



CITY OF HENDERSONVILLE
ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY BOARD
Operations Center – Assembly Room | 305 Williams St. | Hendersonville, NC
28792

Tuesday, April 14, 2026 – 4:30 PM



AGENDA

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Approval of March 2026 Minutes

4. BUSINESS

A. Review and vote on quote for Lower Mudd Creek Edible Forest Educational Sign - *Caitlyn Gendusa, Staff Liaison*

B. Review 2025 Sustainability Strategic Plan Annual Report - *Caitlyn Gendusa, Staff Liaison*

C. Review 2025 Bee City Annual Report - *Caitlyn Gendusa, Staff Liaison*

D. Sustainability Topic Presentation - *Joey Burnett, Member*

E. Hendo Earth Fest Update - *Emily Davidson, Chair*

F. Volunteer Sign Up for Farmers Market - *Emily Davidson, Chair*

https://docs.google.com/document/d/15Qi4aX_5a6wihbGM-vNnsarnLMD6J1KgE4VQ9PGQIu8/edit?usp=sharing

G. Review SDS Signup Schedule - *Emily Davidson, Chair*

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1hUcxz-eGyUD387ihl3VKwvSqOpyuzPL6lIYw6tLlJ6E/edit?usp=sharing>

5. ADJOURNMENT

The City of Hendersonville is committed to providing accessible facilities, programs and services for all people in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Should you need assistance or an accommodation for this meeting please contact the City Clerk no later than 24 hours prior to the meeting at 697-3005.



CITY OF HENDERSONVILLE
ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY BOARD
 Operations Center – Assembly Room | 305 Williams St. | Hendersonville, NC
 28792



Tuesday, March 10, 2026 – 4:30 PM

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order at 4:36 p.m.

Present: Emily Davidson, Virginia Tegel, Alicia Stump, Kimberly Blackwell, Kyla Christensen, and Joey Bernett

Absent: Jill Carter

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Emily motioned to approve first followed by Kyla with the additional of introduction since Joey is present as a new member.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Approval of January 2026 Meeting Minutes - Emily motioned to approve first followed by Virginia

BUSINESS

Introductions with new member Joey Bernett

Spring 2026 Mulch & Leaf Compost Giveaway - *Virginia Tegel, Member*

There will be no free leaf compost or mulch giveaway this spring. The leaf and tree debris that was picked up was hauled with other Hurricane Helene brush so there is not enough material to process into mulch/leaf compost.

Energy Saver Upcoming Workshop - *Caitlyn Gendusa, Staff Liaison*

Caitlyn will update the board as the event gets closer.

Consideration of Tree Board & Environmental Sustainability Board joint meeting

Caitlyn will send out a poll to finalize a meeting date.

Hendo Earth Fest Update - *Emily Davidson, Chair*

Group discussion/brainstorm on ESB member retention - *all members*

Virginia mentioned having a table at Hendo Earth Fest for member recruitment. Caitlyn is sending new member flyer to the board to pass around. Caitlyn will put together brochure.

Virginia motioned first followed by Emily to have the student member position term be April 1-March 30th

Monthly maintenance of Sustainability Demonstration Station - *Emily Davidson, Chair and Virginia Tegel, Member*

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1hUcxz-eGyUD387ihl3VKwvSqOpyuzPL6lIYw6tLlJ6E/edit?usp=sharing>

Sustainability presentation for future ESB meetings

Sign up: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1g4Bc0uAoAAAtaW-X2t5tRNs4G6k2TDTCcxgKvXZJFrRc/edit?usp=sharing>

Mountain True update - *Emily Davidson, Chair*

Potential collaboration opportunities with Plastic Free WNC

City Council update – Gina Baxter, Council member

Gina mentioned now that the transportation bond is approved City Council is looking at partnering more with Bike Walk HVL

ADJOURNMENT

Emily motioned to go into closed session first followed by Kyla.

CLOSED SESSION

Vote on 2026 Sustainability Hero Award

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Welcome to the Food Forest at Grove St. Park

The Grove St. Park Food Forest provides a place to forage and enjoy fresh food. In addition to food, this forest provides shade, habitat for wildlife and attracts pollinators.

A food forest is a diverse planting of edible plants that attempts to mimic the ecosystems and patterns found in nature. This forest will grow year after year without the reliance of fertilizer or pesticides, thus sustaining itself. As time passes, fallen tree decay and other leafy debris returns nutrients to the soil.



There are many different edible and pollinator plants in this food forest. Can you spot any of these?



Persimmon This deciduous, medium-sized tree, is known for its deep green, oval leaves and distinctively, deeply furrowed grey-brown bark. It produces edible, bright orange, sweet fruit in late autumn after the first frost.



Pawpaw This deciduous, pollinator tree is known for producing large edible, banana-mango flavored fruit that has a custard like texture. Harvest is typically in late August to mid-October.



Elderberry This multi-stemmed deciduous plant produces dark, edible berries in the fall. The fruit is used in jams, jellies, and wine. Harvest is typically in August and September. Note, berries should be cooked before eating.



Spicebush This deciduous shrub features aromatic, spice-scented leaves and twigs with glossy red berries. Harvest is typically in late August to mid-October.



Highbush blueberry This deciduous shrub produces large, sweet, edible blue-black berries. Harvest is typically in mid-June to August.





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Estimate 1589

Item A.

ADDRESS Caitlyn City of Hendersonville/Hendo Earth Fest	DATE 03/06/2026	TOTAL \$2,563.35	
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ACTIVITY	QTY	RATE	AMOUNT
6mm Polymetal 30"x48"/Customer Supplied Art	1	364.55	364.55T
3/4" MDO 30"x48"/Primed & Caulked Edges/Painted Back/To Mount 6mm Onto for Hidden Mounting System.	1	183.40	183.40T
Sign Frame Viewpoint Wayfinding Post System For 30" Panel/Direct Burial/ 60" Posts/SKU:407B-30- DB /Sign Bracket Store	1	1,395.00	1,395.00T
Shipping Shipping Costs from Sign Bracket Store	1	165.00	165.00
Installation Mount 6mm Panel to 3/4" MDO/ Install Posts/ Ready Mix Concrete Substitute	1	303.75	303.75T

SUBTOTAL	2,411.70
TAX	151.65

TOTAL	\$2,563.35
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THANK YOU.

Accepted By

Accepted Date

All accounts past due after 12/31/2022 Will be charged a \$25 late fee. Starting January 12,2023 every account that balance is not paid within 30 days will acquire a late fee *the greater of thirty-five dollar (\$35.00) or four percent (4%) of the amount of the payment past due.

Bee City USA

Renewal Preview – Report on 2025

Statistics

How many pollinator-related events or outreach activities did you host or help with in 2025 (in total)?

A total of 12 pollinator related events were hosted which include:

- Hendo Earth Fest
- Sponsorship of 10 classrooms for Symbolic Monarch Migration activity
- 6 Farmers Market educational events
- Native rain garden plant giveaway
- Bradford Pear Bounty event
- Tree giveaway event
- Tabling at Garden Jubilee

How many people attended those events (in total)?

Approximately 2,500 attended the above 12 events.

How many habitat projects did you help to create or enhance in 2025?

Approximately 250 habitats were enhanced through native tree giveaways, native rain garden plant giveaways, and Bradford Pear Bounty replacement program.

How many people (staff, volunteers, students, partners, etc.) helped with those projects?

Approximately 67 people assisted with these projects which include volunteers, staff, and board members.

How many projects benefit monarchs, milkweed, or nectar plantings?

All projects benefited monarchs or nectar plantings. The projects listed previously also don't include the 7 existing pollinator garden sites maintained by the City.

How many total square feet of habitat were created or enhanced?

Estimating that small trees take up approximately 80 square feet, a total of 16,000 sq. ft. of habitat was created with additional sq. ft. of improvements from the native rain garden plant giveaway. The City's Four Seasons Boulevard pollinator garden was also expanded with additional pollinator plants however the total square footage of improvement is not known.

Please check all that describe the habitats your affiliate helped to create or enhance in 2024 with pollinator benefit in mind.

X Flower garden

- Vegetable garden
- Orchard
- X Natural area with tree snags and stumps, and bare areas for ground nesting species
- Meadow
- Pollinator-friendly lawn (with flowering clover, dandelions...)
- Herb garden
- Native milkweed planting for monarchs and bees (where appropriate)
- X Invasive/exotic plant species removal for habitat improvement
- X Native pollinator-friendly tree planting
- Native pollinator-friendly shrub border/hedgerow planting
- X Rain garden/bioswale
- X Roadside/rights of way planting
- School garden
- Other

Please check actions you have taken to make pest management practices more pollinator-friendly.

- X Implemented or maintained a written IPM plan
- X Only use pesticides as a last resort within the IPM plan
- X Avoided use of pesticides in public sites containing designated pollinator habitat or other sensitive features (except when targeted use is deemed the best option for invasive or noxious weed, insect or disease management)
- X Implemented non-chemical pest prevention and management methods on city or campus grounds
 - Eliminated pesticide uses that are solely to maintain aesthetics on city or campus grounds
 - Reduced the total area of city or campus-managed lands to which pesticides are applied
 - Restricted pesticides used to organic pesticides on city or campus grounds
 - Eliminated use of neonicotinoid insecticides on city or campus grounds
 - Dropped pesticide use altogether on city or campus grounds
 - Distributed educational materials to residents or students to encourage the reduction or elimination of pesticide use
 - Sourced plants for city or campus grounds using “Buying Bee-Safe Plants” methods recommended by Xerces Society. (See <https://xerces.org/publications/fact-sheets/buying-bee-safe-plants>)
- X Sourced plants for city or campus grounds that were not treated with neonicotinoids

- X Encouraged developers and private landscapers to source plants using “Buying Bee-Safe Plants” methods recommended by Xerces Society. (See <https://xerces.org/publications/fact-sheets/buying-bee-safe-plants>)
- X Encouraged developers and private landscapers to source plants that were not treated with neonicotinoids

How many Bee City USA logo street signs have you installed to date (in total)? 4

Essay Questions

Please describe pollinator conservation events or outreach activities in your community in 2025, indicating whether your committee hosted them or not.

This year City of Hendersonville staff, Environmental Sustainability Board, and Tree Board worked together to host several pollinator conservation events and outreach activities. First was our third annual Hendo Earth Fest which brings an estimated 2,000 visitors and features exhibitors and interactive activities from a wide range of sustainability related focuses. A few pollinator focused exhibitors included Caregivers of Mother Earth, Carolina Nature Tours, City of Hendersonville Tree Board, Bee City, and Environmental Sustainability Board, Henderson County Beekeepers, and more.

During the annual Symbolic Monarch Migration month in September, our Environmental Sustainability Board sponsored 10 classrooms to have an educational activity coloring and sending monarch butterflies to classrooms in Mexico. The Board also tabled at 6 Farmers Market days throughout the year at their Sustainability Demonstration Station which features 2 pollinator and vegetable garden beds. The Board also hosted a native rain garden plant giveaway event which was a great way to teach people how to utilize a small area on their property for pollinator habitat.

Our Tree Board hosted the annual Bradford Pear Bounty program where free native trees (including trees beneficial to pollinators such as Eastern Redbud, Red Maple, and Dogwoods to name a few) were given away to approximately 100 participants who in exchange removed invasive Bradford Pear trees from their property. The Board and City staff also hosted a native tree giveaway to help rebuild lost tree canopy from Hurricane Helene. 100 trees were given away which included many varieties benefiting pollinators. Lastly, the board tabled at Garden Jubilee, an event that attracts around 200,000 people to educate folks on the benefits of native and pollinator trees and plants.

Please describe pollinator habitat creation or enhancement projects in your community in 2025, and whether your committee hosted them or not.

The City’s Tree Board and Environmental Sustainability Board helped community members create pollinator habitats through their native rain garden plant giveaway, Bradford Pear Bounty tree giveaway, and native tree giveaway. The native rain garden plants included Clethra hummingbird which is a native plant attracting hummingbirds, butterflies, and numerous native bee species. The other two tree giveaway events featured several native

pollinator tree species including Sycamore, Pignut Hickory, Eastern Redbud, Crabapple, Overcup Oak, and Willow Oak.

Please describe actions taken to make pest management more pollinator-friendly.

All our tree maintenance is completed by Leatherwood Wildland Management who maintains an IPM plan and implements non-chemical practices where possible such as using organic horticultural oil, essentially using synthetic pesticides as a last result if organic methods aren't successful or if needed for invasive species removal. Synthetic pesticides and herbicides are never used on pollinator sites.

Are efforts underway in your community to further reduce pesticide use in residential or business areas? This may include neighborhood-led efforts, outreach to landscapers, etc. If so, please describe.

The Tree Board maintains a landscape plant list for developers, gardeners, and homeowners.

In your city or campus, are any policy initiatives underway to further protect pollinators, people or waterways from pesticides?

There are no new initiatives in this area.

Did your committee participate in any continuing education on ecologically-based Integrated Pest Management planning?

The City of Hendersonville Public Works Department employees (not committee) are trained in best practices for IPM and pesticides are not used within pollinator habitat areas.

Photos



Fall tree giveaway



Henderson County Beekeepers Association tabling at Hendo Earth Fest



Pollinator rain garden plant giveaway

Building a Resilient

Hendersonville

The Economic Case for a Community Resilience Assessment

Hendersonville Sustainability Board | 2026

Inspired by the global Transition Towns movement

The Transition Towns Movement

Item D.

ORIGIN

Started in 2006 in Totnes, Devon UK by permaculturalist Rob Hopkins. Built on the insight that communities facing the end of cheap oil needed a positive, practical planning framework -- not just warnings. The first step: an honest accounting of what a community needs to survive and thrive, and how much of that it can currently provide for itself.

SCALE TODAY

992+ registered groups worldwide

50+ countries represented

21 regional hubs coordinating action

THE ENERGY DESCENT ACTION PLAN (EDAP) FRAMEWORK

AWARENESS

Map the community's oil dependency honestly -- food, energy, transport, healthcare, economics.

VISIONING

Community-wide process to define what a resilient local economy looks like in 15-20 years.

TRANSITION

Practical projects across every sector: food hubs, local energy, re-skilling, repair economies.

ACTION PLAN

A living document -- an EDAP -- that coordinates projects and tracks progress publicly.

Resilience Is Smart Economics

Item D.

This is not an environmental program. It is a community investment strategy.

LOCAL MULTIPLIER

Money Stays Local

Every dollar spent at a local food producer or energy cooperative circulates 2-3x more within the county before leaving than a dollar spent at a chain retailer. Resilience investment is fundamentally anti-leakage economics.

2-3X

local multiplier effect

JOBS

Labor-Intensive by Design

Resilience sectors -- food production, weatherization, repair, care -- are labor-intensive and locally employed by definition. They cannot be offshored. A food hub or weatherization program creates jobs that stay here.

Local

jobs that cannot be offshored

DISASTER COSTS

Prevention vs. Recovery

FEMA estimates every \$1 spent on pre-disaster mitigation saves \$6 in recovery costs. Helene's economic impact on WNC will run into the billions. Resilience planning is the cheaper path -- by a wide margin.

\$6

saved per \$1 invested in mitigation

GRANT LEVERAGE

Funding Follows Planning

Communities with formal resilience assessments are dramatically more competitive for federal and state grants -- FEMA BRIC, USDA Rural Development, EPA Climate Pollution Reduction. Bloomington just won \$250K off the back of their plan.

\$250K

grant

Peer Communities Are Already Acting

Item D.

Communities our size have done formal assessments -- and found it pays off.

Totnes, UK

Pop. ~9,000

What they did:

Birthplace of the Transition movement. Produced the world's first community Energy Descent Action Plan covering food, energy, transport, and health. Process engaged 500+ residents over 18 months.

Outcome: Launched a community energy company, local currency (the Totnes Pound), and inspired 992+ groups worldwide.

Bloomington, IN

Pop. ~80,000

What they did:

Published a formal Peak Oil Preparedness Plan and has built continuously on it. Their documented resilience framework made them highly competitive for federal funding.

Outcome: Won a \$250K federal grant in 2025 for community-wide energy resilience. Active sustainability department.

Montpelier, VT

Pop. ~8,000

What they did:

City Council adopted a Net Zero by 2030 goal tied explicitly to reducing fossil fuel dependency. Developed a full action plan and joined the national Transition Towns network.

Outcome: On track to become the first US state capital to eliminate fossil fuel use. National model for small cities.

Henderson County: A First Look

Item D.

Initial observations only -- a formal assessment would replace these with rigorous data.

WHERE WE ARE EXPOSED

Healthcare & Elder Care

#1 employer | 27% of residents 65+

Retail Trade

#2 employer | long-haul supply chain dependent

Manufacturing

#3 employer | plastics, auto components

Agriculture

70% of NC apples | synthetic input exposure

Tourism

Car-dependent visitor model

SEEDS WE ALREADY HAVE

Apple Heritage

Strongest regional food asset in WNC

Farmers Markets

Heavily attended and diverse markets

Ecusta Trail

Low-oil tourism & active transport infrastructure

WNC Herbal Tradition

Local pharmaceutical capacity -- rare & valuable

Post-Helene Networks

Mutual aid infrastructure already partially built

Gen H Already Points This Way

Item D.

Hendersonville's own 2024 Comprehensive Plan contains the foundation for this work.

GEN H VISION STATEMENT

"Hendersonville is known as a livable city with a strong sense of community created through commitments to -- and investments in -- quality neighborhoods, a strong local economy, sustainable infrastructure, accessible public facilities, context-appropriate amenities, and the conservation of historic, cultural, and environmental assets that define its character and identity."

RESILIENT COMMUNITY GOAL

Gen H Ch. IV, p. 96

Resilience Is Already a Core Value

Gen H explicitly identifies a "Resilient Community" as one of its ten vision goals -- calling for adaptation, readiness, and recovery from adverse events including extreme weather as a commitment to providing sufficient resources.

SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGIC PLAN

Gen H Ch. III, p. 58

30% GHG Reduction by 2035

The City adopted a Sustainability Strategic Plan in May 2024 with measurable goals to reduce municipal greenhouse gas emissions by 30% by 2035 -- covering energy, transportation, waste, water, and land management.

APPLE HERITAGE & NATURAL ASSETS

*Gen H Ch. III, p. 54
& Ch. IV, p. 94*

Local Food Economy Is Explicitly Valued

Gen H identifies Hendersonville's apple industry and agricultural landscape as assets "important to the city's future success" and calls for preservation of working landscapes and minimizing encroachment on orchards and managed forests.

ECUSTA TRAIL & MOBILITY

*Gen H Ch. I, p. 18 &
Ch. III, p. 56*

Low-Oil Infrastructure Already Funded

The Ecusta Trail -- a 19-mile shared-use trail connecting Hendersonville to Brevard -- is already under construction. Gen H identifies expanded bikeways and sidewalks as the #1 ranked community priority for walkability.

Starting the Conversation -- at Every Level

Item D.

City Council is one part of this. Community engagement can begin now, in parallel.

CITY COUNCIL

Institutional Track

- 1 Board endorses assessment today
- 2 Request joint agenda item with Council
- 3 Seek council resolution of support
- 4 Use plan to anchor grant applications

WHY THIS MATTERS

Only Council can create policy, zoning, and procurement rules that lock in resilience gains -- and grant funding often requires a municipal resolution.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Grassroots Track

- 1 Host public open house / listening sessions
- 2 Partner with Curb Market, BRCC, local farms
- 3 Run neighborhood canvassing (like Gen H did)
- 4 Build a Community Advisory Committee

WHY THIS MATTERS

Resilience is built from the ground up. Gen H engaged 50+ pop-ups and round tables -- we can use the same model to build local ownership of this work.

WORKING GROUP

Organizing Track

- 1 Form cross-sector working group (4-8 people)
- 2 Map existing local initiatives and allies
- 3 Draft scope of formal resilience assessment
- 4 Present findings publicly -- Fall 2026

WHY THIS MATTERS

A small, committed working group is how Transition Towns starts everywhere. Totnes began with a handful of people. The working group catalyzes everything else.

The cost of not planning is higher than the cost of planning.

Helene showed us what unprepared looks like. Totnes, Bloomington, and Montpelier show us what prepared looks like. Henderson County has the agricultural roots, the community networks, and the institutional will to lead this conversation in WNC.

The ask is simple: let's start the conversation.

**TODAY: Board endorses authorizing
a Community Resilience Assessment**

**NEXT: Request a joint session with City Council
to introduce the Transition Towns framework**