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New Meridian City Hall to open soon

Built to green standards, the building is a monument to the city's past

BY CYNTHIA SEWELL - cmsewell@idahostatesman.com

Edition Date: 10/01/08

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Even before it opens, the new Meridian City Hall will have to be fumigated.

The building is almost complete, and city leaders and employees are eager to occupy it. But before the first desk can be brought in, the building must be closed for two weeks for a thorough air flushing.

There are no vermin, but fresh air must be pumped in to clear out construction fumes, making the building's air healthier and safer for employees and visitors. The air flush is one of many elements intended to make the building one of the most environmentally friendly in Idaho.

"We want to be the example of good stewardship," Meridian Mayor Tammy de Weerd said as she led a tour Tuesday.

The city will move into the building in late October. A grand-opening celebration is planned for sometime in November.

The \$25.2 million, 100,000-square-foot building includes three stories and a basement. It cost about \$188 per square foot, compared with \$442 per square foot for Boise State University's new Stueckle Sky Club and \$184 for the new Siena K-8 School in Meridian.

The city paid for it by setting aside money over the last few years. It includes enough extra square footage to serve a city of 180,000 people, De Weerd said. Meridian's population has doubled since 2000 to 73,000 people.

"The building is built to survive for 200 years," she said.

The current City Hall was built in 1987. "We outgrew it within five years," de Weerd said. Some city departments had to be located elsewhere. At the new City Hall, all departments will be brought together again.

Designed by LCA Architects (formerly Lombard Conrad Architects) and built by Petra Inc., both of Boise, the building is an homage to Meridian's past. The plaza and amphitheater hearken back to Meridian's early downtown.

"Downtown used to be a place where people would come and gather," De Weerd said. The city could have found cheaper land to build on, but wanted the community connection downtown offers, she said.

The plaza's two water features are symbolic of the Five Mile Creek and New York irrigation canals, she said.

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Darin Oswald/Idaho Statesman
Mayor Tammy de Weerd and a team of builders and architects get ready Tuesday for a sneak-peek tour of the new Meridian City Hall. De Weerd hopes to move city personnel into the building starting Oct. 15. [See more photos online at IdahoStatesman.com/PhotoGalleries](#)

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

CITY HALL PRICE TAG

\$25,165,189

Land purchase and site preparation, including demolition and abatement of the old Creamery: \$4,271,271

Space study and architectural design: \$978,742

Construction management: \$1,111,314

Construction: \$18,803,862



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"Water was a mainstay in how our community developed" into a farming center, De Weerd said. "These water elements celebrate Meridian's agricultural roots."

The architect and builder will seek a LEED Silver certification from the U.S. Green Building Council. LEED - Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design - is a national benchmark for the design, construction and operation of high-performance green buildings. LEED ratings include certified, silver, gold and platinum.

In 2005, the Ada County Courthouse in Boise became the first building in Idaho to receive LEED certification. This year, two more new county buildings received a LEED Silver rating - the Ada County Paramedics Station and the Ada County Weed, Pest and Abatement Facility. Both are in Meridian.

City Hall LEED highlights include:

A state-of-the-art heating and ventilation system. Eighty percent of the air is recirculated, saving heating and cooling costs. Sensors control the amount of fresh air entering the building. The electrical system does not require transformers, which require cooling.

Lighting sensors that automatically dim the lights when natural light is bright and increase the light level during dusk and on cloudy days.

A reflective roof coating that reduces cooling needs.

Low-volume plumbing fixtures.

Measures to encourage alternative transportation, including showers, bike storage and designated carpool parking.

The site is a "brownfield" site, originally occupied by a creamery with a high level of asbestos and soil contamination.

Cynthia Sewell: 377-6428

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