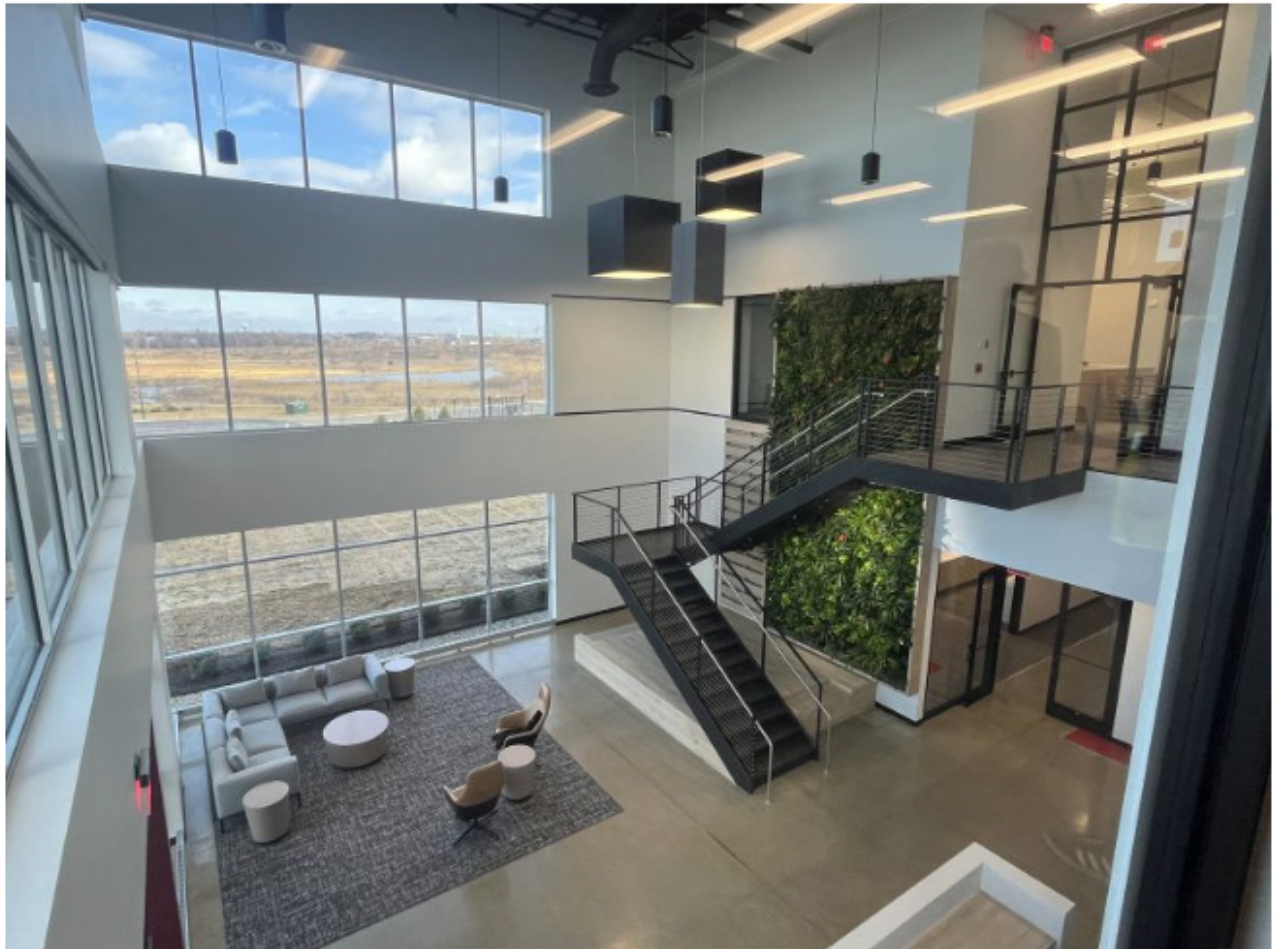


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Patience, problem solving and Client Support: Inside Meridian Design Build's project playbook

BRANDI SMITH | AUGUST 5, 2025



RIM LOGISTICS LOBBY (PHOTO COURTESY OF MERIDIAN DESIGN BUILD.)

Over a period of more than nine years, **Meridian Design Build** kept revisiting a 40 acre infill site in Romeoville, one of the last parcels in the area available for large scale light industrial development. During that time, a number of developers kicked the tires asking Meridian and other general contractors to help them understand construction costs and evaluate site challenges and anticipated project timelines.

The well-located site had more than its share of challenges including site balance concerns, subsurface rock conditions, and flood plain and wetlands mitigation constraints. There were also significant offsite improvements that would be required to accommodate the development including enhancements to an adjacent storm water detention facility and the construction of a public roadway and related utilities across the site frontage.

“After years of looking at the site, we were retained in 2022 by an interim owner of the site to complete design work and helped them get the project to the point where it was nearly shovel ready,” said Howard Green, Meridian’s Executive Vice President and Co-Founder. Meridian worked with Arete Design Studio and Jacob and Hefner Associates to generate permit drawings that maximized the building footprint while addressing the various site specific challenges. In late 2022, the project lost momentum for various reasons including uncertainty around wetland permitting timelines and rising interest rates.



LogistiCenter at Romeoville (Image courtesy of Meridian Design Build.)

Early this year, NAI Hiffman helped the interim owner bring the site to market and there was another flurry of budgeting and schedule discussions. Ultimately, Reno-based developer, Dermody stepped in, moving quickly to creatively clear a few remaining entitlement hurdles and close on the property. After a final round of competitive bidding, Dermody tapped Meridian Design Build to construct the 460,000 square foot speculative facility that they had helped design back in 2022.

“We’re thrilled to be working with Dermody to make this long-awaited project a reality,” Green said. “Mass grading work has already been completed and we’ll be standing wall panels at the site within the next several weeks as we move towards an early 2026 project completion.”

That Romeoville narrative — assisting with creative problem solving during the preconstruction phase, providing multiple rounds of budgeting assistance to help clients generate proformas, and delivering competitive pricing and an aggressive construction schedule when a developer is ready to move forward, captures how Meridian helps its clients succeed. The firm is a full-service construction company with professional project managers who run point from site due diligence and conceptual planning through the budgeting, design, construction and turnover.

When asked about planning for other upcoming projects, Green noted that their clients’ site-selection calculus has shifted a bit in recent years. Access to highways, rail, and intermodal is still important, but the hidden chokepoint in today’s market is often power. “Availability, timing and costs related to getting power infrastructure to potential development sites has become a major factor in site selection,” Green said. “There are a number of sites that we’ve looked at recently for clients where lack of power utility capacity has been a factor in derailing or delaying developments.”

“Sustainability and accommodations for renewable energy are also considerations on all of our projects,” Green said. “We continue to see increased interest in upsizing the roof structure on new buildings to make them solar ready. Most corporate clients and large developers are incorporating LEED design standards into their buildings and many of our recent projects have incorporated provisions for EV charging stations.”

Meridian also does a significant amount of design-build work for corporate users. The company recently completed a 400,112 square foot corporate headquarters project for RIM Logistics in Bartlett, delivering roughly 40,000 square feet of two-story office space, a customer experience center, a café with 30-foot ceilings, a fresh market, bike storage and a fitness center. The project was designed to LEED standards and incorporates EV charging, natural daylighting, and IP addressable lighting controls among other sustainable elements.

Other Meridian projects underway in the area include a 123,000-square-foot speculative industrial development for Logistics Property Company near O’Hare International Airport, a 130,000-square-foot food production facility in Huntley for Silesia Flavors and developer Venture One Real Estate, and a 50,000-square-foot tire maintenance/tire storage facility in Bartlett.

The firm has a national reach that extends well beyond Chicago to markets as far away as Florida, New York, Texas, and California. Meridian has delivered 13 projects totaling more than 2.6 million square feet in the Indianapolis area alone since 2013, including a recently completed 125-door cross-dock truck terminal on a 43-acre site in Greenwood, Indiana for Scannell Properties and a leading North American LTL carrier.

The diversity of Meridian Design Build's current project load is telling. The company's capabilities are not limited by product type, geography, or a specific client base. Its strength is leveraging its construction expertise to help clients find cost effective and time sensitive solutions project specific challenges. Being selected by Dermody to construct the Romeoville project was less a lucky break than the result of years of hard work blended with perseverance, creative problem solving, and strategic partnership.

When asked where the company's priorities lie for the balance of 2025 and the years ahead, Green pointed to Meridian's clients. "More than 90% of our projects are the result of repeat business", Green noted, "helping our clients navigate the planning stages of their upcoming projects has, and always will be, what drives the success and growth of our business."