



2024 TOP FIVE GOALS 6 Month Update

Enhance Public Safety

- 1. In an effort to bolster our neighborhood patrols and traffic enforcement, our police department will be diligent in their efforts to increase our current number of police officers from 31 to 42. With the increased number of service calls to the fire department, we will increase our budgeted staffing level from 34 to 36 full-time paramedic/firefighters. In addition, we will secure plans and funding to build new dorms at the Central Fire Station. The new dormitory will provide for gender equity as we increase the number of female paramedics.**

Township Board approval of the Public Safety Recruiting and Retention Program has proven to be extremely successful as the police department, once down to just 30 sworn officers in 2023, currently employs 39 sworn officers. Thus far, we have hired 8 Police Officers in 2024. Two of the newly hired officers were previously employed by the MTPD and decided to come back. Four of the newly hired officers were sponsored through the police academy using a state funded grant. One of the newly hired officers is a female. We have one additional recruit beginning his academy training and have three female candidates in the background process for sponsorship through the fall 2024 academy. Should all of the academy recruits complete their training, the department will be fully-staffed (42) by December 2024.



The Fire Department hired two firefighter/paramedics in January 2024, as a result of the authorized staffing increase of two additional positions. We received two resignations since the beginning of the year and are currently in the process of hiring two firefighters who are expected to begin working full time in July 2024. This will bring the department up to 36 full time firefighter/paramedics on staff.

The design services RFP for the Central Fire Station Dormitory addition was issued in January. After receiving multiple qualified bids, Hobbs + Black was selected as the design firm. Hobbs + Black are in the process of creating preliminary floor plans and compiling costs for this project. The current draft shows the addition of 7 bunk rooms, as well as, an additional bathroom, along with the potential for long needed storage space.



Community/Senior Center

- 2. In 2024, Meridian Township shall work in collaboration with professional and community resources, to determine the feasibility of a new multi-generational Community/Senior Center. The community's work shall focus on funding, location, timeline, citizen feedback and amenities. The Township will also seek additional funding from the state and federal community grant programs.**

The Meridian Senior Center currently exists at Chippewa Middle School. With the upcoming development of a new Chippewa Middle School, the existing building will be demolished. With this in mind, the Community/Senior Center Committee reviewed six possible locations for a new Community/Senior Center. Due to the fact that some of the location options had wetland issues and substantial tree removals, the Committee decided to go with rehabilitation of the former Younkers location.

The proposed plan is a multigenerational senior and community center. There is a demand for Parks and Recreation space in the winter as well as meeting room space for public use. The Parks and Recreation Department would be housed in the facility. The facility would include space for a senior center, meeting rooms/multipurpose room, two regulation size basketball courts, badminton courts, pickleball courts, volleyball, two exercise rooms, warming kitchen, lockers, changing rooms, vending area, and youth activities.

The Committee has held two sessions with the current Senior Center members on their needs, wants and ideas for the new facility. The Township is sending out a professionally designed survey this fall to a sample of residents. The survey will include questions regarding the Community/Senior Center.

The Committee is hosting two night meetings in mid-July, for the community to view enlarged prints of the Community/Senior Center and provide feedback.

The Township applied for a Fiscal Year 2025 Community Project Funding (CPF) grant from Congresswoman Elissa Slotkin's Office for the Community/Senior Center Project. The Township was shortlisted for one of Rep. Slotkin's 15 available grants. We currently project that we will receive \$750,000-\$2 million in funding when the Fiscal Year 2025 CPF grant awards are finalized sometime between late 2024 and June of 2025. Combined with the previous \$5 million of State dollars, we have made substantial progress on funding.

Citizen Outreach and Enhanced Citizen Communication

- 3. The Meridian Township Board believes there is nothing more important than effective and timely communication with our residents. In 2024, the Township Board and staff will focus on continuing our township-wide Listening Sessions, create the 2024 Citizen Survey & Prime Meridian Magazine, produce monthly Good Morning Meridian newscasts and semi-monthly updates from our communications team.**



The 2024 Listening Sessions, held in June, started with Staff mailing an invitation to every resident in the Township, inviting them to one of three evening sessions, held at the Town Hall Room in the Municipal Building. Over those three nights, 200+ residents shared their opinions and asked questions on a variety of topics. Each session was opened with updates from Staff and Trustees on four topics:

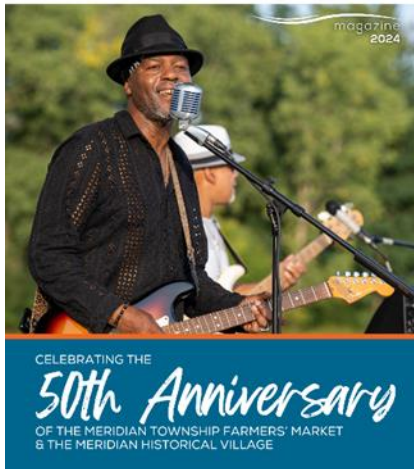
- Police and Public Safety related issues from Police Chief Grillo
- Road Construction updates from Deputy Township Manager Dan Opsommer
- Senior Community Center Conceptual Design from Township Trustee Marna Wilson
- Economic Development Project update from Interim Township Manager Tim Schmitt

After those four updates, the Supervisor opened the floor to the general public to ask questions, which ranged from recreational marijuana to issues with invasive garlic mustard. Additionally, the Township Board stayed beyond the nominal end time of 7:30PM to continue to discuss and answer questions from constituents.

In early July, the Township Board finalized the questions and format of the triennial Citizen Survey. Neighborhoods and Economic Development Director Clark is coordinating with Colbalt Community Research to have the survey disseminated and to bring results back to the Township Board to help guide 2025 goals and beyond.

The Prime Meridian Magazine was sent out to all Meridian Township residents in March 2024. Additional copies were ordered to keep on hand in both the Municipal Building and the Service Center. A digital, ADA compliant copy is also available on the Meridian Township website.

PRIME MERIDIAN



Good Morning, Meridian is still airing monthly on the Meridian Township YouTube channel and HOMTV channel. It was decided that the length of the videos would be decreased from 15-20 minutes to five minutes. This was done with the hope of retaining viewership for the entire duration of the video.

The Township's email marketing via our three newsletters (Playbook, Meridian Happenings, and Green Gazette) remains our most successful outlet by measure of engagement, consistently maintaining a net-gain in subscribers, an open rate above 50% (average email open rate for government marketing is around 30%), and a click rate above 6% (average for government is around 3%). These newsletters are received by approximately 9,000 email addresses.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

- 4. In 2024, expand our DEI training and update our Personnel Handbook and Job Descriptions. We will also focus on events that celebrate the rich diversity of our community.**

Township-wide events celebrating diversity, inclusion, equity, and belonging include Meridian Pride, Celebrate Meridian, Juneteenth, and the observance of the Juneteenth Holiday, which was added to Township policy in 2023.



The Policy Review Committee (Board Policy and Personnel Policy) have met weekly with a one week break in July. Additional peer reviews are pending once counsel has reviewed updates addressed by the committee. Both policies are on track to be reviewed by the Board for adoption this fall.

A DEI training option offered through Lansing Community College entitled Building a Conversational Culture is being scheduled when we can ensure we are able to get all staff, and shift workers through the mandatory training without disrupting Township operations. This should occur in September for all Staff.

Job Descriptions are continually reviewed and updated as we have vacancies within the Township. Prior to interviewing, Staff and Human Resources review the description to make sure it is still relevant to the current work role. In addition, to align with continuity of operations and emergency response, we also consider succession planning in all departments, to ensure smooth operations regardless of any vacancy.

Environmental, Infrastructure and Recreational Sustainability

- 5. In 2024, Meridian Township will continue their emphasis on the environment, infrastructure and recreational open spaces. The Township will complete a fifth solar array, seek funding for a second recycling center, enhance wetland protection, complete Phase II of the MSU to Lake Lansing Trail, determine the future use of the Central Park Pavilion and implement Phase I of the water meter replacement program.**



The Department of Public Works & Engineering anticipates getting the request for proposals (RFP) out to bid for the North Fire Station Solar Array contract by the end of July. The only component of the RFP that has not been finalized are the specifications for the carports. The Township has not constructed one of these solar array carports before and we want to ensure we construct an asset that will serve our taxpayers well for many years to come.

Township Staff elected not to apply for the grant to construct a new recycling center on the north side of the Service Center in 2024 after meeting with EGLE earlier in the year. The funding for this grant was even lower this year than in 2023 and based on our discussions with EGLE, we knew we would not be competitive

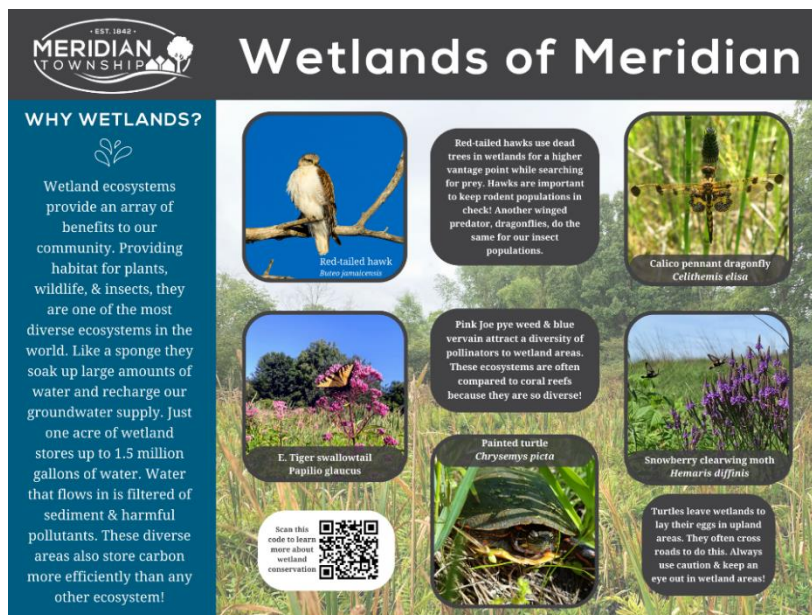
this year. Proximity to existing recycling centers is part of the scoring for this grant. This scoring criteria, combined with the reduced funding, is causing all of the funding to be awarded to rural areas that are recycling deserts. We have spoken to our state lawmakers about the need to get this Recycling Infrastructure grant funding back up to normal levels, which is \$7-\$10 million annually. This would allow suburban and urban areas to compete for these grant awards again.

Township Staff are developing interpretive signage to help increase wetland protection and educate residents. The installation of these signs will be focused around Township sites where restoration and added protection has taken place. These signs will be implemented throughout the Township, in 2024-25, at designated wetland locations and areas where water quality is being enhanced by native plant installations.

Draft Signage



Longer term, Staff will be evaluating potential signage for residential areas, along with informational mailing, social media, and other outreach.



Phase I of the MSU to Lake Lansing Trail was officially open to the public on Friday, December 8.



Construction of Phase II began in August of 2023 and is expected to be completed in August or September of 2024. Once Phase II is complete, users will have an easy, safe, and enjoyable option for non-motorized travel between the MSU Campus and Lake Lansing Park South, along approximately five miles of connected pathways and trails.

Phase II will be 1.2 miles long and will begin near the Grand River Avenue and Campus Hill Drive intersection and will conclude near the Okemos Road and Gaylord C. Smith Court intersection. Pedestrians and bicyclists will use the Township's existing pathway system to get from the Grand River Avenue and Park Lake Road intersection, where Phase I ends, to the Grand River Avenue and Campus Hill Drive intersection, where Phase II begins. The estimated cost of construction for Phase II is \$730,000. This phase will be funded by the Ingham County Trails and Parks Millage and the Township Pathway Millage.

The Township completed the surveying for Phase III design in May and June of 2024. The Township hopes to complete the design of Phase III in 2024, obtain all necessary permits in late 2024 and early 2025, which would allow for bidding and construction in 2025.

Phase III is the final phase of the MSU to Lake Lansing Trail. Phase III will provide a trail route from Marsh Road, just south of Haslett Road where the Inter Urban Trail ends, all the way to Lake Lansing Park North. Once all three phases are completed, the MSU to Lake Lansing Trail will provide residents with approximately 6.75 miles of trail system, which will enhance the region's trail system by connecting to the MSU and Lansing River Trails.

The Parks and Recreation Department is finalizing the rehabilitation of the Central Park Pavilion to extend the life of this community asset. New roofs have been installed and "barn doors" have been added to improve usability in less than ideal weather. Additionally, the rear of the building was opened up where possible so that people could be inside and still keep watch over their children playing outside.

The Township has signed a contract with VEPO Solutions and recently receive a shipment of 1,600 water meters from our supplier to implement our Water Meter Replacement Program. The Department of Public Works & Engineering is now working to complete the list of meters that are of the highest priority to replace. The Township hopes to mobilize our contractor in July of 2024.

We applied for a Community Energy Management (CEM) Grant with EGLE, which could help fund the purchase of our first electric vehicle, construction of the first phase of our electric vehicle charging infrastructure at the Municipal Complex, and energy conservation improvements at Township facilities. We applied for \$100,000 in funding through this CEM grant opportunity. The Township is currently reviewing the first draft of a design to construct electric vehicle charging infrastructure at the Municipal Complex.