



2025 State of the City
Mayor Robert E. Simsion
Meridian, ID

Thank you Robb for that kind introduction and for ICCU serving as the Title Sponsor today.

To Sean, the Board and the Chamber team, I appreciate and value your work for our local businesses, the community, and today's event.

To our business leaders, City Council, fellow elected officials, city employees and the community, thank you for being a part of what makes Meridian special.

Finally, to my family. Thank you for all you do to keep me grounded and allowing me to serve.

Each April, I spend some time walking with the students from the Meridian elementary schools. This is a great way to encourage healthy activity and have some pretty frank conversations with some of our future leaders.

Over the years I've come to expect the usual questions: Do you know the President? How much money do you make? Do you have a chauffeur? Do you live in the White House?

And for those that know him, is Jake your bodyguard?

I'm able to respond to these questions with cat-like precision because it isn't my first time walking around these school tracks. This year, I started to get a new question that really hasn't been asked on a regular basis. Do I like being Mayor?

Even with the challenges, of course, the answer is YES!

But, as anyone knows when you are talking with intelligent West Ada kids, yes and no questions are never enough. It's always followed by the all-encompassing question of "Why?"

So in order to keep up my verbal ninja skills, I knew I needed to get to a place where we could both understand my why. So, I began sharing that yes, I like being Mayor because it is challenging and I get to do cool stuff like walking with them.



We all have challenges in our jobs, and I love taking them on almost as much as one of my favorite tv characters. If you know Barney Stinson, his signature line is “Challenge Accepted”. That phrase is a long-standing joke at home with Jenny and I, but it really sums up this job I love. Just like Barney, I’ve never been one to shy away from the hard stuff. I will dig in to do the job and pretty much tell it like it is.

I cherish this event every year as it is an opportunity to truly share the State of the City. What specifically are we doing and what does the future hold? I will touch on highlights and successes, and I also see it as my responsibility to share with you the hard work to be done.

This means I’m going to spend some of our time together talking about the opportunities and challenges I see. But more importantly, the ways we are addressing them and advocating for all of you as we continue to live, work, and raise a family in the greatest City in Idaho. With that, here is what you need to know about the State of the City.

Meridian continues to deliver the high-quality services our residents and businesses expect. With more than 600 employees, our team operates by the CARE values — Customer Service, Accountability, Respect, and Excellence — delivering what we call “The Meridian Way.”

Whether it’s a 911 response, a park reservation, water from the tap, or navigating city services, our team does it with professionalism, speed, and heart. Why? Because they aren’t just services to us, they’re proof of our city striving to be, and remain, the best city in Idaho.

We continue to lead with our best practices. We save before we spend, have no debt, and use hook-up and impact fees as a way for growth to help pay for growth. That’s at least true for our capital investments like the water and sewer infrastructure, new parks, police and fire facilities, and some rather large fire trucks that you see on the road.

Meridian’s business community is thriving. With over 900 Chamber members and low unemployment, more residents are living and working in Meridian than ever. We truly are built for business and designed for living.

The educational outcomes from the West Ada School District and others are exceptional. From overall student success in the classroom to dual degrees with our partners in higher education, and a true commitment to career technical education, graduates are ready to succeed in their future endeavors.

We live in an amazing community that is focused on building a future of opportunity.



Today, the State of the City is stable. We are firmly fixed on ensuring public safety, enhancing the quality of life, protecting taxpayer resources and stimulating job growth.

Over the last year we have continued to make progress on one of the most important issues to our residents – transportation. You have heard me beat the drum about two items specifically, the Linder Road Overpass and the safety of Eagle Road.

Work on the overpass started in March and work for a variable speed corridor on Eagle should begin this fall to reduce the speed limit during times of congestion.

These projects are on key north/south corridors and will result in safer and more efficient travel for our businesses, residents and emergency service providers. And if lower speeds lead to fewer accidents on Eagle, that also means less calls for service from our police and fire which is less resource demand.

With an additional road to cross the interstate at Linder, that means less congestion on Ten Mile and Meridian Roads. Ultimately, the overpass gives another route for our public safety personnel, school buses, Republic Services trucks, and others as they go north and south in Meridian.

A simple look on Google maps shows that opening the overpass will about cut in half the travel time it takes for our Fire Department to respond to Peregrine Elementary. That is a big deal.

The overpass plans to open in mid-2027 along with another major project, the extension of Highway 16. Both of these projects will reduce traffic on Ten Mile and change how people move throughout the Valley.

With exits at Franklin, Ustick and Chinden, we will see access open up to major employment areas, service providers, and community gathering spots like schools.

And, while Ada County Highway District is very busy working on active projects across the city like Ustick near Black Cat and Ten Mile, south Meridian Road will also see capacity and safety improvements soon. Once again, our community will benefit from a STAR project on Meridian Road from Victory to Columbia that allows road expansions to be funded by new commercial development, getting roads built faster and cheaper for the community.

This will be the fourth project and third state highway in Meridian that will benefit from the law that was championed by now House Speaker Mike Moyle, and we are thankful for that tool.



We know road construction is frustrating to navigate, and while we are all excited for all the work to be done, the extra time today is well worth the outcomes as they become fully operational once the barriers are removed.

But what about our needs in 5 or 10 years? How about 25? Or even 50 years? As the center of the Treasure Valley, all roads go through us.

For Meridian to stay premier, we must be working to solve the large planning needs of the community. That means working every day in partnership with our transportation agencies to identify, plan, and complete the major road networks needed in our community.

It's no doubt that projects like Highway 16, and the future lane to be added to I-84 between Meridian and Eagle roads will help us meet the next generation's needs. But we must stay focused on turning large-scale transportation challenges into reality that can support everyone from Mountain Home to Ontario.

Working with groups like Keep Idaho Moving, ITD and others, we have to keep advancing solutions like a southern beltway for I-84 or a passenger rail system. Projects like these will reduce the congestion we experience on I-84 which also spills over onto our local roads.

If passenger rail is ever to be a reality, it starts with community partners making a decision on a route to pursue. Then we need an adequate funding source for rail service and other transit needs, just like we do for our roads.

While these are state decisions, unless we want to be bogged down by semi-trucks traveling from Salt Lake to Seattle, we need to advance solutions now. I'll continue advocating alongside our business community for big-picture results that serve Meridian and our entire Valley for years to come. Together we have a powerful voice.

And how is our business community doing? Well, if we judge by ribbon cuttings and Chamber memberships, then the answer is "*off the hook*". Let's take a look.

[\[VIDEO\]](#)

More and more businesses continue to recognize the energy is in Meridian with our business-friendly climate, ease of access, efficient processes and a supportive community. Yes, growth has impacts. But it also has opportunities. Opportunities for residents to have access to great amenities and shopping, and also for employment closer to home as businesses thrive.

According to the U.S. Census, we have seen measurable economic progress over the last 20 years with an increase in the percentage of both population growth and of local jobs



filled by residents. In fact, we rank first out of the more than 25 compared cities that continues to see a positive trend.

We have also seen jobs grow during this same time to achieve this reality. We already have more jobs in Meridian than people to work all of those jobs. Well, we continue to see more and more family wage jobs available that are allowing residents to live and to work in Meridian. This has been part of the City's efforts to bring a higher quality of life to its residents.

Drilling down, if we look at 2024, we saw over 1,800 new jobs created by hundreds of new businesses. The average wage in Meridian grew to over \$58,000, a nearly 5 percent increase. More and more companies want to be in Meridian. Within the last year or so, we have seen businesses of all sizes establish their presence in Meridian such as Okland Construction, Ardurra, Tesla and, once again, a Fast Eddy's now calls Meridian home - just to name a few.

And what happens when they get here? Well, let's look back on JST who does clean manufacturing. JST came to Meridian in 2021 from multiple locations in the Treasure Valley. At the time, they had 71 jobs and planned to grow to 121 jobs over 5 years. Today, JST continues to be a success story. Their revenue has grown by 43% and now they employ over 200 employees. And the success of businesses like JST has also created opportunities for other Meridian vendors and contractors. This creates a positive economic impact for our community.

Our economy continues to grow in several sectors. We also know that if we want to ensure long-term economic success as a city, region and state, then we need to be focused on meeting the healthcare needs of our community. Without access to physicians, nurses, and other caregivers, our region will stop thriving quicker than a paddle down the north fork of the Payette in spring. People need access to healthcare.

That is why I am committed to making Meridian the medical epicenter of Idaho. I am steadfast on that vision because the need is real and growing, but more importantly the opportunity exists.

Recently, Grand Canyon University opened up a nursing program in Meridian. This isn't just about their growth, this is about providing our community with better care, more educational opportunities, and family wage jobs. Together, we can build a Meridian that is not just a place to live, but one where people come for the best healthcare because we have the resources.



Last fall, the City approved Idaho State University's initial expansion efforts for their new campus on Central Drive. Once this campus gets up and running, it will dramatically change the access to those who want a healthcare-related career. This is part of the vision.

Ultimately, these projects are in support of the true need. We need more students educated in healthcare in Idaho, so they can learn and practice here, especially doctors. Idaho ranks 50 out of 50 nationally when it comes to the number of physicians compared to population according to the Idaho Medical Association. To keep our economy and community thriving, we have to improve this.

This spring, I wrote an op-ed asking the State of Idaho to focus on educating doctors. I shared a story of Dr. E. Victor Simison, my grandfather. Dr. Simison lived in Pocatello and had a distinguished medical career as a surgeon. I recently visited with former patients of his who told me they would drive from Boise to Pocatello as he was a leader in his field of practice.

As part of his work, he also served in the state as President of the Idaho State Medical Association and several other roles. In 1968, he was asked by then ISU President Bud Davis to be the first Dean of the College of Medical Arts. This is now known as the Kasiska College of Health Professions at ISU.

Part of what he worked on in that role was looking to Utah to help train future doctors in Idaho. If you followed the legislature this session, this concept might sound familiar – 50 years later.

One part of the solution to our challenge is right here in Meridian with ICOM. The owners of ICOM have presented the state with the opportunity to purchase the medical school, which the state is currently examining. Making this investment would put Idaho in a positive position to better ensure we have enough doctors to meet the healthcare needs of residents.

While he was clearly years ahead of his time, I'm sure my grandfather never imagined that someday ISU would have, let alone be expanding, their campus in Meridian, or that Idaho had an opportunity to have its own medical school. Today, I carry his vision forward and know that we can and MUST do better, and Meridian can lead the way.

Beyond healthcare, partnerships are thriving. The Meridian Library District expanded services as they opened their newest branch at Pinnacle in south Meridian. It is a beautiful facility and serves as an important gathering spot for families. I want to say thank you to the Board for your hard work to make this happen. This new branch also helps to provide access for services that will be needed when renovations take place at the Cherry Lane branch.



I also want to congratulate Jeff Kohler and Garrett Castle on their election to serve as MLD trustees! The library district has been a vital service provider in Meridian to help families raise their children in Meridian, and we look forward to your service to continue the success.

Most importantly, thank you to the residents of Meridian for supporting our local library system. It seems like every year we are asking you to support essential functions like these. You have responded with a resounding yes to invest in our community and its leadership who are forward-looking and committed to delivering services.

We have great partnerships with the agencies that serve Meridian. And while many have their facilities here, one key service provider has facilities that snake throughout the Valley so they can deliver a critical need to many of our homes – water.

Recently, I had a chance to tour where the irrigation water that serves much of Meridian gets pulled out of the Boise River by the Nampa Meridian Irrigation District. It is an impressive system and provides irrigation water for the lawns in most of our Meridian subdivisions.

I was excited to learn about its 100 year history and their upcoming project to create a more efficient headworks. This project will reduce the need for manual operations in the river and better serve users for another 100 years. We will continue to work with them to ensure water, which is the life blood of the Valley and Meridian, is efficiently delivered to users.

While the City does not manage the surface water irrigation, we do manage the system for our drinking water which comes from deep, abundant aquifers.

The groundwater supply for Meridian is stable and plentiful. Protecting this resource from contaminants continues to be a priority for Meridian. Our team is engaged with other local drinking water providers and the Department of Water Resources as we work to expand enhanced drilling standards to keep your water supply clean and protected.

You have also heard me talk about another of our partners, the Western Ada Recreation District. The City and WARD have been working to find the most effective way to provide services to the community. This effort led to WARD transferring ownership of the Meridian Swimming Pool and other property to the City, as well as the City resuming operations of an updated Lakeview Golf Course.

This was a lot of work over the last few years, and during this transition WARD dramatically reduced the amount of property tax they collected for these assets. I think they collected \$.57 cents from Jenny and I for this tax year.



WARD Chairman Shaun Wardle worked with representatives from District 21 during this last legislative session to create a simple mechanism for the patrons to decide whether to close down a taxing district. WARD has a meeting scheduled next month to discuss this, and I hope to see the question for the voters on the November election ballot.

This is a great example of collaboration, and I applaud the work of all involved – especially our Parks and Recreation team who have taken on these extra duties, finding the most cost-effective way to provide these services to the community and a way to fully remove this separate property tax burden.

And while we strive for a property taxing district to close, we hope a special purpose district opens. I wanted to give you an update on the Chamber's effort to establish an auditorium district in Meridian.

Auditorium districts are funded by fees paid by people who stay at hotels in a district, not from property taxes on people who live in the district. Why does it matter? Because it can provide space needed in Meridian.

I'm sure that many had to drive into Boise to go to a graduation ceremony this past month. This Auditorium District is envisioned to create space where kids can graduate in Meridian, because that is what we expect.

It fills a real and growing need to have a place where milestones are celebrated, competitions occur, and performances happen — right here at home. And beyond that, it boosts our local economy, supports hospitality and tourism, and positions Meridian as a true destination city.

Work continues to get this on the ballot for May 2026. If you live in the area and haven't signed the petition, I encourage you to do so.

We are making stable progress on our priorities and those of our partners. Yet we also find ourselves at the crossroads of our future along with many other Idaho communities.

Meridian has plans about where we are going and how we are going to get there. But with the Idaho Legislature changing laws every year, it becomes less clear how we are able to continue to meet community expectations in our services as we grow, or if the unexpected happens.

Two months ago, I stood right here in this room before our City employees. I shared with them the realities many Idaho cities are facing. Expenses are up. Things like software,



health and property insurance, retirement costs, and so much more. Have you heard of the reinsurance market? Well, it's a thing and it is impacting most all Idaho cities.

At the same time, revenues are flat from sales and liquor taxes. Law enforcement fines can go uncollected. Building permit revenue is declining. And legislative changes such as House Bill 389 have reduced the amount of revenue the City receives from new growth. Revenue that is used to pay for ongoing expenses like new police officers and firefighters to the tune of about \$1.8 million annually.

We have been taking steps to address these issues where possible with my direction of reducing or holding our spending flat on discretionary expenses over the last several years. Yet expenses continue to grow, and the revenues aren't able to keep up.

Two weeks ago, City Council received my budget request for Fiscal Year 2026. It is a budget that reflects the reality of the challenges we are facing. It is lean. Despite the fact that Meridian grew by more than 4,500 people last year, it does not include any new police officers, firefighters, parks personnel or administrative support staff as we are focused on staying in our means while also taking care of our current employees.

This budget does include funding for the construction of a new community center which has been a priority since my first term. We finally found a place that made sense when the City purchased land adjacent to Settlers Park. Here, we also plan to co-locate our Fire Safety Center as part of the project. The design of the next phase of our Public Safety Training Center is also included in the budget. All of these projects that are "things" are funded with one-time money from impact fees paid by new homes and commercial buildings.

There are several water and sewer projects in the budget that are funded by the fees people pay to hook-up their new homes and businesses. There are three new positions in the Enterprise fund where rates have planned for the utility needs. This allows Public Works to keep up with growth - more accounts, more water and sewer lines, and the need for 24-hour operations at our Wastewater Treatment Plant.

We are also striving to take care of our current employees, and the budget does include a request to take the 3% increase to our property taxes as allowed by law. This is the cost of doing business and necessary to pay for increased costs for personnel and operations. Our costs, like your costs, continue to rise.

Last year, I told you that the rising cost of doing business is what keeps me up at night, and that hasn't changed. What has changed is the pressure. I'm still fighting to make sure growth pays for growth, because if we don't keep up, we fall behind.



We must have the revenue to match our need to have fair, competitive wages for the employees who keep this city running, and to fund the additional staff and services for our growing population. This isn't just about dollars and cents — it's about keeping Meridian strong, responsive, and prepared for the future.

With our long-term needs – especially in public safety – we need to be focused on how we fully fund the unique needs of our Police Department, Fire Department and prosecution services. This is our greatest challenge.

Public Safety is expensive. A new ladder truck costs about \$1.8 million today. Kevlar vests, police cars and fire turnouts have a limited lifespan. Radios and computers need to be updated and replaced.

New technology is becoming a larger part of the work every day. From body cam footage to license plate readers to drones, technology produces results that benefit us all but comes at a cost.

Yet, it is all about people. The integrity and character of our police and firefighters is top-notch. That is what Meridian has always been about. We work to hire the best and we are selective in that to ensure we are building and keeping the Meridian we love.

[\[VIDEO\]](#)

Now, there are some pretty big differences between our police officers and our firefighters. It starts right when we post a job opening. The amount of people who apply and are qualified for open positions is dramatically different between the two. And yet, both continue to be the best of the best!

Many who apply to the Meridian Police Department aren't able to be considered for a variety of reasons. It's almost like a game of Survivor as individuals go through the process for this demanding job, and only a few are able to move forward. While over in fire, we had over 750 applicants for 18 open slots two academies ago. That is a national trend.

After the initial investment of finding candidates, the amount of training they do in order to perform their duties is immense. It starts with academies, continues to field training, and then, over time, can progress to very specialized skills learned locally or nationally. Taken all together, this is a huge investment made by the community for every person who puts on a police uniform or a set of fire turnouts.

And then what happens? Another agency will offer more money because of the training we helped them achieve. Or maybe candidates didn't look at Meridian in the first place due to the pay structure or benefits offered by a competitor.



When it comes to police, here is what I can tell you. Our wages are competitive, and we have made steps to reduce some discrepancies that existed compared to other agencies. But our benefits and take-home salaries fall behind Boise. And people know that both in the Department and outside of the Department.

If we are going to attract the best talent from the start and retain the people who we have made huge investments in with the Meridian Police Department we need to increase the wages to our sworn officers.

Separately, in 2023, Meridian accepted a SAFER Grant from the Department of Homeland Security that funded 18 additional firefighters for three years. This grant was to put four firefighters on each engine in Meridian. It's an enhanced service to put more people on emergency scenes at once and improve the safety of our firefighters and our community. This grant pays for these individuals until 2027. Then, it is incumbent on the City to fund the roughly \$3.2 million ongoing cost.

We also have relied on and paid Boise to provide our prosecution services for the last couple of decades. As our cases have grown and the challenges of policing have changed, now is the time to bring this service in house to ensure we have the best for our future and that those doing the work are accountable to the residents of Meridian. Having people 100% dedicated to Meridan, working with our officers, and ensuring the crimes our officers are enforcing are being prosecuted is an important step as our community grows.

Last year I requested City Council take foregone to put us on a path of paying for the additional firefighting capacity. They approved that request as part of the budget which was about \$500,000 towards the needed \$3.2 million. At that rate, and with the current limited funding increases we are receiving, fully funding the firefighter, police, and prosecution needs isn't practical without taking a major step forward.

So, while I have not included a request for foregone in this year's budget, I am asking the City Council to place a levy increase on the ballot this November asking you, the residents of Meridian, to fully fund these public safety needs in Fiscal Year 2027.

The people of Meridian have long supported the needs of our police and fire departments.

Now, because adding the firefighters and prosecution is increasing our services, and increasing the pay of our police officers would put us above the salary level of our competitors, these are questions for you the residents of Meridian to consider.

Do you want to help ensure we can recruit and retain the best police officers to serve and protect?



Do you want to have a prosecution team that is committed to prosecuting the crimes our police department is enforcing?

Do you want to have more firefighters on each shift to respond to fires and healthcare emergencies?

This is a big challenge and I believe these are necessary steps to meet the public safety service expectations of our community without sacrificing our quality of life. I also believe this is the right way to seek funding for these asks. They are questions for our community, and you will have opportunity to weigh in as the public discussions roll out.

And how do I know these are the right needs for Meridian? Because our community expects the best. Just look back at our surveys. Over 90 percent of the community rank public safety as a high priority. We know that. And, we see the success of our teams. For instance, after making investments in new stations, personnel, and technology like Opticom, we have seen a steady reduction in our response times.

In fact, since we were able to get the Opticom system upgraded at the start of the year, we have seen a reduction in travel time of 23 seconds over the last few months. If you don't think 23 seconds makes that much of a difference, think about you or your family facing any possible emergency and start counting.

That was only five seconds. 23 is a big improvement.

And our firefighters are reporting that the system is working well as traffic is moving in front of them as signals open ahead of our emergency response vehicles.

This is a great start and we will continue to work on our response times.

We continue to see high calls for service in the Police Department, yet the crime rate in Meridian continues to go down. In fact, we were once again recognized as one of the safest cities in Idaho based on based on FBI crime data according to Safewise.

Meridian truly shines on safety. Despite being nearly three times larger than the next city on the list, our per capita crime is remarkably low — this is a testament to our track record of responding to the calls we get, taking care of the little things, before they become big things.

In 2024, total offenses and group A per capita crime rates decreased and that downward trend has continued into the first quarter of 2025. Simply put: Meridian is growing, and our Police are still doing a great job keeping our community safe.



This doesn't happen by chance. This is a combination of investment in crime prevention, focused teams that put the right resources in the right places, utilizing technology, strong agency and community partnerships, and exceptional leadership.

Three years ago, I stood before you and announced the investment of adding a dedicated team of School Resource Officers into our elementary schools. Well, next month the Meridian SRO team will be awarded the Model Agency Award by the National Association of School Resource Officers.

This award recognizes agencies for their creative and innovative approach to school-based policing. Whether it is the work they are doing in our elementary schools, leading the Treasure Valley Youth Safety Summit or the recently created Student Standout Program, our SRO's are committed to the health, well-being and success of our students.

The Student Standout Program is a way for our SRO's to celebrate students each month. The program recognizes students who distinguish themselves through acts of kindness, maintain a positive attitude, serve as role models, and contribute to the school environment and the community,

And the SROs couldn't do this without the support and collaboration of the West Ada School District team – a team which is also achieving results.

West Ada is getting it done in academics. They are the leader in kindergarten through third grade literacy as well as the highest ranked district in Math, English Language Arts, and Science based on the Idaho Standards Achievement Test.

They are also focused on having a robust CTE program and are actively pursuing expanded access to some of the most in-demand programs, such as construction and welding. You may have seen the news from WASD that they have found a building on Locust Grove Road for purchase through funding from the State thanks to House Bill 521. They also have a plan for renovation and anticipate the facility opening in fall of 2026. More details will follow, I am sure!

Speaking of kids, I am so thankful for the opportunity to support some deserving seniors with the Meridian Youth Scholarship awards. I appreciate the continued partnership with the Chamber and this event to provide the funding.

Here are this year's City scholarship winners.

[\[VIDEO\]](#)



Congratulations to this year's winners and thank you to the sponsors of this event who helped make these scholarships happen.

We also want to recognize another group of standout students, the Owyhee Storm who earned top honors as the first-ever winners of the Meridian Watertower Championship.

This new citywide competition celebrates excellence across athletics, academics, and the arts among Meridian's four 6A high schools. In May, we presented the Storm with a championship banner and the students enjoyed the victory celebration with gelato ice cream. Banners are up on Main Street for the community to enjoy during Dairy Days, and we will present the trophy this fall. Congratulations again to the Storm and thank you to Cap Ed Credit Union for powering this competition!

With funding from the State for school facilities, WASD is also committed to addressing some capacity issues impacting our elementary schools in both north and south Meridian. I encourage West Ada to prioritize the funding to meet the growing demands in these areas and serve the next generation of residents.

This brings me to this year's Legacy Award. You know, I thought long and hard about this year's award as I wanted to remain steadfast in having a recipient that I felt was making a difference today for future generations.

Someone who kept coming to the top of my mind over and over set the example of selflessness in a vision that will live on in our community. This year's award is bittersweet to say the least, and yet remains one of the highlights of my time as Mayor. We have all seen people give their time and talents to others. We have all seen so many deserving individuals see a vision and set about achieving those goals.

And yet, in all my time, I have never come across someone so determined to achieve their vision for others to enjoy, even when they knew they may never see it completed.

This year's Legacy Award is dedicated to Eva Plimmer.

For those that may not know her, Eva was diagnosed with an inoperable tumor in her brainstem at ten years old in 2024, and passed away earlier this year. She had a strong belief in faith. She had a joy for gatherings and celebrations where people could come together. That is why her wish of the Ninja Warrior playground at Discovery Park is a true Meridian Legacy for years to come.

Please join me in welcoming Eva's parents, Shawn and Jodi, to accept the award on her behalf.



Thank you Shawn and Jodi again for raising such an exceptional young lady who has made a difference in the lives of so many.

As we wrap up, it has been said that true stability results when order and disorder are in balance. When the unexpected happens, and it will, the unexpected is addressed so balance is restored. This is the everyday work and successes of Team Meridian and the challenge of the job I love.

As we look to the future, we will see the need for more transportation projects, rising costs, and shrinking revenue. We will also see growing healthcare needs, public safety challenges, legislative changes, and more. When that happens, I will say “Challenge Accepted”.

Team Meridian shows up at all hours of the day. We get the job done, and then move on to the next challenge. We solve problems when unexpected moments happen, all while ensuring the future of our community for those who call Meridian home.

We aren’t flashy. We are working behind the scenes to encourage the big things and helping to shape the intent and framework. Local government is supposed to be that way. In Meridian, we continue to stay focused on core issues, so you don’t have to.

Sometimes we will have to work with our partners. Sometimes we will look internally to find ways to get it done a better, faster way. And, sometimes that means taking a plan to the public and asking you “How important is this to you?”

If we want premier services as a City, Valley and State, we must make investments – investments in our kids, investments in businesses, investments in our infrastructure, and most importantly investments in our people. Now is the time for Meridian to invest. I ask the public to join us as we look to the future. Take on this next challenge and see it as an opportunity to help ensure Meridian continues to be the premier place to live, work and raise a family.

Thank you Meridian and God bless.