitched roofs, probably because right at the moment it seems like we are getting a lot of people that want -- we -- I think I saw a pergola on the top of Keller and Associates building. Flat rooftops with event space or common space seem to be kind of the trend from what I'm seeing.

Qualls: Thank you for that question and opportunity to clarify. So, there wasn't a recommendation for just pitch roofs, but where pitch roofs are allowed to some standards for them and where flat roofs are proposed, some standards for them, really decorative cornice. So, there is options for both, just some minor standards for each what was -- what I try to put in there. So, we are not excluding one or the other, but just so that they are done in a way that doesn't -- isn't out of context with the rest of the downtown.

Little Roberts: Great. Thank you.

Taylor: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Taylor.

Taylor: Yeah. I have a question. It's maybe for staff and maybe even for you, Mayor. I think there is a lot of work to be done to kind of -- for us to get -- figure out exactly what the design standards are going to look like. So, I guess my question would be if -- if we get to a point where we sort of dial in on exactly what we want to see, do we want to do it through an overlay, a rezone, or by amending the Comprehensive Plan what -- what's sort of the better process by which we might want to actually nail down what these design standards would look like? And I'm curious staff -- feedback from them from a sort of practicality and, then, maybe even from you if you have some thoughts on that.

Simison: I can honestly say I have no thoughts on what's the best approach then. Defer one hundred percent to staff.

Hood: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. And Councilman Taylor. So, we have thought about it and, honestly, I think it may be a combination of all three of those and that to me is

some of the crux of the question. Are all of these things that are called standards in here that also recommend -- recommendations, are those things we want to standardize or do we want to encourage and promote and do some of those other verbs that really lead towards the vision, but it's not in black and white that thou shall or shall not, so I think that's some of what we need to figure out. So, some of those things that aren't prescriptive standards, but we want to encourage and promote, could go on the Comprehensive Plan and, then, kind of like depending on what happens. What we can't do is design standards in our Comprehensive Plan if we are going to have standards those need to either be in our code -- well, they need to be in our code or put -- you could put them as an addendum to the code and cross-reference our architectural manual or -- or downtown standards. But, again, I think it's some combination TBD and I think that's part of what we need to fully understand is how many of the things are baked enough where we can push them forward to public hearing versus need to be talked about more and we explore these things more and maybe eventually they turn into code or standards and maybe they are longer term things, like Brian and I were just talking like -- again, I like a lot of the things, but if our design standards for downtown say a building along the rail corridor has to be a minimum of 75 feet and have doors that face the railroad, I don't think that's going to be received well; right? If those standards aren't for the hearing now we are going to get pushback. So, we need to understand where we can have alternative compliance or design standards exceptions or whatever that process looks like or is that something that just says we really want you to think about embracing the railroad corridor, because it's coming whether it be with, you know, bus rapid transit or commuter rail or light rail or something -- or just a park even along there -- really try to embrace that and encourage it versus requiring it. So, I think that's where, again, staff is kind of in the middle. I don't want to say things are bad, it's just how do we take them to the next step; right? And have those dialogs.

Simison: So, I want to get to Council Member Whitlock before we go down this road, but maybe be thinking about this real quick. If you look at the appendix -- if you look at the items in the appendix -- staff, I think if you went through and were able to identify where you would recommend the changes and I think that starts with the overlaying, you know, do you create additional overlays or not? I think that would help answer some of the questions through that, but don't give us an answer now. Council Member Whitlock.

Whitlock: Mayor and Aaron and Chris, thanks. Let me just preface what I'm about to say with the fact that I have spent more than half of my adult life working in downtown Boise and I have never thought about design standards in -- in the last 35 years as I have worked in downtown Boise, but I did this weekend after reading your document. At some point in the early 1900s they built the Idaho State House and next door they built the Federal Building, which is now the Borah Post Office. Two very majestic buildings. It seems like nothing else really happened until about 30 years later when art deco seemed to be the -- well, 20 years later art deco seemed to be the style. So, you had the Hotel Boise, which was the Hoff Building now. You have the old Ada County Courthouse, again, in that art deco style -- design standards I guess that they were trying to meet or look that they were going after, both of which don't appeal to me

today, nor 30 years later when they started building out the rest of the downtown core area in that government complex with the Hall of Mirrors, Len B. Jordan Building, the State Library, the State Supreme Court building, are all very vanilla to me, both inside and out and so as I read this plan and looked at some of the recommendations, whether it's, you know, the exteriors of the building, the heights of the building and, then, I looked at the renderings of the trail and rail corridors and -- to Caleb's point where doors may face the railroad or not, I'm familiar with Salt Lake City and their light rail system and, you know, they have just got fencing and it's kind of ugly as it meanders through Draper and Murray and everywhere else and I like the idea of trying to make that inviting, I just don't know how you do that with design standards and rail coming through the middle of your city. I like the renderings. I like what you put there. I just don't know that we can, A, do it safely, efficiently, have it be affordable. So, again, some questions on -- as we look at the design standards what ultimately is it that we will -- will see. Back to what I prefaced all of this with. Downtown Boise, as I stood there and looked around, some of those buildings have withstood the test of time, 120 years later they are still majestic. We are still proud of what it -- what they have accomplished and -- and that's what I want as we kind of look to the future of Old Town to Councilman Overton's point, I want that history, but I also -- if you go back to your very last slide, I didn't have a problem with anything that I saw in that slide. I saw the new complementing the old. I saw streetscapes. Didn't see a lot of backup traffic in the roads or anything. So, that you have addressed the traffic problem in your picture. Those are the kinds of things that -- that I would like to see, rather than a cavernous hundred foot tall buildings lining our rail corridor. I don't know how to get there with design standards. I appreciate the thought provoking report and what it's caused me to do and reflect upon. I think we do have some work to do and definitely feel that there should be some public input there. I love what you said in the report in terms of we want downtown and Old Town to be a go to rather than a go through. A 110 percent on board with that. I don't know that I necessarily agreed with some of the comments in there. One of the comments on page 24 was there is little to no appeal to passersby to stop and see an accountant, legal services or financial services and those are exactly the same -- the things that would bring me downtown and cause me to take my wife to lunch after we turn our taxes in. So, think about those kinds of things that allow us to go to and stay and -- and be a part of downtown. Just my comments. Thanks.

Danley: Appreciate it. Hey, if I can just touch on the -- one of the -- a little bit of the rail part of it if I might and that is just -- it is not easy to do that, but you all have been leading the charge on this very issue with the rail with trail, very much a family friendly desired use that connects not just Meridian, but places east and west. So, that vision is already moving forward and so I think what we try to do is complement that vision by not only on the land use of the adjacent parcels, but a linear park space, because at some point what is the future of the rail. That's a fundamental part of this discussion; right? We just don't even really know. But also the human element part of this document is intended to make that even more vibrant and to create an experiential location to, then complement some of the design standards that not everything is going to be the hundred story or hundred foot -- definitely not a hundred stories. Sorry. Hundred feet. There is going to be variation. But imagine being able to go to a restaurant that sits

outside looking at a green space where people are riding their bike in downtown Meridian; right? And that's -- that's the kind of vision that we are trying to not only put forth in the document, but hopefully memorialize in some meaningful way with the design standards to complement and some of the other things that I can't really wait to get to, like the human experience chapter, maybe because I'm selfish I love that part of it, but just some of that stuff that's I think to be determined.

Strader: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Strader.

Strader: Yeah. The rail corridor is a really interesting tough challenge, but has so much potential. I mean I liked where you were going with the linear park space and I -- and, obviously, the rail with trail has been something that we have been exploring for a long time. I think -- I think the push and pull of that is -- and just a concern is if we end up with buildings that if we proactively say, hey, look we want to see like eight story buildings, we want to see our density along this corridor, how do we do that in a way that kind of preserves like light and air and a park like feel, because I could see it turning into just kind of, you know, masses of really tall buildings and, then, you have all the issues of shadows and it creates like a lot of challenges. So, I was kind of curious about how you are thinking about that in the pedestrian element and how -- how can -- you know -- and I know you talked about pedestrian crossing, but kind of wanted to drill down into that, like how do you foresee that functioning, you know, is it a combination of fencing for safety and, then, you are -- you are going to have like specific crossings with kind of safety elements like -- that -- that's something I wanted to understand and that's a good example. Like maybe that whole stream of work is something that we kind of direct toward parks, for example; right? Like maybe one way to -- I'm just trying to brainstorm of how we could be proactive and trying to move it forward from a practical level. Like, you know, maybe if you had just a listing of, okay, from your perspective these are the top priorities in changes in design standards that you want to see in order. These are the biggest changes that we think are the most important and you -- and you sent us that, maybe we could all kind of weigh in and say -- this is what we do a lot with our code changes. We sort of say, okay, these ones we feel like we can move these ones forward. These ones we think need more work. I mean there will be a public hearing process no matter what on any changes. But maybe that's one way to do this is just, you know, prioritization of design standard, changes from your perspective and, then, I think it will be important for you to separate out changes you are requesting in our processes, because that I think is very different. I'm just trying to brainstorm, but maybe that's a way we could try to move this forward from a practical level. Is here is our updated prioritization of design standard changes we want to see you consider and here are the things that are actually process changes and departures from how you normally do things and maybe we could tackle it that way sort of separating those out and we could create some work streams where it's like, okay, we do think parks needs to take on these items, send those over to that commission and that department, maybe there is a way to tackle that. It's a weighty document, so I think that's part of the challenge. I'm very open to that though. I think -- I do think like having staff spend time

on this makes sense like. I -- I do want to say that. I think -- but I do think we have to get into a more practical framework for how to move these forward specifically, because it's a beautiful document, but, then, there is a lot of verbiage, but it's like at the end of the day I think, honestly, your bullet points here are a good example of like here are some design standard architectural components and if you are saying, okay, you know, our number one priority is -- you know -- and it doesn't mean that there aren't multiple priorities, but, hey, these are our top priorities, then, that might help us -- that might be clarifying for us. Just a suggestion.

Simison: I think we knew that the -- that the first two that we bit off were the two biggest and this one was going to be -- well, one is a -- the first one -- I think the parking is a different type of animal. This is the animal that we knew was going to be the most intensive in terms of trying to figure out where to go from here and, then, we are nearing the end of our workshop and, you know, I don't want to -- I think that this is one of -- next month. I don't want to get too far away from this and just move on to the next one. I would recommend to Council we bring -- they have staff take this feedback and contemplate some of the things about what would move forward in what ways and the next and also Council to give feedback after this conversation to staff on any of their thoughts, so we could continue this specific conversation next month to lay out a process on those elements that we think we -- to answer those questions. But I kind of -- staff needs further guidance on -- even from Council on some of the elements to -- before they can even make those ultimate decisions and I want you all to make sure you have time to take what you have heard and think about it. Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: I -- I agree with you on that and I think I would maybe also encourage you and staff to take it one step further, which is be maybe doing some of that -- whether it's a -- it's a pre-meeting with either Council members or the liaison or you, Mayor, or sending a memo to the Council, so that we are not having to kind of have you -- the process introduced, have it take a month for staff to evaluate -- I mean staff have had the Destination Downtown plan for at least as long as we have, so rather than piecemealing it month after month, if we could have them come more prepared with some of those questions as we are taking on these topics each month I think it would make us more efficient and see that move forward.

Simison: I think we can start with them telling us -- looking just at the appendix items, where they think that they should be addressed and what questions they need answered in order to address them. You know, what are the overarching things that they want Council's feedback on. I think -- I mean the biggest is overlay or reset standards for Old Town amongst it. And, then, you can get into the conversation about height specifically if we want to when we have -- when we get to that right time of the conversation.

Taylor: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Taylor.

Taylor: I will just be really brief. I know we need to end. I appreciate that. I think there is things that are obtainable in the near term and there is things that are very challenging and we need to be more of a longer term discussion. So, I do appreciate any guidance we can get from staff on things that are, you know, how -- what they need from us to provide that feedback, but there are things I think that are close that we can -- we can do something with and clearly there is things that are kind of further off that maybe we can have those at the proper time in discussion point.

Simison: Questions. Caleb? Brian? Bill? Okay. Well, we will pick this one back up next month with hopefully a little bit more specifics on these elements that we can either talk about or just process and talk about them.

Danley: Okay. Mayor. Council. Staff. Thank you for your time. Appreciate it.

Cavener: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: I move we adjourn our work session.

Strader: Second.

Simison: Motion and second to adjourn. All in favor signify by saying aye. Opposed nay? The ayes have it. We are adjourned.

MOTION CARRIED: ALL AYES.

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 5:52 P.M.

(AUDIO RECORDING ON FILE OF THESE PROCEEDINGS)

MAYOR ROBERT SIMISON

DATE APPROVED

ATTEST:

CHRIS JOHNSON - CITY CLERK