

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**National Register of Historic Places Registration Form**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

**1. Name of Property**Historic name: Meridian Water TowerOther names/site number: 10AA11577

Name of related multiple property listing:

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(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)N/A**2. Location**Street & number: 254 E Watertower

Street

City or town: Meridian State: Id County: AdaNot For Publication: ☐ Vicinity: ☐**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this \_\_\_ nomination \_\_\_ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

\_\_\_national \_\_\_statewide \_\_\_local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

\_\_\_A \_\_\_B \_\_\_C \_\_\_D

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Signature of certifying official/Title:

Date

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State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting official:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title :

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency/bureau  
or Tribal Government

#### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- \_\_\_ entered in the National Register  
\_\_\_ determined eligible for the National Register  
\_\_\_ determined not eligible for the National Register  
\_\_\_ removed from the National Register  
\_\_\_ other (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Action

#### 5. Classification

##### Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Private:

☐

Public – Local

☒

Public – State

☐

Public – Federal

☐

##### Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

Building(s)

☐

District

☐☐

Meridian Water Tower  
Name of Property  
Site

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Structure

☒

Object

☐

### Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing

Noncontributing

0-

0

buildings

0

0

sites

1

0

structures

0

0

objects

1

1

Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

### 6. Function or Use

#### Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

GOVERNMENT: Public Works: Water Tower

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#### Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

GOVERNMENT: Public Works: Water Tower

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## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

OTHER: Spheroid Tank, Steel Water Tower

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**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: CONCRETE; METAL: Steel

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

### Summary Paragraph

The Meridian Water Tower is located at 254 E. Watertower Street in Meridian, Ada County, Idaho. Constructed as an elevated municipal water storage structure for the City of Meridian, the tower formed part of the "1976 Elevated Water Tank Foundation and Site Work Project," prepared by J U B Engineers, Inc. under E.D.A. Project Number 07 01 01600. The property is best classified as a structure for National Register purposes. The tower consists of a 500,000 gallon spheroid steel tank supported by a cylindrical pedestal and flared pedestal base, set on a circular reinforced concrete foundation within a fenced municipal utility yard.

Elevated spheroid water tanks became a common form of municipal infrastructure during the mid-to-late twentieth century because they provided efficient water storage while maintaining system pressure through gravity-fed distribution.

The April 1976 tank elevation identifies the structure as a "500,000 Gallon Pedestal 245 Spheroid." A metal manufacturer's plate mounted near the base identifies the tank as a "Horton Waterspheroid," built by Chicago Bridge & Iron Company of Oak Brook, Illinois. The plate lists Contract No. 61509, year 1977, capacity of 500,000 gallons, and height to bottom of 86.5 feet.

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The tower reflects late twentieth century welded steel tank fabrication, reinforced concrete foundation construction, buried waterline installation, valve and thrust block construction, electrical and telephone service coordination, gravel access road construction, and graded site work.

The tower is an engineered public works structure rather than architectural resource. Its character derives from engineered form, welded steel fabrication, reinforced concrete construction, water storage capacity, and municipal utility function. The structure stored municipal water, supported pressure regulation, connected to Meridian's water distribution system, and reflected late twentieth century public works expansion in the city. Together, these features document the tower as a public works installation built to store water, maintain pressure, and support Meridian's expanding municipal service network.

Current field investigation confirms that the Meridian Water Tower retains its original location, design, materials, workmanship, and setting. The nominated property includes one contributing structure, the Meridian Water Tower, and associated site features related to its 1976 waterworks function, including the circular reinforced concrete foundation, fenced utility yard, access drive, valve features, waterline connections, and service components. The 1976 site plan defines "Tank Site Work" as work within the area bounded by the chain link fence. No separate noncontributing resources are identified within the nominated boundary.

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## Narrative Description

### *Location and Setting*

Meridian, with a 2026 population of 148,009, is located in the high desert of southwestern Idaho on a broad, flat plain in western Ada County, approximately 18 miles west of Boise, the state capital. The Rocky Mountain foothills rise to the northeast and the Owyhee Mountains are located to the southwest. North of the city, the Boise River, a tributary of the Snake River, flows through the valley. Historically part of a predominantly agricultural region shaped by irrigation development, Meridian experienced rapid growth during the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries as Ada County transitioned toward a more urban landscape with expanding municipal services and infrastructure.

The Meridian Water Tower is located on flat municipal utility site south of the Meridian Speedway. The site is separated from the Speedway by Eight Mile Lateral, which borders the property on the north and east. The surrounding area is characterized primarily by commercial development, including businesses and restaurants, with the former Oregon Short Line Railroad corridor nearby.

The Meridian Water Tower occupies an approximately 100-by-100-foot parcel established for the municipal water system. An April 1976 general site plan shows the water tower centered within the parcel and identifies the tank foundation, water line, gravel access road, and chain-link perimeter fence. These features reflect the property's historic use as a municipal utility site. The

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tower remains centered on the parcel and continues to function as part of the City of Meridian municipal water system.

### General Characteristics of the Property

The site functions as working waterworks setting rather than a landscaped civic space. Current field photographs show the tower within an open gravel surfaced utility yard enclosed by chain link fencing. Low vegetation appears within portions of the yard, while open clearance remains around the foundation, pedestal, valves, and service equipment. Adjacent low scale industrial, utility, and rail corridor conditions remain visible beyond the fence. This setting supports maintenance access, visual inspection, public safety, and operational control.

The tower forms a prominent vertical landmark within Meridian's built environment because of its height, elevated tank, open utility setting, and municipal lettering. The tower's height, open utility setting, and municipal lettering make it visible from nearby streets and identify it as civic infrastructure within Meridian's built environment.

### Physical Description

The 1976 drawings document the tower's original design and site organization. Current field photographs document the tower's existing physical condition and show retained character defining features as well as later or updated service components associated with continued municipal operation. The tower is best understood as an integrated municipal waterworks system. Its historic character depends on the relationship among the elevated tank, pedestal, foundation, access road, fenced service yard, waterline connections, valve features, and electrical and telephone service. The April 1976 general site plan locates an "Approximate Tank Base," "Approximate Tank Foundation Limits," and "Tank Center" within the property. This organization remains central to the property's historic character because the site functioned as a designed public works installation, not an incidental open lot.

The tank is the elevated spheroid storage vessel, the pedestal is the cylindrical steel support shaft, the drywell provides internal access, and the reinforced concrete foundation anchors the assembly at grade. The tower rests on a circular reinforced concrete pedestal foundation documented in the 1976 foundation drawings. The foundation plan shows the tank centered within a circular footing mat, with anchor bolts equally spaced around the ringwall and an electrical entrance through the ringwall where required. The foundation sheet lists approximate foundation quantities of 211.7 cubic yards of concrete and 27,755 pounds of reinforcing steel. A table of loads identifies stored water as the dominant load, listing 4,231.8 kips for water, 98.2 kips for metal, 254.4 kips for concrete, and a total minimum load of 4,584.4 kips.

Current photographs show a raised circular concrete foundation ring at the base of the flared pedestal. Regularly spaced boxed anchor bolt housings, painted to match the tower, are mounted around the perimeter and mark the structural connection between the steel pedestal and the reinforced concrete foundation. Dark staining, coating wear, and surface grime appear along the foundation ledge and lower pedestal, especially where water and debris collect.

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The 1976 plan documents the foundation as part of an engineered site response. The “Meridian Water Tank Foundation Investigation” locates the staked center of tank at elevation 2621.96 feet and places three test borings, D.H. 1 through D.H. 3, around the footing mat. The boring logs record topsoil, clayey silt, silty or gravelly sand, sandy gravel, groundwater in portions of the boring logs, and Payette Formation bedrock. These materials document subsurface analysis before construction and link the foundation to site specific soil, groundwater, and bedrock conditions.

Above the foundation, the tower rises on a cylindrical steel pedestal with a flared conical base. At the base, the cylindrical pedestal widens into a flared conical transition above the circular concrete foundation, visually and structurally mediating between the narrow steel shaft and the broad foundation ring. The single pedestal support concentrates the tower’s load and visual mass into one vertical shaft rather than an exposed steel frame. This form differs from earlier multi leg elevated tanks and gives the structure a simple late twentieth century infrastructure profile. Current photographs show visible vertical and horizontal welded seams beneath the exterior coating, indicating welded steel plate construction.

The pedestal supports a spheroid steel storage tank. The 1976 tank elevation identifies the structure as a “500,000 Gallon Pedestal 245 Spheroid.” The tank has a capacity of 500,000 gallons and an approximate projected diameter of 40 feet, based on the dimension associated with the “Approximate Tank Base” on the general site plan. The tank elevation identifies the high water line, low water line, roof hatch with vent, vent and manhole, ladder, 36 inch diameter drywell with ladder, painters’ rings, platform, anchor bolts furnished by the tank supplier, 12 inch diameter supply main, tank pedestal, concrete floor by others, and tank foundation and valve pit by others.

The tower rises approximately 138 feet above grade. A metal manufacturer’s plate mounted near the base identifies the tank as a “Horton Waterspheroid,” built by Chicago Bridge & Iron Company of Oak Brook, Illinois. The plate lists Contract No. 61509, year 1977, capacity of 500,000 gallons, and height to bottom of 86.5 feet. The plate provides field evidence for the tank’s proprietary type, manufacturer, capacity, contract

The tower includes access and maintenance features associated with municipal operation. The tank elevation identifies a ladder, platform, painters’ rings, roof hatch with vent, vent and manhole, and 36 inch diameter drywell with ladder. Current photographs show painters’ rings encircling the upper pedestal below the tank bowl, with a small circular access plate or hatch on the pedestal wall. Dark streaking appears below the tank bowl and around the upper pedestal, indicating weathering and coating exposure in areas subject to runoff. These features document the tower as a maintained structure with internal circulation, inspection access, and occupational safety features.

The base entry area includes a projecting personnel entry with a metal door, exterior concrete pad, grated metal platform, conduit runs, control equipment, and a large valve wheel mounted on the door assembly. The entry provides access to internal service space within the pedestal and reflects the tower’s continued use as a maintained municipal utility structure. Some equipment at

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the entry, including conduit, control boxes, and door hardware, appears to reflect later operational maintenance or updates rather than original 1976 fabric.

The water system connection appears at the base of the tower. The site plan shows a 12 inch water main constructed under separate contract, with a 12 inch tee and thrust block, 12 inch gate valve and thrust block, 12 inch cast iron plug and thrust block, and connection to the 12 inch water main. The valve anchor detail specifies 2500 psi concrete poured against undisturbed earth and anchor bars of 1 inch diameter minimum for valves connected to PVC pipe. The valve vault drawings document ladder steps, pipe penetrations, watertight joint treatment, and drainage through a sump with a 4 inch clay tile drain.

Current waterworks components include above grade valve assemblies, flanged pipe connections, black pipe segments, pipe supports, and a concrete valve vault or box with a metal grate. These components occupy the gravel surfaced yard near the tower base and maintain the physical relationship between the elevated storage tank and the municipal water distribution system. The visible valve and pipe assemblies should be treated as current operational components unless municipal records confirm original 1976 materials or replacement dates.

Electrical and communication systems form part of the original waterworks installation. The electrical sheet locates Panel A and the Power and Telephone Board inside the tank pedestal near the entry. It specifies a 120 and 240 volt, 60 amp panel, copper wiring, rigid metal conduit where exposed to physical damage, PVC Schedule 40 conduit underground and under slab, coordination with Idaho Power, and 2 inch PVC telephone conduit routed for Mountain Bell service. The sheet also documents pole mounted exterior lighting, interior tank support lighting, and ladder shaft lighting. These systems supported operation, inspection, safety, and communication at the tower site.

The site enclosure includes chain link fencing and a vehicular gate. The 1976 chain link fence detail specifies a 6 foot fence with a 3 strand barbed wire top, 45 degree barbed wire supports, terminal, corner, and gate braces at 10 foot maximum spacing, and concrete post foundations. The gate detail specifies a 20 foot gate opening, galvanized wire mesh with 9 gage minimum fabric, galvanized gate posts, hinges, braces, and a semi self draining center stop. Current photographs confirm chain link fencing and a vehicular gate with metal posts, hinges, latch hardware, and a mounted municipal warning sign. The presence, continuity, and condition of the barbed wire top should be verified in the field.

The access drive connects the tower site to the public street network and supports construction, maintenance, inspection, and operation. The access road plans define work limits from Station 5 plus 53.7 to Station 10 plus 88, including the short approach apron to the tank site. The profile shows the gravel roadway rising at shallow grades between the public approach and fenced tank enclosure. The typical access road cross section specifies 4 inches of three quarter inch minus crushed gravel over 8 inches of 3 inch minus pit run base gravel on compacted subgrade. The plan also notes a 20 foot ingress, egress, and water main easement, plus a 10 foot temporary construction easement.

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Associated site features include the circular reinforced concrete foundation, fenced utility enclosure, vehicular gate, gravel access drive, open utility yard, valve pit, 12 inch water connections, pipe and valve assemblies, electrical service, telephone service, conduit, and control equipment. For this nomination, the fence, gate, access drive, valve features, and service equipment are treated as associated features of the contributing structure rather than separately counted resources. Their significance lies in their relationship to the tower's operation, access, maintenance, and connection to Meridian's water distribution system.

The exterior tank and pedestal carry a pale yellow coating. Current photographs show localized staining, dark moisture or biological streaking below the tank bowl, surface grime, and areas of coating wear near the base and concrete foundation ring. The tank displays MERIDIAN in large sans serif block lettering near the upper curve of the tank bowl. The lettering contributes to the tower's current civic identity and visual recognition. Its date should be verified before treating it as an original character defining feature.

The tower appears maintained, with localized weathering. Current photographs show pale yellow exterior coating, dark streaking below the tank bowl, surface grime at seams and rings, coating wear near the foundation ledge, staining at anchor bolt housings, and visible wear on exposed valve and pipe assemblies. These conditions appear consistent with an operating or maintained waterworks structure and should be documented as part of the resource's current physical condition rather than treated automatically as integrity loss.

## **Resource Inventory**

### **Resource 1: Meridian Water Tower**

Resource Type: Structure

Evaluation: Contributing

Date of Construction: 1976, with 1977 manufacturer's plate date requiring confirmation

Engineer: J U B Engineers, Inc.

Owner or Client: City of Meridian

Associated Project: 1976 Elevated Water Tank Foundation and Site Work Project, E.D.A.

Project Number 07 01 01600

The Meridian Water Tower stands as the primary structure within a fenced municipal utility parcel at 254 E. Watertower Street in Meridian, Idaho. The tower occupies the interior of the site and serves as the focal point of the property. The general site plan shows the tank centered within a defined site measuring approximately 100 feet by 100 feet, with a gravel road, property line, water line, chain link fence, tank center, approximate tank base, and approximate tank foundation limits identified. Current photographs show the tower within an open gravel yard with an access drive, chain link fence, gate, valve connections, electrical service, telephone service, base entry equipment, and other service components forming the associated waterworks setting.

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The structure consists of a spheroid steel storage tank supported by a cylindrical pedestal and flared pedestal base. The 1976 tank elevation identifies the tower as a "500,000 Gallon Pedestal 245 Spheroid." The tank has a capacity of 500,000 gallons and an approximate projected diameter of 40 feet, based on the general site plan. The tower rises approximately 138 feet above grade, pending confirmation of the measured datum. The manufacturer's plate identifies the tank as a Horton Waterspheroid manufactured by Chicago Bridge & Iron Company in 1977, with Contract No. 61509 and a height to bottom of 86.5 feet.

The pedestal rises from a circular reinforced concrete foundation. The foundation plan shows anchor bolts equally spaced around the ringwall and an electrical entrance through the ringwall where required. The foundation sheet lists approximate foundation quantities of 211.7 cubic yards of concrete and 27,755 pounds of reinforcing steel. The foundation investigation places test borings around the footing mat and records topsoil, clayey silt, silty or gravelly sand, sandy gravel, groundwater in portions of the logs, and Payette Formation bedrock. Current photographs show boxed anchor bolt housings, a raised circular foundation ring, and localized coating wear and staining at the lower pedestal and foundation ledge. These plan and field details document the tower's foundation as a substantial engineered base designed for the load and site conditions of an elevated municipal water tank.

The tower includes character defining operational features, including a ladder system, drywell, platform, painters' rings, roof hatch with vent, vent and manhole, base access door, valve assemblies, pipe connections, conduit, service equipment, and water system connections. The 1976 plans document a 12 inch diameter supply main, 12 inch water main connection, tee and thrust block, gate valve and thrust block, cast iron plug and thrust block, and valve anchor details. Current photographs show above grade valve assemblies, flanged pipe connections, black pipe segments, a concrete valve vault or box with a metal grate, and updated base entry equipment. These features continue to express the tower's waterworks function, while visible equipment updates appear consistent with routine operation and maintenance.

The fenced utility yard contributes to the tower's waterworks character. The 1976 drawings document a 6 foot chain link fence with 3 strand barbed wire and a 20 foot vehicular gate. Current photographs confirm chain link fencing and a vehicular gate, while the presence and continuity of the barbed wire top should be verified. The access road plans define work limits from Station 5 plus 53.7 to Station 10 plus 88, including the short approach apron to the tank site. The access drive and gravel surfaced yard provide maintenance clearance around the tower base and connect the site to the public street network. For this nomination, these features are treated as associated features of the contributing structure rather than separate resources.

The Meridian Water Tower retains integrity of location, design, workmanship, feeling, and association as an elevated municipal water storage structure constructed for the City of Meridian in 1976 to 1977, subject to field confirmation of parcel continuity and operational status. Its spheroid steel tank, cylindrical pedestal, flared base, circular reinforced concrete foundation, open utility yard, water system connections, and associated site features continue to convey its original public works function. Integrity of materials and setting require field verification because repainting, equipment replacement, fencing changes, lighting changes, telemetry

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additions, access road resurfacing, and surrounding development may affect historic appearance. The tower remains legible as a late 1970s municipal waterworks installation and is classified as a contributing resource.

### Changes Over Time and Integrity

The available documentation establishes the original 1976 project scope while current photographs document the tower's present condition. The 1976 plan documents the tank, foundation, site work, access road, chain link enclosure, valve connections, electrical service, telephone service, and related infrastructure. Current photographs confirm retention of the spheroid tank form, cylindrical pedestal, flared pedestal base, circular concrete foundation ring, open gravel utility yard, chain link fence and gate, base access door, painters' rings, valve and pipe assemblies, utility conduit, equipment cabinet, and manufacturer's plate.

- 1976: Elevated water tank, foundation, site work, access road, fencing, valve anchors, electrical and telephone service features, and related utility connections documented for the City of Meridian by J U B Engineers, Inc.
- 1977: Manufacturer's plate identifies the tank as a Horton Waterspheroid manufactured by Chicago Bridge & Iron Company, Contract No. 61509, year 1977, capacity of 500,000 gallons, and height to bottom of 86.5 feet.
- Date unknown: Exterior coating renewed or repainted as routine maintenance and corrosion protection.
- Date unknown: Base entry equipment, door hardware, conduit, control boxes, telemetry, lighting, valve components, and exposed pipe assemblies may represent routine maintenance, replacement in kind, or later operational upgrades.
- Date unknown: Existing chain link fence, gate, security equipment, and signage require comparison with the 1976 alignment, materials, and details.

The Meridian Water Tower retains integrity of location, design, workmanship, feeling, and association. The tower remains on its municipal utility site, retains its spheroid tank and cylindrical pedestal form, and preserves the plan documented relationship among tank, foundation, access road, fenced enclosure, valve features, and service equipment. Integrity of materials and setting require field confirmation because repainting, fence replacement, equipment upgrades, and surrounding development may affect historic appearance. These changes should be evaluated as routine infrastructure maintenance unless they remove, obscure, or substantially alter the tower's character defining form, materials, site organization, or waterworks function.

The tower retains integrity of location because it remains associated with its municipal utility site and waterworks setting. Location carries particular importance because the site supported storage, pressure regulation, distribution, access, and visibility within the water system. The tower retains integrity of design through its Horton Waterspheroid tank, cylindrical pedestal,

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flared base, circular foundation, and basic site layout. The design includes the tank, pedestal, foundation, access drive, fenced enclosure, utility routing, valve anchoring, electrical service, telephone service, and site grading.

The tower retains integrity of setting if the immediate utility site continues to express service space, open clearance, security, maintenance access, and visibility. The setting should not be judged as a picturesque landscape. Later development around the site does not necessarily remove setting integrity if the tower remains visually prominent and the immediate utility yard retains its open, fenced, and operational character. Current photographs support this assessment by showing the tower within a gravel surfaced utility yard with surrounding fencing, access, service equipment, and visible clearance around the base.

The tower retains integrity of materials if the original steel tank, pedestal, flared pedestal base, reinforced concrete foundation, anchor systems, and principal site features remain. Routine maintenance, including coating renewal, corrosion protection, valve replacement, fence fabric replacement, electrical updates, lighting replacement, door hardware, and telemetry equipment, should be separated from material loss. Such work does not necessarily diminish integrity if it preserves form, material character, function, and working utility setting.

The tower retains integrity of workmanship through its welded steel fabrication, tank erection, reinforced concrete work, anchor bolt installation, pipe and valve assembly, thrust block construction, site grading, fence construction, gate installation, road base preparation, and electrical service installation. These features remain legible in the tower's steel form, concrete foundation, anchor bolt housings, access features, and associated utility components.

The tower retains integrity of feeling because it remains visually prominent and continues to read as a municipal water tower within a working utility landscape. Feeling comes from the height, spheroid tank, cylindrical pedestal, flared base, pale yellow coating, municipal lettering, fenced service yard, gravel surfacing, access drive, and utilitarian equipment. The tower retains integrity of association because it remains physically and visually connected to Meridian's municipal water system and the 1976 public works project.

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## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☒ A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- ☐ A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- ☐ B. Removed from its original location
- ☐ C. A birthplace or grave
- ☐ D. A cemetery
- ☐ E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- ☐ F. A commemorative property
- ☐ G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT AND ENGINEERING

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**Period of Significance**

1977

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**Significant Dates**

1977

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**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

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**Cultural Affiliation**

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**Architect/Builder**

C

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**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Meridian Water Tower is significant under Criterion A in the area of COMMUNITY PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT as a principal component of the expansion of Meridian's municipal water system during a period of rapid residential and commercial growth in the late twentieth century. Completed in 1977, the elevated water storage tower provided increased storage capacity, improved system pressure, enhanced fire protection, and supported the city's expansion beyond its historic agricultural core. The property is also significant under Criterion C in the area of ENGINEERING as a well-preserved example of a late twentieth-century elevated steel water storage tower constructed by the Chicago Bridge & Iron company, a nationally recognized engineering firm that designed and built municipal water infrastructure throughout the United States. The period of significance extends from 1977 to ca.2000, encompassing the years during which the tower played a central role in Meridian's municipal water system and the community's transformation from a small agricultural town into one of Idaho's fastest-growing cities.

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

### **Community Development and Municipal Water in Meridian**

Euroamerican settlement of southwestern Idaho increased during the 1860s following the discovery of gold in the Boise Basin in 1862. Farming settlements quickly developed along the Boise River, where water was readily available for irrigation. Farmers raised vegetables, grains, and fruits to supply mining communities. Initially, settlers farming adjacent to the river constructed small ditches to divert water from the river and nearby streams. As settlement expanded onto the bench lands above the Boise River, larger irrigation systems were needed to make the arid land productive. Community efforts and private enterprise resulted in the construction of an extensive network of canals and laterals that opened much of the Boise Valley to agricultural development.<sup>1</sup>

Meridian's early development was directly tied to the expansion of irrigation and agriculture in western Ada County. Early settlers located near Five Mile and Ten Mile creeks, where water was available. Construction of the Idaho Central Railway between Nampa and Boise in 1887 also encouraged settlement. The following year, the U.S. Postal Service established a mail drop along the railroad approximately midway between Nampa and Boise. The location was initially known as Hunter, after John Hunter, superintendent of the Idaho Central Railway. A small trading center developed around the railroad and mail stop. In August 1893, C.G. Zenger filed a plat for a new town named Meridian for its location on the Boise Meridian. The name of the post office was changed from Hunter to Meridian in April 1894.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Arrowrock Group, Inc. Patterns of the Past 4-6. Ada County Historic Preservation Council. Boise, Idaho.

<sup>2</sup> City of Meridian Preservation Plan. TAG Historical Research & Consulting, 2014 p. 4.

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The growth of Meridian and the surrounding agricultural area was aided by the development of several irrigation systems. The Settlers Ditch Company was organized in 1884 to provide water to land west of Boise City. After several attempts to complete the system, Boise businessman John Lemp assumed direction of the project in 1887, and it became known as the Lemp Canal. The main gate was completed in 1891, followed by a system of laterals that supplied water to surrounding farms. In 1901, the newly organized Settlers Canal Company, Ltd. purchased the system and returned the name of the main canal to Settlers Canal. The Nampa & Meridian Irrigation District was organized in 1904 and became an important supplier of irrigation water to Meridian and the surrounding agricultural area. Together, these irrigation systems supported the agricultural economy that shaped Meridian during much of the twentieth century.<sup>3</sup>

Meridian was incorporated as a village in 1903. As the community developed, residents increasingly required municipal services, including a reliable source of domestic water. Plans for a municipal water system were underway by late 1909. Engineer Edmund M. Blake prepared plans for the system and estimated that approximately \$18,000 would be required for the installation of iron water mains, twelve fire hydrants, an electric pump, and a 60,000-gallon elevated water tank.<sup>4</sup> Supporters of the project cited the need for improved fire protection as well as public health concerns. During a November 1909 Commercial Club meeting, a local physician urged construction of the system because of an increase in cases of typhoid fever.

Construction of Meridian's municipal water system followed in 1910. A new city hall completed that year included an engine room and a 10,000-gallon settling tank associated with the waterworks plant.<sup>5</sup> Blake served as city engineer for the project and oversaw construction of a 110-foot-high water tower, which was completed in December 1910.<sup>6</sup> The construction of the municipal water system provided Meridian with a centralized source of domestic water as well as water for fire protection and represented an important improvement to the community's municipal infrastructure.

Meridian remained a relatively small agricultural community during the first half of the twentieth century. The surrounding area supported orchards, dairies, and row-crop farming, while the community served as a commercial and service center for the surrounding agricultural population. Following World War II, however, population growth and residential development began to increase demands on Meridian's municipal infrastructure. Improvements in transportation, regional employment opportunities, and suburban development throughout the Treasure Valley contributed to the community's growth.

By the 1970s, Meridian was experiencing a period of more rapid population growth. In 1974, Meridian's City Clerk noted that the city's population had doubled since 1970. Increased residential and commercial development placed additional demands on the municipal water system, including the city's water system. A new well was approved to go into operation in

<sup>3</sup> Belinda Davis. A Study of Irrigation and the Development of Ada County. 1990.

<sup>4</sup> "Water System for Meridian." *Idaho Statesman*, November 19, 1909.

<sup>5</sup> "New City hall for Meridian." *Idaho Statesman*, December 3, 1910.

<sup>6</sup> "Waterworks at Meridian." *Idaho Statesman*, December 11, 1910.

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1974. A study prepared by J.U.B. Engineers identified the need for a new water tower and updating and enlarging existing water lines in addition.<sup>7</sup>

In May 1975, the U.S. Economic Development Administration awarded the City of Meridian a \$1.45-million grant to expand its water and sewer systems. The grant was part of a larger \$6.5 million project funded through federal and local sources. Improvements included a new sewage treatment plant, two new wells, a new water tower, and new water lines within the city. According to Maor Don Storey, the improvements would allow the system to carry a greater volume.<sup>8</sup>

The new water tower was planned as part of the 1976 Elevated Water Tank Foundation and Site Work Project. In July 1976, the City awarded a contract to the Chicago Bridge & Iron company for construction of the new elevated water tank. By October, construction of the tower was underway. A local reporter described the new tower as resembling a “squashed bright yellow golf ball sitting on a pedestal.”<sup>9</sup> Mayor Don Storey noted that the city wanted to have “modernistic stripes” to the tank but opted for the plain yellow coating because stripes were too expensive. Instead, “Meridian” was painted on the tank.<sup>10</sup>

Construction as Constructed by the Chicago Bridge & Iron Company, the steel tower rises approximately 134 feet and has a storage capacity of 500,000 gallons. By August 1977, the tower was substantially complete and was being filled as it was incorporated into the municipal water system.<sup>11</sup> The new tower replaced the earlier water tower near City Hall and increased the City’s water-storage capacity tenfold. The larger water improvement project also included two new wells and improvements to the water distribution system. At the time the new tower was constructed, Meridian had a population of approximately 5,000 residents. Its construction reflected the City’s efforts to improve municipal infrastructure to meet the needs of a growing community.

The Meridian Water Tower remained part of the city’s municipal water distribution system as Meridian experienced substantial residential and commercial growth during the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. As the city continued to expand, additional water storage and pumping facilities were constructed to meet increasing demand. The Meridian Water Tower represents an important period in the development of Meridian’s municipal water system and the City’s response to the community growth occurring during the 1970s.

## Period of Significance

The period of significance begins in 1977, when the Meridian Water Tower was completed and placed into service as part of a major expansion of the city’s water system. The tower represented a substantial increase in the City’s water-storage capacity and was constructed as

<sup>7</sup> “Growing Population of Meridian Strains Public Services to Limit.” *Idaho Statesman*. December 12, 1974, p.1.

<sup>8</sup> “Meridian Gets \$1.45 Million,” *Idaho Free Press*, May 2, 1975.

<sup>9</sup> “Meridian Gets New Water Tower,” *Idaho Statesman*, October 26, 1976.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid

<sup>11</sup> Dianne Whitacre, “Meridian’s New Tank Gets its Fill,” *Idaho Statesman*, August 3, 1977.

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part of a larger program of water and sewer improvements undertaken in response to rapid population growth and increased demands on municipal water system. Although planning and design for the tower began in 1976 and the tower remained in service after its completion, its historic significance is associated with its construction and placement into service in 1977 apart of Meridian's expansion of municipal infrastructure during the 1970s.

**Criterion A**

The Meridian Water Tower is eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion A in the area of Community Planning and Development for its association with the expansion of Meridian's municipal water system during a period of rapid population and residential growth. By the mid-1970s, increased development had placed additional demands on the City's water system. A study prepared by J.U.B. Engineers identified the need for a water tower and improvement to existing water lines. In 1975, the City received federal funding as part of a larger program to expand its water and sewer systems, including construction of a new water tower, two new wells, and new water lines.

Completed in 1977, the 500,000-gallon Meridian Water Tower replaced the earlier water tower near City Hall and increased the City's water-storage capacity tenfold. Its construction represented a significant investment in municipal infrastructure undertaken as Meridian responded to the rapid growth and development occurring during the 1970s. The Meridian Water Tower is a surviving physical representation of the City's efforts to expand municipal services as Meridian transitioned from a small agricultural community to a growing suburban community.

**Criterion C**

The Meridian Water Tower is eligible under Criterion C in the area of Engineering as an intact example of a late twentieth-century Horton Waterspheroid elevated steel municipal water storage structure. Completed in 1977, the tower embodies engineering principles commonly employed by American municipalities during the post World War II era to provide gravity-fed water storage, maintain consistent system pressure, improve fire protection, and accommodate increased demands on municipal water systems. Its spheroid steel storage tank, cylindrical pedestal, flared pedestal based, welded steel construction, and reinforced concrete pedestal foundation illustrate the distinctive design and construction characteristics of elevated municipal water towers constructed during this period.

The tower was manufactured by the Chicago Bridge & Iron Company, a major designer and builder of municipal water storage structures during the twentieth century. The 1975 tank elevation identifies the proposed tower as a "500,000 Gallon Pedestal 245 Spheroid", while the manufacturer's plate on the completed structure identifies it as a Horton Waterspheroid manufactured by Chicago Bridge & Iron company in 1977 under contract No. 61509. The Meridian Water Tower reflects the standardized engineering practices and welded-steel construction methods associated with this type of large-capacity elevated municipal water-storage facilities during this period. It retains the defining physical characteristics of its type, including its spheroid tank profile, cylindrical pedestal support, welded steel construction, and water-distribution system.

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The Meridian Water Tower retains the design, materials, workmanship, and engineering characteristics established at the time of construction. Although the surrounding community has expanded considerably since 1977 and the municipal water system has grown beyond the original facility, the tower retains its original form, structural system, construction materials, and associated utility features. These characteristics allow the Meridian Water Tower to continue to convey its historic function and engineering significance as a Horton Waterspheroid elevated municipal water-storage structure.

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

**Bibliography** (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

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Mathis, Gregor R. *Steel Water Towers Associated with South Dakota Water Systems, 1894-1967: An Historic Context*. Pierre: South Dakota State Historical Society, 2012.

Spring, Ronald E. "They Didn't Just Grow There: Building Water Towers in the Postwar Era." *Minnesota History* 53, no. 4 (Winder 1992):130-141.

TAG Historical Research & Consulting. *City of Meridian Preservation Plan*. 2014.

Whitacre, Dianne. "Meridian's New Tank Gets Its Fill." *Idaho Statesman*, August 3, 1977.

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**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested  
☐ previously listed in the National Register  
☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register  
☐ designated a National Historic Landmark  
☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- ☒ State Historic Preservation Office  
☐ Other State agency  
☐ Federal agency  
☐ Local government  
☐ University  
☐ Other  
Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acres of Property** 994 sq.meters (less than one acre)

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_

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(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: Longitude:

2. Latitude: Longitude:

3. Latitude: Longitude:

4. Latitude: Longitude:

Or

**UTM References**

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

☐ NAD 1927 or ☒ NAD 1983

1. Zone: 11 Easting: 549243.73 Northing: 4827735.19

2. Zone: 11 Easting: 549272.58 Northing: 4827736.54

3. Zone: 11 Easting: 549273.82 Northing: 4827709.58

4. Zone: 11 Easting: 549241.71 Northing: 4827708.15

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundary includes the tank, pedestal, circular reinforced concrete foundation, fenced utility yard, access apron, valve features, and service components directly associated with the 1976 waterworks installation. The boundary captures the area necessary to convey the tower's historic function, access, maintenance clearance, and physical connection to Meridian's water distribution system. Areas outside the historic tank site, access easement, or utility enclosure have been excluded unless they retain documented association with the 1976 project.

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The nominated boundary encompasses the historic parcel associated with the construction and operation of the Meridian Water Tower as documented on the 1976 Elevated Water Tank Foundation and Site Work Project plans prepared by J-U-B Engineers, Inc. The boundary includes the tower and the site improvements constructed as part of the original project,

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including the reinforced concrete foundation, fenced utility yard, access apron, valve assemblies, and associated utility features necessary for the operation and maintenance of the municipal water system. The boundary was selected to include the resources that retain a direct historic and functional association with the 1977 construction of the water tower while excluding adjacent municipal property and later utility improvements that do not contribute to the property's significance.

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## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Barbara Perry Bauer, M.A. and Jeffery Holley M.A. with Research Assistance by Erik Cordes M.A.

organization: TAG Historical Research & Consulting

street & number: 401 W. Idaho, Suite LL-3

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e-mail: bpbauer@taghistory.com

telephone: 208-338-1014

date: August 19, 2026

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## Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

## Figures

1 of 8 Vicinity Map

2 of 8 USGS Map

3 of 8 Property Boundary Map

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4 of 8 Photo Key

5 of 8 Meridian Water Tower Plan Sheet

6 of 8 Chicago Bridge & Iron Company Plan for Waterspheroid, Meridian, Idaho

7 of 8 *Idaho Statesman*, March 18, 1977

8 of 8. *Idaho Statesman*, April 7, 1977

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### Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

### Photo Log

Name of Property: Meridian Water Tower

City or Vicinity: Meridian

County: Ada

State: Idaho

Photographer: Barbara Perry Bauer and Jeffery Holley

Date Photographed: March 23, 2026

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

1 of \_10\_ .ID\_AdaCounty\_Meridian Water Tower\_001

Overview, facing northwest.

2 of \_10\_ ID\_AdaCounty\_Meridian Water Tower 002

Meridian Water Tower, facing northeast.

3 of \_10\_ ID\_AdaCounty\_Meridian Water Tower 003

Meridian Water Tower, facing southwest.

4 of \_10\_ ID\_AdaCounty\_Meridian Water Tower 004

Meridian Water Tower, looking from base to spherical tank.

5 of \_10\_ ID\_AdaCounty\_Meridian Water Tower 005

Meridian Water Tower, looking north to access gates.

6 of \_10\_ ID\_AdaCounty\_Meridian Water Tower 006

Meridian Water Tower, looking at entrance and base of tower.

7 of \_10\_ ID\_AdaCounty\_Meridian Water Tower 007

Meridian Water Tower, looking at entrance door. Camera facing west.

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8 of 10 ID AdaCounty Meridian Water Tower 008

Meridian Water Tower, Manufacturer's plate. Close-up.

9 of 10 ID AdaCounty Meridian Water Tower 009

Meridian Water Tower, Interior. Camera facing north.

10 of 10 ID AdaCounty Meridian Water Tower 010

Meridian Water Tower, Interior view of access ladder. Camera facing west.

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for nominations to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.). We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for each response using this form is estimated to be between the Tier 1 and Tier 4 levels with the estimate of the time for each tier as follows:

Tier 1 – 60-100 hours  
Tier 2 – 120 hours  
Tier 3 – 230 hours  
Tier 4 – 280 hours

The above estimates include time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and preparing and transmitting nominations. Send comments regarding these estimates or any other aspect of the requirement(s) to the Service Information Collection Clearance Officer, National Park Service, 1201 Oakridge Drive Fort Collins, CO 80525.

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Figure 1. Vicinity map

## Meridian Water Tower

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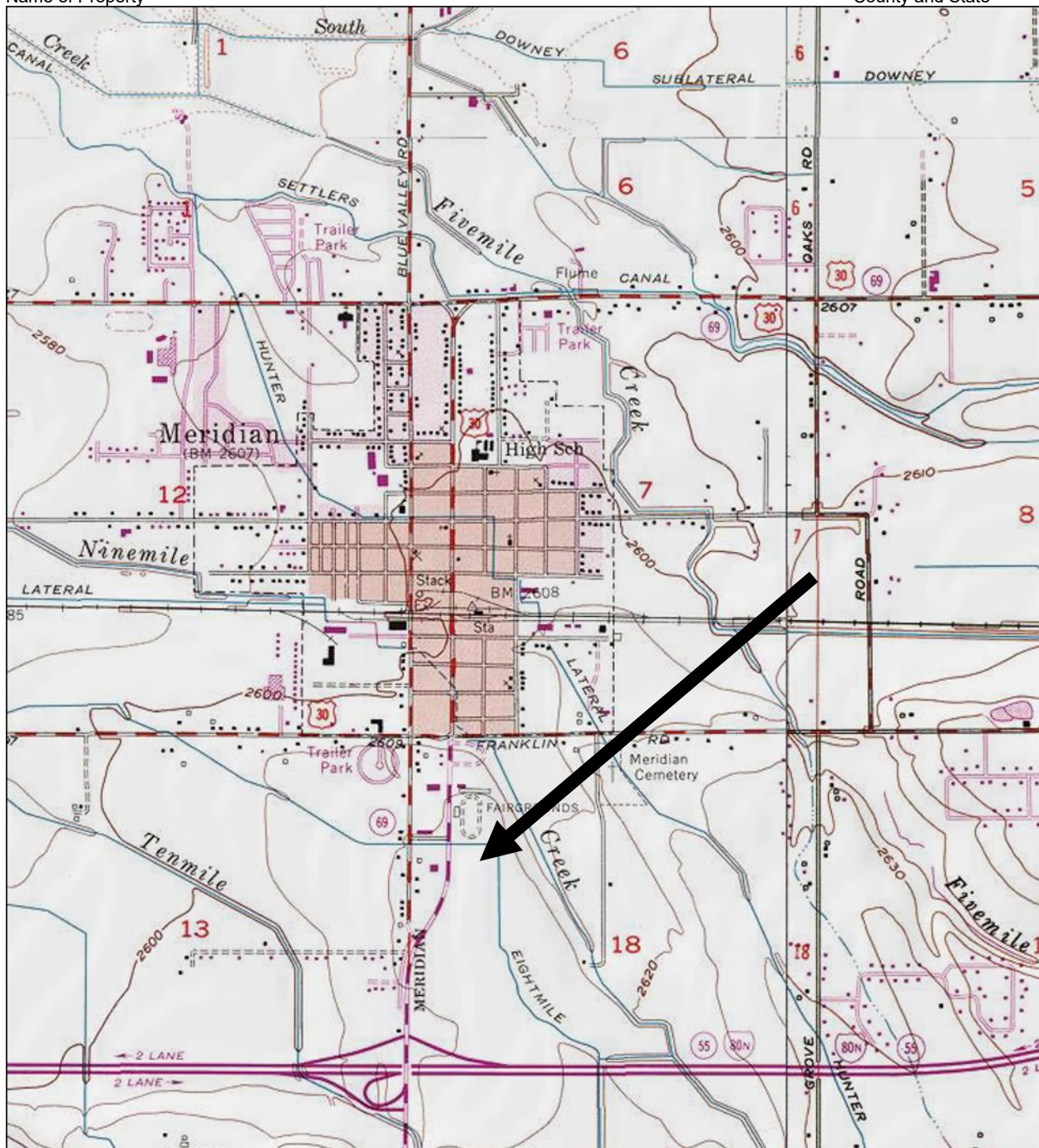


Figure 2: USGS Quadrangle Map

Meridian, Idaho, 1953, 7.5-minute series, Scale 1:24,000

Township 3 North Range 1 East, Section 18



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Figure 3. Aerial Map  
Meridian, Ada County, Idaho  
Source: Google Earth accessed July 2026  
NRHP boundary outlined in red

- A. 11T 549243.73mE/4827735.19mN
- B. 11T 549272.58mE/4827736.54mN
- C. 11T 549273.82mE/4827709.59mN
- D. 11T 549241.71mE/4827708.15mN



N

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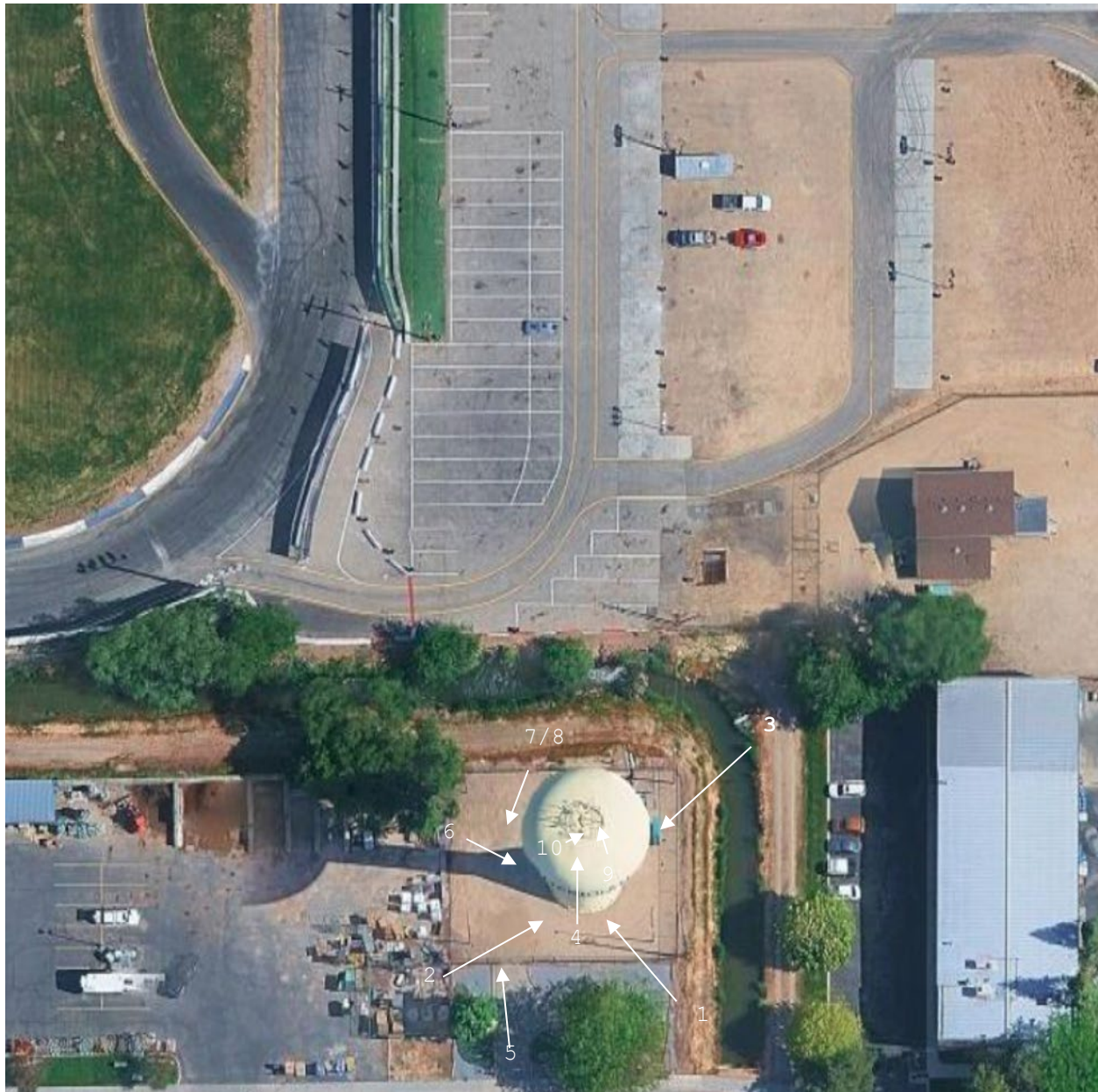
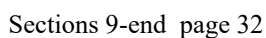


Figure 4. Photo Key  
Meridian, Ada County, Idaho  
Source: Google Earth accessed July 2026





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Figure 7. Idaho Statesman, March 18, 1977, p. 39.

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Figure 8. Idaho Statesman, April 7, 1977.

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Photo 1 of 10. ID\_AdaCounty\_Meridian Water Tower 001  
Overview, facing northwest. Photo by Barbara Perry Bauer, March, 2026.

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Photo 2 of 10. ID\_AdaCounty\_Meridian Water Tower 002  
Meridian Water Tower, facing northeast. Photo by Barbara Perry Bauer, March, 2026.

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Photo 3 of 10. ID\_AdaCounty\_Meridian Water Tower 003  
Meridian Water Tower, facing southwest. Photo by Jeffery Holley, March, 2026.

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Photo 4 of 10. ID\_AdaCounty\_Meridian Water Tower 004  
Meridian Water Tower, looking from base to spherical tank. Photo by Barbara Perry  
Bauer, March, 2026.

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Photo 5 of 10. ID\_AdaCounty\_Meridian Water Tower 005  
Meridian Water Tower, looking north to access gates. Photo by Barbara Perry Bauer,  
March, 2026.

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Photo 6 of 10. ID\_AdaCounty\_Meridian Water Tower 006  
Meridian Water Tower, looking at entrance and base of tower. Camera facing east.  
Photo by Jeffery Holley, March, 2026.

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Photo 7 of 10. ID\_AdaCounty\_Meridian Water Tower 007  
Meridian Water Tower, looking at entrance door. Camera facing west. Photo by Jeffery  
Holley, March, 2026.

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Photo 8 of 10. ID\_AdaCounty\_Meridian Water Tower 008  
Meridian Water Tower, Manufacturer's plate. Close-up. Photo by Jeffery Holley, March, 2026.

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Photo 9 of 10. ID\_AdaCounty\_Meridian Water Tower 009  
Meridian Water Tower, Interior. Camera facing north. Photo by Barbara Perry Bauer,  
March, 2026.

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Photo 10 of 10. ID\_AdaCounty\_Meridian Water Tower 010  
Meridian Water Tower, Interior view of access ladder. Camera facing west. Photo by  
Jeffery Holley, March, 2026.