

March 2023 Chamber Newsletter

Every year, our team puts together an Annual Report detailing the work we have accomplished as a City. As always, I am impressed with the progress the City made in 2022! An extensive amount of work was accomplished towards meeting the City's Strategic Goals in each of our six focus areas: Responsible Growth, Transportation and Infrastructure, Business and Economic Vitality, Public Health and Safety, Vibrant Community and Government Excellence.

Our strategic goal of Business and Economic Vitality states that Meridian "will ensure business and economic vitality to meet community needs." I would like to share with you how the City supports this goal with its Economic Development team and Community Development Department. Last year (2022), these two divisions supported the following growth in our business community:

- 483 new business opened;
- 2,358 new jobs created;
- 1,341 single family homes and 968 apartments built;
- 105 New Commercial buildings built, totaling over 1.7 million square feet of space; and,
- 245 commercial remodels took place, combined to add or remodel over 1.5 million square feet of tenant space.

So, just how do we support businesses through our Community Development and Economic Development teams? Meridian's dynamic economy is fueled by you – "main street" businesses owners, early and late stage entrepreneurs, national chains, Meridian based local and regional businesses, franchisees, professional services, contractors, builders, tradespeople and home-based businesses. At some point in your business journey you will come into contact with an aspect of city government. From life-safety (police, fire and EMS), to building codes, land use questions, public works utilities, to community development and economic development services, there are many divisions of responsibility but ONE Meridian Team.

For most businesses who are starting and growing, they will come into contact with our Economic and Community Development divisions. Generally, the Economic Development team works with businesses through the business retention, recruitment processes, and assistance programs. Where appropriate, they also coordinate with regional and State economic development organizations to assist business in accessing economic development programs and incentives. The team also works with the staff in Planning services to support and coordinate site selection and design. Community Development services (Planning, Land Development, and Building) work together to ensure that land use and building codes are addressed and coordinate with

life safety, public works, parks and other city departments to ensure safe, sustainable, orderly and high-quality development.

Together, these divisions help provide demographic, economic and market data and information, assist and explain to businesses various regulatory standards and ensure compliance; and certify that buildings are built to local, state and industry standards and codes - ensuring that owners and tenants have confidence in their long-term investments; provide sustainable growth so that the community can grow in an orderly way; and provide timely, efficient services.

With the help of the Meridian Chamber of Commerce which provides additional resources for businesses as well as networking opportunities, the City is here to welcome and assist businesses to grow, helping to realize our vision of making Meridian the premier community in the west to live, work and raise a family.

To find out more about these services and business resources, visit our updated City Website at meridiacity.org/community-development and meridiacity.org/business. I always say that government does not create jobs, we create an environment in which businesses can thrive! I encourage you to utilize these resources to help you achieve your immediate and long-term goals. Team Meridian is here to help you be successful!

Mayor Robert Simison