

QUESTIONS & RESPONSES The following are emailed questions and response (in red) to the 7th Avenue RFP
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What type of Marketing if any is done now to promote the 7th District?

Currently, marketing is mostly based on events that happen in the district, particularly the Hendersonville Farmers Market. With limited staff capacity, our downtown department does not do significant amounts of district marketing beyond events, and social media posts for downtown businesses, however our local Tourism Development Authority promotes businesses and places in a robust social media and marketing presence.

What is being done currently for the existing downtown branding?

Our overall downtown brand revolves around the “H” logo that was developed 10+ years ago. We use the “H” logo on street furniture and banners for Main Street, and will likely include that on features in 7th Avenue as the streetscape improvement continues. We see the “H” logo being the downtown brand that encompasses both districts while the new 7th Avenue Branding to be used when we are distinctly referring to that district.

What are the distinct features of Seventh Avenue? Or who will help determine what these are?

The historic Train Depot is the most architecturally significant feature in the district, and served as a hub of activity when passenger rail was active. Now, the Hendersonville Farmers Market takes place weekly by the depot.

The 7th Avenue district could be described as “grittier” than Main Street, which does not mean a bad thing. It includes a couple warehouse like buildings that could lend themselves for future development. The district also includes 3 breweries, a bakery, soul food and taco restaurants that offer unique attractions to the district.

From around the 1960s-early 2000s, the district was seen as the less desirable / unsafe part of town. This led to some disinvested structures and lower income neighborhoods that have felt left behind. In recent years we have brought the district in as an overall part of our downtown program. Toward the end of this year/ early next year a portion of 7th Avenue will begin first phases of a streetscape improvement project to create a better pedestrian environment.

Branding position for the district that fits within the downtown context. Can you expand on what you mean by the “downtown context?”

Downtown Hendersonville is composed of both the Main Street and 7th Avenue districts. When we are marketing or talking about Downtown Hendersonville, we’re referring to the combination of both districts. We envision marketing the district like “The 7th Avenue District in Downtown Hendersonville” or something similar. The “H” logo we use as branding for downtown Hendersonville will still be used for that overall downtown marketing, so having a

logo/style for 7th Avenue that fits within the overall downtown branding but that's distinct from Main Street is the goal.

Including a logo that can be adapted into a variety of media (What type of Media do you expect?)

We need the ability to print in 1 color (screen printing t shirts, signage, etc) and for it to be a vector file so it can be in large format (banners), or small for letterhead, business cards, window decals, etc.

The branding would also help to inform gateway signage that will be incorporated into the scope of work for the streetscape improvements. Are there drawings of the streetscape improvements available for review?

I will attach renderings.

How many Focus groups do you anticipate or public input meetings?

I believe 1 or 2 focus groups/public meetings would be sufficient. The commercial district neighbors some lower-income and diverse residential neighborhoods who have expressed an interest in being involved in the process, and we feel that an in-person discussion may be a better way to connect. It's possible businesses in the district and the nearby residents may have different opinions and bringing them together to talk about the district would be a valuable conversation.

At what stage of the process do you desire the community's input?

This is open. It may be best to start with a survey and then schedule a public meeting after reviewing the responses.

The final project should result in a determined name for the district. Have there been any survey's of which nomenclature is preferred?

This has not taken place. We've had some discussions at a committee level but no conclusion. If surveys have happened it has likely been 10+ years ago when the municipal service district was created, but it is unlikely they occurred.

What are the different variations of the H logo? Can we see the brand guidelines for it?

We do not have specific brand guidelines for the H logo that are currently followed. We have used a number of variations for events, website, seasons, etc.

Are there events happening during July and September 2021, that correlate with then the public input should happen? So perhaps we could survey people at a certain event?

Yes! The Hendersonville Farmers Market occurs weekly in the district and can be an excellent opportunity for surveying. We also have our Rhythm & Brews concert series (3rd Thursday) and LoveHendo Saturday (2nd Saturday) on Main Street that is not in the 7th Avenue district but could be a valuable time for community input, particularly from a general public perception and feedback.

Is there an event driving the final completion date of October 8?

The timing is mostly related to our bidding timeline for the streetscape. We anticipate construction bidding to take place in the fall and that would include the gateway signage.

Are there any current brand guidelines you'd like to see contributors follow or would you like a brand created 100% new from scratch?

The "H" logo is an overall downtown brand that we would like the 7th avenue brand to be incorporated into or to be complementary. We don't have any set ideas for how that works, (can be seen on our downtown website here: <https://www.hendersonvillenc.gov/downtown-hendersonville>)

Currently we use Bembo Bold and News Gothic for fonts, which are incorporated in the overall downtown "H" logo.

Is the brand guideline intended to support an entire ecosystem of other brands/divisions of Hendersonville or will it be managed independently?

The "H" logo serves the purpose of being the overall city/downtown brand (started as solely downtown, but has also been used by city departments), the 7th Avenue Branding would be incorporated as a division / brand of the overall downtown brand

Could we please receive more information on the platforms Hendersonville will utilize to source public input? What are some of the criterias the public input will submit

We currently have used a variety of survey forms, including google forms, survey monkey, survey123 (arcgis) for sourcing information. For this particular project, we believe there should be an in-person component that includes inviting the neighboring residential areas to have opportunities for input on the vision/branding for the commercial district.

Why is the district taking on this project now?

The impetus of this project is a streetscape improvement that is being planned for the district. In recent years, there has been improvements on Maple Street in the district, and in 2020 the Hendersonville Farmers Market launched on Maple Street.

The district itself has seen increased investment in the past several years with 3 breweries, a popular bakery, and a regional restaurant White Duck Taco (locally owned restaurant with multiple locations) came into the district.

While reviewing streetscape improvement plans, our team (staff and volunteers) reviewed gateway signage which led to the discussion for a need for more specified branding for the district.

Are you willing to work with an out-of-state firm?

We are not opposed to an out of state firm, however if all factors in the proposals are similar, we would most likely select a firm that is in closer proximity to the town.

Because we are out-of-state, given the budget are you open to virtual meetings?

We believe at least one in-person session for public input will be important for this project. The commercial district neighbors some lower-income and diverse residential neighborhoods who have expressed an interest in being involved in the process, and we feel that an in-person discussion may be a better way to connect.

For the community engagement portion: Would we be gathering a list and reaching out to stakeholders directly for the community survey or would we provide the survey to be disseminated to a pre-existing group of identified stakeholders?

We can disseminate the communication to our identified stakeholders. For some more background, the 7th Avenue commercial district neighbors a historically African American neighborhood and the district was disinvested until more recent years so we want to be very transparent and communicative not only with the businesses and property owners within the geographic boundaries of the municipal service district, but to involve the areas neighboring so there can be some level of comfort with the improvements that are being made in the district and corridor. In-person input will be valuable that we may not be able to obtain effectively from a survey.

Is there interest to create a social media campaign or a placebased social media account for the launching of the project? If so, we could add this into the proposal for the committee to view.

I don't believe we will have that interest. While we want to use the branding to help make the 7th Avenue district distinct, we do want to continue to promote both 7th avenue and Main Street overall as downtown. This is intentional as we recently merged our 7th Avenue and Main

Street committees to be one overall downtown advisory board, and up until the past several years the 7th Avenue district had some feeling as if they were less favored to the Main Street district. By having both districts as a part of downtown that will help continue to send our messaging that both districts are important and valued. In addition, we are a small staff so managing another social media account would be difficult to handle. We have our downtown page and a couple event pages.

Is there a page limit or any formatting restrictions for the electronic submittal?

There is no page limit.

The RFP is requesting pricing and portfolio experience that is relevant to the scope of the project (ie-branding/brand implementation), along with additional services that could be offered. There is also a note that "additional consideration may be given for future projects to firms that offer robust downtown master planning services". Is it acceptable to include examples of firm experience that is relevant to master planning services, and if so, are you requesting to see pricing structures for that as well?

We are not requesting those pricing structures at this time for master planning services as we have yet to determine the direction we want to go with downtown master planning / comprehensive planning and that may be a couple years down the road. While it's not a priority for this branding project, if the experience with the branding partners work well and the company is qualified in master planning, that may be considered for future downtown planning projects.

Who was the firm that did the current logos (city and district)?

Arnett Muldrow did our past city logo (the H that is used) It was originally just a downtown logo but has been used for a variety of city resources. We consider it our overall downtown branding so we'd like to have the 7th Avenue branding fit within the context of that because it's important to us to have 7th Avenue as a distinct district but a part of the overall downtown that includes Main Street and 7th Avenue. I have sent the RFP to Arnett Muldrow.

Are there current firms that are currently under contract for any current design work with the city?

We do not have any current design contracts with our department, and none that I'm aware of with other departments within the city, so there will be no preference to firms in that way. We have 2 local marketing firms that may submit proposals that we've done some work with in the past.

Is there a rating scale for the selection criteria's to your "Evaluation Metrics" section. Normally in these RFPs they provide numeric numbers to show how much each section is weighted.

We don't have a rating scale at this time. This the first time anyone on our boards/committees have done a branding project like this as the branding with the H logo was over 10 years ago so in reviewing the proposals will create some valuable conversations for the direction the committee wants to go.

Assuming due diligence is maintained and quality of work does not suffer, is the Downtown Community Character Team okay with vendors turning around the scope of work ahead of schedule? (It is our professional opinion that 4 months is not necessary and only inflates pricing for Hendersonville entities.)

There is no issues with an earlier schedule, we just need to have the project completed before the deadline in order to fit the final product in with our streetscape project that will happen at the end of 2021/early 2022.

Does the Downtown Community Character Team prefer a process that fosters in-person collaboration that includes focus groups, polling, and A/B testing or a process that takes advantage of digital technologies that include SMS, Google Survey, Google Slides, etc.? These factors play a hand in cost basis and timeline.

In person focus groups and collaboration will be an important factor for this project. The district includes and neighbors some marginalized communities and we would like to ensure that there is an inclusive public input and communication among the neighboring residential areas in addition to the businesses within the district.

Is the RFQ open only to design firms? I am a local graphic designer specializing in museum and commercial signage. I have worked with town governments, parks and museums around the country,

We are not limiting it specifically to design firms and would gladly review a proposal.