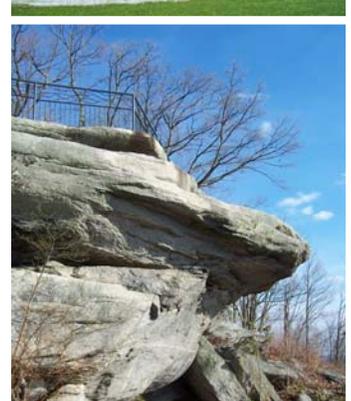


**COUNTY OF HENDERSON**  
**STRATEGIC PLAN**  
**FISCAL YEARS 2007 – 2011**

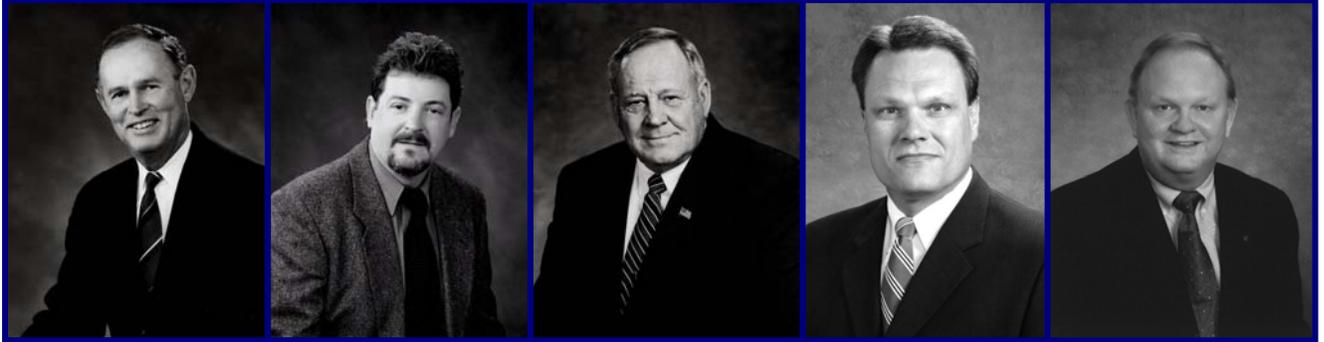


**Annual Review Update Approved June 2, 2008**



## **Henderson County Officials**

### **Board of Commissioners**



**Bill Moyer**  
Chairman

**Charlie Messer**  
Vice-Chairman

**Larry Young**  
Commissioner

**Mark Williams**  
Commissioner

**Chuck McGrady**  
Commissioner



**Steve Wyatt**  
County Manager

**Selena Coffey**  
Assistant County  
Manager

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## Introduction

Henderson County is a community in rapid transition, with challenges and opportunities presented by our continued growth and diversity. To be successful as a governmental entity, we must respond strategically to the needs of our citizens in an ever-changing environment. The Board of Commissioners is taking steps to meet these challenges by engaging in a strategic planning process that maps a strategy for the next four years.

Some of the issues and many of the strategies from the earlier 2006 Strategic Plan have been brought forward and included within this 2007 -2011 Strategic Plan draft.

## What is a Strategic Plan?

A strategic plan is an action-oriented set of strategies and action steps developed to accomplish a mission that is responsive to a dynamic, changing environment. Typically, a county strategic plan:

- Identifies the county's mission or purpose;
- Identifies the county's issues, including strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats;
- Develops a vision for the county's future;
- Develops strategies designed to realize the shared vision;
- Formulates an action plan and timeline;
- Identifies persons or groups responsible for initiating the action(s); and
- Establishes methods to measure progress and success in achieving the desired outcomes.

## Goals, Strategies, and Action Planning

In order to ensure that the critical issues are addressed, the County has identified several goals. The goals are general ends toward which the County intends to direct its efforts. **Goals** are *broad statements of policy that are ambitious, clear, concise, and easily understood*. Henderson County expects to be working towards meeting these goals over the next four years.

In order to make sure that we make progress toward meeting our goals, Henderson County has identified a number of strategies and action steps to keep us on track. **Strategies** describe *a plan of attack – a description of the programs, approaches, and projects to be undertaken*. Goals, strategies, and objectives are revisited and revised annually.

## Identification of Strategic Issues

In August 2006, Henderson County began its 2007-2011 Strategic Planning process. The initial phase of the process entailed a comprehensive public input process, including four (4) public input sessions and an e-survey process.

The input sessions, entitled *Listening to Our Community*, were held in early August 2006 to allow the citizens of the County the opportunity to have input on the development of the 2007-

2011 Strategic Plan. The strategic planning process was given substantial media coverage, with press releases sent to all local media outlets and subsequent articles prominently published in the *Times-News*, the *Pisgah Mountain News*, and the *Hendersonville Tribune*. In addition, the input sessions garnered the attention of *WLOS* and announcements of the input sessions were televised on the County's own *HCTV Channel 11*. As a result of this publicity, and that generated by the Strategic Plan Team members, the County Manager, and the Board of Commissioners, the process received outstanding participation from the community. Approximately 150 citizens attended the input sessions and 71 actively participated by making requests or recommendations.

During the facilitated input sessions, the speakers and audience were asked to focus on and answer the following key questions that serve as the foundation for the 2007-2011 Strategic Plan:

- 1. What do you feel are Henderson County's most important issues, opportunities, and challenges (strategic issues) for the upcoming four to five years? And why?**
- 2. Do you have suggestions (strategies) for how the County should address these strategic issues, opportunities, and challenges?**
- 3. North Carolina law provides counties one primary source of revenue to be used to finance its operations – property taxes. In limited instances, counties are permitted to charge fees for services. Given this, how would you propose that Henderson County should finance the initiatives that you have suggested?**

In addition, the speakers were asked to provide any back-up materials necessary to further explain their positions. For instance, representatives speaking on behalf of the Alliance for Human Services provided a copy of the *2006 Human Service Needs Assessment* for the team's information.

Simultaneous to the input sessions in August, the County launched an online survey requesting input on the Strategic Plan. The survey was available the entire month of August and focused on the same three questions as those posed for the input sessions. The team received 391 total responses. Of this total, 61 responses were either incomplete or duplicative. Thus, 330 of the survey responses are being utilized for purposes of developing the Strategic Plan.

Prior to beginning the input phase of the 2007-2011 Strategic Plan, staff met with individual County Commissioners to gain their responses to the three key questions. In addition, County Department Heads were invited to participate in the process by answering the survey questions. All data gathered from the input sessions, e-survey, departmental surveys, and input from the Board of Commissioners has been assimilated and bound for the Board of Commissioners' review.

### **Evolution of the Strategic Issues**

The assimilation of the data received from the community input phase of the process was difficult because so many of the strategic issues gathered during the input sessions, e-survey, input from the Board of Commissioners and County Department Heads, intersect each other and are duplicated depending on how the issues are categorized. For instance, the overwhelming

majority of input suggested that *growth* is the key issue for Henderson County, but respondents narrowed their responses to reflect growth's impact on various issues, such as its impact on our transportation systems; public schools; public services such as emergency services and law enforcement; jobs; land use planning; etc. To further complicate this, growth was linked to quality of life issues such as recreation opportunities, health care, cultural and performing arts, nuisance abatement, preservation of natural resources, etc. Please note that many of these categories are interrelated and dependent upon each other.

## Guiding Principles

Below are ongoing action strategies and objectives previously included within the Board of Commissioners' 2006 Strategic Plan and deemed vital to be included as "Guiding Principles" in the 2007-2011 Strategic Plan.

- To review all County billing procedures and internal controls annually.
- To comply with Debt Issuance Policy established by the Board of Commissioners.
- To comply with Fund Balance Policy by maintaining a 12% undesignated fund balance.
- To continue the implementation of the 2020 County Comprehensive Plan, conducting an annual review to ensure compliance.<sup>1</sup>
- To budget funds annually for economic development initiatives and support the Lockwood Greene recommendations.

## Strategic Goals & Objectives

Based on the input received during the input session, 6 strategic goals have been established. These goals are:

1. To enhance public trust and confidence in County government through sound policy-making and implementation, professional management, and active citizen participation.
2. To responsibly manage growth and its impacts.
3. To enhance the quality of life for all County citizens through improved access to health care, children's services, aging and elderly services, human services, public safety, and cultural and recreational resources.
4. To protect and preserve the County's historic and natural resources.

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<sup>1</sup> Note: The 2007 - 2011 Strategic Plan does not include "ongoing" Comprehensive County Plan action items, although these continue to be addressed by the Henderson County Planning Department.

5. To responsibly plan for the County's educational facility needs.
6. To help create a business climate that promotes a growing and diversified economy.

***Goal 1: To enhance public trust and confidence in County government through sound policy-making and implementation, professional management, and active citizen participation.***

**Strategy 1.1: Improve government accountability and fiscal stewardship by increasing cost effectiveness of County government.**

**Objectives:**

- A. Limit operational growth for County-funded departments and agencies to tax growth benchmarks. (FY 2008)
  - a. Provide incentives to employees/departments/agencies for implementing cost-savings measures. **Complete ✓**
- B. Implement zero-based budgeting. (FY 2008) **Complete ✓**
- C. Implement an energy conservation policy and plan (FY 2008) **Complete ✓**
- D. Develop and implement a cost recovery policy and implementation plan. (FY 2009)
- E. Develop a funding formula for public school operational needs to include annual growth and schools expansion. (FY 2008 2009)
- F. Develop a funding formula for the community college operational needs. (FY 2009)

**Strategy 1.2: Improve citizen participation and understanding.**

**Objectives:**

- A. Enhance the County's public information program by developing and implementing a comprehensive education program. (FY 2009)

**Strategy 1.3: Responsibly plan for the County's capital needs.**

**Objectives:**

- A. Implement a 12-Year Capital Improvements Plan. (FY 2007 – FY 2011)

***Goal 2: To responsibly manage growth and its impacts.***

**Strategy 2.1: Take a leadership role in sewer and water planning. [CCP: SW-01]**

**Objectives:**

- A. Establish and fund a 10-year capital improvement program and capital reserve fund which is adequate to implement planned investments in sewer and water infrastructure. [CCP: SW-01-G] (CCP Phase II: FY 2007 – FY 2010)

- B. Consider forming an inter-local sewer and water agreement. [CCP: SW-01-C] (CCP Phase III 2010 - 2015)

**Strategy 2.2: To direct growth to areas where essential services and infrastructure are present, and protect sensitive natural areas and key historic / cultural resources from extensive development. [CCP: GMS-01]**

**Objectives:**

- A. Develop a Land Development Code. **Complete ✓**
  - a. Consolidate existing land development ordinances into a single Land Development Code (i.e. Zoning Ordinance Re-write). [CCP: GMS-01-B] (FY 2008) **Complete ✓**
- B. Adopt and begin enforcing the Land Development Code. [CCP: GMS-01] (FY 2008) **Complete ✓**
- C. Develop a Cost of Community Services Study. (FY 2008) **Complete ✓**

**Strategy 2.3: Begin community planning process. [CCP, Section 4, Implementation Steps]**

**Objectives:**

- A. Complete one small area plan each fiscal year. (FY 2007 – FY 2011) **Ongoing**
- B. Amend CCP Implementation Schedule, in addition to other minor/technical revisions, in order to accommodate for the completion of the Land Development Code. (FY 2008) **Complete ✓**

***Goal 3: To enhance the quality of life for all citizens through improved access to health care, children’s services, aging and elderly services, human services, public safety, and cultural and recreational resources.***

**Strategy 3.1: Meet parks needs through 2020. [CCP: R-01]**

**Objectives:**

- A. Develop a countywide parks master plan focusing on long-range facility needs. [CCP: R-01-A] (CCP Phase II FY 2007 – FY 2010)

**Strategy 3.2: Promote a diverse range of home ownership and rental opportunities. [CCP: H-01]**

**Objectives:**

- A. Adopt a Minimum Housing Code. [CCP: H-01-E] (FY 2009)
- B. Begin enforcement of the Minimum Housing Code. (FY 2010)
- C. Lead the establishment of an affordable housing trust fund. [CCP: H-01-H] (CCP Phase II FY 2007 – FY 2010)

**Strategy 3.3: Protect the County's citizens through the provision of quality and responsive emergency services.**

**Objectives:**

- A. Develop and take action upon an E911 Improvement Study. (FY 2008) **Complete ✓**
- B. Identify service levels of EMS and develop and implement an action plan for improvements. (FY 2008) **Complete ✓**
- C. Address Emergency Medical Services (EMS) facility and operational needs. (FY 2010)
- D. Assessment of County's wireless communications system. (FY 2011)

**Strategy 3.4: Provide professional and quality animal control services.**

**Objectives:**

- A. Develop and implement a spay-neuter program to reduce the number of unwanted domestic animals. (FY 2008) **Complete ✓**
- B. Evaluate volunteer capacity and implement a volunteer program at the animal shelter. (FY 2008) **Complete ✓**

**Strategy 3.5: Address the needs of children within the community.**

**Objectives:**

- A. Coordinate children and family services via support for the United Agenda for Children. (FY 2008) **Complete ✓**

**Strategy 3.6: Address the needs of aging and elderly within the community.**

**Objectives:**

- A. Continue support of the public transportation program. (FY 2008) **Complete ✓**
- B. Continue funding non-profit programs that assist the elderly and aging within the community. (FY 2008) **Complete ✓**

***Goal 4: To protect and preserve the County's historic and natural resources.***

**Strategy 4.1: Reduce Farmland Loss. [CCP: A-01]**

**Objectives:**

- A. Review whether County's current policies regarding farmland preservation are adequate to protect agriculture land. (FY 2009)
- B. Consider the costs and practicality of establishing a farmland protection fund for Henderson County. [CCP: A-01-A] (CCP Phase II FY 2007 – FY 2010)
- C. Develop and implement a farmland preservation plan specific to Henderson County.
- D. Work toward expanding current voluntary Ag Districting options to include "Enhanced Ag Districting."

**Strategy 4.2: Protect Water Quality. [CCP: N-02]**

**Objectives:**

- A. Begin enforcement of Sedimentation and Erosion Control standards within County land development ordinances. [CCP: N-02-D] (FY 2008) **Complete ✓**
- B. Identify and incorporate Storm Water Management standards and requirements into County land development ordinances. [CCP: N-02-E] (FY 2009)
- C. Begin development and enforcement of Storm Water Management standards within County land development ordinances. [CCP: N-02-E] (FY 2009)
- D. Address coordination of watershed programs within the County. (FY 2008) **Complete ✓**

**Strategy 4.3: Protect key sites of historical and cultural significance from development. [CCP: N-05]**

**Objectives:**

- A. Conduct an inventory of historic / culturally significant sites / structures, as related to cemetery issue. [CCP: N-05-A] (FY 2009)

**Strategy 4.4: Address solid waste management issues including recycling and upcoming pertinent solid waste legislation.**

**Objectives:**

- A. Develop a comprehensive 20-year Solid Waste Management Plan. (FY 2009)

**Strategy 4.5: Promote energy efficiency and the use of sustainable and renewable energy sources within the County.**

**Objectives:**

- A. Conduct an energy efficiency study of County-owned facilities. (FY 2009)

***Goal 5: To responsibly plan for the County's educational facility needs.***

**Strategy 5.1: Take a leadership role in school facilities planning. [CCP: PS-01]**

**Objectives:**

- A. Implement a CIP for education through debt service issuance. (FY2007 – FY 2011)  
**Complete; Ongoing ✓**
- B. Work with public school system to develop a growth projection model for planning for school facility needs. (FY 2007 – FY 2011)

**Strategy 5.2: Promote schools to function as focal points for communities. [CCP: PS-02]**

**Objectives:**

- A. Consider incorporating mechanisms that link public school capacity and long-range public schools master plans to the land development permitting process into County land development ordinances. [CCP: PS-02-B] (CCP Phase II FY 2007 – FY 2010)
- B. Establish site selection criteria for new schools and site design criteria for all schools. [CCP: PS-02-C] (CCP Phase II FY 2007 – FY 2010) **Complete ✓ for Elementary Schools; Ongoing for Middle and High Schools**

***Goal 6: To help create a business climate that promotes a growing and diversified economy.***

**Strategy 6.1: Support the development of the industrial sector of the County's economy.**

**Objectives:**

- A. Support economic development efforts to retain the County's existing businesses. (FY 2008) **Complete; Ongoing ✓**
- B. Develop an inventory of land suitable for industrial use, meeting the criteria of size, access, utility availability and cost of acquisition. (FY 2008) **Complete ✓**
- C. Research the feasibility of constructing an industrial park for new industry recruitment. (FY 2009)

**Strategy 6.2: Support the County's agriculture industry as an important element of the County's economy.**

**Objectives:**

- A. Support economic development efforts to retain the County's existing businesses. (FY 2008) **Complete; Ongoing ✓**

## **Implementation of the Strategic Plan**

The Henderson County Strategic Plan will be used by the Board of Commissioners, Management, and County staff to provide direction for the County's leadership role in our community and as a guide for allocation of resources and prioritization of services provided. By planning for the future, Henderson County will be better prepared to respond to challenges and opportunities as they arise.

As noted earlier, the Strategic Plan is only a document and its real value is centered in the planning process and, more importantly, its implementation. While Henderson County expects to accomplish many of this plan's strategies and actions within next two years, the goals will likely guide our actions for the next several years. Goals, strategies, and objectives are reviewed annually. This review examines the extent to which the strategic issues have been addressed and the goals achieved. It will also recommend revisions, if necessary, to strategies and objectives in order to better carry out the Board of Commissioners' mission.



Additional copies of the Henderson County Strategic Plan can be downloaded at [www.hendersoncountync.org](http://www.hendersoncountync.org).