

A Meeting of the Meridian City Council was called to order at 4:30 p.m. Tuesday, June 18, 2024, by Mayor Robert Simison.

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

ROLL-CALL ATTENDANCE

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

Simison: Council, we will call this meeting to order. For the record it is June 18th, 2024, at 4:30 p.m. We will begin this afternoon's work session with roll call attendance.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Simison: Next item up is adoption of the agenda.

Cavener: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: Quick apologies. We are going to make a slight modification to the Consent Agenda. We are going to take Item 15 and continue it to next week, but with that just forecasted change, I move that we adopt the agenda as presented.

Strader: Second.

Simison: I have a motion and a second to adopt the agenda as presented. Is there any discussion? If not, all in favor signify by saying aye. Opposed nay? The ayes have it and the agenda is adopted.

MOTION CARRIED: ALL AYES.

CONSENT AGENDA [Action Item]

- 1. Approve Minutes of the June 4, 2024 City Council Work Session**
- 2. Approve Minutes of the June 4, 2024 City Council Regular Meeting**
- 3. Approve Minutes of the June 11, 2024 City Council Regular Meeting**

- 4. Foxcroft Water Easement Full Release (ESMT-2024-0076)**
- 5. Windrow Subdivision No. 1 Emergency Access Easement Number 1 (ESMT-2024-0079)**
- 6. Windrow Subdivision No. 1 Sanitary Sewer Easement (ESMT-2024-0082)**
- 7. Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law for Pebblebrook Subdivision (H-2024-0005) by Rodney Evans + Partners, LLC., located at 5725 N. Meridian Rd.**
- 8. Final Plat for Horse Meadows Subdivision (FP-2024-0006) by KB Homes, located at 710 B. Black Cat Rd.**
- 9. Development Agreement (Reveille Ridge Subdivision H-2023-0050) Between City of Meridian, Endurance Holdings LLC (Owner), and Challenger Development (Developer) for Property Located at 7355 S. Eagle Rd.**
- 10. Recipient Agreement between the City of Meridan and David's Hope Pregnancy Loss Ministry, Inc. for Fiscal Year 2024 Neighborhood Grant Funds**
- 11. Recipient Agreement between the City of Meridan and the Meridian Library District Foundation, Inc. for Fiscal Year 2024 Neighborhood Grant Funds**
- 12. Recipient Agreement between the City of Meridian and the Meridian Senior Center for Fiscal Year 2024 Neighborhood Grant Funds**
- 13. Agreement for Use of Kleiner Park for Special Event – Meridian Fine Arts Festival**
- 14. Resolution No. 24-2459: A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Meridian, Idaho, Setting Forth Certain Findings and Purposes to Declare Surplus Property and Authorizing the Donation of Certain Computer and Equipment to Computers for Kids**
- 15. Item Continued to June 25, 2024 Resolution No. 24-2460: A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Meridian to Amend City of Meridian Standard Operating Policy 9.8, Regarding Grant Management; and Providing an Effective Date**

Simison: First up is the Consent Agenda.

Cavener: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: Move that we approve Items 1 through 14 on the Consent Agenda and continue Item 15 to next week.

Strader: Second.

Simison: Have a motion and a second to approve the Consent Agenda with Item 15 moved to next week. Is there any discussion? If not, all in favor signify by saying aye. Opposed nay? The ayes have it and the Consent Agenda is agreed to.

MOTION CARRIED: ALL AYES.

ITEMS MOVED FROM THE CONSENT AGENDA [Action Item]

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

DEPARTMENT / COMMISSION REPORTS [Action Item]

16. Idaho Humane Society Fiscal Year 2025 Budget/Contract Presentation

Simison: So, we will move on to Item 16, which is Department/Commission Reports. First up is the Idaho Humane Society of Fiscal Year 2025 budget contract presentation. Chief, do you want to introduce this at all before we get going? Okay. All right. Then I will welcome up the Idaho Humane Society.

Gilberg: Good afternoon, Mayor and Members of the City Council. My name is Leann Gilberg. I am the Chief Financial Officer at the Idaho Humane Society. Also here today is Dr. Jeff Rosenthal, our CEO. Craig Nixon, who is the director of our Animal Care and Control Services and Kris Shaffer, who is our chief operating officer. He oversees the animal care portion of our operations in the shelter. We thank you for having us here this afternoon. We are proud to serve the citizens of Meridian and we value our relationship with your city. We also value the positive working relationship that our officers have with your police officers. So, thank you to the officers for working with us. Just want to give you a little bit of an idea of what we have been up to at the Idaho Humane Society in the past year. This is outside of kind of the scope of animal control, but to give you an idea of who we are and what we are doing, we saved 9,636 pets last year. Our save rate for dogs is 94 percent. Our save rate for cats was 95 percent and those numbers allow us to be considered a no kill shelter, which is a great accomplishment for us. We have been that way for several years and if you have been around the valley for a long time you will know that that wasn't the case 20 or 30 years ago. So, we are very proud of that designation. We also reunited 1,464 lost pets with their owners and spayed or neutered 9,833 pets, preventing unwanted litters. We

provided veterinary care to 10,418 privately owned pets from predominantly low income households and that was in our public veterinary hospital and we supplied over 68,000 pounds of food to members of the pet food pantry and Meals on Wheels for Pets program. So, we do a lot of helping in our community and the majority of these efforts were funded by charity and our own internal efforts. They were not funded by animal control activities. We account for those separately. But, again, just thought you would like to see some of the good things that we are doing. Specifically related to Meridian, we responded to 1,321 calls or incidents last year. We issued 18 citations for animal code violations, 178 barking dog letters and warnings, 53 issues -- notices for dogs at large, 95 warnings for other animal code violations. We like to -- I guess what you would call do community policing. So, we educate when we can, rather than cite. Our first -- the first thing that we would like to do is try to educate people, so our officers educated 326 times, rather than citing people in the community. We handled 1,691 animals from Meridian. We impounded 1,203 animals and we returned 278 animals to their owners. We have animals that come to us from Meridian from many different intake channels. So, I thought I would just give you a preview of a couple -- a few of those that came in. This is Hurley. He is a ten year old that was brought in by animal control. He stayed with us for four days and, then, was responded -- or returned to his owner. These two little guys were brought in for protective custody by animal control after their owner passed away. They stayed with us for five days and, then, they were reunited with a family member who took them home. This is Brody. This was a sad case. This -- these people had to surrender their puppy because he was very ill and they couldn't afford the care. So, we kept him for eight days. We used grant money to provide a life-saving surgery for him to remove a foreign object that was lodged in his intestines and, then, we returned him to his family at no cost to them. And this is Tuna. She's still with us. She was 22 years -- 22 days old last week. She is going to be with us for about six weeks. She came in with a broken leg. Animal control brought her in and she will stay with us until she grows a little bit, gets old enough to be spayed and get her vaccinations and her microchips and, then, she will be adopted. You can see that these all came as a result of our relationship with you as -- through our animal control contract services and as you probably know we provide services for all of Ada county pretty much, with the exception of Garden City. We only have a sheltering agreement with them. We don't do any enforcement basically. In relation to the big picture, to give you an idea of where Meridian falls in that bigger picture, Meridian made up approximately 27 percent of the population that we serviced last year and counted for about 22 percent of the calls and your contract fees accounted for just over 22 percent of what we charged for the animal control contracts. For fiscal year '25, as you can probably see on there, our ask from Meridian is 717,251 dollars. That is an increase of 7.25 percent, but that is slightly less than the total increase in our cost, which we are projecting to be about nine percent. We once again allocated the total cost to the various agencies that we contract with using a consistent methodology that combines prior years population served and calls that come in from the different jurisdictions. The ratios remain pretty -- remain pretty consistent over the past few years. Your portion went down just a tidbit, because we did add Star to the pool. It's a small addition, but it did drop other organizations' percentage just a tidbit and as I'm sure you can all relate to, our costs have continued to rise at significant rates over the

past few years. Our increases are primarily due to continued pressure on payroll and the cost associated with the staffing to provide the animal control services. Since the time -- just to give you an idea -- that the fiscal year '23 budget was presented salaries for veterinarians have increased over 20 percent. There is a national veterinarian shortage and trying to get veterinarians anywhere in the valley is a challenge. Rates for technicians have increased over 15 percent. Animal control officers have increased over 13 percent. Shelter staff over 12 percent. And the majority of these positions pay under 20 dollars an hour. So, it's not like we are making people rich working at the Idaho Humane Society. What this graph shows you is in the past five years the wage inflation has been significant and that is why you have continued to see your fees go up. A new animal control officer started at 13 dollars an hour back in fiscal year '20 and they are up to 20 dollars an hour in the fiscal year '25 budget. And, again, nobody's getting rich on 20 dollars an hour. Fifty-four percent in five years, 64 percent for a mid level officer, 65 percent for a supervisor, 38 percent for a dispatcher. Front desk staff from 10.45 to 16.70 five years later. Sixty percent increase. So, as you can see these -- these pay increases have continued to push us to have to increase the fees that we are charging and in order to be competitive, to be able to hire and retain staff, it's just necessary for us to do this. The animal control program funds about 41 FTEs. So, 41 full-time employees to service over 500,000 people in the valley and those 41 employees make up about a third of our workforce at IHS. That covers enforcement, animal care, including veterinary care, customer service representatives. They deal with people who bring in dogs or come in to redeem their dog. Get them out of jail. Dispatch. And, then, of course, there is an admin and HR component of that, because, you know, there is payroll and different things that have to be handled as well. You can see that the total cost for our services, based on our expenses, because we do a zero budget, it's just over 3.3 million dollars for fiscal year '25. That's a 9.23 percent increase from fiscal year '24. And, again, if you go to the next slide, the -- the big dollars are really in the payroll bucket of that. It's a 7.7 percent increase in payroll. But it's 13 percent for animal control personnel, almost seven percent for shelter personnel. You see a decrease in the admin side, because we have decreased the top overhead. Dr. Rosenthal and myself, we have decreased our percentage that is allocated to the contracts, just because we feel like we have hired a higher level director in the program now and the operating expenses are up 14 percent, but that's really only about 100,000 dollars over the -- over -- split over, you know, six organizations. So, we really try to keep our operating expenses, which is your utilities, your insurance, your dog food and that kind of stuff -- the increases are minimal. Focus our increases on the payroll to continue to ramp up our staffing. And, then, just one other thing I wanted to touch on is what we are doing with our officers. Since Director Nixon has come on we have really ramped up or continued to ramp up -- this is something we have been working on for a couple years -- our training program for our officers. They go through eight to ten weeks of field training with an experienced officer. They get certified through NACA, which is the National Animal Control Association. They do level one and two certifications. They do continuous online classes, in-service training with the Ada County Prosecutor. Craig's been having them come in monthly and do training with the officers and we also do -- they do biweekly team meetings on like -- and training on like report writing and policies and procedures and so we feel like we are doing our best to provide a quality

service for you guys for your community and we do value our relationship and we hope that you see the value that we bring to your community, because we do. I really enjoy working with Meridian. So, that is pretty much in a nutshell what I have. If anybody has any questions.

Simison: Thank you. Council, any questions?

Strader: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Strader.

Strader: Yeah. Maybe I can kick a couple things off. Would you mind going back to the slide on the details for the budget increases. Yeah. If you could just go back a little more. I think it was -- keep -- keep going. I think a couple more. Yeah.

Gilberg: This?

Strader: I think so. Mr. Mayor. So, help me understand how you -- just for context. I mean this -- I think in my opinion seemed to be a really tough budget year for the City of Meridian. So, we have increasing costs across the board. We have 18 firefighters that we need to take on their wages and benefits in a couple fiscal years. We are just really stretched thin. So, help me understand, you know, how -- how we can get this percentage increase down. What options are available, if any? Is there a way to recoup, you know, additional fees from pet owners? Is -- what are you doing to kind of control your personnel costs? I kind of want to get into some of the meat of that. And just one comment. I think in the future if you could provide these presentations in advance of the meeting that would be extremely helpful to us, because we are in the middle of our budgeting process and we haven't had --

Gilberg: I kind of forgot about it and the request didn't come through and so today I was like, oh, I probably should have sent this to them. So, yeah, I apologize for that. To answer your question -- I mean in the big picture of things you guys are actually getting a pretty good deal. If you look at your percentage of population that we are serving, which is, you know, almost 27 percent and 22 percent of calls and if you average those out you are probably actually looking at more like a 24 percent of the total cost base and you guys are paying 22 -- well, 21.8 percent next year. So, in reality I think that we are doing -- you guys are getting a pretty fair allocation. Some of the things that we, you know, could look at -- because from -- as far as the staffing perspective, we are bare bones staffed. I mean we are trying to get three to four officers on the streets every day. We have one dispatcher every day. We have got three people working the front desk, but the number of animals we have coming in and the number of calls that we are getting -- we can't cut our staffing anymore. You know, if your police wanted to take on more -- like maybe bringing animals to us or something, we could potentially look at something like that where we took some of the enforcement off of our plate, but, you know, when I'm paying officers 18, 19, 20, 21 dollars an hour -- we are having a really hard time hiring people and keeping them as it is. I just don't -- I have got so much

pressure on payroll costs that I'm -- I'm pushing constantly to reduce our like benefit costs and trying to keep those costs down. There is just not a lot of wiggle room in the personnel budget and personnel is 75 percent of the animal control budget, 75 percent of the cost of animal control services is personnel and pay related. We can -- you know, we can look at it, but I just don't -- I -- off the top of my head I can't think of anything that's going to reduce that significantly.

Strader: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Strader.

Strader: Yeah. And I think -- again I think that speaks to the importance of providing the details around your operating budget. You know, you are -- we are outsourcing basically a city service to you. The City of Meridian has a very conservative financial philosophy and I think some of the things -- like new vehicles, things like that, we need to dig into some of those details.

Gilberg: To give you a feel for new vehicles, we -- they cost about a hundred thousand dollars each. We -- city of Boise bought two vehicles and basically provided them to us two years ago-ish. We bought one. We, then, bought another one and we got another one on order, because the ones that we have literally have over 300,000 miles on them. Two of them that we have on the road still are ones that we got from your animal control when we took it over. We bought two of your guys' vehicles and we are still running them. So, they are kind of like -- can we, please, get something that's more reliable. So, after this round that I just ordered this last one, I think we are probably done purchasing vehicles for a while, but I don't even bill those out in the contracts every year. I split it over three years. So, the portion of those costs that you are paying -- you are paying 20 percent of a hundred thousand dollar vehicle over three years. So, it's pretty small dollars.

Strader: Mr. -- Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Strader.

Strader: Yeah. I -- you know, so I -- I don't know. I just want to go through and understand the history, but I think, you know, we had a 4.52 percent increase year over year of the previous year, then, it was a 7.18 percent increase year over year. This is close to a seven percent increase. Yeah. I saw it -- some of the -- in some e-mail history I quickly glanced at it -- it did say something like the goal is to like pay employees a livable wage. I want to make sure we are paying employees a market wage. I think that that's an important piece of understanding.

Gilberg: I completely agree with you and if we go to that next slide and just look at it, I'm not sure that any of those wages are what I would consider out of market. I mean McDonald's is hiring for 15 dollars an hour and our front desk staff on average are making 14.89, 15.64 right now. We are bumping it to 16.70 and that's average. That's

the brand new person who just started and the supervisor who has been there for two years. So, out of, you know, the -- of the four or five people that are -- work in that department that's -- that is an average. So, I mean they are starting at 14 dollars an hour.

Strader: Okay. So, it sounds like from your perspective the -- really the only option available is if our police department takes on kind of an increased burden that -- that doesn't sound like us.

Gilberg: Because I can't think of -- I mean, Craig, any suggestions?

Nixon: So -- so, this is a consolidated contract, even though it doesn't come in as a consolidated contract among all the different municipalities in Ada county. So, everyone's sort of buying into the same system, the same service levels and they are all paying a proportional share. So, that benefits you tremendously. The -- the -- the -- the -- Leann mentioned bringing on Star. So, that -- that proves the power of not duplicating services and rather spreading the cost out among all the different communities. One of the issues that occurs, however, when we get into individual negotiations is that because it is a combined contract we have a lot less room to change things, because everybody else is also budgeting in under that service contract. So, a number of years ago before we moved to a two facility model, we met with all of the municipalities for a year before making some major changes to the animal control contract. One of the things that was discussed at that time was actually a suggestion of ours is to form a -- kind of a joint powers agreement among the different municipalities, so that these sort of details could be worked out earlier in the year amongst the entire group, because what happens in Meridian actually impacts Boise and impacts Kuna and vice-versa, so it's very hard for us to sort of individualize -- craft a -- kind of a -- kind of a -- an a la carte contract with one community, Garden City, being really the only one right now that -- that has that, but they are doing all the enforcement. So, that's something to consider and that -- this is one of those services that doesn't make sense for a community to do on their own, because the cost, then, just completely skyrockets. It's -- it's something that works because all the communities are buying in and they are only buying a portion of each employee versus having to employ a -- you know, buy -- buy the entire employee. So, I think one of the things that could be explored in future years would be greater coordination among all the different communities, rather than us individually going out and, you know, pitching these -- these contracts individually. We had a consolidated contract for a couple years actually where everybody signed on. That's gone by the wayside.

Strader: Thanks. That's -- that's it for now. Thank you.

Cavener: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: Mr. Rosenthal, I may have another quick question that you may be really well equipped to answer for me. If we could jump back one more slide. It -- it's what kind of piqued my interest, which was -- yeah. I think calls by calendar year and so when I look at this I look at fiscal year '20, 1,800 calls. Fiscal year '23 1,300 calls. Our population has grown a lot since then. I'm just curious kind of from your expertise what do you attribute with a growing population why you are receiving less calls for service?

Rosenthal: Yeah. My understanding -- and maybe Director Nixon can actually expand on this, is the -- the -- I believe what happened is the way we collected calls changed, the methodology for reporting a call --

Gilberg: And the staffing that was handling the calls when we were having a transition between directors, they kind of changed the way that they were recording calls that were coming in. I believe that we corrected that and changed it going forward. They were not capturing all the calls that were coming in, so everybody across the board had a decrease. So, if you were to look at -- I mean if -- you can see it there that you guys weren't the only ones that had a decrease, because the total number of calls went down as well.

Nixon: Additionally, my recollection is also during that time period we moved to a certain -- a certain number of calls for particularly barking dogs and certain nuisance responses being handled in a slightly different way than a door-to-door -- more of an online and a -- by a phone methodology. So, they are not -- and, unfortunately, they are not directly comparable from these numbers.

Cavener: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: I guess, then, that brings the question are there other numbers that are on here that maybe shouldn't be comparable, then, that have been included as --

Nixon: No. I think that's the only thing that we ever changed.

Cavener: Okay. And then -- Mr. Mayor.

Simison: Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: Do you know -- because it's not reflected here -- what is the total calls for service that you provided to all jurisdictions?

Nixon: You know, that's 5,934, I believe.

Cavener: If it's on there and I missed it. I'm really -- really sorry.

Nixon: You know, it's -- it's down there -- the third from the bottom.

Cavener: Oh. Thank you very much. I totally missed that one. Thank you. I think that's good for me. Thank you, Mr. Mayor.

Gilberg: Mr. Mayor, may I just add -- I do apologize that this did not get to you guys earlier. We did submit a budget on January 31st, but I'm not sure who that went to. It may not have made it to the Council, but I will definitely make sure you get it earlier in the future.

Simison: We received the budget. I think it's the presentation with all the backup information. Councilman Overton, did you have a question? Sorry. I heard your voice.

Overton: Mr. Mayor, I was going to ask one question. How is our increase in relation to the increases to the other cities on your contracts?

Gilberg: It's about average. It might -- I think it's a little bit lower than some and it might be a little bit higher than like -- I think equals like 5.7 percent and you guys were seven point something percent. I would have to go look, but if you look at the total increase in the total contract, it's nine. The contract income is going up nine percent and yours is only going up seven percent. So, you got -- I mean, again, I feel like Meridian is getting a pretty fair allocation.

Cavener: Mr. Mayor, maybe one more.

Simison: Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: And because this is -- to, you know, I think kind of the Mayor's point, we get the numbers and part of the presentation is to get the story to help us understand and so, I apologize, this may come across as an ignorant question, but I might need you to walk me through it, because -- I think you heard Council Member Strader speak to it. Obviously we are -- we are very sympathetic to cities about being able to pay, you know, market wage wages and so that is a consideration certainly that you guys are trying to -- to explore and so I look at it little over 500 bucks per call. Meridian or region wide, about 12, 13 -- almost 13,000 dollars a week for Meridian, which if you are paying somebody 21 dollars an hour -- I'm just trying to figure out what -- I understand -- what -- what is -- what is the City of Meridian taxpayer is going to pay 500 and something dollars per call. Where is that money going to?

Gilberg: Councilman and Mayor, I -- I completely understand where you are going with that and let me give you a little bit better background of what that includes. It's not only the officers going out on the calls, there is the people who sit at the front desk. There is the veterinarians who have to spade and neuter and vaccinate the animals that come in. We don't -- and we split -- just so you know, like Doorman, that facility, since we moved part of our operations into our Bird Street facility, is now allocated 60 percent to the animal control contracts and we pay 40 percent of it. That's based on -- consistently and we update every year. The number of animals that we bring in, as like owner surrenders or transfers in versus what's brought in through what we consider to be

animal control-related activities. So, for an animal control officer the contracts are covering a hundred percent. They are covering a hundred percent of their costs. They are covering a hundred percent of their vehicles. Their animal control contracts are also covering a hundred percent of the dispatchers and the front desk staff. They are only covering 60 percent of the kennel workers who take care of the animals. A portion of the -- an allocated portion of the veterinarians and the technicians. They are paying a portion of like our media, like I think a third or something like that of our media person, because we are constantly dealing with the angry person who is mad about something that happened with an animal control officer and they are having to deal with that and so -- because I pro rata any administrative type costs a third to animal control and two-thirds to IHS and that's based on the fact that about a third of our employees are related to the animal control functions if you do it on an FTE basis. So, besides the actual salaries, there is the uniforms, there is the insurance, there is the -- the power, there is the vehicle costs -- basically everything that you would need to run an animal control operation stand alone is what we put into that bucket. Some of it a hundred percent, some of it on a pro rata basis. Does that kind of answer your question?

Cavener: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: It provides I think a good explanation to all the -- the resources that are involved. I guess I am still struggling to -- because it's not just -- the Meridian portion that's paying for that, it's -- it's the totality of all of the users that are contributing to that and so you have got -- again political science majors are not great at math -- 114 calls a week. We will split that by five hundred -- five hundred dollars -- that's lowball for a call. So, that's 57,000 dollars a week in operations.

Gilberg: I mean you -- you have to also take into consideration that a call doesn't necessarily equate to an animal. So, besides the calls we also have -- sorry. Give me just a second here. So, the -- the animals serviced -- so, you know, you look at -- we brought in -- we handled seven -- almost 1,700 animals for Meridian and when I say handle the animals that was bringing them in, feeding them, vaccinating them, because you can't keep them in a shelter if they are not vaccinated. Any emergent medical care, whatever. So, there is 1,700 from Meridian. Multiply that by five. So, you know, that's almost 10,000 animals that are taken care of. Some of them for a day, some of them for ten days. So, there is that cost, too. There is the animal cost. So, it's not -- you can't just really calculate it based on calls. Kind of have to also look at animal service, because they are kind of two different buckets. I can go out on a call for a vicious dog and that animal may never enter the shelter.

Cavener: Sure.

Gilberg: So, there is kind of two different buckets that you are covering.

Cavener: Yeah. I think that's where probably some of these questions are coming from is I'm responding to the information that you are giving us to a kind of essentially justify the request that you are making and so I'm trying to do the math in my head about -- you want to pay your people more, which we support, but not knowing all of these things and not having that information provided to us, I'm trying to figure out where is the rest of the money going and I'm -- I'm -- that's what I'm trying -- that's where some of these questions are coming. I'm just trying to figure it out. I don't think anyone's playing hide the ball, it's just we haven't been educated about this and we -- we are very protective of the taxpayer dollars, as I know you are aware of, and so making sure that we -- I want to be able -- if -- if I'm a citizen and I see it's costing me as a City of Meridian taxpayer 12,846 dollars a week and there is going to be 25 calls in Meridian, they are going to ask me why am I okay with that?

Rosenthal: Council Member, I -- I appreciate the frustration, because I have listened to this sort of frustration for 24 years from council members, because animal control services and shelter services is really expensive -- almost shockingly expensive for small communities. What would assure the Meridian taxpayer is a simple comparison to virtually any peer community across the United States that has this population and has to do this work on their own with their own animal shelter, because that number is going to be in the millions, not sub one millions, but for the City of Meridian to run an animal control program and an animal shelter, which I think everyone would agree every community of this size is going to have to have animal control services. You can't just not have it. And in previous years when I -- when I did some of these presentations I would frequently provide those matrix and we would be happy to do a survey of peer communities to Meridian so you could compare, hey, is Meridian getting a good deal versus other communities across the United States that have this population base and I think you would find that that would be very reassuring to you and the Council Members that you are getting the best possible deal. I would be surprised if we found many, if any, communities that are comparable to Meridian that are paying less.

Cavener: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: And, Dr. Rosenthal, I appreciate that and -- and, frankly, I'm not looking for a deal. I -- I want to be able to explain to my boss why we are spending this money that we are -- and what -- what we are getting in return and this is where the challenge is that the matrix that are provided to us today to justify the request, which is a fairly large increase from when this started, makes it hard for me to feel comfortable that I could explain to them why this was justified and so that's -- I'm not looking for -- not looking to you for a Groupon or a discount code, we want to pay what is fair and it came back to we want to make sure that your staff -- I'm a firm believer -- we want to make sure that our Meridian employees are paid not just living wages, but wages that they can be proud of, that I can be proud of. I know you want that for your people, too. It's not about that. It's helping us understand. You are the experts. We are not. And if we are not provided the information I can't -- I can't just say it's nice to meet you, Leann. Nice

to meet you, Dr. Rosenthal, thanks for being here. Whatever you are telling us I'm just going to say Dr. Rosenthal said it was a good deal, so it should be okay, taxpayers. I can't do that.

Gilberg: I think part of the challenge is that --

Rosenthal: We can provide any more information that you require.

Overton: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Overton.

Overton: I understand the concerns expressed by our two other councilmen, but I remember when we started this contract and I stood where you are and I pitched it to the city as a member of the police department. The very first time we handed over the two animal control vans and we put the cost analysis in front of City Council at that time on the three to five million dollar building we would have to build and staff and run to have anything close to what you provided to the entire community. I think trying to break that cost down into something as simple as a -- how much per call for service doesn't tell the whole story, just as it wouldn't tell the whole story if we took the cost of a police budget and divided it up between the police calls for service, because there is so much more that goes on behind the scenes. I think you don't -- maybe you don't spell it out enough, all the things and the time you do with the shelter, all the pets that you take in that has nothing to do with a call for service that are dropped off. All the animals that are -- that are dropped off from people in other communities belong to owners in Meridian. The animals that are found in Meridian that belong to owners in other parts of the city or other cities that you guys take the time to take care of, feed, handle and find their owners and get them back to. The idea is you have a very comprehensive approach that goes far beyond just the call for service and how you handle these animals.

Rosenthal: Thank you, Councilman Overton. I also add that in recent years moving more and more to our community policing model, one of the frustrations we have is the -- the fact of the matter is that when we go out on a call and we don't issue a citation and we work on owner education and we are providing resources or providing problem solving and mediating between angry people, because largely what we are doing is -- often has somewhat less to do with the animal that you might suspect and more to do with neighbors that are at war with each other. This is actually a longer, more time consuming, resource intensive in that way, because time is money process. So, back in the day we used to very much pound on all these citations we have issued and -- and so forth and what I would encourage you to think about is when we go out and do these warnings they are -- they are -- they are -- it's a lot longer and more expensive a process, quite frankly, than just issuing the citation and driving away. But, you know, piling up more work on the legal folks here, it's not worth it and actually not solving problems getting people to get along and, you know, if we go out and we spend the time working with people and figuring out what the problem is and how can we just get this

solved and actually solve the problem for the long term, so we are not going out time after time after time and not getting anywhere and not really accomplishing what I think you folks want, which is this is all about making the community more harmonious. Animals are an integral part of it and for the most part they are force for good, but sometimes they are force of division and decreasing quality of life issues. So, that's one may -- possibly part of the frustration is when you look at matrix they don't necessarily, as Councilman Overton is sort of suggesting, indicate the full scope of it all and what the City of Meridian is getting actually is, essentially, their own animal shelter. It's a portion of it. Instead of buying their own animal shelter they are basically paying for a portion of it and -- and I think the cost savings are -- are indisputable really.

Gilberg: Mr. Mayor and Councilmen, even more recently than what Councilman Overton was referring to when IHS originally took on the contract, around 2021 I believe when we were moving into our other facility and there was going to be an increase in the cost because of the allocation of the Dorman facility, Meridian did a very in-depth analysis of what the cost would be to do their own shelter and I -- they quickly determined that it was much more cost effective to continue to contract with IHS. If that helps.

Strader: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Strader.

Strader: Just to chime in, I know the Finance Department is willing to -- as they do for all of our budgeting requests -- they are happy to update that analysis for us each year that it does show a cost savings, but they will be happy to provide that. I think it would be very helpful to sort of breakdown the cost per call for future information, just the cost per call, what percentage of that is allocated to -- to different, you know, personnel, overhead, whatever it is and, then, I think if you could compare Meridian to the other cities on that basis I think that would be helpful for us, so that we can kind of understand how -- how that's kind of playing out.

Gilberg: Council Woman, when you say compared to other cities, are you talking about financially or calls, because we -- we issue a report every January and, again, I can get you a copy of that that shows all the different contracting agencies and what calls they have had and how many animals we have handled and it has all of those in it and we issue that every January.

Strader: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Strader.

Strader: Yeah. I -- I think all the information is helpful, but I think, you know, breaking down the cost per call per city I think would be also enlightening for us, so that we can see, you know, if -- I understand how you are sort of -- you are -- you are allocating -- you are trying to allocate your contract between the different cities it sounds like based

on the volume; right? But I think it would be helpful to double check, you know, is Meridian getting a good rate on a per call kind of basis compared to the other cities. Any kind of those sort of matrix I think are helpful and, -- you know, I mean I get it, the -- the personnel costs -- like we really do understand, because we are facing a similar -- we face similar dilemmas here, especially with inflation, but, you know, again, like we have to do the same thing, like we are really stretching to control our own costs in every kind of facets. So, you know, I expect -- I expect you all to do the same and if you provide us more detailed information about your operating budget, then, that allows us to, you know, provide helpful suggestions as well.

Gilberg: I do appreciate that and we can do better with that. One of the parameters that -- typically when we do these type of comparisons is cost per capita and you will see that at the bottom of -- I don't know what page it is. It's a page with the Meridian cost share portions. You can see that your cost in fiscal year '20 was \$4.43 per capita. In fiscal year '23 it was \$4.51 per capita and I'm guessing it's going to be right around that -- it says 4.82 in fiscal year '24, but that's without increasing the population base, because we didn't have the updated population numbers. So, the cost per capita has continued to stay relatively stable.

Strader: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Strader.

Strader: Yeah. It's just -- I don't -- and don't take this wrong way. I don't really trust that matrix in isolation, because to Councilman Cavener's point, your calls for Meridian -- now, granted, some methodology has changed, so I don't fully understand that, but if Meridian residents are using your facilities less than I would actually expect the cost per capita to be going down --

Gilberg: If our costs went down.

Strader: If your cost went down. Yeah. But I mean, again, it's like our population is going up; right? Like our population has expanded dramatically. So, I would still expect the cost per capita to start going down, because we are spreading a bunch of overhead across a bigger base of population. So, I -- I don't know, I'm a little bit -- I -- I guess I just -- I don't know if I want to say they are like red flags. So, I just -- I see some concerns about help me understand the calls that you are actually getting. Why -- why have those gone down compared to where they were and -- and try to compare on some kind of a basis that's fair, which I think cost per call would make sense -- and I don't even know what the answer is, I just want to see it. You know, what's the cost per call per city, break that down into some different components and provide a more detailed operating budget. I mean that would be very helpful. You know, I sympathize, I mean driving a vehicle 300,000 miles stinks, you know. Strader family uses Mint Mobile and I have got a computer that I'm -- it's ten years old and I'm hoping to make it to 15, you know, so I get it. But, you know, we also have to -- we all have to control our

costs in this environment. I mean and the taxes -- to Luke's point, it's like the taxpayers are going to ask us these questions, so we need have a good answer. Thanks.

Cavener: Mr. Mayor, just one more if I may.

Simison: Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: Along with that information I think it would also be good to get an average call time. What is the response time to Meridian and how does that compare with the rest of the region. That was something I had real concerns with about a number of years ago. I was getting a lot of complaints. I haven't got those anymore, so my hope is, hey, you guys have addressed that and it's went down. Again, having less calls for Meridian than you had maybe four or five years ago is probably also -- freed some of that capacity up, but I'm -- I'm very interested in understanding -- to -- to Dr. Rosenthal's point, if we all are in this together, then, I want to make sure that our Meridian residents are getting the same type of response as our neighbors in Boise, as our neighbors in Star and Eagle, that we are -- we are all getting the same level of service if we are all being asked to pay the same amount.

Gilberg: We -- we do provide that information monthly.

Simison: Council, any additional questions? All right. Thank you very much. Appreciate you being here.

Gilberg: Thank you.

17. Valley Regional Transit (VRT) Update and Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Request

Simison: Next item up is Item 17, which is Valley Regional Transit update and fiscal year 2025 budget request. Welcome, Elaine, to the podium.

Clegg: Thank you. It's a pleasure to be here and -- and I have behind me Kate Dahl, who is our principal planner, somebody -- the supervisor of Stephen Hunt, gave him a vacation and he is off on his way to Europe. So, he is not here to help us today. But Kate will fill in very well I'm certain. Really appreciate the opportunity to come talk to you about our budget. Sorry, I'm trying to -- there we go. So, I'm going to give you an overview of the budget process that we follow, a little overview of VRT, what we have been up to, the services that you all get from us, the ridership that -- that corresponds with that and, then, go into our budget request. So, the 2025 budget request -- and you should have received these numbers some time ago, but -- oops. I went the wrong direction. There we go. You did not receive this presentation and next year we will try to get it to you earlier. Did want to talk a little bit about the timing of the process and some changes that we have instituted. Used to be that you would simply get the budget request and not much else. I sent a letter to all of you in April. I'm hoping that next year will come in in March and in that letter tried to give an overview of the things that -- not

just Valley Regional Transit does overall, but how it impacts Meridian specifically. Then shared the preliminary funding request and now we are in the discussions about that. You will finalize your budget. One of the things -- another thing that we have changed this year is as soon as you finalize your budget and send it to certification we know what number is in it, we will send a cooperative agreement draft and ask that you finalize that once your budget is certified, so that we actually have a certified budget before the fiscal year starts, instead of after. Would be nice. So, an overview of what we do. VRT has 43 direct staff and 149 contract staff. We have four facilities, including the administrative offices here in Meridian. The base in Boise at the airport at Orchard and in Canyon county at Happy Day and, then, of course, Main Street station in downtown Boise. We have a fleet of 45 large buses and 39 smaller buses. We also have a fleet of 25 vans and 16 support vehicles. We have increased ridership since COVID by 19 percent. As of last year, if we look at this year's numbers, we are confident that by the end of 2024 we will be above the numbers that we had pre-COVID. Really really excited about that. We provide fixed route services and on-demand services. I will talk about those. We also provide paratransit services to persons with disabilities and this year we started a new service called Beyond Access, which is for both older adults and persons with disabilities who are outside the access service zone. Again, really excited about that. Other things that particularly are of interest in Meridian are The Village van, the Rides to Wellness, some of the transit connections and Lyft Late Night rides, as well as opportunities to participate in our transportation demand program, which allows employers to buy passes for all of their -- all of their employees. So, a week and a half ago he did a big service change. Some of you may have noticed. We have new signs everywhere. But most importantly we have consolidated services into more frequent services in the places where we know we have people. We have increased trips between Meridian and Nampa and Boise. We -- I will show you in a minute why we are really excited about those and what we think they will do and we have upgraded our branding -- new sign blades and information holders at all of our stops. So, these are the new sign blades. Some of you may have seen them on some of the stops around town. Next to it is an information sheet. It used to be when you came to a stop you maybe saw the sign. There was no other information. Every stop now has this information sheet, which tells you what route is being served there or routes and the stops along that route. Gives you a QR code to go for more information and tells you what the fare is, all of those things. This is a really exciting upgrade that we are pretty proud of in the system. We have got a lot of good feedback already. In addition -- and you will see this in just a minute -- we redesigned all of the brochures. Those brochures also have a lot more information on them. So, one quick thing about this sign. You will notice that it has the stop ID number. Previously if you were out of stop and you called customer service you had to try to explain to the person where you were. Let's see. I'm at the corner of -- I think it's south and east. Now you just say, oh, I'm at AB211 and customer service says, oh, I know exactly where you are. It's really really helpful. The routes are shown by color according to frequencies. So, anything in green comes every 15 minutes at least four hours a day, most of them six hours a day. Anything in white and blue comes either 30 -- every 30 minutes or every 60 minutes, but all day and anything in purple is peak hour only. So, again, at a glance you can say here is -- here is what kind of I can expect at this stop. Meridian used to have the Route 30. Still does.

We have changed it up a little. It also has the 40, the 42 and the 2045. What's not on this one -- and I apologize we missed that new route that serves between Town Square Mall in The Village. Route 24. We will talk about it. And, then, all of these specialized services, which also move a lot of people around Meridian. Here is an example of the new brochures, new timetables, new maps that show all of the stops. The old maps didn't used to show that. Some points of interest along the way on each of the routes. Then on the other side is information about how to use the bus system. That's a lot more detailed than we used to have. So, Route 30 statistics. In FY-24 or '23 there were 3,000 boardings. It's growing. It's been a little slow, but given how it started with COVID and everything we are actually pretty pleased with it. I'm sorry. FY-25 is the 3,000 boardings and I will explain to you why that's lower. FY-23, which is the year we have final numbers for, we had 5,219 boardings and, again, as I say, that's been growing maybe a little lower than we would like, but getting there. With the service change we combined it in a sense with the 45 -- the 45 now goes all the way from downtown Boise to downtown Nampa. It follows the Route 30 through the middle of Meridian and between the Route 30 and the Route 45 there is service every half hour, every 30 minutes for five and a half hours a day. That's a big change. We think overall in aggregate that there will be an increase between the two routes of 40 -- 52 percent in boardings and we expect a lot of those to be in Meridian itself. So, last year the Route 45 had also had about 5,200 boardings. With the new Route 45 combined with the 30, again, in aggregate the two will be 16,000 boardings a year according to our projections and that ridership increase is pretty dramatic and we are excited about this. What the Route 45 does is offer residents of Meridian direct access to CWI in downtown Boise in ways that they didn't used to have it. It would take -- transfer most cases to get too many of those places. The Route 24 is the new route that is -- serves between Town Square Mall and The Village. This is service hours that used to be fully within Boise. Oh, I might note before we leave this, so you will notice that your service assessment is actually down a little bit and that's because we moved trips to the Route 45, which also is paid for by both city of Boise, CWI, and the city of Nampa, as well as Meridian and so your share of your costs on the 45 went down. The 24 is mostly within Boise. It is service that used to be fully paid for by Boise and went in the West Valley neighborhood from the Town Square Mall to the Idaho State campus. We are now serving that campus from the Chinden route and the Glenwood route and instead move this service east-west between the Town Square Mall and The Village. It will run every hour all day. So, it's not real frequent service, but, again, it's consistent service for residents of City of Meridian who need to get into Boise. Once you get to the Town Square Mall you can see there are connections to routes that go all over the city. So, again, pretty excited about this one. We expect a lot of boardings on this route. We will see if it comes through, but we expect this route to perform really well. The Route 40 is an express route between cities that goes from Happy Day Transit Center to downtown Boise. Ridership on this route has been increasing over the last number of years and with this change we expect it to increase even more from 14,000 to almost 20,000. It is -- sorry. I'm looking. There is a -- a number on here that I want to share. Thirty percent -- excuse me -- of the households who will be served by this route, 14 -- there is 14,700 households within half a mile of it and 21 percent of those only have one car, while -- or 37 percent of those only have one car, 21 percent of those live in poverty. That's why

this route is such an important one and as you can see we are expecting a 38 percent increase in ridership with the redesign of this route and its ability now to reach so many destinations that we know people are looking to get to. Route 42 is also redesigned and it is now a local all day service from Happy Day all the way into downtown Boise. Again, citizens on the south side of Meridian have not had that all day service into either city previously and while it's only once an hour, just the consistency of it at least begins to let people begin to plan to use it. Because of those changes we expect a 41 percent increase in ridership on this redesigned route. So, the services that are serving Meridian are the ones that we really expect to see the highest increases in ridership on in many cases, other than the Fairview frequent route, which went to 15 minute service inside the city of Boise. The routes in Meridian are the ones that are seeing -- projected to have the highest increases. Access is a service for persons with disabilities. It's a curb-to-curb service -- or, actually, a door-to-door service. Excuse me. That is a guaranteed ride. If you live within three-quarters of a mile of a fixed route and with the changes now you have more service area within the City of Meridian that is eligible for this. We have a number of riders signed up in Meridian. We haven't seen a lot of uptake yet. So, one of the things we have been talking about is what we can do to market this service to the people who really need it, because it is one that could be very useful to the people within that area who do need it. Our Beyond Access Service is one that replaces previously -- service that was previously provided by Harvest and a small amount of service that was provided in Meridian by SHIP or Supportive Housing Services program. Those -- together those two programs provided 30 -- together those programs, as well as other senior centers across the valley and metro community services provided 31,000 trips last year. So, the changes this year are that Valley Regional Transit is directly operating the services that used to be provided by Harvest and by SHIP. The Meridian senior centers you will see in a minute still provides separate service on its own. We also provide services that used to be provided by the Star Senior Center, the Eagle Senior Center and Metro Community Services is the partner in this. The result of that instead of having very discrete, small service areas is that a person can travel all the way from southeast Boise to almost Parma on this service that previously wasn't available. The beauty for Meridian being right in the middle of the valley is now your residents have access to almost anywhere in the valley on this service. It is a qualified service. You have to be an older adult or a person with disabilities, but if you are qualified and you live outside of access -- regular access service area, you can use the Beyond Access services. So far we have provided since January 14,467 rides on this service, 3,335 of those have been within Meridian. So, again, pretty excited about this service. Meridian Senior Center continues to -- to provide services in -- to seniors in Meridian. You don't pay for any of that. Area Agency on Aging provides the local match, which is about 18,000 dollars -- a little more than 18,000 and Valley Regional Transit provides the federal match for that, which is 73,000. So, you get almost 90,000 dollars' worth of services from this that moves older adults around the city. Last year there were a little over 8,000 boardings. Lyft Late Night is a service for particularly service workers. It's an income qualified service. If you can get to or from work on a regular fixed route bus you can -- and you qualify income wise, you can use this service to get a Lyft home or two for only three dollars if it's anywhere within the service area shown. The red outline is an addition to the service area that we

made with these changes. Recognizing that there are a lot of service employers along that Overland corridor and so this new service will -- will serve that corridor we think quite well. Here is an overall view of the ridership and the ridership as it was experienced in Meridian on the routes that serve you. So, in 2023 out of 112,000 total rides on the services that somehow touch Meridian, almost 40,000 of those rides were Meridian residents. We think you are getting a pretty good deal for the services that you are paying for. So, our budget request this year. Our assessment is broken down in four different ways. The general assessment is regional overhead. That pays for the administrative services, planning, those kinds of things that happen over at this office here in Meridian. As you can see your general assessment actually went down a little bit last year, even though your population grew, because it is a calculation based on both population and service miles and service hours and because of the change in service hours on the 30 and the reduction there you guys are actually going to pay just a little bit less for that. Your service assessment similarly went down because of -- for those same reasons. The capital assessment -- we don't have a lot of rolling stock or other capital that we are buying this year. I would note that we are trying to -- I'm trying to figure out a way to normalize the capital assessment, so it isn't so lumpy. It's down a little bit this year. One would expect it will be up next year as a -- as a result. So, over this next planning year I'm working with staff to see if we can figure out a way to normalize that. Where there is an increase is in the services. That's the Beyond Access, Rides to Wellness, the rides to the VA, the VA shuttle and, sorry, there is one other that's included in that and I'm forgetting what it is. Oh, the medical transportation. All of those have increased kind of dramatically, frankly, this year because of the increases we have seen in cost. We think we have done a really good job trying to keep costs down everywhere we could. This is one place -- we had to eat some of those increases this year. We would expect that again to normalize next year because we have been able to -- we think to absorb what those increases will be with this -- this request this year. Overall we are only asking for a one percent increase from the City of Meridian. We think the value that you are getting for our services is good. We are excited about the future. We think that with the increases we expect in ridership that value will grow without asking for more money, at least this year. Not very much more money. We hope in the future that if you are interested we will be able to grow because we have negotiated with you additional services, not because our costs go up, but because you actually get more out of it. So, with that our request this year is 880,293 dollars and we are hopeful that if you have any questions we can answer them.

Simison: Thank you, Elaine. Council, any questions?

Overton: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Overton.

Overton: Elaine, thank you. That was a fantastic presentation and I'm -- I'm really happy to see all the positive changes that you have done with VRT over this past year. Just the simple changes on the signs and how much that's going to help people know where they are at, know where they are going, know what's available. Seeing these

ridership numbers continue to grow -- I'm always thinking about transportation and knowing that as those ridership numbers continue to grow that means future -- or less vehicles on our roadways at a time when those numbers are climbing at a steady rate. So, I'm glad to see that that's happening. I also appreciate -- we have talked before about how you are modifying those routes to try to meet the areas as we are building and some of our heavier and more denser areas you are already working on those routes to service those areas and I think it's a fantastic job and I appreciate it very much.

Clegg: Thank you.

Taylor: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Taylor.

Taylor: Thank you. And first let me say congratulations on your nomination. It's a Senate confirmed position; right?

Clegg: Thank you. Yeah. That Senate confirmation process could be a bugger, but hopefully --

Taylor: Yeah.

Clegg: -- it will go well.

Taylor: Well, I spent five years as a Senate staffer, so I know. Good luck. It is the presidential election year, so you might be hanging out there for a while, but I think it's great and congratulations. Hopefully it ends well for you. A couple questions. I -- I just had on the special -- the how -- how do we pay for the Beyond Access program? And, then, is that part of the -- if you want -- could you go to that last slide that you were on. So, the special assessment line where it says it's negotiated, can you just explain what that is? And, then, like some of these programs, like Beyond Access is that -- is that part of that budget line and just kind of -- if you can elaborate a little bit on that.

Clegg: I will and I don't know that I have too much more detail than what I can tell you in terms of what it is -- is included in that, but -- as well. So, the negotiated special assessment includes Beyond Access. Beyond Access is paid for in part by the Area Agency on Aging. We get a grant from them. Our grant this year was down 100,000 dollars overall across all of Ada county -- Ada and Canyon counties, frankly, and so part of what you are doing is helping make up that difference. Part of that comes from the feds, part of that from the state. But without -- without the full local match we would not be able to maximize the federal money that we have and provide as much service as we would otherwise. Rides to Wellness is paid for by the service -- the healthcare service providers and it's seen a dramatic increase in ridership and we are not asking you for any more money for that, but as a result some of the rides that -- that might have gone on it are going to be on access to the VA service and the medical transportation

services, which you do help pay for. All of those have gone up -- not because -- not just because the costs are up, but because the number of rides we are providing is up.

Taylor: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Taylor.

Taylor: One more follow up. So, one thing that's kind of interesting -- and I think I'm seeing this a little bit in some of these new services. One of the challenges with a public transportation system is the convenience for people. I lived in Washington DC that had wonderful -- but it was still really inconvenient; right? I rode the -- I got on a bus, took me to the Metro. In the summer I would just sweat in the humidity. It was lovely. Great system, you know, still kind of inconvenient. Obviously, that's one of the challenges probably with ridership is the -- you know, if you live close to walk that's great, but a lot of people don't. So, one thing I have -- I like what I'm seeing is like the late night lift guaranteed, you know, that's -- I think that is really smart kind of an innovative approach. Some of these other programs -- because I see to me the future of public transportation, I -- it's hard for me to envision the public transportation system that we have today in 20 years being the same. I see almost like a switch where instead of trying to get people places, services, jobs, groceries, things are being brought to people, so I think supplementing a transportation system that focuses on where the people live, main quarters, as many people as you can, but, then, connecting people to the -- the routes with these sort of innovative approaches I guess. So, I guess my question is -- I'm fascinated with the idea of leveraging Lyft, Uber, other rideshare services as a way to get people to that, because I think that would really dramatically help. Like -- I mean if I could call an Uber and I could get to a bus station in a few minutes and know that I'm going to get there a few minutes before and it picked me up and take me, I would be much more likely to use it. So, could you speak to that a little bit and kind of some of your thinking and -- and where things are going with that?

Clegg: Sure. So, if -- if I had my own computer with me I would -- I would slip to a slide from another slide deck. The city of Boise was able to go after a grant and I believe that grant was -- was through United Way, but I -- I may be wrong. I can't remember for sure. And with that grant and some money from the city of Boise -- in addition to Lyft, Late Night in Boise, we also offer Lyft Connections and Lyft Connection is for two dollars up to an eight dollar ride total, you are guaranteed to be picked up within a five minute walk of wherever you are and dropped off at the nearest large transit stop. Not just any transit stop. We have got 57 in the Boise system that we have chosen. That service used to be very narrow. When we made this service change we more than doubled the service area of -- of the Lyft Connections and as a result we are already seeing a big update -- uptick in use getting from wherever you are to the convenient transit. So, then, you can take the rest of your ride. I do see that as an opportunity in the City of Meridian, especially as we have begun offering these more robust fixed route services, at least they run all day, those kinds of things. I think we would -- we would be happy to work with you and your staff to see if there is a similar grant that we could get that -- that might start something similar to that in Meridian if you guys are interested.

Strader: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Strader.

Strader: I mean I -- I'm always interested to see the information and evaluate it. I think it could never hurt to have that. I'm not sure if this year is the year to take that on, but I think we should definitely take a look at that. I -- I want to compliment you on optimizing the service for Meridian. I really appreciate the work that you have done. The signage is great. I -- I think especially just sort of fixing the routes and the frequency of the routes has been fantastic and also thank you for providing the letter in advance of our budgeting process. You probably heard that that is a point of frustration sometimes, but thank you for doing that. I just wanted to -- the only piece I'm still not totally understanding -- it could be a follow up, but I would like to get just a further breakdown of the special assessment, the components of that as a follow-up to this meeting. I think that would be extremely helpful and, then, you know, I wanted to say a one percent increase is very much appreciated this year and I think that's very reasonable. So, it seems like it's moving in the right direction. I definitely agree getting ridership up is critical. You know, helping make sure that the service is successful. So, hopefully, we will get there. Thanks for your work.

Clegg: And I will, in fact, follow up and get you more breakdown on that special assessment.

Cavener: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: I think I have had my 10th or 11th VRT presentation that I have seen. By far the best. I -- I have been known at times to be a little prickly from the dais. It's not my intention, but it comes across that way and I recall years ago asking VRT to look at your work from a local government perspective and we are seeing that today. I appreciate that you are calling out ridership on routes. You are not resting on your laurels. Saying we have way more to do. I commend you for saying this is our projection. This is what we are shooting for. It makes it really easy for me to continue to be supportive. That said, you inherited a real challenge with COVID and how that has impacted ridership and I believe the changes you are making are to address that. I am really looking forward to you being before us next year and saying this is what we projected, not only did we meet it, we exceeded it or we got nearly here, but we overexceeded here and those were kind of connected. One point. I appreciate you painting the picture for us and letting us know. I'm really proud that we have brought public transit to Meridian, but it -- as a budget -- you know this from your past experience -- it is a challenge for us to look at it year over year and make sure that this is the right decision for us for the taxpayers. I'm excited we have public transit. I'm also very critical of the system and I want to make sure that it's meeting not just the riders, but the taxpayers as a whole. So, I'm just forecasting that for you next year that if the -- there are a few more arrows coming at you -- I don't want to do that. I hope that -- that you are able to say -- just

throw them right back at me, because you guys are kicking so much butt. That said I'm going to ask you a question as a friend, but it's a question I get a lot.

Clegg: Sure.

Cavener: There is a perception amongst some in Meridian that the reason our VRT buses are wrapped is because VRT doesn't want anybody to see that there is nobody inside. Now, ridership isn't where we want it to be, but I -- I recall a time when we had a route in Meridian that did sit empty for weeks at a time. We are not in that season anymore. Talk a little bit more about what you are doing to attract what I kind of call riders of choice, people that you -- you want people to choose to leave their car at home or go to a park and ride and ride the bus. So, give us a little flavor of that.

Clegg: Thank you. Well, thank you for the kudos first of all and I appreciate the questions as always. You know that. So, let me say one thing first and there -- there always is this, you know, gosh, I see empty buses. What's wrong? And it's true. There are some empty buses. There is also some buses who have a lot of people on them. And so I -- those buses are usually on State Street or Vista or now Fairview. Hopefully the 45 will begin to be one of those buses. What I often ask people when I hear that question is do you live on a cul-de-sac? Anybody? Okay. And is your street empty 97 percent of the day?

Cavener: Ninety-nine percent of the day.

Clegg: Access services require lots of service in places where you don't get a lot of riders that, then, connect to the services that do and so in some cases you will see buses that don't have a lot of people on them, just like you see roads that don't have a lot of cars on them in those places that are just providing access. On the other hand, on those buses that should be providing a lot of rides, we ought to see a lot of riders and what we are doing to attract that is is lots of things, but you mentioned some of them. The -- the signs. I can't tell you how many people have said there is a bus route there? I didn't know that. Now I do. How cool. So, making it obvious that there is actually a bus route there. Giving them information. I used to -- my son lives right by the Fred Meyer on Chinden and I would be there and I see somebody waiting at that bus stop, knowing that the only bus that came there was peak hour and it was the middle of the day. There was not going to be a bus and I would go talk to them and say do you know there is no bus coming? Well, it says it's a bus stop. Now, everybody has that information at the bus stop. Once they get there they can see that. We are doing an inventory right now -- Kate is leading that -- of our bus stops and which ones have the correct amenities, which ones don't. I'm happy to say that the first phase, which is the biggest one hundred bus stops, are the ones that serve the most riders, that are very high percent of those that have shelters, that have trash cans, that have bike racks, that have all of the amenities we would like to see so it really attracts riders. The next phase will be bus stops that aren't quite as highly used and we expect -- we will see that many of those don't have those amenities and so previously VRT had a budget line item for bus stop improvements and it was just the same amount of money every year and not

any real -- you know, just as things came up things would get done, which is not a bad way to do it, but what we are going to look at is over a five year period what are the improvements we know we need to make? How much would those cost? If we go after a discretionary grant to pay for those, which I am confident we could get, how much local match would we need to get all those done? I don't think it will be more than what we were budgeting previously. I just think it will be a different way to do it and we will be able to plan to get all of those amenities done that we identify in this next phase. We know those amenities make a difference to riders. The other thing we are doing we are putting art on bus shelters. You guys are getting one very soon. Two of them actually. It's going to be very cool. I'm very excited about that. In addition, each of the shelters now is going to have a route map. So, again, just information you use to go -- you didn't know what routes were there. Now you see the whole system. If there is a shelter once we get that completed and, then, finally, we have really leaned into using Main Street Station and the Town Square Mall and hopefully ultimately the Happy Day transit center more effectively by increasing the signage there, the wayfinding, letting people know how to use the system. We have applied for a grant at Town Square Mall for bathrooms and a break room for the drivers and on-route charging, some things like that. It won't be overnight, but we know all of those things ultimately will lead to more riders, because they are more -- more choice riders, because it's more attractive to ride. And, hopefully, that answered your question.

Whitlock: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Whitlock.

Taylor: Mayor and Elaine, can you just give me a general sense of what the local match is when you go after these federal or state dollars? Just a percentage on average.

Clegg: Sure. And it's good to see you, by the way, and congratulations. I haven't seen you since -- since your appointment. So, great -- great to see you here. I know you will do great as a -- in this phase of your public service. So, local match on capital projects is 20/80. Unlike highways, which is seven and three-quarters and 92 and so buying buses, buying, you know, shelters, doing the bus stop enhancements, those kinds of things. Match on service is only 50/50 in the small urban area, which is Nampa-Caldwell and is 50/50 only up to a certain percent of our federal funding in the larger urban area, which is the Boise-Meridian area. So, overall in our budget we get close to 14 million a year from local cities and counties. We -- or 13 -- excuse me. We earned over a million in fares last year. That's directly generated revenue. We expect to earn almost a million in advertising this year. That goes to why do we have those wraps on the buses. It's not to cover up whether there is riders or not, it's to earn money and we are earning a lot of money on it and, then, we get -- for operations. All of that goes toward operations. We get about 12 million a year in federal funding to match that. If you are in Canyon county you would be paying a little bit less a percentage, because the match there is -- is more generous. But overall we are -- we do about 45/55 -- 55 local, 45 federal on the operations. On the flip side on the capital it is an 80/20 and often if we apply for discretionary grants we get actually a little bit better match rate. So,

on the raise grant that we have got in Ada county right now on State Street, it's a 15/85 match. Does that help?

Whitlock: Thank you.

Clegg: And overall that's about another ten million. So, total budget around 35 million.

Little Roberts: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Little Roberts.

Little Roberts: Mr. Mayor, Elaine, I just would like to add my thanks. You and I have had many conversations over the years on transportation and it's great to see you leading the charge to really get the needle moving and make such progress and I look forward to what is to come. I knew things were changing when I saw that one of my son's 27, 28 year old friends was leaving his F-150 pickup at home and taking transit to and from work. So, that's a hard age to impact, so thank you.

Clegg: Great story. Glad to hear it. Thank you.

Simison: Well -- well, to piggyback off that comment -- and I don't know if you have the data or if you will have the data or not, but 45,000 rides on a route can be anything from 90 people commuting to and from work every day or it can be 45,000 unique rides.

Clegg: Yeah.

Simison: Do we have any idea how many -- how many different riders there are within the system? Are we servicing a hundred people, 150 people? Five hundred people on these routes? Do we have any way to track that yet or will we?

Clegg: We -- we can -- we can surmise it from the boardings and the lightings and the location of that. We don't have it exactly. The way we do our passenger counts is an automatic laser system, so we don't do face recognition. We can't say that's a unique individual. I -- you know, it's a great question, Mayor, and I don't have an answer for you. I can tell you on specific routes where we have looked at it what it is, but we -- that's an answer I will go ask Alyssa to start working on and see if we can get --

Simison: I think it would be important for us. You know, again, what's the cost per --

Clegg: Unique rider.

Simison: -- unique rider is a lot in the same way the conversation you just heard about dog owners --

Clegg: Yeah.

Simison: -- and the cost.

Clegg: I can tell you this much, we dug into it. City of Nampa had some very specific questions and I don't have the presentation right before me, but my memory is there were close to 5,000 unique riders over this -- all the services that we provided in the city of Nampa.

Simison: Okay. All right. Thank you very much. Appreciate you being here.

Clegg: Thank you.

Simison: Great seeing you walking around downtown.

Clegg: I love walking -- this is a great downtown to walk around. I really love it. Thank you.

18. Ada County Highway District Linder Road Concept Study, Pine to Ustick

Simison: Thank you. Up next will be item -- Council, are you good to go? Do you want me to take a break for any reason? All right. Then with that we will move on to Item 18, which is the Ada County Highway District Linder Road concept study, Pine to Ustick. We will welcome Brooke Green to the podium.

Green: Thank you, Mayor, Council. It's a privilege to be before you. For the record I'm Brooke Green. I'm a planner there at Ada County Highway District. This is I think my second time presenting this project to you. I'm here tonight to give you an overview of our past public engagement opportunity that we conducted this past December. I'm going to briefly go over the alternatives that we took out to the public as I see we have got some new Council folks who were not here last time and, then, I'm going to talk about the cost and the next steps. So, moving along, one of the things I do want to highlight with this project is our engagement and it's one thing to note that the engagement we took on this project is a little bit different than we have done in the past. Recognizing Linder is very unique. It's got a lot of front-on housing and that was important for us to be able to engage with those residents one on one and I will tell you when we came into this engagement opportunity originally we wanted to start just with general public outreach, but I will tell you I have done over 61 one-on-one meetings with your residents here in your community. I have gotten to know them quite personally. I have met their whole family. So, these one-on-one opportunities -- and we had some really difficult discussions. Oftentimes -- I have met with each one of these residents at least three times. At minimum maybe once or twice, depending on the respondents, and this last time the real hard questions were asked more or less worst case scenario what would happen, because when we do projects such as this, especially with Linder, we are talking about 36 potential homes that ACHD may end up having to purchase and so there is -- evening meetings are quite emotional. They are taxing. Believe me. But one thing I can hope is that we are not going to have a lot of surprises based off of

what decision you pick, because we were upfront and we were honest and I call that out, because what I'm going to go over today is the result of that public engagement that took place this past December and it will tell you where the public is leaning on this project. So, with that being said I want to go ahead and talk you through the project itself. So, the project is no further north than Ustick Road, no further west than Pine Avenue. I'm sorry. No further south than Pine Avenue. But some highlights, some attractors along the corridor -- you have got Tully Park, which is a large attractor. You have got Barbara Morgan Elementary School and you have Meridian High School and all of those attractors were taken into account with these alternatives we put forward. The path to adoption -- we have been at this for several years now. We started in December 2022 with our first public outreach. That was just a survey. In January 2023 that's when we started doing our data collection and modeling. This is also when we started to start doing our public engagement. We sent two letters to each property that was going to be impacted along this corridor. So, if I thought that their houses were potentially going to have some encroachment, I sent them a letter. If they didn't respond to my first letter I sent them a second letter. So, we really did engage. As you continue on we did our concept development. I have been before you before to introduce this project. This past April I had this exact same presentation provided to our Ada County Highway District Commission, as well as I had presented to the Meridian Transportation Committee. So, that brings us to where we are at today, which is in June. It is the goal, based off of what happens this evening and the next recommendation, that we take this to adoption later this summer or early fall. So, quickly just go and recap what those three alternatives were. What you are seeing before you was the three lane with a shared use road. Note. The shared use road is only between the pinch point along the corridor. That pinch point is at Sandalwood Drive and Chateau Drive. This was an alternative we put forward to be able to minimize the property impacts. I'm going to walk you through briefly each one of these. I don't want to spend too much time, but do want to highlight some of -- some of the enhancements for those folks who are new to the Council. So, starting off I'm going to bring your attention there to West Pine Avenue and the main attractor there at the top of the slide, that's the Meridian High School. This is the existing footprint. So, what you are seeing here is the four lanes. This is what you see today outside of Meridian High School, but some enhancements that we do -- we did suggest and we are making along the corridor is you are going to see a lot of pedestrian enhancements for good reason. You have got an elementary school, you have got a park and you have got a high school and right now the pedestrian facilities, based off of all the conversations I have had, aren't very comfortable. So, that first enhancements, that modified pedestrian hybrid beacon to help facilitate kids who are getting across the school there and at which point you are going to see the lane is going to reduce back to its existing footprint, which is that two lanes through the rest of the corridor. But to ensure access management -- control of access management we are making some suggestions for landscape medians. This is in alignment with -- and in partnership with the City of Meridian. Their tree landscape is what we are suggesting continue along the corridor and I wanted to draw your attention to the first of several homes that will be impacted. This circle here doesn't necessarily mean we are purchasing those homes, but I want to highlight that those three homes -- or four homes, because of the way we get close to their -- to their property, we made a

suggestion at that location, rather than continuing the multi-use pathway on that segment, to actually cross people across the street if they want to continue on the multi-use pathway and continue across Cherry Lane. Anything less than that, if we were to do a multi-use pathway, we would be looking to purchase in this alternative. Continuing along the corridor, this is where we are going to start getting to the pinch point and this is going to see where you are going to see two of our suggested roundabouts. Chateau Drive -- I'm sorry -- Linder between Chateau and Sandalwood are bookend by two roundabouts and this is where you are going to start seeing some property impacts. It was our hope with this three lanes with a shared use road that we were not going to have property impacts. However, after our last conversation we did some analysis a little bit more and that's when we started to realize that we are definitely going to have a few property impacts, primarily because of those roundabouts. This is also where you saw us try to get a little innovative in our approach to be able to preserve those homes. This is where you are going to see the suggested shared use road. The shared use road does provide access to those homes along that corridor through their own designated space. To give you an idea of what that looks like, again, those are the three homes that we are likely to have to purchase if this is the alternative that moves forward and we have had that conversation with them that says, unfortunately, any alternative and we are going to have to purchase your home and so that was a conversation we just recently had. As difficult as that is they are -- they are not going to see any surprises coming out of this. This is what that -- again that typical section looks like. Something to note -- and based off of the comments that I actually received from this committee and from Council Woman Strader was the concern about that mixed space between pedestrians and vehicles on that shared use road. Something to note about that shared use road, it really is to only provide for access for vehicles who are trying to get to their homes. However, originally we were -- the goal was to be able to create a space that's comfortable enough for everyone to mix in that space, because it's so little utilization. We went back to the driving table and said can we squeeze in a sidewalk in that location? And so you are seeing that suggestion here. It's the best we can do just based off available space. Anything more than this and we would be -- we would actually have to be purchasing homes and so moving along to the corridor, we are going to get further closer to Tully Park to bring your attention to some other type of pedestrian enhancements. Certainly they are getting to your Meridian parkway and this is where we also start to see that mixed space with the open irrigation district -- Irrigation canal that's at that location. There is options we can do at that particular location. This is one suggested option, which is to move that multi-use pathway behind it, but still continuum on to Ustick and continued. Other options you are going to see them in some of the other alternatives coming before you was to actually tile that. So, again, moving on to concept number two. So, there were three concepts. This is the second one. This is your standard five lanes. This is what you typically see right now that is north of Ustick and this is what you see that is at Pine -- Linder and Pine. This is also the largest footprint. So, should this one move forward it is going to be the largest number of homes in which we have to purchase. So, again, I don't -- I don't want to spend too much time walking through some of the amenities I highlighted, because the amenities actually stay the same through all of these alternatives, with a few exceptions. We are going to start with that exception right there. Because we are making a

suggestion of expanding the roadway itself and that multi-use pathway connectivity, you are going to see the first series of homes that we are going to have to purchase. All the yellow boxes represent a home we are going to have to purchase should this alternative be the one that moves forward. At this location, rather than shifting everybody across the street, we are keeping the multi-use pathway through the whole corridor across Cherry Lane and hence we are purchasing some additional homes. In addition to that, this is where we start to get back to that pinch point at Chateau and Sandalwood. This is a standard five lane option. This does not have the roundabouts. Now, the roundabouts in both of these alternatives can be shifted. So, if we want a standard five lanes with a roundabout, it's certainly something we can consider. We could keep it just with a shared use road, but just -- just to note. This is also where you are going to see the largest number of property purchases that we are going to have to do and I will tell you I have met -- I like to say with 65 percent of the property owners along this corridor who are being impacted -- 65 is a pretty good number. I can't force everybody to the table if they don't respond, but I will tell you we have engaged with them and the -- it's mixed feelings. When we originally had the conversation the east side was eager. It's the west side we were trying to preserve and I have since had that difficult conversation. I will hold that discussion when we get to the next slide, because that's something to note had to change. We made some changes. So, this is the pinch point along the corridor. This is going to require us to purchase all of the homes which you have highlighted there. There could potentially be some additional homes if a roundabout option is considered. Again this is what that typical section looks like. The footprint is approximately 89 feet, so it's fairly large. Continuing. Oops. It went too fast. Continuing on to Tully Park, rather than the multi-use pathway being back behind the canal at this point, because of the expansion of the road is so large, we are going to have to look to covering up that canal and so the multi-use pathway being adjacent to the road is a suggested option at this location. And, then, continuing along the five lanes with the shared use road, this is -- the shared use road, again, just to note, only between Sandalwood Drive and West Chateau Drive. That's the pinch point. This is one of those options where we were trying to be a little innovative in our approach to be able to preserve as many of the homes as we possibly could. Just to kind of give you some general idea. Because we were purchasing all the homes on the east side it gave us a little bit more space and so to that point we were able to provide adequate sidewalks space, as well as -- as well as that shared use road. You have the landscape buffers on both sides and the landscape median down the middle and, then, the travel lanes. Because we are purchasing the homes on the east side, the multi-use pathway is an appropriate facility at that location. So, just to walk you along. Again, the same amenities still apply. We have the pedestrian hybrid beacon. This option, the shared use road, the five lanes just continues what you have already in existence on Ustick. Sorry. At Ustick as well as Pine. Continuing along the corridor, again, I'm just going to highlight. Those yellow boxes represent a purchase. When we got to this pinch point originally we came in hoping that we were going to be able to preserve all the homes on the west side. However, once we did some additional layout and we were trying to accommodate that multi-use pathway, it became evident that there were going to be a few homes that we would actually have to purchase on the west side and so to give you a general idea of what that looks like, I will bring this in a little bit closer, so you can get

a view. Those four homes closer to Sandalwood, those were -- originally we didn't think we are going to have to purchase them. However, we are going to have to purchase them and so it does reduce the number of homes in which we are able to preserve. We have had some really difficult conversations with many of these property owners. If the standard five lane option is the one that moves forward, there are many people who are going to be impacted and so I will tell you that in those conversations a lot of people are starting to understand the circumstances that are in front of them and I highlight that, because I want to highlight what the public had to say and to bring you to that, again, the multi-use pathway option here is behind the canal, as opposed to fronting there on Linder, and, then, we bring you to the Engagement piece. So, when we took this out we had more than 500 people respond, 2.8 thousand folks who visited the site to understand a little bit more about the project, with over 448 folks who actually participated in the survey. In addition to the 61 property owner meetings that we had. Of those we asked them what do you think of these projects? What do you think of the alternatives that were before you? And you are going to see that the three lane design with the shared use road was the least liked amongst all of them. Certainly we understand that with the growth that is taking place in Meridian it's clear that your constituents want to see a five lane. Now, which five lane that is to question. So, we went and we asked them of the standard five lanes, 60.5 either loved it or liked it. Just of that and we just asked them what do you think of this? And, then, of the five lanes designs with the shared use road 40 percent loved it or liked it. When we asked them overall what is your preference, 45.6 percent of preference was concept two, which is the standard five lanes. Concept number three, 28.3 percent, that's the one with the shared use road. And, then, of course, the least liked amongst all of them, of course, was the three lanes. I want to bring you into the next steps is the cost. So, we did a cost comparison on each one of these projects and, obviously, the three lanes is going to be the least cost and, then, you get into the five lanes and, then, you get in those five lanes with the shared use road and you are going to see that number approaching approximately 31 million dollars for the standard five lanes and, then, for the standard five lanes with a shared use road approximately 30 -- 30 million dollars. We -- however, what's not reflected in here and we are doing that analysis is relocation cost. Since we have gone back and realized we are going to likely have to be purchasing more homes, we are going to have to add about 223,000 dollars per home we purchase and that's part of the relocation package, in addition to all the other compensation that comes with it. I do want to take a moment to talk about what conversations did occur with the property owners, so you have an understanding of what's been communicated. When we communicated to all the property owners we talked about worst case scenario. If we have to purchase your home this is what it would look like. We had a right-of-way agent in on every single one of those calls and we talked about how this timeline would play out and how it would impact their family. The compensation package -- and for your understanding it's probably helpful -- the compensation package -- we look to their appraisal or we look for the market, whichever one is higher, that is what we pay. In addition to that, we look to the moving costs per room. So, they also get that additional chunk. In addition to that, say for instance they did their -- refinance their two percent, but, you know, it's raised to seven percent, we pay the difference of that for the duration left of their loan. I bring that up because -- I bring that to your attention so you have an

understanding when those property owners or your constituents reach out to you, we did walk them through what that looks like and, then, we walked them through about the timeline, because every single one of these property owners is in a different timeline in their life and so we talked about how long is this going to take. I will tell you three of the ladies I spoke with with their families are in their 90s and certainly, you know, they would like to stay there and so we took that into consideration we talked about how much longer it's going to take before this project actually goes into construction. Others were so eager, buy my house, I don't want to live on Linder, I can't back out. So, I just want to put some -- a glimmer -- you know, some sort of -- tell you what that conversation was. What we are having in those one-on-one meetings, because these are people's homes, but I will tell you I don't think too many of them will be surprised with the outcome of this decision or the decision of ACHD Commission is going to be and so I hope that helps you in understanding what path to take. Lastly, just to kind of give you an idea, somewhat -- we did take into account a lot of conversations through this process with your team and with the representatives from the City of Meridian and some of the concerns that were brought to our attention that we want to make sure that we address in design is should we have to purchase all of these homes, what are we going to do with that vacant space? It's important for your community that we take that into account and so I commit to you that through the design phase of this project our staff will work in concert with your staff to ensure that we address the access management with the remnant parcels. We take into account any concerns regarding restrictions and mitigate any issues with those parcels. It is your community. You certainly don't want to look at dirt space along Linder and so we commit to you being able to work through that process in the design phase. Other things that were brought to our attention that we would like to do to enhance this is raised crossings at Sandalwood, consider that, and review, if we could do that, at the roundabout should a roundabout -- the option move forward, that we really lift those kids up into the view shed of those larger vehicles that are traversing through our neighborhoods now and, lastly, to address some stormwater facilities. But ACHD is committed to continuing to work with your staff through this design phase to take into consideration a lot of those concerns about what happens if we purchase that space, those parcels, and what's going to happen with that space afterwards and, lastly, the next steps. So, this is where we are at. So, we have presented to your transportation committee. We are here before you today. We are asking that the City of Meridian and you consider what option you would like to move forward or asking for a formal letter or formal response, so we can take that back to the ACHD Commission and, again, we are looking and anticipating an adoption at the end of the summer or early fall and that concludes my presentation and I will stand for any questions.

Simison: Thank you, Brooke. Council, questions?

Little Roberts: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Little Roberts.

Little Roberts: Mr. Mayor, Brooke, thank you so much. That was a great presentation. Excuse me. Is there any capacity difference? I know there would be for the three and the five, but the five on the two different styles, because as we look for putting input into what will be transportation 30, 40 years down the road, as you well know, capacity plays a critical role.

Green: Mayor and Council Woman Little Roberts, the capacity stays the same. It is five lanes. The changes of how fast it takes for you to get down the corridor that's going to play a factor if we look to roundabouts as opposed to a signal and I certainly can bring my person with HDR to talk kind of what we anticipate. It's going to be seconds if -- you know, if a roundabout as opposed to an intersection, but the capacity will stay the same, because it's five lanes.

Overton: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Overton.

Overton: Not to try to put you on the spot, Brooke, but just yesterday I was handed the draft to the FY-25 to '31 regional TIP and in that it put a 5,772,000 dollar figure in for this entire project. Like I said, the look on your face tells me that this was brand new information for me. It was just handed yesterday from COMPASS. If you are not aware of it I'm assuming, looking at this as we are talking about, that would be the initial design, funding and starting with -- no? We have a -- we have a shake.

Green: All right.

Simison: From a friend.

Green: And she would be familiar with what was put in there.

Inselman: Yes.

Green: So, yes.

Inselman: Thank you. For the record, Kristy Inselman. I'm the planning supervisor at ACHD. So, Mr. Mayor, Council Member Overton, so what was put in the TIP -- they can only use the costs as what we had them, which was in the CIP. So, CIP was our 20 year horizon and that was anticipating a three lane roadway based on cost from like 2020. So, until an actual concept is adopted, then, we won't be able to update the cost in the TIP until we have a formal path forward on what we are going to be doing. I hope that makes sense. Mr. Mayor, follow up?

Simison: Councilman Overton.

Overton: It's best to look at that as kind of a placeholder until we decide which direction we are taking. Thank you.

Taylor: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Taylor.

Taylor: Brooke, thanks for the presentation. Quick question. When thinking about this project and the Linder overpass, can you speak to how the overpass and riders -- or, you know, the number of cars, how that was factored into some of the thinking here? Just kind of -- if you can touch on that point I would appreciate that.

Green: Mayor and Councilman Taylor, I'm going to pull up Pearson to go ahead. He is the one that conducted the modeling on the corridor itself. Certainly the overpass plays a factor into this. I will let him speak any further details about what's on the horizon.

Whitney: For the record Pearson Whitney. HDR. Mayor Simison, Member Taylor. So, we got the COMPASS long range model and we used that to analyze the traffic associated with the proposed improvements and what we learned from that is that the development of the overpass doesn't really affect the fact that the capacity on the roadway will work in either a three or five lane configuration, because there are so many other north-south routes and when you look at it from a larger origin and destination perspective, either alternative will work and it won't really factor in substantially, because there is other ways to get to the overpass.

Whitlock: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Whitlock.

Whitlock: Just on the -- the -- I think option three with the trees down the middle, who maintains all of that and how does that work?

Green: Mayor and Councilman Whitlock -- and I'm glad I can say that. Congratulations. This is an agreement we would have with the City of Meridian pertaining to the maintenance of those facilities, similar to what we already have in place when we look to do landscaping. It is in concert with the City of Meridian for the maintenance moving forward.

Cavener: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: Thanks for the thoroughness of the presentation to us and the efforts you have made to our citizens. Your -- your point about our residents being in all different places in their life, were there some emerging themes or reoccurring themes that came from the public engagement that you tried to take into account? Are there -- were there big themes? Is it start this two years from now? Start this now. I mean you -- you touched on it. Certainly if I'm 90 I don't -- you are not -- I don't want you to take me out of my home. If there is a new opportunity, right, I would hate to be one backing into

Linder. I don't wish that on anybody. But were there -- were there any themes or reoccurring comments that you heard and is there a plan to take any of that feedback into account with -- which -- whatever option you move forth with?

Green: Mayor and Councilman Cavener, yes, there were a lot of themes. I will tell you initially -- certainly where you are in your life makes these decisions and this impact a little -- little different.

Cavener: Yeah.

Green: For a lot of folks they were eager to -- once we got to the third meeting, because I have met with them three times -- most of them three times. Once we got to the third meeting I think they had a lot of time to digest what was coming. For those who were older who would like to live out in their homes, I, too, would like to see them live out in their homes. Those were some incredibly emotional meetings and when we look to the costs associated with this project certainly that's going to be a factor played into this. I'm only here to put the facts forward. As for planning and moving it forward, I look to our Commission for that direction. I can certainly look to the City of Meridian for that direction, too. But the themes really determine where you are in your life and I will tell you of the 60 -- so, 65 percent is approximately how many people I have met with, there were three older women, all in their 90s. For them certainly I want to see them live out the rest of their lives in their homes and would like to see that move forward. At 30 million dollars for a project I don't anticipate the dates we have listed in the integrated five year work plan are going to -- to stay. So, play that into the decision. But my hope is that they will be able to continue to stay in their homes and -- but I know that their families were with them in these meetings. A lot of them were providing support. But for everyone else -- some people would rather not. They would like to stay in their homes until we actually have to purchase them. Some of them are please buy us out early so I can move on with my life. You know, one -- one particular woman -- insurance company wants her to change the roof of her house and she is like why go put in a 30 year roof when I'm going to have the house torn down? So, these -- that's decisions people are having to weigh and, then, we show up at their doorstep and we have these conversations. But because we did such a -- a phased approach in these conversations I'm hoping that there aren't too many surprises. There will be one or two surprises, but I'm hoping we eased this process a little bit more for them and we don't typically do this in a concept, but I think it was important for this project.

Cavener: Thank you.

Strader: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Strader.

Strader: Just for some feedback, I'm still mulling it over, but it definitely doesn't seem like three lanes is adequate, you know, to meet our needs and I agree with you that I think what Meridian residents expect generally would be the five lane. So, it's really just

a question -- in my mind I have eliminated sort of option one and I think it's just the next two concepts that sort of -- I guess are -- are there. So, we have -- the differences I guess are the roundabout versus regular streetlights; right? Whether or not there is a shared access road that I guess would preserve some homes along the corridor and, then, the pathway location. Is there anything else noting -- worth noting?

Green: Mayor and Council Woman Strader, no, you have -- you have highlighted the three changes -- or the three options of the two five lanes. You can do a roundabout in either case. We just reflected on one. You can do the intersection in either case. And, then, the multi-use pathway in concert in conversations with the irrigation district, that's one that through design we can work through what the preferences are. Mind you when we go through design we will have some additional public engagement that talk about more nuanced pieces of this project. Right now it's a very high level just to figure out what option. And to your point the citizens did weigh in. It looks to be one of the five lane options is the preferred.

Taylor: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Taylor.

Taylor: Just one quick question, Brooke. The shared lanes or the shared roads are those one way? Really narrow? They are one way? So, kind of come in, come out, just like to better understand what that looks like.

Green: Absolutely. Mayor and Councilman Taylor, yeah, you weren't here for the first discussion and so I take some time really quick to kind of go over what that looks like. I will reflect it there on the five lanes with the shared use road. You see the typical right there. So, it is one way. And I don't know if you can see my cursor. Does my cursor show up? Okay. It doesn't. So, I'm going to speak to it. So, if you lived on the west side and you were getting to one of those homes that we were able to preserve with this option and you wanted to go south, so you will actually come out of your driveway -- I'm sorry. If you wanted to go north. You will come out of your driveway, it's one way south, so you are going to continue along, you will come out -- you will go through the roundabouts and you will flip around and, then, you can go up north and so that is -- the shared use roads are one way for good reason. We don't have enough space to give it to go two directions. With the roundabouts, however, we are able to facilitate that movement. The shared use road could not be necessary -- it would be difficult with an intersection, because we are not going to give -- you can still do it, but the roundabout is what enables them to make the turns and get into their properties, because you are also going to see -- we are making a suggestion for the landscape median down the middle and that's for access control. We made that determination about the whole corridor to minimize folks who are trying to make left-hand turn movements for the safety of the public.

Simison: So, Brooke, a couple unfair questions and go from there. Only based on this -- based on maybe some things I have heard. Do you think there is a willingness from

the ACHD Commission to do all three of these or is there one that you think is not really an option from what you have heard or believe?

Green: Mayor and Council, so I can't speak on behalf of the ACHD Commission. Certainly it's their prerogative to choose which one. They are very much looking to the City of Meridian for your feedback and preference. I will tell you all three options are on the table. I gave this exact same presentation to them as I'm giving to you this evening and it will certainly be left up to them. I can't gauge and it's not my place to gauge where they stand on this. I'm here to give the facts. But I will tell you they are certainly eager to hear what you have to say.

Simison: Okay. Second and third questions -- you know, being Linder Road overpass was like a Herculean effort at ten million from ACHD or 15 million -- at 30 million -- I mean the questions you are asking about people's life decisions -- and I'm going to put a few more words maybe in what I felt like what I have heard over the years is ACHD has avoided making improvements on Locust Grove due to the amount of property impacts and cost associated with. What is the likelihood that this is done in ten years and, you know, all things considered -- financial with the rate we are -- you know, I heard today the cost projections Eagle from Amity to Lake Hazel and, again, are -- are these people going to be the ones that are going to actually going to be making the decisions, because ACHD is going to go buy it now and maybe construct it in 15, 20 years? What -- what -- what would you expect from a time frame to the best of your ability?

Green: Mayor and Council, very good question. Certainly the cost of doing business has certainly gone up across the valley and not to mention the cost with many of these projects we are seeing significant rises. For programming itself, you know, it is programmed in the integrated five year work plan to move into design in 2028. The cost does become a factor. The City of Meridian, city of Boise, all of our stakeholders, they do provide their prioritization list and we take that into account when we are prioritizing projects. This price tag is high, but I can't certainly determine what our Commission is going to agree to in programming these projects, because it's ultimately up to them. But we do have this in the integrated five year work plan as of today for the design work to start in 2020 -- 2026 we will grant to -- you know 2024 now. Will that change? That could shift. But this is a priority project which you guys have identified. We are out here doing the concept for that good reason. The Linder overpass is a factor. But really the programming and the prioritization will have to come from the City of Meridian in concert with our ACHD Commission prioritizing this with the new -- with the cost. But all of our projects are coming in with very high price tags and that's -- that's going to be a decision our Commission is going to be left to decide which one moves forward. We -- I will tell you the price tag is for the whole project in entirety. To your point about -- can we go into design, can we start the right-of-way process, it is phased in over several years on all of our projects. So, while we may not see construction right away, we can start the other part -- other parts of this project to keep it moving forward and certainly in alignment with your prioritization that you guys put forward.

Simison: Thank you. Because just from a -- my two cents for -- I think a normalized -- and I say normalized meaning lights, not roundabouts on this corridor and, you know, my -- my rationale is I -- I have got a roundabout near my house. I have always said there is a time and place for roundabouts irregardless, but in this case that corridor, with the schools that are on it and other things, I -- I just don't feel like roundabouts are great for a lot of bus traffic that will -- that will drive through here, especially if you are only going to have to -- on what is currently being built. I -- I -- I'm not getting the impression that we are going to go back and redo the other intersections on Linder, but just to throw in two roundabouts here in the middle when you remove the housing obstructions, you know, there were -- the -- you want people driving slower if you had the -- the alley -- or the people backing into the roadway, but when you remove that and you get to a more standard road section, at least to me the regular lighted intersections would seem to work better than putting in two random roundabouts along this -- what I think is going to be -- no disrespect to the modeling -- I think this is going to be much heavier -- more heavily used than the modeling predicts long term, because of all the community access points that are along Linder that connect, you know, down from Eagle. You know, I'm not going to say Swan Falls. I have only driven down there once. I'm -- I'm not going that far. But, you know, the amount of people in -- and here in Kuna who are excited about this -- I think the modeling is not going to be accurate long term for what this road is going to be functioning as.

Overton: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Overton.

Overton: I actually agree with most everything you said and talked about that yesterday. I think that this is going to be a very heavily used road for the very fact that it's going to be a north-south from the farthest edges of Kuna all the way into Eagle. Already has a bridge crossing at the Boise River and I think it -- although we always try to predict what the vehicle trips today are going to be on a roadway, sometimes we are wildly off. When Locust Grove was just an overpass, vehicle trips doubled almost instantly when that thing opened up. So, I don't -- I don't base what I think vehicle trips are going to be based on it being just an overpass not a full on-ramps, off-ramps and I think this Linder Road is going to get a lot of use and I will say right now I'm fully in favor of the five lane concept that keeps it consistent through the whole area. I know it's a huge impact, but I think it's the right thing to do.

Strader: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Strader.

Strader: Would you pull up the concept to graphic that's similar to this one?

Green: Mayor and Council Woman Strader, certainly.

Strader: Thanks.

Green: Is this what you are looking for?

Strader: What I wanted to find was concept two. Yeah. Thank you. I think -- I think there are some trade-offs just talking out loud; right? So, I -- I think the Mayor makes a really good point about the pedestrian element with the schools and having, you know, kind of standard intersections compared to a roundabout and I think to me like the trade-offs there are -- it feels like the roundabout concept is pretty critical for the success of the shared use road, because it's going to be really challenging for those homeowners to sort of get in and out without a roundabout. I'm leaning a little bit toward concept two, just because I feel like there is a level of predictability here. We are not, then, kind of innovating this shared use road that we have never really tried before. I have had some concerns, because it -- again, it -- because it's a one way I have had a concern that people will see that as -- during traffic a way to zip through and kind of avoid traffic, which I think is risky for the homes that would be along there. I just -- I feel like concept two provides a level of predictability and sort of meets what I think most people in Meridian consider like our standard and just what they would expect. So, I mean I'm open minded and I'm -- I want to hear everybody's thoughts, but just -- it feels like if we are not -- if we are not even considering roundabouts and that becomes our consensus, then, I feel like we should move away from the shared use road, because the roundabout feels really critical for that to be successful. I don't know. I'm just sharing some thoughts. But that's my initial reaction.

Whitlock: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Whitlock.

Whitlock: Yes. Thinking back to the previous presentation -- I'm on that bus, too. I -- I think from a safety standpoint and -- and I have -- there are some of those shared roads -- and I don't -- I don't think they are attractive. I don't think they invite a good feeling in your neighborhood. So, I -- I totally agree. I think it would become a thoroughfare for people trying to get around traffic that will naturally build up there. So, I'm on that option two bus.

Taylor: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Taylor.

Taylor: This may be a question for you and everyone else. Are we officially weighing in tonight? Are we going to discuss this later and write a letter or is this our opportunity to say what we think?

Simison: My understanding is ACHD would like a letter, but my desire is that this was the decision point and we can put it into a letter from tonight's conversation anything that needs to be pointed out specifically.

Taylor: Okay. Well, I'm -- I'm going to -- I'm supportive of the concept two as well. I -- I actually do -- you made a good point. I -- I agree with that. I think once the Linder overpass is done I think this will be a pretty significant roadway. I think it will be a lot of -- a lot of traffic, especially as the community grows, really only having a few points where we can go north-south in Meridian across the freeway. So, I -- yeah, I think concept two works and I agree with Council Woman Strader's comments, I think this is just what the people expect and what we like and I think familiarity is -- is good. Sometimes we introduce new concepts here and there and I think they -- sometimes they confuse, if anything. So, I -- I -- I am in support of concept two. I think that's the right approach.

Cavener: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: I'm in agreement as well. I think there could be a case made if there was such a -- make a significant shift in cost, but they are, you know, similar I guess playbook, so I'm -- I'm supportive of concept two. I think it's the right thing to do.

Little Roberts: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Little Roberts.

Little Roberts: Mr. Mayor and Brooke, I will concur with that. I think looking through everything -- everything has got its pluses and minuses, but I think we can only consider the larger roadways and with that I would concur that concept two would be our best route to go.

Simison: Okay. Well, with that you have heard the feedback. We will have a letter transmitted to you no later than -- you know, if -- we will talk and see if we are going to bring something back. It's going to be a pretty simple letter. I'm not going to just -- I mean we are not going to go into a lot of deviation, other than saying concept two. But we will get something to you hopefully by early next week.

Green: Okay. Thank you, Mayor, Council. It's a privilege to be before you. Appreciate this opportunity to bring this project and to work with your constituents. It has been a fun project, because it's different, and I want to thank you for taking your time tonight to -- to consider it and I will take that back to our Commission and we shall hear this hopefully at the end of the summer, early fall.

Simison: And thank you, Brooke. And just -- I know it's a tough job, so thank you for your -- your disposition in dealing with the residents and having those very tough heart wrenching conversations and, you know, at least on a personal level, you know, great, but I think if you can -- from my perspective I think that the homes that need to be purchased sooner should be purchased sooner to help alleviate things that people are either going to try to do or stages of life, you know. So, even if it's phased, even if this is

not going to be built for -- constructed for 15 years, the more we can advance that the sooner the better I think for all of us, especially for the residents impacted that want to leave.

Green: Yeah. That's what I heard from the residents. So, I will tell you, just to understand the decision tonight, these residents know this is coming and so while they were tough decisions, I hope that helps you in your decision making process, too, to know that we have been communicating to them and have been transparent this whole time.

19. Ada County Highway District Master Street Map Changes – Arterial Corridor Preservation

Simison: Thank you, Brooke. Mr. Hood, are we quick? Unless someone needs a break. I think this will be fairly quick, this next item?

Hood: Mr. Mayor, I -- I hope to be pretty brief. It's a pretty detailed topic, but I will go as quickly as -- as possible.

Simison: I just want to make sure everyone's good and we don't need to take a break or if you planned on being long. So, with that --

Cavener: Agree to the rush. Sorry, Mr. Mayor.

Simison: Yeah. Exactly.

Cavener: If this was going to be an hour, then, maybe to take a five minute break, but if we are going to be --

Hood: Certainly not an hour from my perspective.

Simison: Okay.

Hood: Ten, 15 minutes maybe.

Simison: All right. Then with that we will move on to Item No. 19, Ada County Highway District master street map changes, arterial corridor preservation. Mr. Hood.

Hood: Thank you, Mr. Mayor, Members of the Council. Kind of building -- I was trying to figure out a way to work riding a bus into this presentation, but standards came up just a couple of times in that last presentation, so, really, this is about standards. This is a follow up to the conversation we had with ACHD -- you had with ACHD in January at the joint meeting talking about McMillan primarily, but other arterial roadway section line arterial roadways in Meridian and standardizing that and saying, hey, at least plan for five lanes on all section land arterials. I am asking this evening that -- that we send a letter to ACHD formalizing kind of that informal conversation that we had. They did kind

of a back-of-the-napkin estimate of what that, you know, financial impact is, because there are some three lane roadways, as we just pointed out with this segment of Linder previously or even currently they are still planning on that being three lanes, but five lanes is an option. There is a financial impact. But we want ACHD to consider that in their planning moving forward. So, that first document that -- that considers that as the master street map or the Master street plan. So, again, what I'm proposing to you through the Transportation Commission that's talked about this over the last three meetings that they had, was to request ACHD change several segments. So, I'm just going to run through four -- four maps real quick. McMillan corridor, this one's pretty easy. It's the one, two, three, four, five miles of McMillan on the western part of the city and our area of impact. Going to slide two. So, match line basically here. There is seven miles of McMillan that would change. They are only currently planned to be three. Two miles of Meridian Road north of Ustick and two more miles of Locust Grove north of Ustick that, again, are only currently planned for three lanes. We would ask them to make those -- preserve the right of way for up to five lanes in the future. Cherry -- actually there is a -- there is a change. This is the biggest conversation with the Transportation Commission. One of the things that staff asked the Commission to consider and -- and Council -- although I will stand down -- is the viability of Cherry Lane west of Meridian Road being a seven lane roadway in the future. There is some pretty significant impacts and the Transportation Commission wasn't comfortable making that request to go down to five. So, right now ACHD is actually planning for that to be seven and staff said, hey, we would like, again, that standard. Maybe five makes more sense. We are going to do some more evaluation over the coming year with the Transportation Commission, so we can put a pin in that. If you want to comment on it that's fine, but the Transportation Commission said, hey, we are not quite comfortable going there yet. So, the yellow segment, including the -- the piece that's purple, no change to that to what ACHD is planning and that's seven lanes. So, aside from Cherry-Fairview and these few miles that go into Boise is seven lanes -- I'm going to jump real quick to this one. Overland. There is two miles of Overland that are also planned for seven lanes in the future. Everything else is either three or five and with this change, again, back to standards, everything would be five lanes or a hundred feet of right of way, except for those couple of miles -- jump back real quick. Also impacted is Overland west of ten Mile. Two miles. All of the Victory corridor into Boise and one mile of Amity that ties in there in Boise and, then, South Eagle Road. And Columbia I guess. I didn't -- forget that. So, again, in the interest of time -- I can jump into that more. I can explain more about how the -- the master street map functions, works, how it works with our Comprehensive Plan, generally how ACHD uses it, although we have Kristy here, so she could give you more details. But, again, that is the request. I have drafted a letter. I actually shared it with Dave -- Mr. Miles this afternoon. Fairly straightforward. Just lists these and says, hey, we would like ACHD to consider changing the master street map per these four attachments. And, again, with that, Mr. Mayor, I would stand for any questions you or the Council have.

Simison: Thank you, Mr. Hood. Council, any questions?

Strader: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Strader.

Strader: Maybe I'm being dense, but just to make sure I understand, so the plan is to ask for the preservation of up to five lanes in these areas, except for where more lanes are planned.

Hood: Seven. Uh-huh.

Strader: Right. So, we are just sort of carving out -- if you have already planned more lanes we are not planning to shrink them, obviously. Yeah. Okay. I think -- I think it makes great sense personally. Thank you.

Cavener: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: Yeah. But I just want to make sure that I -- I heard you right that when you said staff wanted to take a look at the seven lanes, is that City of Meridian staff, highway district staff? Both? Help fill me in.

Hood: Yeah. Mr. Mayor, Councilman Cavener, I appreciate the question. A little bit -- so, mostly city staff, although at the Transportation Commission we did have a representative from the West Ada School District who was also supportive of considering -- I don't want to over speak or -- but with the middle school being there, high school not too far away, seven lanes, obviously, is harder to cross for a middle schooler that's maybe trying to go to our library or get home on the north side of -- of Cherry Lane. So, a lot to consider there. You want to move traffic; right? There is projections with motorists, but you also have a livability factor, so -- but, again, back to your original question, mainly city staff that said, you know what, let's -- let's maybe think about this Meridian Road with the interchange, maybe that's where we transition is our downtown from seven and keep five lanes all the way to the west. I don't have a true pros and cons list developed, but it was something that we at least asked to think through a little bit more is a seven lane facility right through the middle of our community makes the most sense. However you define that.

Simison: And maybe, Caleb, at least in this case -- I mean you are talking about redevelopment before you would ever go do right of way, otherwise, there is a purchase. So, it's not as if though we are -- it is a little bit of different conversation and develop over time.

Hood: And -- and, Mr. Mayor, if I may just to follow up on that a little bit, the master street map mainly is about preservation and there is not a whole lot to preserve there, because there is not a whole lot of development from greenfield development. You will see redevelopment over time, but, again, those impacts are pretty large on the existing properties that are there when you have to buy the additional right of way for ultimately seven lanes. So, there is still community impacts. Yes. Good point, Mayor. That

redevelop -- there is preservation. This is a lot about preserving for the future whatever that may hold.

Simison: Council, any -- we could -- if so -- I know I got a letter forwarded to me, but I haven't looked at it. But I -- again, I assume it will be a pretty simple straightforward letter on this one as well. All right. Thank you very much.

Hood: Thank you.

ORDINANCES [Action Item]

- 20. Ordinance No. 24-2054: An ordinance (Reveille Ridge Subdivision – H-2023-0050) annexing a parcel of land located in the south half of the northeast quarter and the north half of the southeast quarter of Section 5, Township 2 North, Range 1 East, Boise Meridian, Ada County, Idaho, more particularly described in Exhibit “A”; rezoning 59.97 acres of such real property from RUT (Rural Urban Transition) to R-8 (34.69 acres) (Medium-Density Residential) and R-15 (25.28 acres) (Medium-High Density Residential) zoning districts; directing city staff to alter all applicable use and area maps as well as the official zoning maps and all official maps depicting the boundaries and the zoning districts of the City of Meridian in accordance with this ordinance; providing that copies of this ordinance shall be filed with the Ada County Assessor, the Ada County Treasurer, the Ada County Recorder, and the Idaho State Tax Commission, as required by law; repealing conflicting ordinances; and providing an effective date.**

Simison: With that Item 20 is our -- is Ordinance No. 24-2054. Ask the Clerk to read this Ordinance by title.

Lomeli: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. Ordinance No. 24-2054, an ordinance Reveille Ridge Subdivision, H-2023-0050, annexing a parcel of land located in the south half of the northeast quarter and the north half of the southeast quarter of Section 5, Township 2 North, Range 1 East, Boise meridian, Ada county, Idaho, more particularly described in Exhibit “A”; rezoning 59.97 acres of such real property from the RUT to the R-8, 34.69 acres, Medium-Density Residential, and R-15, 25.28 acres, Medium-High Density Residential zoning districts; directing city staff to alter all applicable use and area maps, as well as the official zoning maps and all official maps depicting the boundaries and the zoning districts of the City of Meridian in accordance with this ordinance; providing that copies of this ordinance shall be filed with the Ada County Assessor, the Ada County Treasurer, the Ada County Recorder, and the Idaho State Tax Commission, as required by law; repealing conflicting ordinances; and providing an effective date.

Simison: Thank you. Council, you have heard this ordinance read by title. Is there anybody who would like it read in its entirety? If not do I have a motion?

Taylor: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Taylor.

Taylor: Move that we approve Ordinance No. 24-2054.

Little Roberts: Second.

Simison: Have a motion and a second to approve Ordinance No. 24-2054. Is there any discussion? If not, Clerk will call the roll.

Roll Call: Cavener, yea; Strader, yea; Overton, yea; Little Roberts, yea; Taylor, yea; Whitlock, yea.

Simison: All ayes. Motion carries and the item is agreed to.

MOTION CARRIED: ALL AYES.

Simison: Council, we have reached the end of our meeting agenda, but we have also reached the last meeting for Deputy Chief Joe Bongiorno prior to his retirement from the city. Joe, it's been a pleasure having you join me up here for the full five years. I know it goes well beyond that in that context. We have had a lot of good conversations and feedback from you for what you have done just here, but we really appreciate and value everything you have done for your career to the residents of Meridian. So, you got a mic in front of you. If you have any final parting words of wisdom that will be on the record I'm sure we would be happy to take them.

Bongiorno: No. Mr. Mayor and Council, thank you so much. It's been a wild ride for sure. My 24 years with the City of Meridian, 21 years full time, three years as a volunteer has been awesome. I'm happy I made it to the end of my career and it's been a blast sitting here with you guys. Thank you so much.

Simison: Council, anyone else?

Cavener: Yeah. Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: Take a mic away for me tonight when it comes to this one. Chief, you have taught me a lot and how I look at a land use application today is much different than how I looked at it ten years ago and it's thanks to you. You really bring a public safety approach to all of our work and you have made us as a city better, us as a Council, me as a Council Member better. I will forever use the term speed pillows as long as I exist, but there is something bigger than that and you are just an incredible man and a father and a husband and a leader and on the few occasions we have been able to eat together and connect -- not as a deputy chief and a Council Member, just as two guys

who care about this Meridian -- this community of ours, I have just -- I have learned a lot about you and I just continue to admire you both personally and professionally. Know that will continue long after Friday and really want to just wish you well in a new chapter. We appreciate it.

Little Roberts: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Little Roberts.

Little Roberts: I will try to do this without crying. I already got to hug him outside. I first encountered chief at the Chamber. He came to do an inspection and learned a lot that day about -- and have been learning ever since. It's been a pleasure to get to work with you the first time and, again, the second time and so you will definitely be missed. Just wish you the very best. I know there is a second chapter and just real excited to hear about what that is, so --

Bongiorno: You are going to have to teach me how to golf.

Little Roberts: Deal.

Strader: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Strader.

Strader: Yeah. No. I just want to share everyone else's comments and thank you so much, you know, for spending your most precious resource your time with us for so long and building a career here and you have, obviously, made a huge impact on everybody and I wish you well in the next chapter.

Overton: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: I was going to try to take -- go to adjournment, so I don't want you to have to say anything nice about someone from the fire department, but Councilman Overton.

Overton: Mr. Mayor, I'm struggling here, but I'm going to get through it. I have spent a career not having to say too many nice things about firemen, but in all jest. You have been a supremely dedicated member of the department and I'm proud to call you chief for all of your years of service to this community. Every night you are here we can tell that you are only interest and your main interest is for the citizens of Meridian, not for yourself, and that's what's most important that you carry with you and be proud of. Appreciate it.

Simison: With that anyone want to end the meeting?

Cavener: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: So much fun, but I move we adjourn the meeting.

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

MOTION CARRIED: ALL AYES.

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 6:57 P.M.

(AUDIO RECORDING ON FILE OF THESE PROCEEDINGS)

MAYOR ROBERT SIMISON

DATE APPROVED

ATTEST:

CHRIS JOHNSON - CITY CLERK