



CITY OF HENDERSONVILLE ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY BOARD

City Operations Center – 2nd Floor Meeting Room | 305 Williams St. |
Hendersonville, NC 28792

Tuesday, September 09, 2025 – 4:30 PM



AGENDA

1. CALL TO ORDER

A. Call to order - *Emily Davidson, Chair*

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Approval of August 12, 2025 meeting minutes - *Emily Davidson, Chair*

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

5. CITY COUNCIL UPDATE

A. City Council Update - *Gina Baxter, City Council Member* (5 minutes)

6. OLD BUSINESS

A. Hendo Green Partnership Update - *Jane Edgar, Member; Fiona McColley, Vice-Chair; and Caitlyn Gendusa, Staff Liaison* (7 minutes)

Create list of businesses and organizations to reach out to and designate members to facilitate. Note: board members should consider reaching out to the businesses that were already signed up in ESB's previous similar initiative, Plastic Free

Hendo: <https://www.plasticfreehendo.com/>

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1gwuyGg1g-vWrlB8q6_26wYLbLId1jp9eTrnhozTvAmY/edit?usp=sharing

7. OUTREACH DATES

A. ESB Outreach Dates - *Emily Davidson, Chair* (5 minutes)

SDS at Farmers Market: September 13th - Symbolic Monarch Migration Month

Emily Davidson will help setup and Virginia Tegel will take over after from 7:30-10am and Omar Zafra from 10am-1pm

ESB volunteers needed for 9/27 Chef Day at Farmers Market for compost of food scraps and containers.

SDS at Farmers Market: October 11th

Kyla Christensen will be there from 10am-1pm.

Review outreach poster to finalize and purchase

8. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Consideration of moving meetings back to the City Operations Assembly Room - *Caitlyn Gendusa, Staff Liaison*
- B. Hendo Earth Fest Update - *Caitlyn Gendusa, Staff Liaison* (5 minutes)
- C. Review ESB Annual Report - *Caitlyn Gendusa, Staff Liaison* (10 minutes)
- D. Edible landscaping and native plants - *Virginia Tegel, Member* (5 minutes)

Note from Caitlyn - Public Works recently planted 20 native berry bushes along the Oklawaha Trail (35.335458, -82.464744). From talking with our Property Maintenance Supervisor, the City prioritizes native plants and estimates about 90% of new plants purchased are native.

- E. Support for Ecusta Trail - *Virginia Tegel, Member* (7 minutes)

9. 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.



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MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Emily Davidson called the meeting to order at 4:35 p.m. Present: Emily Davidson, Fiona McColley, Jill Carter (Zoom), Virginia Tegel, Omar Zafra (Zoom), Alicia Stump, Jane Edgar, Kyla Christensen, and Joan Zaki. Absent: Judy Moolten and Gina Baxter

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Virginia Tegel motioned to approve first followed by Fiona McColley.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Emily Davidson motioned to approve the July 2025 meeting minutes first followed by Fiona McColley.

PRESENTATIONS

Spotlight Solar Presentation - *Tom Grimes, Guest & Fiona McColley, Member* (15 minutes)

Tom Grimes of Spotlight Solar presented on their Haven Solar Canopy product which includes a solar shelter with charging capabilities and a picnic table. The integrated battery makes the system completely self-sustaining without the need for electrical hookup to the grid.

Tom Grimes mentioned grant opportunities that can offset the cost including the IRA tax deduction which is available until 2027. And can pay for up to 40% of the cost. Caitlyn Gendusa is going to investigate grant opportunities for this type of project.

Virginia Tegel mentioned interest in having the ESB tour Spotlight Solar's facility.

Caitlyn Gendusa suggested if the board is interested in having a solar canopy installation like this that they consider drafting a letter to City Council recommending they consider a solar canopy amenity as part of the design plans for the upcoming City projects including Patton Pool and the Whitmire Center. Fiona McColley is drafting the letter for City Council.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No community members were present for public comment.

CITY COUNCIL UPDATE

City Council Update - *Gina Baxter, Council Member* (5 minutes)

Gina Baxter emailed Caitlyn Gendusa her meeting notes which asked ESB members to let her know of any additional concerns with the Ecusta Trail safety to relay. Comments from members include:

There are still a lot of cars driving down the trail especially by Lennox Station

At the bottom of the hill at Lennox Station there is a stop sign that no one can see and there are no crossroad indicators. Improved markings are needed.

On Willow St. near Dry Falls Brewery, there is a sign indicating that there is a road ahead but the placement of the sign makes you think you should turn onto the trail and that the trail is the new road.

Down Willow St at the intersection, there is a left turn sign but no indication to pedestrians on who goes first.

Similar to sign on Oklawaha Trail, there should be signs for cyclists to announce when passing. Connect Buncombe has resources for best trail etiquette signs.

There is no signage on mile markers or distance to next bathroom, distance to water, etc.

There should be a sign of who to call with concerns and broadcast the punch list to ensure everything is done.

Caitlyn Gendusa is also finding out who the specific contact from Henderson County is for people to relay concerns to about the trail as they arise. Caitlyn is also going to relay these concerns to Hendersonville's Assistant City Manager to bring up at the next Ecusta Trail meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

Hendo Green Partnership Update - *Jane Edgar, Member (7 minutes)*

Jane Edgar is sending Caitlyn Gendusa a draft email that can be sent to local businesses about program.

Alicia Stump asked for link to form for initiative which can be found here:

<https://www.cognitofirms.com/CityOfHendersonville4/HendoGreenPartnershipQuestionnaire>

Caitlyn is also emailing associated graphics to the board.

Fiona mentioned announcing the Hendo Green Partnership program at a future Rhythm & Brews event.

Hendo Earth Fest Update - *Caitlyn Gendusa, Staff Liaison (7 minutes)*

First subcommittee meeting: August 27th at 5:15 p.m. at the City Operations Center second floor meeting room

Caitlyn is finding out if businesses can sponsor the event to pay for the off-duty officers.

ESB Outreach Dates - *Emily Davidson, Chair (7 minutes)*

Emily Davidson created Recycling Right game which can be reused at future ESB events.

SDS at Farmers Market: August 9th

Brooklyn Community Garden (Jules Heimer & Tae Brown)

Caitlyn Gendusa hosting a waste reduction education game 10am-12pm

SDS at Farmers Market: September 13th - Symbolic Monarch Migration Month

Emily Davidson will help setup and Virginia Tegel will take over after from 7:30-10am and Omar Zafra from 10am-1pm

SDS at Farmers Market: October 11th

Kyla Christensen will be there from 10am-1pm.

Emily Davidson mentioned wanting to create a SOP for ESB outreach events and have a poster of ESB accomplishments to use for future outreach events.

NEW BUSINESS

Low Waste City Meeting Pilot - *Caitlyn Gendusa, Sustainability Manager (7 minutes)*

The City will be offering compostable serving ware and food waste bins for the following events as part of a new pilot program. Food waste will be taken to the Sustainability Demonstration Station's compost bins. Pilot meetings include:

- Boards & Committees Appreciation Dinner (Sept or Oct 2025)
- Council/Staff Retreat (Feb or March 2026)
- City Council Budget Workshop (May of 2026)

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 5:57pm

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Dear Community Members,

The City of Hendersonville's Environmental Sustainability Board warmly invites you to join us in showcasing your sustainability practices and demonstrating your business' commitment to building a greener future.

Our board is eager to highlight the innovative ways that local businesses are contributing to a healthier environment and aligning with the goals set forth in the City's Sustainability Strategic Plan, adopted last year by City Council.

Through this initiative, we aim to establish a Green Partnership with businesses of all sizes. Together, we can promote sustainable practices that not only protect our natural resources but also enhance Hendersonville's reputation as a vibrant, thriving place to live, work, and do business.

Our vision is a thriving Hendersonville where businesses and organizations lead by example, creating a cleaner, greener place to live and work. Our mission is to inspire and support Hendersonville businesses and organizations in adopting environmentally responsible practices that contribute to a healthier, more sustainable community.

We are seeking forward-thinking business leaders ready to take part in this exciting initiative. Are you ready to step into this role? We would love to hear from you!

If you are interested in joining, please complete the attached questionnaire to get started.

We look forward to collaborating with you and shining a spotlight on the great work already being done in our community.

With appreciation,

[Name]

City of Hendersonville

Environmental Sustainability Board Member

[Email]

[Phone Number]



HENDO EARTH FEST

Held annually during April, the purpose of the Hendo Earth Fest is to promote community education for all ages on environmental and sustainable practices, inspire action, and renew and expand commitments to protect our planet. In our first 2023 festival, we saw approximately 2,000+ participants!

SUSTAINABILITY HERO AWARD

The Sustainability Hero Award celebrates outstanding achievement of a City of Hendersonville employee or team pursuing environmentally sustainable practices to preserve our community for future generations.



SUSTAINABILITY DEMONSTRATION STATION

The Sustainability Demonstration Station features multiple sustainability practices community members can implement at their own homes with a focus on composting. Visit us at 650 Maple St., a few feet down from the Historic Train Depot by the overpass.

BEE CITY USA POLLINATOR INITIATIVES

As part of Hendersonville's Bee City USA and Mayor's Monarch Pledge, the board leads various pollinator related efforts each year, such as educational events and sponsoring the Symbolic Monarch Migration school initiative.



LEARN MORE AT
[HTTP://WWW.HVLNC.GOV/ESB](http://www.hvlnc.gov/esb)

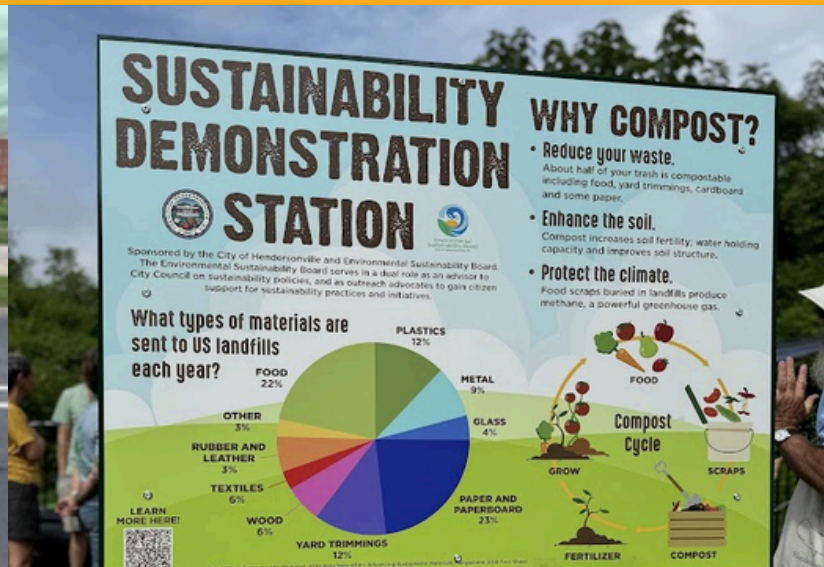




Environmental Sustainability Board

City of Hendersonville, NC

2025 ANNUAL REPORT



NOTE FROM BOARD CHAIR

Dear Council,

On behalf of the Environmental Sustainability Board (ESB), I want to thank you for your unwavering support of our board initiatives over the past year. As stated in your vision statement, “Hendersonville is a vibrant mountain city where the government and citizens work together for a high quality of life.” Our board recognizes that having a high quality of life is directly linked to a healthy environment. The ESB cannot steward a healthy environment without your support, so thank you for allowing us to engage and advise on city matters pertaining to environmental sustainability within our beloved city.

Sincerely,



Virginia Tegel
ESB Chair

PROJECTS

Hendo Earth Fest

This year marked the third annual Hendo Earth Fest which has become a widely popular festival that brought an estimated 2,000 visitors to Main Street. The festival included 52 exhibitors ranging from environmental non-profits, solar energy and electric vehicle demonstrations and more.

The event planning subcommittee to organize the event included three different local non-profits, community advocates, and several Environmental Sustainability Board members.

The purpose of the Hendo Earth Fest is to promote community education for all ages on environmental and sustainable practices, inspire action, and renew and expand commitments to protect our planet.

Local and regional environmental allies focus on participation/hands-on activities and demonstrations designed to educate, renew and expand action to protect our Western North Carolina environment and natural resources.





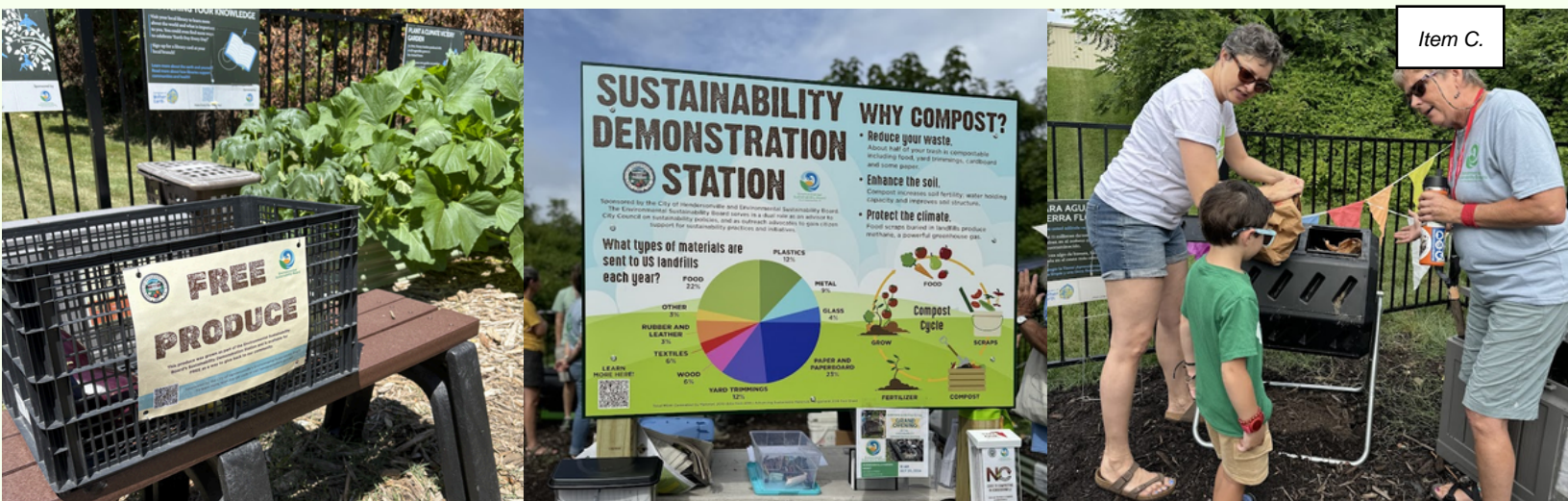
Sustainability Demonstration Station

The Sustainability Demonstration Station had their groundbreaking event in July of 2024. The demonstration station provides community members with hands on learning of various sustainability practices including composting, collecting rain water, permeable landscaping, biking, and pollinator gardening. Highlights from this year include:

- Produce grown on site given away for free at demonstration station
- Approximately 500 brochures given out to visitors
- 6 Hendersonville Farmer's Market days educating visitors at demonstration station
- Improved educational signage

Student Member Position

New this year, City Council approved the addition of a permanent student member position on the ESB. Kyla Christensen, a junior at Hendersonville High School joined the board this year. (IS THIS CORRECT?)



Item C.

Compost Bin Program

Inspired by the success of the Sustainability Demonstration Station, the ESB started the City's Discounted Compost Bin program, now managed by the City's Sustainability Division. The program, similar to the rain barrel program, works with a vendor that delivers compost bins for free to the City. Customers then purchase the bin directly on the company's site and the City coordinates pickup.

Mayor's Monarch Pledge & Bee City USA

Since Hendersonville's Bee City USA program came under City leadership, the Environmental Sustainability Board has partnered each year with local community members to host the Symbolic Monarch Migration at the Farmers Market in September. This activity engages children to draw butterflies that are mailed off to schools in Mexico as a way to symbolize the Monarch butterfly's annual migration to Mexico. Butterflies from Mexico are then sent over and shared with the children that put together their butterflies at the farmers market.

The ESB also sponsors 10 classrooms each year for the Symbolic Monarch Migration activity.

Lastly, this year the ESB partnered with the Tree Board and our Stormwater Division to give out free rain garden plants as part of a tree planting day at Sullivan Park. The ESB used this as an educational opportunity to show people the benefits of rain gardens and riparian buffer improvement.

Sustainability Hero Award

This year marked the second annual Sustainability Hero Award which celebrates outstanding achievement in the pursuit of the City's commitment to lead by example in pursuing environmentally sustainable practices critical to preserving the community for future generations. The Sustainability Hero award honors an individual City employee or team that is a champion for change and is responsible for development and implementation of sustainability practices in Hendersonville and the surrounding community.



Hendo Green Partnership

New this year is an initiative called Hendo Green Partnership. This program recognizes local businesses and organizations located within the City of Hendersonville to promote sustainability practices in our area. How the program works are businesses submit an application to be recognized as a Hendo Green Partner. Evaluation criteria includes areas of sustainability such as energy, water, waste management, and more.

For further information, please visit
<https://www.hendersonvillenc.gov/advisory-boards-commissions-and-committees/environmental-sustainability-board/hendo-green>.