



CITY OF MERIDIAN

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: February 4, 2016

CONTACT: Kaycee Emery, 208-489-0538, kemery@meridiancity.org

MAYOR TAMMY HIGHLIGHTS MERIDIAN'S PLANS FOR 2016 INCLUDING NEW DEVELOPMENTS, AND THE NEXT FOCUS FOR TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS

MERIDIAN – More than 600 people packed the auditorium at Meridian Middle School to hear Mayor Tammy de Weerd deliver her 13th State of the City address, outlining accomplishments of 2015 and goals for 2016, related to the City's strategic plan. The key points of that plan include: strategic growth, economic vibrancy, responsive government, safe, healthy and secure, as well as arts, culture, and recreation.

The theme of the State of the City was "Building Meridian Together". Mayor Tammy says partnerships and collaboration are keys in making Meridian the number one place to live in America.

"In 2015 we added more events, amenities and infrastructure to Meridian. Together, we built a movement of compassion for our "Do The Right" campaign and held a preview event for this summer's Youth Farmers Market. We also added amenities like the Storey Bark Park and the Public Safety Training center," said Mayor Tammy.

Other projects in 2015 that were highlighted include: 75 body-worn cameras deployed by Police; a Bike Medic program providing EMS support at local events; the Parks and Recreation Master Plan for the next ten years that includes the addition of regional parks; substantial business growth for the community; and new developments in Downtown Meridian such as New Ventures and the Meridian Library's UnBound facility.

The focus on Downtown Development will continue into 2016. Another area of focus is the Ten Mile region. On February 9, the Meridian City Council will discuss a proposal to create an Economic Development Urban Renewal District for the area.

"It is prime for employment opportunities and we are serious about bringing family wage jobs closer to where people live," said Mayor Tammy.

From jobs, to schools and transportation, the City of Meridian will focus on all of these areas in 2016. Now that the Meridian Interchange is complete, the City's next project in the area of transportation is Highway 20/26 (Chinden).

"We have pulled together a work group because we are focused on improving this corridor and bringing it up to its full potential. Our call to action is for ITD to program funds to design and

construct additional travel lanes and widen intersections starting at Eagle Road and working west. We have growing interest by community partners, ACHD, our county and neighboring cities,” said Mayor Tammy.

The Mayor also highlighted a growing concern for the City when it comes to the cost of courts in the county. The Mayor called for Ada County Commissioners to join the cities in finding another solution that is fair to taxpayers. The Cities of Meridian and Garden City will release more information regarding this issue and the history of the discussion between the county and the cities, on Thursday, February 4, 2016.

One couple regarded as a partner to the city and a “vital contributor” received this year’s Legacy Award. The Legacy Award is presented to a Meridian resident or business person who has contributed to the betterment of Meridian in a variety of capacities over a number of years. Mayor Tammy recognized Orville and Heidi Thompson, Owners of Scentsy, for their vision, leadership and innovation.

A copy of Mayor Tammy’s State of the City speech and a video of the address will be posted to the City’s website, www.meridiancity.org on Thursday, February 4, 2016.

###

The City of Meridian is located in the center of the Treasure Valley in southwest Idaho. Founded in 1893 and incorporated as a city in 1903, Meridian is now one of Idaho's largest and fastest growing communities. Meridian is cited by Money Magazine as one of its Top 50 Best Places to Live, and by America's Promise Alliance and ING as one of the nation's 100 Best Communities for Young People. For more information, visit www.meridiancity.org.