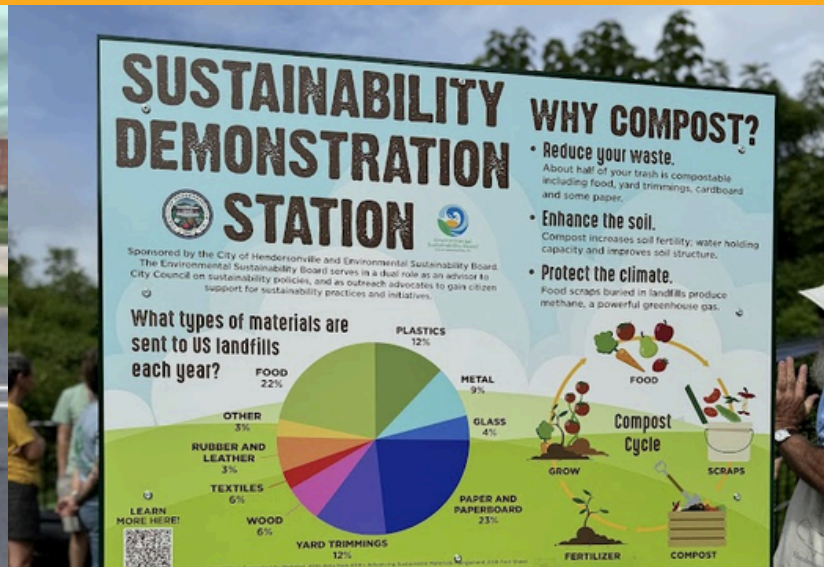




Environmental Sustainability Board

City of Hendersonville, NC

2025 ANNUAL REPORT



NOTE FROM BOARD CHAIR

Dear Council,

Members of the Environmental Sustainability Board, including myself as chair over the last year, appreciate the ongoing support the city council provides to implement our mission – provide policy and outreach support for sustainability practices and initiatives. During the impact and recovery following Hurricane Helene, we witnessed firsthand the city’s vision of government and citizens working together to protect our quality of life. The city’s long term commitment to this vision by focusing on sustainability and serving as stewards to our precious mountain environment is essential.

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.



Outreach Events

Throughout the year, the Board tables at various events as well as hosting events on sustainability related topics. Highlights in addition to Hendo Earth Fest include:

- Presentation to Trinity Presbyterian Church on the E.S.B.
- Leading native plant giveaway and collaborating on tree planting day at Sullivan Park
- Tabling at various Rhythm and Brews events as well as the Farmer's Market.

Sustainability Demonstration Station

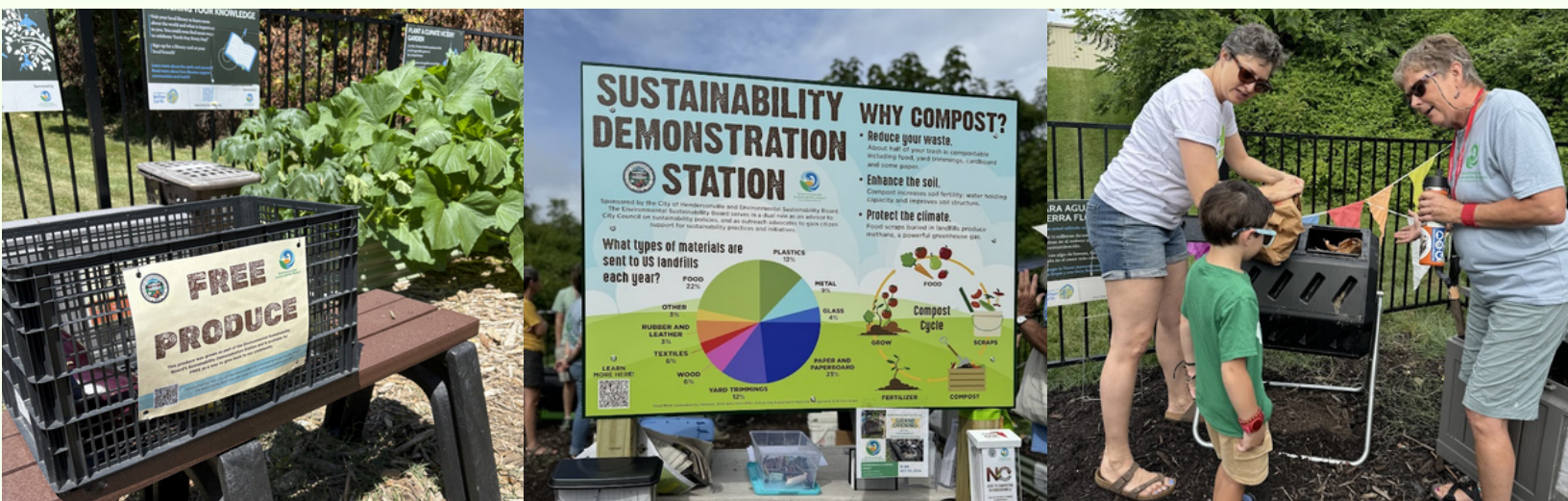
The Sustainability Demonstration Station had their groundbreaking event in July of 2024. The demonstration station provides community members with hands on learning of various sustainability practices including composting, collecting rain water, permeable landscaping, biking, and pollinator gardening.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





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>.