



MERIDIAN CHARTER TOWNSHIP COMPLETE GUIDE TO DEVELOPMENT



JULY 2023



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KEY TOWNSHIP ADMINISTRATIVE CONTACTS

Township Manager

Tim Schmitt- Interim Township Manager schmitt@meridian.mi.us 517.853.4254

Community Planning & Development Department

Tim Schmitt- Planning Director schmitt@meridian.mi.us 517.853.4506

Brian Shorkey- Senior Planner shorkey@meridian.mi.us 517.853.4576

Keith Chapman- Assistant Planner chapman@meridian.mi.us 517.853.4564

Building Division

John Heckaman- Chief Building Official heckaman@meridian.mi.us 517.853.4516

Economic Development Department

Amber Clark- Economic Dvlpt. Director clark@meridian.mi.us 517.853.4568

Department of Public Works

Dan Opsommer- Asst. Twp. Manager opsommer@meridian.mi.us 517.853.4450

Younes Ishraidi- Chief Engineer ishraidi@meridian.mi.us 517.853.4460

Assessing Department

Ashley Winstead- Township Assessor winstead@meridian.mi.us 517.853.4404

Fire Department

Tavis Millerov- Fire Marshal millerov@meridian.mi.us 517.853.4720

DEVELOPMENT BOARDS & COMMISSIONS

BELOW ARE THE AUTHORITIES/ADVISORY BOARDS RELATED TO DEVELOPMENT IN
MERIDIAN TOWNSHIP:

- **MERIDIAN TOWNSHIP BOARD**

Meets twice a month, typically on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday at 6:00 pm

Staff liaison: *Interim Township Manager Tim Schmitt* schmitt@meridian.mi.us
517.853.4254

- **PLANNING COMMISSION**

Meets twice a month, typically on the 2nd and 4th Monday at 6:30 pm

Staff liaison: *Senior Planner Staff Brian Shorkey* shorkey@meridian.mi.us
517.853.4576

- **BROWNFIELD REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**

Meets once a month, typically on the 2nd Thursday at 8:00 am

Staff liaison: *Economic Dvlp Director Amber Clark* clark@meridian.mi.us
517.853.4568

- **DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**

Meets once a month, typically on the 1st Monday at 7:30 am

Staff liaison: *Economic Dvlpt Director Amber Clark* clark@meridian.mi.us
517.853.4568

- **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**

Meets once a month, typically on the 1st Thursday at 7:30 am

Staff liaison: *Economic Dvlpt Director Amber Clark* clark@meridian.mi.us
517.853.4568

- **ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS**

Meets once a month, typically on the 3rd Wednesday at 7:00 pm

Staff liaison: *Assistant Planner Keith Chapman* chapman@meridian.mi.us
517.853.4564

OUTSIDE AGENCY APPROVALS

A PROPOSED PROJECT IN OUR TOWNSHIP MAY REQUIRE APPROVAL(S) FROM AN OUTSIDE AGENCY. SEE BELOW FOR APPLICABLE CONTACTS.

INGHAM COUNTY DEPARTMENTS

- **Ingham County Drain Office** provides for the construction, maintenance, and improvement of County public drain systems.
Drain Commissioner: Patrick E. Lindemann
Contact: 517.676.8395 or drainoffice@ingham.org.
- **Ingham County Health Department** provides state-level health standards to prevent disease and ensure the safety of the public in relationship with public/private services. This includes business license approvals:
Health Officer: Adenike Shoyinka Deputy Health Officer: Anne Barna
Contact: 517.887.4311
- **Ingham County Road Department** provides for the maintenance of roads and bridges in Ingham County. A majority of the roads in Meridian Township are the responsibility of Ingham County. Approvals for road improvements, changes, design standards, etc., must come from this department.
Contact: 517.676.9722 [Please see Ingham County Policies](#) and [Please see Ingham County Permits](#) for specifics on these approvals.

MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (MDOT)

- MDOT maintains responsibility for the maintenance of Grand River Avenue (M-43) and Saginaw Highway (M-78) in Meridian Township. Approvals for road improvements, changes, etc., must come from this department.
Contact: Joe Rios (Construction Permits) 517.241.2103. Please see [MDOT Permit Contacts](#).

OUTSIDE AGENCY APPROVALS

A PROPOSED PROJECT IN OUR TOWNSHIP MAY REQUIRE APPROVAL(S) FROM AN OUTSIDE AGENCY. SEE BELOW FOR APPLICABLE CONTACTS.

UTILITY PROVIDERS

- Consumers Energy provides energy services for gas and electric power at residential and commercial properties for almost all properties of Meridian Township.
Contact Business Service Team: 888.450.9143
Monday - Friday: 7:00 am- 6:00 pm Saturday 8:00 am- 2:00 pm
- The Lansing Board of Water & Light provides energy services for water and electric power for a limited number of residential and commercial properties. For those with Lansing BWL service, contact customer service: 517.702.6006. Please see BWL Customer Guide for further information.
- Meridian Township Department of Public Works provides clean water & sanitary sewer for residential and commercial properties in the Township.
Contact: dpw@meridian.mi.us or 517.853.4440

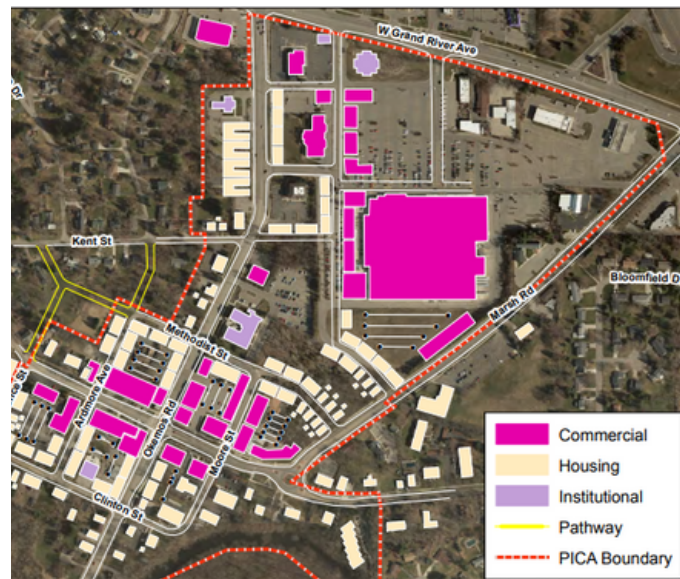
ENVIRONMENT, GREAT LAKES, AND ENERGY (EGLE)

- The Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy provide regulatory protection for Michigan's environment. EGLE may require additional permitting or approval based on any necessary site work for a project.
Contact Permit Coordinator: 517.281.2615
Please see EGLE's regulatory permit assistance page for more information.

POTENTIAL INTENSITY CHANGE AREA (PICA)

Potential Intensity Change Area or PICA: A geographically designated area within Meridian Township with an active overlay zoning allowance for additional density and height for a project concept. The allowance can support the redevelopment of our core areas to enhance walkability, housing, amenities, traffic, and commercial redevelopment. Developers are encouraged to speak with the Economic and Community Planning Directors prior to selecting a project site to gain access to the incentives created to support redevelopment.

The Okemos PICA includes the entire Downtown Development Authority district. This area begins south of Grand River Avenue to Okemos Road on the western border and Marsh Road on the eastern border. This PICA offers two layers of incentives for redevelopment. The Downtown Development Authority (DDA) can support an eligible development project through the use of the Tax Increment Financing plan. TIF requests may be submitted to the Downtown Development Authority, requesting the use of the funding mechanism for eligible expenses. A development project in this location could also be supported by the Meridian Redevelopment Fund. This fund, created by Meridian Township supports the redevelopment of this area. Developers should consider this location as a prime opportunity for development with matching incentives to make the concept a reality.

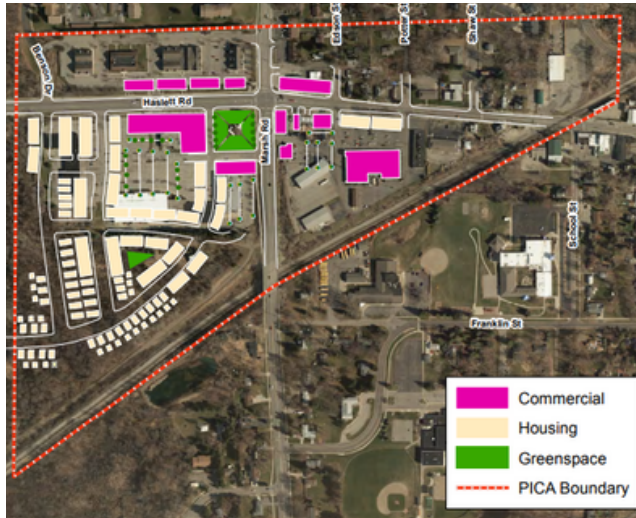


Map of the Okemos PICA

In addition as a Redevelopment Ready Certified Community (RRC) with the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC), development in this area may be eligible for:

- Match On Main Incentive
- Community Revitalization and Placemaking Grant (MCRP)
- Revitalization and Placemaking (RAP)

POTENTIAL INTENSITY CHANGE AREA (PICA)



Map of the Haslett PICA

The Haslett PICA is the high-density commercial intersection of Marsh and Haslett Road in the northeast corner of Meridian Township. Following Haslett Road east to the CN railroad line and south to the Interurban Trail, the Haslett PICA includes the commercial shopping areas and offices along Haslett Road. 30+ acres are currently under development and purchase option. We anticipate additional updates along Marsh Road to enhance the Haslett village area. Developers are encouraged to consider the possibility of dense development in this location when considering a new project in Meridian Township. Reimbursement through the Meridian Redevelopment Fund for eligible activities may be available for use.

The Carriage Hills PICA is the high-density commercial intersection of Lake Lansing Road and Hagadorn Road in Meridian Township. Following Lake Lansing Road west to the intersection of Hagadorn Road north. The Carriage Hills PICA includes commercial shopping areas and offices along Lake Lansing Road. Developers are encouraged to consider the possibility of dense mixed-use development in this location when considering a new project in Meridian Township.



Map of the Carriage Hills PICA

Set up a meeting with the Economic Development Director to get an overview of the available incentives for development in either PICA. Meetings can be coordinated with the development staff to hear the proposal and receive comments from all departments associated. Contact the Economic Development Director for more information: 517.853.4568.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVES

Meridian Township will work with a development team to identify eligible resources available to them for development. The Economic Development Department works with internal & external groups and departments to gain the necessary approvals to financially support a development project.

Brownfield Redevelopment Tax Increment Financing

Brownfield Redevelopment Tax Increment Financing provides the ability to utilize the estimated value increase of the land as the funding source to clean up contaminated sites. "Brownfield" is a term used to describe land that is contaminated and blighted. This fund specifically supports the clean-up of sites that are in this condition to allow for demolition, asbestos abatement, and other related activities in support of a new project.

Commercial Rehabilitation Exemption

Commercial Rehabilitation Act affords a tax incentive for the rehabilitation of commercial property for the primary purpose and use of commercial businesses or multi-family residential facilities. Specific qualifications are necessary in order for a 1-10 year exemption to be applied. With approval from the Municipality, the property taxes are based on the previous year's taxable value. The taxable value is frozen for the duration of the approved certificate. Applications are approved by the local unit of government and are subject to review at the State level by the State Tax Commission.

Downtown Development Authority Tax Increment Financing

The creation and implementation of a Tax Increment Financing plan is a required element of an established DDA. The plan will describe the costs, location, and resources for the implementation of public improvements that are projected to take place in the district. A developer may be reimbursed over a designated period of time as related to the length of the TIF plan. Approvals are subject to the Downtown Development Authority and the local unit of government.

Potential Intensity Change Area

Potential Intensity Change Area or PICA: A geographically designated area within Meridian Township with an active overlay zoning allowance for additional density and height for a project concept. The allowance can support the redevelopment of our core areas to enhance walkability, housing, amenities, traffic, and commercial redevelopment. Developers are encouraged to speak with the Economic and Community Planning Directors prior to selecting a project site, to gain access to the incentive. Please **see PICA** for more information.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVES

Other State or Federal departments may offer additional incentives that your project may be eligible to receive. Meridian Township maintains strong relationships with several agencies and is happy to assist with funding resources for development. The Economic Development Department works with several entities to support redevelopment in our community. Select their name and follow the links to access these programs.

[Michigan Economic Development Corporation](#)



**MICHIGAN ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**

Through a variety of programs and resources, Michigan offers personalized assistance for businesses, starting, relocating, or expanding operations in Michigan. In addition, Michigan ranks among the top 10 states for major new and expanded facilities due to a fair and efficient 6% corporate income tax and \$500 million in annual business savings through the elimination of industrial personal property tax. This is why Michigan is the place to do business.

[Lansing Economic Area Partnership](#)



Business incentives are available to new, expanding, and relocating companies in a wide variety of categories. The LEAP team has a wealth of experience and knowledge of business benefits and savings at every level. LEAP will work with investors, developers, and business owners to connect you to the incentives that best match your needs.

[Small Business Association of Michigan SBAM](#)



SBAM understands that while every business is different, there are common needs. Our tools help you attract and retain talent, manage employee benefit programs, offer discounts on the things you're already buying, and help you stay compliant. Our work at the Capitol helps ensure Michigan is a great place to own and operate a small business. As a part of a membership to the [Meridian Area Business Association](#), your SBAM membership is free! Join MABA today for \$150 and receive two memberships in one!

REZONING PROCESS

The Process To Formally Allow A Use That Previously Was Not Allowed On The Designated Parcel(s)

- 1** A pre-application meeting is held to discuss if the project meets the parameters of zoning, and determine if other approval processes are required. To schedule a meeting, reach out to the **Planning Department staff**.
- 2** **Planning Department staff** will notify the developer that the project will need to be rezoned in order to allow the proposed concept. A complete application to rezone the property should be submitted to the Community Development Department. Complete Rezoning Applications and Site Plans can be emailed to: PlanningDepartment@meridian.mi.us
- 3** **Planning Department staff** of the Community Planning Department will review the application materials for completeness and verify receipt of the Planning Division Fee Schedule.
- 4** Once a complete application is reviewed, a Public Hearing is scheduled with the Planning Commission. Please see the Planning Commission Application Submission Schedule
- 5** At a meeting following the Public Hearing, the Planning Commission will receive the application, and recommend the application for approval or deny the Rezoning with recommendation to the Township Board. Under the state, law the Planning Commission can not make conditions for the rezoning only the applicant can provide conditions with their application.
- 6** Once a recommendation is received from the Planning Commission, the matter is scheduled to be placed on the Township Board agenda.
- 7** After their initial review, the Township Board will make a final motion to approve or deny the Rezoning. The Township Board can not make conditions for the rezoning only the applicant can provide conditions as a part of their initial application.
- 8** If approved, **Planning Department staff** will submit a letter of approval stating all conditions of approval for future stages of development.

SPECIAL USE PERMIT PROCESS

The Process To Formally Allow A New Or Additional Use Of Designated Parcel(s)

- 1** A pre-application meeting is held to discuss if the project meets the parameters of the zoning district and determine if other approval processes are required. To schedule a meeting, reach out to the **Planning Department staff**.
- 2** **Planning Department staff** during the pre-application meeting will identify if the project requires a **Special Use Permit** or can proceed straight to the **Site Plan Review**.
- 3** Application for **Special Use Permit (SUP)** is submitted to the Community Development Department. You can find the [Special Use Application](#) here. Submit complete applications and Site Plans to: PlanningDepartment@meridian.mi.us
- 4** **Planning Department staff** will review the application materials for completeness and verify receipt of the [Planning Division Fee Schedule](#).
- 5** Once the complete application is reviewed, a Public Hearing is scheduled with the Planning Commission ([See Planning Commission Application Submission Schedule](#)).
- 6** At a meeting following the Public Hearing the Planning Commission will approve, approve with conditions or deny the SUP.
 - * (Some) SUP applications will require Township Board approval- in this case, the Planning Commission will make a recommendation and submit applications to the Township Board for Public Hearing. Staff will advise at the pre-application meeting if this is the case.
- 7** If approved, **Planning Department staff** will submit a letter of approval stating all conditions of approval for the following stages of development.

WETLAND DELINEATION/VERIFICATION PROCESS

Process To Inventory And Validate Existing Wetlands In The Township

- 1** A pre-application meeting is held to discuss if the proposed project meets the parameters of zoning and determine if other approval processes are required, such as a wetland delineation/verification. To schedule a meeting, reach out to the **Planning Department staff**.
- 2** A property owner or developer with the property owner's approval shall submit a Wetland Delineation/Verification Application and the associated fee to the Community Planning and Development Department. Applications can be submitted to: PlanningDepartment@meridian.mi.us
- 3** A complete application is submitted to the environmental consultant for field investigation. The applicant can choose to hire their own wetland consultant to conduct a wetland delineation, in which case the Township's wetland consultant would need to conduct a wetland verification. The applicant can use the Township's wetland consultant to conduct the wetland delineation, in which case verification would not be necessary.
- 4** The Township's environmental consultant conducts field investigations for wetland delineation/verification. Identification, flagging, or staking of the wetland boundaries in the field are completed. Wetland delineations are valid for a period of three (3) years.

WETLAND USE PERMIT PROCESS

Process For Approval, Appeal, and Issuance Of A Wetland Use Permit

- 1** A pre-application meeting is held to discuss if the proposed project meets the parameters of zoning and determine if other approval processes are required. To schedule a meeting, reach out to the **Planning Department staff**.
 - * A wetland delineation/verification must be conducted. See **Wetland Delineation/Verification Process**
- 2** Complete the form supplied by the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) made available by the Township along with other information as required by the Director of Community Planning and Development.
- 3** After the Community Planning Director confirms the completeness of the application, they will submit one copy of the application to **EGLE**. The application will be publicly published with dates and times for written comments.
- 4** The environmental consultant shall prepare and transmit a report with recommendations to the Community Planning Director, documenting the review of the request.
- 5** Depending on the project type, the review of the wetland use will also be done in conjunction with other planning approvals. Wetland use approvals shall be decided by the same entity that decides the related land development activity consistent with part 303 of the Resources and Environmental Protection Act.
- 6** After completing the review and holding one public hearing, if required, the Township Board or Planning Commission shall approve, approve with conditions or deny the application within 90 days after receipt of an application, in accordance with this division.
- 7** Written notice shall be sent to the applicant upon approval, approval with conditions, or denial of a wetland use permit by the Township Board or Planning Commission. The denial of a permit shall be accompanied by a written reason for denial. A permit approved by the Township Board or Planning Commission shall not be issued or effective until 10 calendar days following the date of the approval and compliance with § 22-159(c).

VARIANCE REQUEST & PROCESS

Process For Approval Of A Variance From The Township Code of Ordinances

The Zoning Board of Appeals serves as a quasi-judicial body which hears and determines matters relating to applications for variances of the zoning ordinance

The State of Michigan Zoning and Enabling Act requires requested variances to demonstrate a practical difficulty, which is defined as;

- Unique circumstances related to the property
- No adverse effect on the adjacent property
- The issue is not self-created
- Variance is necessary
- The request is not recurrent in nature

- 1** A pre-application meeting with members of the **Planning Department staff** is optional but, recommended. Planning staff will provide useful information related to the Zoning Board of Appeals process. [Locate the Variance Application here.](#)
- 2** A complete application is submitted to the **Planning Department staff** for review. Please see the [Planning Division Fee Schedule](#) for applicable fees.
- 3** A public hearing is scheduled with the Zoning Board of Appeals. Staff provides notice of public hearing to property owners located within 300 ft. of the project site. A legal ad is also posted 15 days prior to the public hearing.
- 4** Township staff will prepare a report related to the variance request and submit it in the meeting packet. The packet is submitted Friday prior to the public hearing.
- 5** At the public hearing, the Zoning Board of Appeals hears the proposal and any feedback from the public.
- 6** The Zoning Board of Appeals approves or denies the variance request. This is determined on the night of the public hearing.
- 7** The Community Planning Director will notify the applicant of the Zoning Board of Appeals' determination in writing.

SITE PLAN REVIEW (SPR) DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

FOR NEW BUILDINGS OR ADDITIONS

Township Planning staff recommends and welcomes pre-application meetings to assist with process time and approvals for projects. Please see the included steps below with the associated department contact to amplify your development experience.

1

A pre-application meeting is held to discuss if the project meets the parameters of zoning. Determine if other approval processes are required. To schedule a meeting, reach out to the **Planning Department staff**.

- ▲ If the property needs to be **REZONED**, please see the rezoning process.
- ▲ If the property/project needs a **VARIANCE**, please see the variance request process.
- ▲ If the property needs to utilize a **WETLAND**, please see the wetland use and delineation/verification process.
- ▲ If the property needs any other **SPECIAL USE**, designation please see the special use permit process.

2

Application for Site Plan Review (SPR) is submitted to the Community Development Department. You can access the application for [Site Plan Review](#) here. Complete applications and Site Plans can be emailed to PlanningDepartment@meridian.mi.us.

3

Planning Department Staff review the application materials for completeness and verify receipt of the [Planning Division Fee Schedule](#).

4

Once a complete application is received a public hearing is **scheduled with Planning Department staff**; notification is submitted to all adjacent property owners of the project site.

5

The Site Plan Review application is distributed by staff to the correlating Township departments for comments.

6

After the public hearing, the Site Plan Review application may be approved with conditions or comments will be sent to inform the applicant of outstanding items that need revision.

BUILDING PERMIT PROCESS

- 1** A Building Permit Application must be submitted to the **Building Division** in order to begin construction. Submit complete applications with associated fees to **Building Division - 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864**
- 2** The application should include the project name, address, property owner, contractor name, and project information. The application should accompany the associated application fee. Please see the Building Permit Fee Schedule to determine the appropriate application fee.
- 3** Upon receipt of a complete application, and application fee, the submitted plans will be reviewed by the **Building Division, Engineering Division, and Fire Department.**
- 4** If there are outstanding items based on department comments, the associated department staff will notify the applicant and await revised plans
- 5** Once all plans are reviewed and approved by the **Building Division, Engineering Division, and Fire Department**, a BUILDING PERMIT is issued. Note a BUILDING PERMIT will specify what can be built. It may say foundations, masonry, etc., which identifies what specific construction can occur.

When the items issued in the BUILDING PERMIT pass inspection, full construction can commence. Inspections will occur concurrently with construction as the elements are produced.

- A** BUILDING INSPECTIONS: Foundation, Footings, Rough Wall Frame, Insulation, and Final Building Inspection
- A** MECHANICAL INSPECTIONS: Heating and Cooling, Duct, Boilers, Refrigerators, Ventilation, Gas Piping, etc.
- A** PLUMBING INSPECTIONS: Sewers, Drains, Water Equipment, stacks vents, etc.

- 6** At the final BUILDING INSPECTION, all items will be reviewed, and upon a passing inspection, a certificate of occupancy will be issued. Note: a temporary certificate of occupancy or another occupancy permit may be used based on situations.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Special Thanks To The Following Contributors

Meridian Township Board

Patricia Herring Jackson	Township Supervisor
Kathy Sundland	Township Trustee
Marna Wilson	Township Trustee
Scott Hendrickson	Township Trustee
Courtney Wisinski	Township Trustee
Deborah Guthrie	Township Clerk
Phil Deschaine	Township Treasurer

Township Manager

Township Manager Frank Walsh
Deputy Township Manager Dan Opsommer

Community Planning Department

Director Tim Schmitt
Senior Planner Brian Shorkey
Assistant Planner Keith Chapman

Economic Development Department

Director Amber Clark





YOU ARE NOW OPEN FOR BUSINESS
THANK YOU FOR SELECTING MERIDIAN
TOWNSHIP

