



For MAYOR *of* HENDERSONVILLE  
*November 3, 2009*

**Common Sense is defined as beliefs or propositions that most people would consider prudent and of sound judgement!**

### **MASTER PLAN FOR DOWNTOWN? PARKS? LIBRARIES? NATURE AND NURTURE!**

The city council recently adopted a Comprehensive Plan for Hendersonville, in April of 2009, with strategies focused for planning to 2030. While greatly appreciative of the totality of the effort, as we all must be, I'm concerned that in the last 30 years much of the needs revealed in the Comprehensive Plan could have and should have been realized by a prudent and visionary mayor and council members. While I suggest every Hendersonville resident read the Comprehensive Plan, it is only a general outline. There is a huge need for a creative and strong leader to develop and coordinate ideas to bring aspects of the Comprehensive Plan to fruition. Important will be implementation, and making sure city management is effective and accountable.

Additionally, Downtown Historic Hendersonville needs it's own separate master plan utilizing some of the marketing information contained in last years marketing assessment, though I do not agree entirely with it's information. I plan to work towards implementing steps necessary to create such a plan during my term as mayor. Included should be property ownership accountability, strategies to identify what businesses are best suited for downtown and how to attract them, how to better service committed owners and merchants, pathway signs, cycling infrastructure, and a much broader public arts program.

Here are a couple of city based ideas:

- Hendersonville-Brevard RT (Rails and Trails). Currently there exists an unused train rail system running parallel to Hwy 64 for approximately 18 miles from Hendersonville to Brevard. I think this could be developed as a great bikeway, jogging, and exercise trail, complete with pullouts in various areas, gathering areas, picnic and shelter areas, and special use areas for children's activities and people with disabilities. Additionally, a "train" could shuttle folks back and forth from Brevard to Hendersonville for dinner trips, mystery train tours, day trips, or nostalgic or sightseeing trips, etc... This could present opportunities for businesses along the rail system. This is a prime example of a "shared resource" partnership that could be developed utilizing multi-city and county resources.
- New and better parks and recreation. Currently, there is no "city" parks and recreation service. Hendersonville is serviced by the county for it's parks and recreation needs. While this is better economically for the city, there needs to be better support from the county in identifying and budgeting for city needs and improvements. Hendersonville is greatly lacking in children's activities and public places for pets, as well as activity centers for people with disabilities. Additionally, Hendersonville parks amenities are outdated and in need of updating to meet safety standards. Generally, our parks need refurbish or repair, and the city needs more space for community centers. I would like to explore opportunities to build a new park - perhaps on the Balfour Road property and certain connecting flood plains, which would include a 15 to 20 acre fishing pond stocked year round for city residents only with elderly and handicapped accessible piers. I would seek to engage folks like Bill Dance - noted outdoor celebrity sportfishing sensation and his buddies to help with sponsorship. I'd like to include an outdoor archery and

primitive arms shooting range, and an outdoor learning center that includes an amphitheater for performances, re-enactments, and the teaching of traditional handicrafts and art skills. Walking and biking trails too, of course. Another perfect opportunity for a partnership program for shared resources.

Libraries and museums say a lot about a city. They should be as significant as any courthouse or city hall, and marketed as centers for culture and learning within a city. That being said, our local libraries and museums are much too small for current needs and desperately need expansion, remodeling, and increased parking. Perhaps a second story retro-fit to our downtown library? Perhaps a new YMCA and City Public Library project?

A modest Convention Center is a must! It is a prudent part of the “common sense” approach to managed responsible growth. It will validate Hendersonville again as a destination, and could make many of the attributes of the Comprehensive Plan possible. Aside from providing a place for happenings, shows, events, performances, concerts, etc..., it will provide much needed jobs for a demographic that has slipped through the cracks locally.

I will always be a proponent for xeriscaped greenways, buffer zones, eco-conscious building techniques, and mixed use planning. Cooperative building programs between the city and start up companies using new technologies are important investment considerations.

Currently, education makes up the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest portion of revenue obligations from the county. Many of Hendersonville’s city schools will need assessment in the coming years. New locations for schools will need to be identified in areas becoming more densely populated. I will encourage the implementation of strategies to make the best use of current education facilities as well as develop creative ideas for alternative education resources.