

MEMORANDUM
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT



May 30, 2025

TO: Mayor Robert Simison
City Council Members
Planning & Zoning Commissioners

CC: Chris Johnson, City Clerk
Emily Kane, Deputy City Attorney
Bruce Freckleton, Community Development Director
Caleb Hood, Community Development Deputy Director

FROM: Brian McClure, Long-range Planning Supervisor

RE: Proposed Updates to Meridian City Code Title 8 Regarding Addressing

This memorandum serves as a request for the attached proposed changes to City Code of Meridian, Idaho, Title 8 – Public Ways and Property, Chapter 2. – Uniform Street Name and Address Number Code (Addressing Code). Unlike Title 11, Unified Development Code changes, there is no formal application process.

Requested Addressing Code changes cover two general topic areas; addressing accessory dwelling units (“ADUs”); and changes to align current addressing standards and best practices in City Code. The ADU-related changes support Current Planning efforts to clean up existing code and better align with International Building Code by clarifying the process for assigning addresses for ADUs. These changes include coordination with the Fire Department; addressing also supports adopted Fire Code. These changes standardize the process so that only ADUs meeting planning and building standards will be given an address. On the opposite spectrum, no address will be assigned to an ADU that does not meet standards. These changes are somewhat self-contained, working with new or old planning code.

On the “cleanup” side, all changes are intended to standardize current practice. Some of this code is no longer relevant. The primary example is removing code that directs building letter identifiers for some multi-dwelling buildings. The United States Postal Service has not supported this practice for some time. The practice has also caused a great deal of confusion when property is later subdivided. Other changes reflect current practice, generally what is already done, with improvements to transparency and elimination of subjective criteria. For addressing, striving for consistency is the greatest mandate across several national guiding standards and best practices.

Attachments:

- Addressing Code Changes, with strike-through and underline.



May 30, 2025

The following are proposed code changes to Meridian's Title 8, Chapter 2. – Uniform Street Name and Address Number Code changes. Proposed changes are shown in ~~strike-through~~ (remove) and underline (addition). Staff comments in code sections are represented by [*Text*].

8-2-3 Definition, Front Door	
Description	Adding a definition of “front door”
The Issue	Addresses are assigned based on the named street toward which the front door faces. Defining the term “front door” will clarify which street will be used for the address.
Proposed Code (with changes)	<u>Front door means the main pedestrian doorway that fronts a street or that provides direct ingress to and egress from a habitable interior space from a public or publicly accessible space.</u>
Proposed Code (Clean)	Front door means the main pedestrian doorway that fronts a street or that provides direct ingress to and egress from a habitable interior space from a public or publicly accessible space.
Additional Explanation	See related code change for 8-2-7-E-12-b.

8-2-3 Definition, Address sub designation	
Description	Simple definition cleanup
The Issue	Buildings are (literally) not a type of sub designation for addressing in the Meridian Enterprise Addressing Database.
Proposed Code (with changes)	Address sub designation means the address alpha or numeric sub- designation used to identify individual buildings , units or suites within a common complex.
Proposed Code (Clean)	Address sub designation means the address alpha or numeric sub- designation used to identify individual units or suites within a common complex.
Additional Explanation	None.

8-2-7-E-12-b Street Address Numbering Standards, Street Frontage	
Description	Corner lot address numbering guidelines related to the “front” of a structure
The Issue	<p>There are cases where garages and “front doors” face different streets. The current standard practice is to use the “front door” facing a named street, rather than the garage. However, staff are pressured to use the garage door at times due to street name preference.</p> <p>Front doors are the primary point of entry for E.M.S. and where address points are located in GIS, used in CAD by Ada County Dispatch. They are also typically where doorbell cameras are placed, and where most packages are left. It is understandable why sometimes a property prefers a different street name; the purpose however is first and foremost consistent wayfinding. Property owners don’t “select” their street name for any other property type. Codifying what is already standard practice will help staff to be more consistent by reducing external pressures.</p>
Proposed Code (with changes)	Corner lots (residential). The address shall be assigned to the street on toward which <u>the front door is oriented</u> the main entrance of the primary structure fronts .
Proposed Code (Clean)	Corner lots (residential). The address shall be assigned to the street toward which the front door is oriented.
Additional Explanation	A definition for “front door” was added, to simplify this code section.

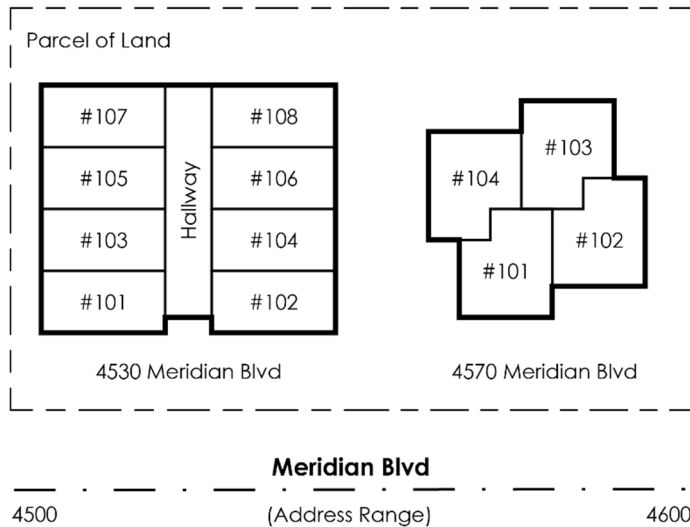
8-2-3 Definitions, Primary and Accessory Dwelling Units	
Description	Define what is commonly known as Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) and differentiate from other common dwelling types.
The Issue	<p>Accessory Dwelling Units or “ADU” need to be defined to better aid in adhering to Court guidance and in better aligning with planning and building codes. What the City defines as an “ADU”, must be given an address under previous legal direction.</p> <p>To align with building code and changes to planning code, the term “Dwelling, accessory”, will be used to define an ADU.</p>
Proposed Code (with changes)	<p><u>Dwelling, accessory shall be defined as set forth in the Meridian Unified Development Code.</u></p> <p><u>Dwelling, primary shall be defined as set forth in the Meridian Unified Development Code.</u></p> <p><u>Dwelling, multi shall be defined as set forth in the Meridian Unified Development Code.</u></p>
Proposed Code (Clean)	<p>Dwelling, accessory shall be defined as set forth in the Meridian Unified Development Code.</p> <p>Dwelling, primary shall be defined as set forth in the Meridian Unified Development Code.</p> <p>Dwelling, multi shall be defined as set forth in the Meridian Unified Development Code.</p>
Additional Explanation	Definitions are intended to be generic and limit contradictions with other Code definitions in other Titles. Additional changes related to addressing Dwelling, accessory (ADU) are included in other following sections.

8-2-7-E-11 Street Address Numbering Standards, Single-family Dwellings	
Description	Revise language regarding single-family dwellings to also apply to accessory dwellings.
The Issue	This is the primary change related to Dwelling, accessory or “ADU”. The intent is to make it clear when an accessory unit must be given an address, and when it cannot. The context here is that the decision is yes or no, with no grey area due to previous judicial direction. The code is intended to align with planning and building code. In short, if it meets building code definition for a Dwelling, accessory, then it must be addressed, and if it’s some other perhaps livable “secondary” space, not meeting the standards, it cannot be addressed.
Proposed Code (with changes)	Single-family dwellings. <u>Dwellings primary and accessory. A single-family dwelling-Both primary and accessory dwelling units</u> shall receive an individual address numbers in conformance with the Assessor's Street Name and Address Database, <u>except that an accessory dwelling unit that does not meet all applicable City standards and requirements for such use shall not receive an address.</u>
Proposed Code (Clean)	Dwellings primary and accessory. Both primary and accessory dwelling units shall receive individual address numbers in conformance with the Assessor's Street Name and Address Database, except that an accessory dwelling unit that does not meet all applicable City standards and requirements for such use shall not receive an address.
Additional Explanation	Terminology is intended to be black and white regarding whether a recognized dwelling type may be addressed or not.

8-2-7-E	Street Address Numbering Standards, Multi dwelling buildings
Description	Change to reflect that letter identifiers for multi dwelling buildings are no longer used.
The Issue	Addressing for multi-family buildings with letter identifiers is no longer supported by the United States Postal Service. This primary addressing method also causes significant issues for the City and residents where properties are later subdivided (a recent example is Summertown on Ustick Road). Address numbers for each multi-family building regardless of whether buildings are in common ownership or on individual parcels, are now standard practice.
Proposed Code (with changes)	<p>2. Multifamily <u>dwelling</u> residential developments and multi-tenant commercial developments.</p> <p>a. Multi <u>dwelling-family</u> buildings. <u>The City shall assign an individual address number to each building within a multi dwelling residential development, in conformance with the Assessor's Street Name and Address Database with separate addresses in common development. When individual buildings within a common multifamily development are assigned separate addresses, i.</u> Individual unit numbers shall <u>also</u> be assigned to each dwelling-unit, with no duplication of unit designations within each building. First floor units shall be assigned 100-series numbers, second floor units shall be assigned 200-series numbers, and so on for each successive floor. Basement units shall be assigned 10-series numbers if the next higher floor is designated the first floor; or basements shall be designated 100-series if the next level is designated the second floor.</p> <p><u>(1) For exterior accessed multi dwelling buildings or interior access with units on only one side of a common hallways, units shall be assigned in increments of 1 (e.g. – 101, 102, 103, and so on) generally from left to right facing the frontage of the building.</u></p> <p><u>(2) For interior accessed multi dwelling buildings with units on both sides of a hallway, units shall be assigned in odd/even number parity.</u></p> <p>b. Multifamily buildings with single address in common development. When multifamily developments consisting of more than one (1) structure have been assigned a single address, each individual building shall also be assigned a letter an address number. Unit or apartment numbers shall then be assigned to each dwelling unit, with no duplication of unit designations within each building. First floor units shall be assigned 100-series numbers, second floor units shall be assigned 200-series numbers, and so on for each successive floor. Basement units shall be assigned 10-series numbers if the next higher floor is designated the first floor; or basements shall be designated 100-series if the next level is designated the second floor. Each unit number shall begin with the letter assigned to the building in which the unit is located (e.g., Unit A100).</p> <p>[*New Sub Designation Numbering Example: See Proposed Code (Clean), following.*]</p>
Proposed Code (Clean)	<p>2. Multi dwelling residential developments and multi-tenant commercial developments.</p> <p>a. Multi dwelling buildings. The City shall assign an individual address number to each building within a multi dwelling residential development, in conformance with the Assessor's Street Name and Address Database. Individual unit numbers shall also be assigned to each dwelling, with no duplication of unit designations within each building. First floor units shall be assigned 100-series numbers, second floor units shall be assigned 200-series numbers, and so on for each successive floor. Basement units shall be assigned 10-series numbers if the next higher floor is designated the first floor; or basements shall be designated 100-series if the next level is designated the second floor.</p>

- (1) For exterior accessed multi dwelling buildings or interior access with units on only one side of a common hallways, units shall be assigned in increments of 1 (e.g. – 101, 102, 103, and so on) generally from left to right facing the frontage of the building.
- (2) For interior accessed multi dwelling buildings with units on both sides of a hallway, units shall be assigned in odd/even number parity.

Figure: Multi-unit Residential



Additional Explanation

This change does two things. The first change is to reflect that original code which was specific to projects under single or multiple ownership, is no longer relevant. As an aside, the City generally tries to stay out of the ownership structure of projects. The second change is to standardize City practice. Over the years multi-unit buildings for small fourplex, “pinwheel” type developments, have not been consistent.

8-2-7-E-2 Street Address Numbering Standards, Multitenant Buildings	
Description	Change to reflect standard practice by the City of Meridian and Ada County for suite addressing. See also previous recommended changes to multi-family numbering.
The Issue	The most important guidance for wayfinding and addressing in International Fire Code (IFC), International Building Code (IBC), National Emergency Number Association (NENA The 9-1-1 Association), and United States Postal Service (USPS) is consistency. Meridian's current practice for addressing of suite numbers is to begin at 100, increase in increments of 10, and to do so facing the building and working from left to right. This is standard practice in the County. This change is intended to codify current best practice to ensure consistency.
Proposed Code (with changes)	<p>eb. Multi-tenant commercial building. The City shall assign a single address to each commercial building, in accordance with this section. The City shall assign a unit number to each suite within a commercial building. <u>For each building, the first floor units shall be assigned 100-series numbers starting with 100 increasing by a value of 10 for each additional suite, second floor units shall be assigned 200-series numbers starting with 200 increasing by a value of 10 for each additional suite, and so on for each successive floor. Basement units shall be assigned 10-series numbers if the next higher floor is designated the first floor; or basements shall be designated 100-series if the next level is designated the second floor. Suite numbering shall be assigned from left to right either facing the frontage of the building or from the main entry within a shared lobby. For exhausted sequences in existing conditions, increments of 5 may be used for new suites, or for large buildings with 10 or more suites, ranges of 1000 may be used for new buildings.</u> In the absence of suites, the City shall not assign suite numbers, even if multiple tenants are co-located in a single building.</p> <p>[*New Sub Designation Numbering Examples: See Proposed Code (Clean), following.*]</p>
Proposed Code (Clean)	<p>b. Multi-tenant commercial building. The City shall assign a single address to each commercial building, in accordance with this section. The City shall assign a unit number to each suite within a commercial building. For each building, the first floor units shall be assigned 100-series numbers starting with 100 increasing by a value of 10 for each additional suite, second floor units shall be assigned 200-series numbers starting with 200 increasing by a value of 10 for each additional suite, and so on for each successive floor. Basement units shall be assigned 10-series numbers if the next higher floor is designated the first floor; or basements shall be designated 100-series if the next level is designated the second floor. Suite numbering shall be assigned from left to right either facing the frontage of the building or from the main entry within a shared lobby. For exhausted sequences in existing conditions, increments of 5 may be used for new suites, or for large buildings with 10 or more suites, ranges of 1000 may be used for new buildings. In the absence of suites, the City shall not assign suite numbers, even if multiple tenants are co-located in a single building.</p>

Figure: Multi-tenant Commercial A

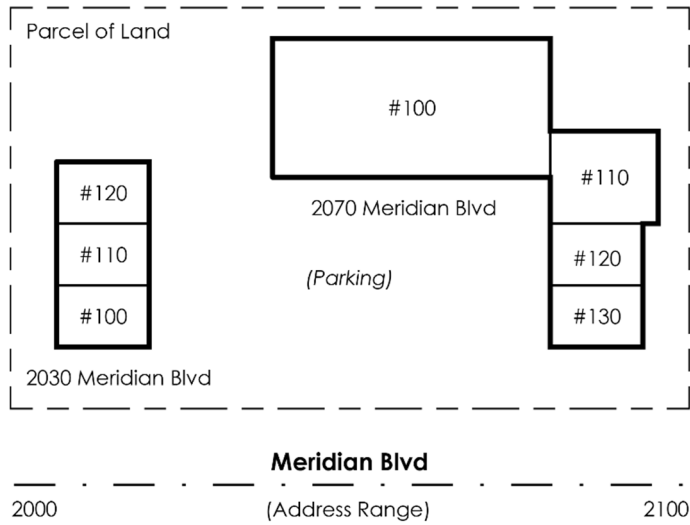
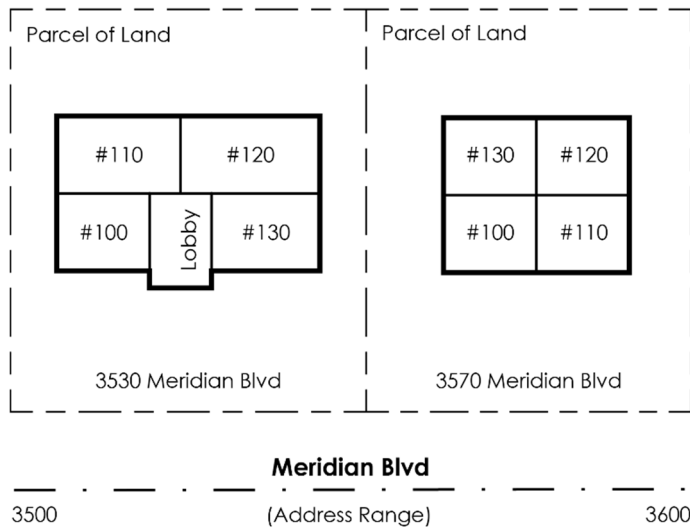


Figure: Multi-tenant Commercial B



**Additional
Explanation**

Staff have received some pushback on this practice, but the conditions are usually the tail wagging the dog, where site improvements occurred without understanding best practices for addressing, that in turn affects perception of addressing. Signage for example can be poorly interpreted when it does not take into account this standard. By documenting in code with examples, at least the practice is more available.