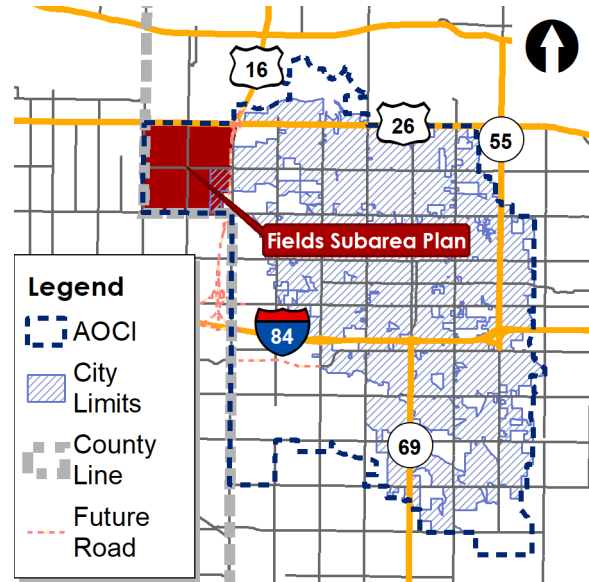


**STAFF REPORT**  
**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**



HEARING DATE: 9/16/2021  
TO: Planning & Zoning Commission  
FROM: Brian McClure, Comprehensive Associate Planner  
208-884-5533  
SUBJECT: H-2021-0047  
Fields Subarea Plan (CPAT)  
LOCATION: Northwest Meridian: Generally between Chinden, Ustick, Can-Ada, and McDermott/SH-16 (future).



**I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

This City of Meridian Planning Division submitted an application for a Comprehensive Plan Text Amendment (CPAT) that proposes to adopt the Fields Subarea Plan. This amendment will effectively add the Fields Subarea Plan (Subarea Plan) to the Adopted by Reference section of the existing Comprehensive Plan (Comp Plan). This request does not include an amendment to the Future Land Use Map.

The Fields Area is a unique opportunity to plan for one of the City’s last growth areas. Surrounded on three sides by other cities/county, and soon to be defined on its east boundary by the now funded SH-16 extension, this area of Meridian may feel disjointed from the rest of the City. Further, other constraints including SH 20/26 (Chinden Boulevard), a litany of large irrigation facilities and infrastructure, and a 7-million-gallon Intermountain Gas Liquified Natural Gas (LNG) storage facility, present barriers to a quality-built and connected environment. Where the area could compete for an identity, the Fields is instead anchored with an inward facing concept that helps to preserve its roots, make use of its challenges, and seeks to further the vision described in the Meridian Comprehensive Plan.

This Subarea Plan integrates implementation elements to promote high-quality neighborhoods, continues to plan for essential employment, and seeks to expand and further integrate parks and pathways into the area. A central mixed-use activity center, located at the southeast corner of the Star/McMillan intersection will serve as a hub for surrounding neighborhoods. This will provide the community with centralized neighborhood-scale retail and services, office, civic, and park space in an environment distinctly Meridian.

This area is not a bubble far removed; to the contrary it is well connected with access to SH-20/26, has access to a Boise River crossing along Star Road, and will have an interchange at Ustick and SH-16 soon. Future residents and other stakeholders will be able to enjoy a sense of community with consolidated neighborhood services, linear open space, and the stage set for a future public park all integrated in close proximity homes. While many residents will choose to commute, ideally many will have an opportunity to work close to home, and if-not, then employment centers can capture some Canyon County trips from traversing the City, or reverse commutes can spread the load.

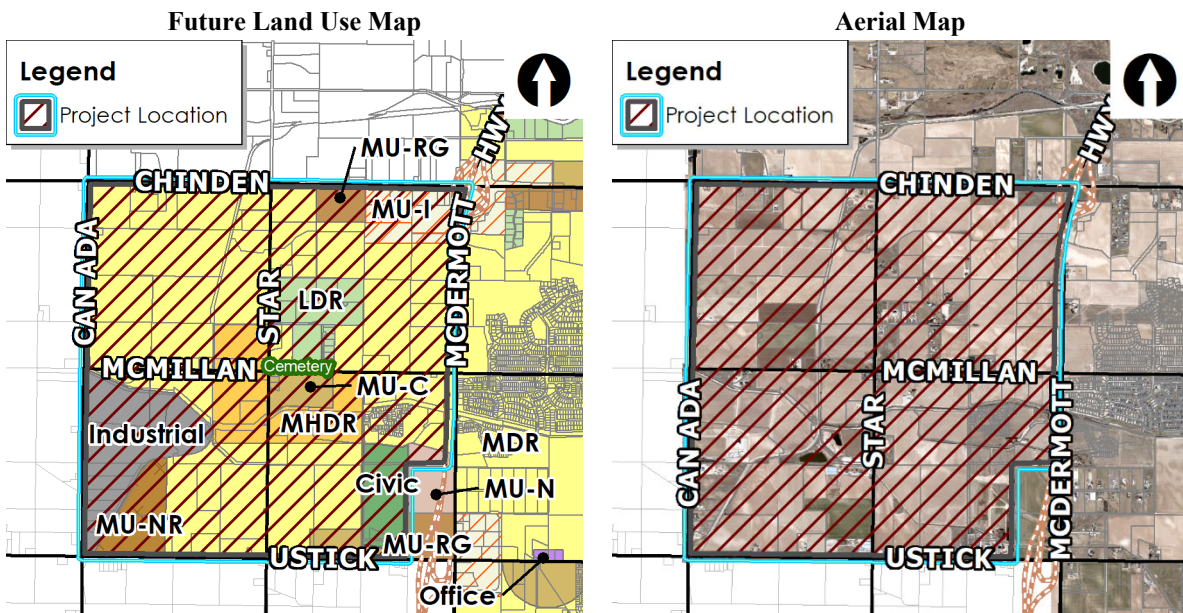
After adoption of the Subarea Plan into the Comprehensive Plan, a more detailed guide for how this area should develop will be in place. A “full service” community with opportunities to live, work, play and raise a family are envisioned. Implementation measures will be evaluated by City staff as development is proposed and as opportunities arise to further the vision for the area.

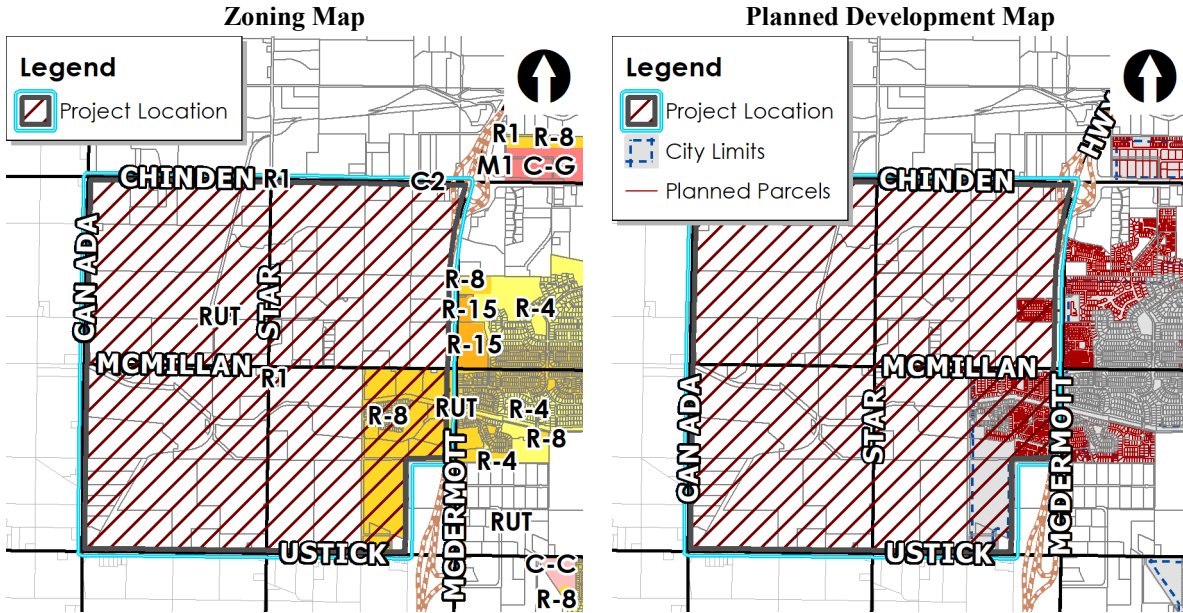
## II. SUMMARY OF REPORT

### A. Project Summary

Description	Details	Reference
Acreage	2,430 acres, or just under 4-square miles	
Future Land Use Designation	Varies, see Project Area Maps	II-B
Existing Land Use(s)	Varies, see Project Area Maps	II-B
History (previous approvals)	H-2017-0079 Intermountain Gas Map Amendment, H-2019-0101 New Comprehensive Plan	V

### B. Project Area Maps





**III. NOTICING**

	<b>Planning &amp; Zoning Posting Date</b>	<b>City Council Posting Date</b>
Notification published in newspaper	8/27/2021	
Notification mailed to property owners within 300'	Not applicable, see UDC 11-5A-6	
Applicant posted public hearing notice sign on site	Not applicable, see UDC 11-5A-6	
Nextdoor posting	8/26/2021	

**IV. APPLICANT INFORMATION**

**A. Applicant:**

Caleb Hood, Planning Division Manager, 33 E Broadway Ave, Meridian, Idaho 83642

**B. Owner:**

Not applicable

**C. Representative:**

Not Applicable

**V. PROJECT BACKGROUND**

**A. Area History**

Planning work in the Fields has been ongoing for more than a decade, but this Subarea Plan really got its start in 2017 as part of the Intermountain Gas Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) Map amendment. In an effort to address safety concerns by Intermountain Gas, and to reflect the existence of the facility on the City's Future Land Use Map, the City processed a Comprehensive

Plan Map amendment changing the land use designation from low density residential to industrial for the LNG property. However, this change did not address a needed non-residential zone buffer around the plant however. Since there was another regional planning collaborative known as Growing Together causing some concern and confusion for stakeholders at the time, the City agreed to hold off on additional changes until that effort completed. The Growing Together effort, which was largely based on agriculture and ag-tech industry attraction, ultimately concluded without impact.

Shortly after the Growing Together effort, the Meridian City Council directed work on a new Comprehensive Plan (2018). Part of that work would include several focus areas, one of which was the Fields Area. The City held several engagement opportunities during the Comp Plan development, including one in-person in the Fields Area where stakeholders generated several mapping concepts. These maps were ultimately synthesized into a preferred future land use concept, included an online review period and ultimately integrated into citywide analysis. This work helped to understand transportation and land use relationships, and the overall balance of land uses across the City. In December of 2019 the new Comp Plan and Future Land Use Map with an integrated, preferred concept for the Fields Area, was adopted.

Future land use designations were identified and adopted, putting to rest long-held stakeholders concerns with land uses that were previously seen as interim, or not “highest and best use”, stakeholder engagement and response was generally very positive during development of the Comp Plan. However, there was still a desire by both stakeholders in the Area and the larger City to imagine development that better considered both what once was, and what was to come. Broad land uses were not seen as a sufficient solution for future development, given the location, history, and future impacts of a SH-16 extension. The opportunity was great to further define how the area should evolve over time into a premier section of the City.

## **B. Project History: Subarea Plan Development & Outreach**

After adoption of the Comp Plan, City staff worked with Council to develop a number of priority projects as follow-up work to the broader visioning effort. The Fields was near the top of the priority projects, and in 2020 Council directed Staff to continue work with Logan Simpson on this area. This allowed the original focus area to continue forward in greater detail. Despite some delays due to COVID, the relatively small number of unique properties and the limited area of focus allowed an efficient, if a slightly slow process, to continue forward.

Initial work by the project team sought to understand potential pitfalls and hurdles. Several rounds of listening sessions were held with agency partners, developers, finance experts, and City Departments. City staff also met early with property owners in the core of the Subarea (near Star and McMillan), and sought to understand stakeholders’ specific vision and future plans for their properties. Several engagement meetings were held early in the process to discuss the project, general purpose, and to receive feedback on conceptual schematics of the Subarea core.

This early work was supported by economic and buildout analysis done both with the 2019 Comprehensive Plan, and supplemented with this project. Leland Consulting Group again supported Logan Simpson with this analysis to consider realistic buildout and guide City efforts. Critical to early periods of work, was understanding what it would take to see the Fields Subarea Plan come to fruition. Leland identified areas essential for City guidance, partnership, and investment understanding future demand. This included detailing implementation and funding strategies, and then having discussions with City Council on interest and support for level of City participation and effort.

After initial concept work was refined, an interactive online public engagement meeting was held with all stakeholders in the four-square mile area invited. Postcards were sent to every property

owner in the Area. The meeting allowed participants to make live comments, draw, and included image preference surveys to understand the look and feel desired by stakeholders. Most of the received feedback only reinforced what was already known; that stakeholders wanted to maintain some rural thematic elements and site design characteristics, continuing the “Fields” theme. Comments received were integrated, and stakeholders were invited to review and comment on a draft PDF of the plan that incorporated built-in markup tools. Subsequently, new images, text, and other revisions were made, and combined to include the final draft for public hearing. Postcards were again sent out to all property owners in the four-square mile area for the public hearing before the Planning & Zoning Commission.

It should be noted that there has been a great deal of land optioning and sales during project development. Some stakeholders that were initially and heavily vested are no longer present, and others have some level of control on new properties. Staff is aware that not all stakeholders are thrilled with all elements of this Plan, but to City staff’s best understanding, most of these concerns are not related to prescriptive elements which could be seen as non-negotiable. There are very few “shall” type statements in the Fields Subarea Plan; all density related thresholds and basic purpose and intent type language are still driven by the Comprehensive Plan unless otherwise provided.

Some areas which will always have some natural push and pull, are the balance between short-term market demand and long-term need in mixed use, commercial, and higher density residential areas. Change is expected and the Fields Subarea Plan is structured to be adaptable, but the Plan is also fully committed to a diversity and balance of uses. There are limitations of market driven variations when the City is also charged with orderly and efficient growth. While land investments carry with it cost, and investors seek return, there may be cases where waiting for the right use, in the right or a future market, will be essential to achieving a critical mass of location appropriate uses that support the vision.

**VI. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ANALYSIS (*Comprehensive Plan*)**

**A. Future Land Use Map Designation (<https://meridiancity.org/planning/compplan/evolving>)**

**1. General Adherence**

The adopted future land use designations in the Subarea Plan are broad and intended to provide diversity and address unique site-specific context. These were developed as part of focused visioning activities during the Comprehensive Plan, by stakeholders, and this proposed Plan remains true both to that work, and to the City’s larger balance of land uses. The one exception to this is are the 80 acres on the north-west corner of Ustick and McDermott, addressed below.

**Overall Land Uses (Detailed further in the Subarea Plan):**

<i>Future Land Use Designations</i>	<i>Acres</i>
Civic	88
General Industrial	218
Low Density Residential	116
Med-High Density Residential	201
Medium Density Residential	1,523
Mixed Use - Interchange	99
MU-C	80
MU-NR	82

<i>Future Land Use Designations</i>	<i>Acres</i>
MU-RG	33
<b>Total Area</b>	<b>2,441</b>

*Note: Total land use areas are gross and reflect considerable area of ROW and undevelopable or previously committee land. Some areas will change as the City or other public agencies acquire additional property and changed to revise their civic nature. Land Use totals described in the Subarea Plan are not gross, and reflect more realistic developable land area.*

## **2. Interplay of Future Land Uses**

As mentioned earlier in this report, no changes to the Future Land Use Map (FLUM) of the Comprehensive Plan are proposed with this application. While no land use designations are changing, the intent of the Subarea Plan is to further define the expectations of how this area will change, evolve and develop over time. This section of the report summarizes some of the details from the Plan and puts into context key areas of importance.

### *Neighborhood Center at Star and McMillan (Mixed Use - Community FLUM designation):*

The area of Mixed Use – Community, at the heart of the Subarea Plan, is a crucial element and requires commitment by the City and future development to fully realize. Even during the Comprehensive Plan, this land was envisioned as a consolidated neighborhood center for which many neighborhood services could be supported. It is intended as an attractive, vibrant, and active space that is worthy of destination travel. These goals and assumptions were inherent in this Subarea Plan work.

This Plan has purposefully planned to not bisect commercial opportunities by busy arterial intersections; that configuration can't work here. Adjacent uses such as churches and low density residential would make transitions difficult, and stripped-out commercial would detract from the higher intensity neighborhood center. The neighborhood center was and is located in the perfect area for a consolidation of diverse land uses to occur. Further, its located along the planned Five Mile Creek pathway network and provides a unique opportunity to fully integrate both private and civic spaces.

It is worth noting that several interviewed participants suggested increasing commercial along SH-20/26 (Chinden). Additional non-residential along Chinden were not expanded by the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, because that type of development pattern ends up as linear, non-integrated frontage development. The market does not support the same quantities of this post Amazon effect, and then other uses such as multi-family are requested and proposed as the next best thing. Further, additional commercial along Chinden would compete with the non-residential proposed at the Star/McMillan intersection leaving the market for developing consistent with the vision problematic. Neither highway commercial or higher density residential support this area plan.

Rooftops can better support the neighborhood center and provide greater access to more community services for more people, and which reduces trips. The cities of Star and Nampa both have more commercial and mixed use designations along their frontage than is likely feasible, and Meridian's Comprehensive Plan intentionally focused its commercial uses into select areas with high visibility (near interchanges), close to major attractors (such as Owyhee High School), or to buffer and separate uses with higher degrees of incompatibility (around the Intermountain Gas LNG facility). This has the benefit of reducing impacts to major arterials and highways by reducing points of access, which becomes points of congestion, and eventually turn into points of conflict (and crashes).

Non-residential uses outside the planned areas may very easily detract from the Neighborhood Center, and the City must remain diligent in limiting commercial creep into other areas; patience and public amenities like the pathway and future park may drastically quicken the pace for which the Neighborhood Center can be realized and supported.

*Intermountain Gas Facility Area (Industrial and Mixed Use Non-Residential FLUM designations):*

The Subarea Plan is fully consistent with the original vision of the Intermountain Gas LNG work in 2017, and with subsequent work done with the 2019 Comp Plan. However, new ownership and the natural change that comes with time, may result in future requests to shrink the Industrial and/or Non-Residential uses planned around the Intermountain Gas LNG property. This area is in Meridian, and likely to be very attractive to new residents given a vibrant neighborhood center and robust pathway and park spaces proposed.

The LNG tank is a massive facility that isn't going anywhere anytime soon. It is visible for miles around, and made more evident at night with bright lighting, and occasional audible siren tests reminding nearby stakeholders of its presence even when not in view. For simple comparison, the LNG tank is 7-million gallons whereas a large City reservoir tank is only 2-million gallons. **While good design can address most potential land use conflicts, it's important to reinforce the significance of this facility.** It is essential that Meridian maintain a balanced portfolio of land uses that contribute towards a diverse mix of both dwellings and jobs, and works to reduce transportation related burdens to Meridian residents already heavily impacted by regional commuting patterns. One large industrial area was not approved in the final 2019 Future Land Use Map (north of railroad tracks and McDermott), and subsequent Map amendments have removed a considerable area of non-residential uses (vicinity of the Waste Water Resource Recovery Facility) and that may be further reduced in the future due to simple proximity, additional residential influences, and reduced overall market potential for large projects. Therefore, it is essential that any future land use designation changes proposed in close proximity to this facility in the future consider the need for safety, quality of life, sense of place, and for essential employment opportunities both in the Subarea Plan and citywide. Thoughtful changes to these designations *may* be appropriate in the future, but as the Ustick and McDermott revision suggest (see below), they require additional analysis and outreach to understand cumulative impacts.

Lastly, it's worth touching on the William's Pipeline which ties into the LNG facility and bisects many of the properties in the area. City code already requires buffering and maintaining easements around the pipeline. The Subarea Plan, page 1-4, very generally depicts this high-pressure pipeline facility.

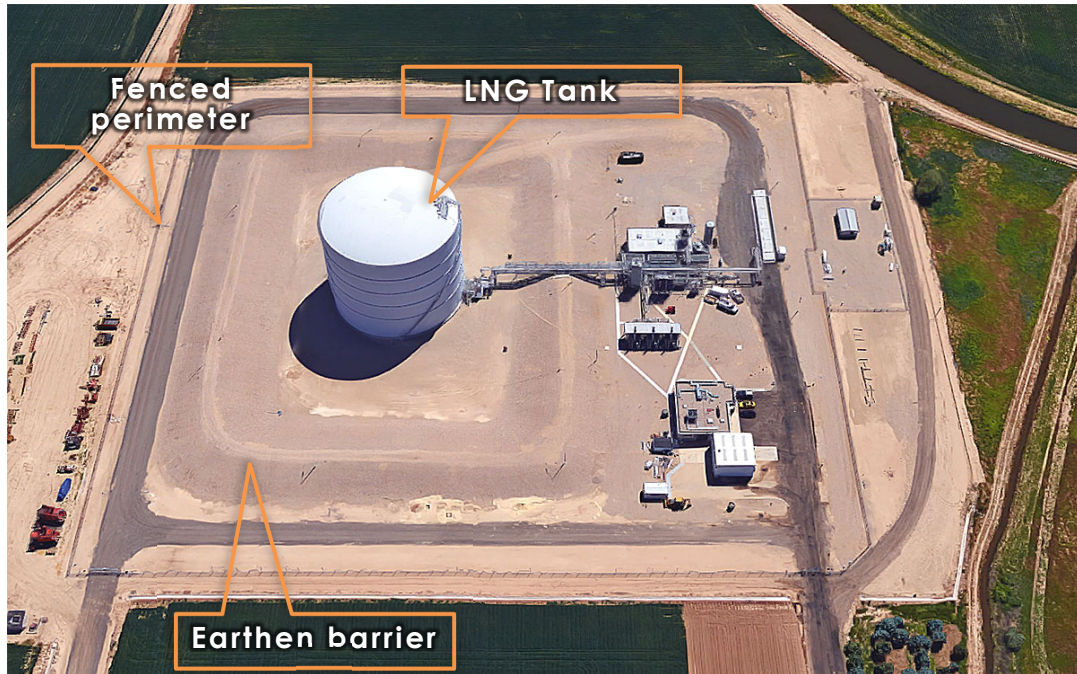


Image Above: 2017 Isometric aerial, facing east.

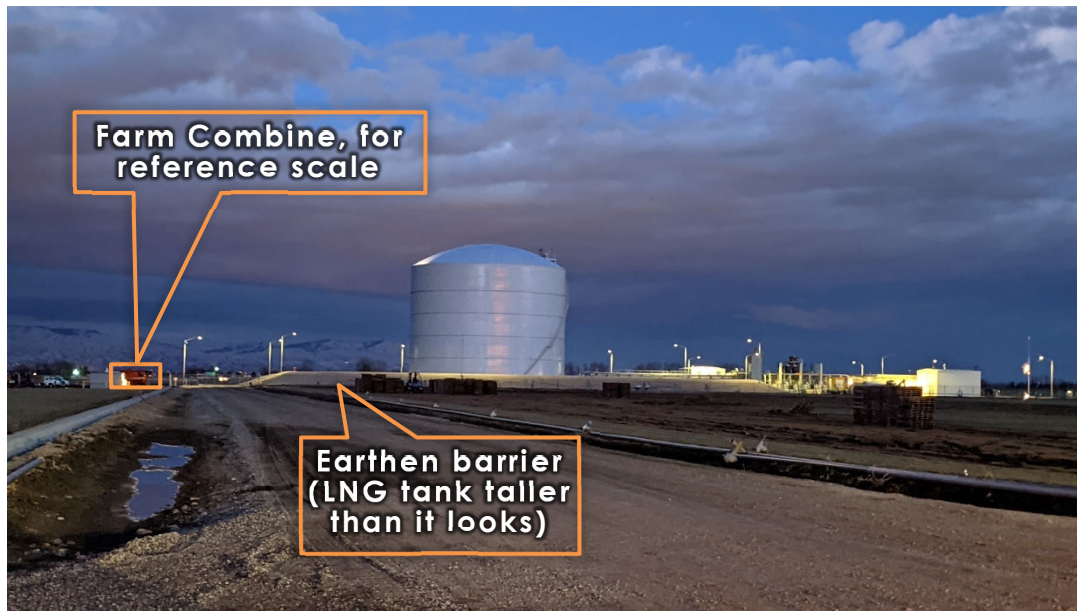


Image Above: 2021 photo near Star Road, facing East at dusk.

Waterways, Future Parks and Pathways Designations on FLUM

The City’s Comprehensive Plan adopts by reference both the Parks and Recreation Master Plan and the Pathway Master Plan. The Pathway Master Plan includes a series of pathways shown in the Fields Area, generally along waterways. The Fields Area is bisected by a series of waterways including the Five Mile Creek, Five Mile Creek Feeder, McFadden Drain, Phyllis Canal, and several laterals. Some of the laterals may ultimately be tiled, but the Five Mile Creek and Phyllis Canal will not be.



During all periods of outreach, almost all stakeholders including agency partners discussed the importance of pathways. There was consistent discussion about integrating this system into the Fields Plan, connecting it to adjacent cities and points of interest, and generally doing more. Of greatest importance, the City's Five Mile Creek pathway system traverses this area. There is a planned underpass crossing of SH-16 for the Five Mile Creek pathway even in the interim phase of development, which will allow contiguous connection to the rest of the City. ACHD is also planning for some type of future pathway crossing to the west, across Star Road in the future. That may be some type of pedestrian signalization, or at grade separated crossing like SH-16.

Related, the Comprehensive Plan includes a number of park symbols with halos on the Future Land Use Map. These depict in very generalized fashion the need for future park facilities. However, there is no land set aside for parks and there are no planned park improvements despite other prioritized service improvements, rapidly vanishing land opportunities, and despite the access challenges posed by SH-16. The Fields Plan provides a refined opportunity to maximize the location of a future park, generally central to the area and well connected on the Five Mile Creek pathway, near the Neighborhood Center to build synergies, and to transition and buffer uses to the west. This location is not set, but should be viewed as an ideal to strive for. Other parks in the area are likely to be owned and operated by future HOAs or created through other partnerships, and do not have the same level of locational need or benefit.

*Ustick and McDermott (Mixed Use Interchange with a future SH-16 Interchange designation on the FLUM):*

During the final hearings of the Comprehensive Plan adoption process, stakeholders requested a different designation via public testimony, and was granted a Mixed Use Regional designation. This change was not studied by the project consultants, City staff, or the Comp Plan Steering Committee. Staff would have recommended caution had the owner solicited feedback, due to limited access of the future SH-16 and associated interchange at Ustick. The northern 40 acres, under different ownership, is reliant upon the lower for transitions and connectivity. Further, the Owyhee High School approvals did not provide east-west connectivity adequate to support more intense uses near to the future interchange. Lastly, and equally important, both 40-acre parcels had active development proposals (now withdrawn or still pending) during the Subarea Plan development.

It's possible that the lower 40-acres will find it very difficult to address findings that describe compliance with the purpose and intent of the Mixed-Use Regional designation. Future development applications here will have to contend with SH-16 improvements and access restrictions intended to preserve interchange efficiency and public safety. As a result of the challenges and previous development applications, **these parcels may benefit from this sub-area plan, including identity by proximity, but will adhere only to the adopted Comprehensive Plan, not this specific area plan.**

**B. Comprehensive Plan Policies (<https://www.meridiancity.org/compplan>):**

It could be argued that virtually all of the Comprehensive Plan policies have some applicability within this large geographic region and over a longer-period of time with development applications. However, and specific to the proposed text and implementation up for adoption, and understanding that the Subarea proposes no future land use changes or development, City staff finds the following to be most applicable to the adoption of the Subarea Plan. Staff analysis is in *italics* below.

- 3.03.01, Plan for an appropriate land use mix, recreational and civic facilities, and phased service extension within specific area plans and urban renewal districts.  
*This Subarea Plan continues to support a diverse mix of land uses, and contemplates them interconnected within the broader context of conditions, context, and future community needs.*
  - 3.03.01A, Continue to develop and implement the desired vision in special areas, areas with specific plans, and along key transportation corridors.  
*This Subarea Plan is the literal continuation of work that began with the Comprehensive Plan, and works to further the vision with additional implementation and context.*
  - 3.03.01B, Actively engage with City leadership and community members to explore the idea, process, and potential impacts of implementing districts, subareas, neighborhood association areas, or similar concepts.  
*The project team repeatedly invited all stakeholders within the four-square mile area to participate through engagement activities, both during the initial 2019 Comprehensive Plan and as part of specific Subarea Plan work. Further, City staff coordinated with City Council and other agency partners to discuss process, ideas, and level of effort to ensure the planning work was feasible and implementable.*
  - 3.03.01C, Consider developing new subarea plans as appropriate for areas with unique characteristics, public/private partnerships in place, and that are compatible with Comprehensive Plan policies in order to provide additional guidance on future land uses, design, infrastructure, and amenities.  
*As a direct outcome of the Comprehensive Plan work, and Council prioritization of follow-up work, this Subarea Plan is directly applicable to this work. The proposed Subarea Plan include additional guidance for development of the planning area.*

Other high-level policies that are appropriate include:

- 2.01.01, Encourage diverse housing options suitable for various income levels, household sizes, and lifestyle preferences.  
*This plan adheres to the adopted Future Land Use Map, which includes a variety of land uses intended to support a range of housing products. The Fields Plan furthers this and includes and integrates a variety of described housing references in both text and images.*
- 3.03.02A, Engage with service providers, City leadership, and community members to identify priority growth areas.  
*This Area has been prioritized for City service improvements. The project team met with a variety of service providers including Nampa Meridian Irrigation Districts, ACHD, and maintained communication with Idaho Power and others. City leadership was apprised and involved throughout Plan development, and included conversations with City Council.*
- 3.03.02E, Develop incentives for appropriate investment in strategic growth areas; discourage development outside of established growth areas.  
*While specific incentives are not proposed, the Plan identifies a variety of partnership opportunities and is clear that City participation will be necessary, to achieve desired results given the unique context of the planning area.*

- 3.04.02A, Solicit public participation in the land use and entitlement process through a variety of digital and in person methods.  
*Development of the Fields Plan continued the robust public involvement efforts of the Comprehensive Plan. Stakeholders were involved through digital and in-person meetings, and included new and innovative tools such as the Mural platform. This has since grown in popularity and been replicated by other agencies in the Valley.*
- 3.05.00, Ensure that all planning, zoning and land use decisions balance the interests of the community by protecting private property rights for current citizens and future generations.  
*The Fields Subarea Plan is very light on prescriptive standards, understanding that time changes all things. The Plan strives for balance between short-term development pressures and long-term essential needs of the City.*
- 3.06.02, Plan for an appropriate mix of land uses that ensures connectivity, livability, and economic vitality.  
*The Plan continues the work of the Comprehensive Plan by further linking the integration of land uses by identifying specific needs and opportunities to address connectivity, livability, and economic vitality through additional detail and description.*
  - 3.06.02A, Support the inclusion of small-scale neighborhood commercial areas within planned residential developments as part of the development plan, where appropriate.  
*The Fields Plan provides a better prototype for how the Mixed Use Community neighborhood center may develop, describing the needs of the center and how it may be supported through other public improvements including pathway and park connectivity.*
  - 3.06.02B, Encourage and support mixed-use areas that provide the benefits of being able to live, shop, dine, play, and work in close proximity, thereby reducing vehicle trips, and enhancing overall livability and sustainability.  
*The concept for the neighborhood center is intended to guide future development towards integrated opportunities to live, shop, dine, and play. It is centrally located within an area otherwise bisected by highways and major regional corridors.*
  - 3.06.02C, Encourage the development of supportive commercial near employment areas.  
*The Plan describes desired non-residential uses in the Fields Area, and includes specific consideration for ensuring that commercial is supportive of employment areas, and not necessarily replacing employment areas.*
  - 3.06.02E, Discourage residential land uses in close proximity to the Wastewater Resource Recovery Facility, the Intermountain Gas Facility on Can-Ada Road, and other incompatible land uses.  
*The Plan supports prior land use changes in 2017 and 2019, and further describes how changes that may in occur in the future should not lose sight of the needs that adopted land use designations address.*
- 4.01.00, Pursue partnerships and funding sources to facilitate and expand access to parks and recreational facilities, programming, and services.  
*The Plan recognizes that partnerships and new funding strategies are essential to realizing all intended benefits. The Five Mile Creek pathway integration with the*

*neighborhood center, and connectivity to a regional like park are paramount to this work. The Plan explores new and old funding tools and compares their pros and cons.*

- 4.01.01A, Explore additional partnership opportunities as well as build on existing partnerships with focus on low-service areas.  
*The Fields Area has been identified as low-service area without additional work to quickly identify new park site opportunities. All other areas of the City have existing land either in development or slated for future development that will accommodate a public park. The Fields Area may otherwise be the most disconnected and far removed part of the City without a public park. The right park in the right location could help the Fields Area to be realized as a premier park service area or the City.*
- 4.02.01, Continue working toward the park land level of service goal of four acres/1,000 persons and a 0.5 miles service area radius from residences.  
*This Area has been identified as a low-service area. A park utilizing a new funding source and not competing for impact fees, such as those identified in this Plan, could help the City to recover from recent years of lost progress towards park service goal. The central location of the identified park places it closely to the most populated areas, and maximizes synergies with the neighborhood center.*
- 4.02.01B, Continue to find and purchase additional land for future park development where level of service is below threshold.  
*This Plan does not propose a specific acquisition of land, but identifies a desired area and the context for the selection. A park is needed closest to high density residential uses to maximize public benefit and minimize vehicle trip generation.*
- 4.02.01D, Look for opportunities to add parks and pathways in new growth areas.  
*The park opportunity identified in the Fields Subarea Plan is central to the planning efforts. Pathways have already been identified but are further integrated.*
- 4.04.02 Link pathways to important pedestrian generators, environmental features, historic landmarks, public facilities, Town Centers, and business districts.  
*The 2019 Comprehensive Plan and the Pathway Master Plan already achieve this vision for the Fields Area. The Plan builds on these opportunities and works to create new opportunities and synergies with public-private benefit.*
  - 4.04.02A, Identify opportunities for new paths that connect residential neighborhoods and community facilities, such as the library and city hall, parks, schools, athletic facilities, swimming pools, historic districts, the Downtown, as well as other commercial and retail activity centers in Meridian.  
*The Plan continues the work of the adopted Pathways Master Plan, and is integrated into both the neighborhood center (commercial and retail activity center), and into a future park. The Five Mile Creek pathway network continues into the downtown area, and all the way to Eagle Road.*
  - 4.04.02C, Continue partnerships with area irrigation districts to continue to expand pathway system along existing waterways.  
*The City has and continues to coordinate implementation of the Pathway Master Plan with irrigation district partners. Nampa Meridian Irrigation District (NMID) was coordinated with specific to the Five Mile Creek Pathway and the Neighborhood Center. NMID was supportive of a public pathway on the north side of Five Mile Creek.*

- 4.10.00, Protect public health and safety by guiding growth and development away from hazardous areas that pose a threat to people and property.  
*The Intermountain Gas LNG facility and the Williams Pipeline have both been previously identified as hazards, and include appropriate buffers to protect the health, safety, and welfare of residents. The Fields Plan includes additional discussion on this topic to ensure that future decisions adequately consider historical context for decisions.*
- 5.01.02C, Promote area beautification and community identity through context sensitive building and site design principles, appropriate signage, and attractive landscaping.  
*The Fields Plan does include some high-level general guidance and direction for future work, to promote aesthetic design nods towards a unified Fields thematic.*
- 5.01.02F, Explore development and implementation of architectural and/or landscape standards for geographic areas of the City.  
*The Fields Plan does include some high-level general guidance and direction for future work, to promote aesthetic design nods towards a unified Fields thematic.*
- 6.01.01D, Pursue construction of the City's pathways network.  
*The Plan identifies the pathway network and especially the Five Mile Creek pathway, as crucial to success of this Plan.*
- 6.01.03B, Require collectors consistent with the ACHD Master Street Map (MSM), generally at/near the mid-mile location within the Area of City Impact.  
*The Plan supports ACHD's MSM and works to further use and benefit the collector roadway system, and supplements them with robust local roadway and pathway connections, as an alternative network for local stakeholders to busy arterials dominated by regional traffic.*

## C. Proposed Comprehensive Plan Revisions

### 1. Proposed Text Revisions

Pages C through D of the adopted Comprehensive Plan include a List of Adopted Plans and Studies by Reference. Similar to the Ten Mile Interchange Specific Plan, and Destination Downtown, this CPAT would add the Fields Subarea Plan to these pages. This entry would be added to the end of the list on page D, and include (in ~~strike-through~~ and underline):

#### List of Adopted Plans by Reference

<i>Plan</i>	<i>Lead Agency</i>	<i>Link</i>
<u>Fields Subarea Plan (2021)</u>	<u>City of Meridian</u>	<u><a href="https://meridiancity.org/fields">https://meridiancity.org/fields</a></u>

In the future, a new section of the Evolving Community Chapter (3), may be appropriate to highlight Specific and Subarea Plans. Currently, the Ten Mile Interchange Specific Area Plan is described within the future land use section; it has its own unique future land use designations. Destination Downtown is mentioned in several areas, including the Premier Community Chapter (2), and within the Old Town Section of the Future Land Use section (even though the District boundaries eclipse the Old Town area), but has no dedicated section.

### 2. Proposed Future Land Use Map (none)

There are no proposed revisions to the Future Land Use Map.

In the future, and with the broader cleanup revisions to the Future Land Use Map, the Subarea Plan could be better distinguished, and other revisions made to better consider multiple specific or subarea plans more consistently.

Informally, and in the interim, this area can be added to interactive maps on the City's website to better highlight the Subarea Plan.

### 3. Proposed Revisions to Draft Fields Subarea Plan

After application submittal and before the public hearing, City staff met with several stakeholders who discussed concerns with language intent. There are several areas that Staff believe can be improved, and are now recommending changes to enhance clarity of purpose.

- i. Revise map title on page 1-4:

Existing Site Features and underlying Future Land use Map (at time of adoption)

- ii. Revise Table 4A notes on page 3-9:

Notes: The table above is intended to show approximate ranges of land uses that can be anticipated in the area. The table reflects residential density ranges adopted within the Comprehensive Plan. Assumptions for commercial values are based on typical averages from uses supported within designation types. Because mixed use areas vary, the following assumptions are used within the context of future land use purpose text and descriptions. **Assumptions:** The Star/McMillan Center and Star/Ustick Center assume 40% residential; Chinden centers assume 20% residential. Commercial uses are broken down as follows: MU-C and MU-R assumes 90% commercial and 10% governmental/other; MU-NR assumes 50% office, 40% office/flex, and 10% other; and MU-I assumes 50% office, 30% governmental/other, and 20% flex.

- iii. Add text to Development Program, first paragraph:

The Development Program is intended to provide an estimate for understanding service needs and general allocation and balance of uses. Because these are for broad land use areas, and generalized, these are not prescriptive standards intended for case by case review. As shown ~~in the development program~~ above, estimated square footage for retail and office uses are expected to take nearly 50 years to fully build out, while industrial and flex space markets could be built out in only 15 years. The City should consider the aggregated commercial impacts ~~this in~~ of development proposals and monitor near-term residential demand and development to preserve opportunities for the lagging, long-term employment demand. Overall balance of residential and non-residential uses is essential.

- iv. Revise text on page 4-3.

Critical path items are actions that should be abided by the City prior to and as development occurs. These items include the following:

- v. Revise Action Item on page 4-20.

Elevate a distinct community identity by creating exterior design standards for the Star/McMillan Center, adjacent residential areas, linear park and greenway and regional park, including a contemporary rural thematic throughout commercial structures and public facilities.

- Within commercial structures, incorporate gabled roofs, exposed trusses and rafters, covered porches, oversized architectural hardware, transitional landscape walls, gates, railings, chimneys, dormers, brackets, corbels, belly band board trim, posts, masonry piers, or other thematic elements ~~into commercial structures.~~

- Within commercial structures, incorporate stone, cultured stone, or brick masonry; horizontal lap siding, vertical board and batten siding, beadboard paneling, and taper sawn shingles; corten and/or wrought iron, or other local thematic materials ~~into commercial structures~~.
- Within commercial structures, discourage or allow only a very limited use of pre-cast concrete, EIFS, PVC or plastic materials, metal siding, plywood or pressed-board materials, or composition siding ~~into commercial structures~~.
- Incorporate distinct architectural elements into monuments, signage, building addressing, and structural infrastructure within landscape buffers, parking lots, and open space that enhances primary structure architectural features.

#### **D. Implementation**

Crucial to the success of the Fields Plan, and the Fields Area itself, is implementation. The unique circumstances and conditions of the area, and the speed at which development is lining up pending planned utility improvements, require commitment by all partners to see the vision of both the Comprehensive Plan and Fields Subarea plan come together.

This Subarea Plan isn't a transportation plan, but it considers regional transportation improvements and ACHD's Master Street Map (MSM). As Meridian continues to bear the burden of regional traffic impacts, and particularly east-west travel, the interrelation of land use and transportation is essential. The 2019 Comprehensive Plan took this into consideration, and the balance and mix of land uses is essential in this context not just for the Fields area, but citywide. While time will bring changes, it is essential that City staff and elected decision makers not lose sight of the higher-level vision, and the reasons for past decisions. Shorter-term market driven changes are not necessarily bad and may be very positive, but they should not undermine long-term community needs. Thoughtful changes should consider comprehensive impacts, both within the Subarea and Citywide.

Many land use decisions include land development configurations that have the unintended consequences of discouraging desired uses and services later or elsewhere in the City. Further, and depending on the speed of development in the area, it is very possible that some essential services and uses in support of this vision, will take time to realize the required rooftops, trips, and other supportive uses and services to be viable. Some of this may be positively influenced through partnerships including private-private, public-private, and public-public. Regardless, it may be a useful to remember that "highest and best" changes with time, that the Comprehensive Plan does not guarantee timing of additional entitlements or services, and that the City is charged with orderly and efficient growth.

Construction of the Owyhee High School, committed improvements for both sewer infrastructure and a new fire station, and prioritized improvements for roadways represent considerable investment by local public agencies in this area. Despite the commitment of so many resources, realizing that the Fields Area is now effectively a growth priority area, more efforts are still needed. Acquiring and constructing park space, and prioritizing pathway improvements to support and advance community spaces in the neighborhood center, are paramount to the Plan. While timing of some improvements may be delayed, building relationships, partnerships, creating agreements, and further identifying or exploring and implementing additional funding mechanisms will need to be fast-tracked to set the stage. Spaces need to be preserved for these critical infrastructure elements.

Development carries a high degree of risk, and with full services not yet in the ground and Meridian increasing the need for coordination and commitment to a better-defined Vision, it will

be important for the City to be a partner. The City's role is not a subsidy for development; it's a commitment to work towards service standards in coordination with willing partners. Partnerships are more difficult, but bring additional opportunities. The timing of Owyhee High School was not foreseen by the City and required significant alterations to expectations for market growth and service improvement priorities. The unique conditions of the area require additional coordination and focused efforts, not a disproportional level of services by the City.

**VII. UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT CODE ANALYSIS ([UDC](#))**

Not applicable. No specific development or annexation is being proposed with this application.

**VIII. DECISION**

**A. Staff:**

Staff recommends revising the text of the Comprehensive Plan to add the Fields Subarea Plan (2021), to page D, within the List of Adopted Plans by Reference.

**B. Commission:**

Enter Summary of Commission Decision.

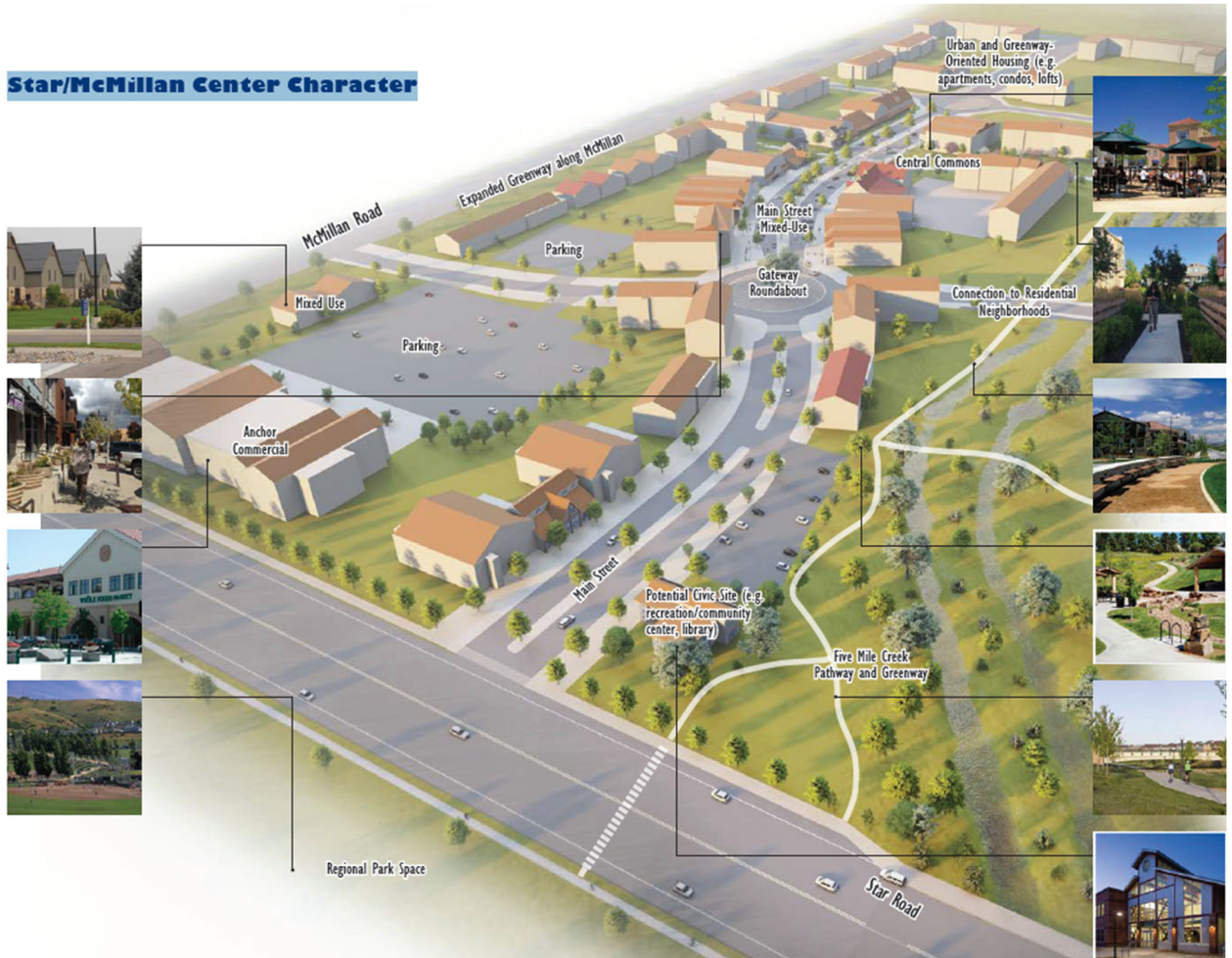
**C. City Council:**

Enter Summary of City Council Decision.





**B. Neighborhood Center Concept**  
(NOT intended for explicit adherence of development review; see Fields Subarea Plan for described context of needs and conditions)



**C. Conceptual Fit and Feel Render of Neighborhood Center**



**D. Conceptual Fit and Feel Render of Neighborhood Center Residential**



## X. FINDINGS

### A. Required Findings from the Unified Development Code

**1. The proposed amendment is consistent with the other elements of the comprehensive plan.**

*The Subarea Plan is an extension of the Comprehensive Plan and which contains all seventeen (17) elements required by Idaho State Statute. Staff finds the new Subarea Plan to continue the vision and is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.*

**2. The proposed amendment provides an improved guide to future growth and development of the city.**

*Staff finds that the proposed Plan provides an improved and more relevant guide to future growth and development with the City. As originally envisioned, this Subarea Plan is a natural extension of the Comprehensive Plan and is an improved guide to future growth and development of the City.*

**3. The proposed amendment is internally consistent with the goals, objectives and policies of the Comprehensive Plan.**

*Staff finds the proposed policies are consistent with the goals of the Comprehensive Plan, as all of the original policies are in place, some of which supported this Subarea Plan, and new policies only further and enhance existing policies.*

**4. The proposed amendment is consistent with this Unified Development Code.**

*Staff finds the proposed Plan provides the necessary guidance to effectively administer the requirements of the Unified Development Code (UDC), and to direct work to maintain and modify the UDC to remain consistent with the proposed vision.*

**5. The amendment will be compatible with existing and planned surrounding land uses.**

*Staff finds the proposed Plan will be compatible with existing and planned surrounding land uses. No specific uses are proposed and no modifications are proposed to general, future land use designations.*

**6. The proposed amendment will not burden existing and planned service capabilities.**

*Staff finds that the proposed Plan will not burden existing and planned service capabilities. Analysis of the proposed Plan has been considered with existing and planned services to ensure that utilities can be provided and maintained in a sustainable fashion.*

**7. The proposed map amendment (as applicable) provides a logical juxtaposition of uses that allows sufficient area to mitigate any anticipated impact associated with the development of the area.**

*The proposed Plan, including a new Future Land Use Map (FLUM), is not associated with any particular development; no development is concurrently proposed. The adopted FLUM and specific designations within the Subarea Plan provides for a variety of uses. Development proposals in the future, will need to be consistent with the proposed Map and will be reviewed on a case by case basis in consideration of both immediate neighbors, and of the City's larger portfolio of uses and mix.*

**8. The proposed amendment is in the best interest of the City of Meridian.**

*Staff finds the proposed amendment is in the best interest of the City because it is current, furthers states goals of the adopted Plan, and because its more relevant and has been vetted through public engagement.*