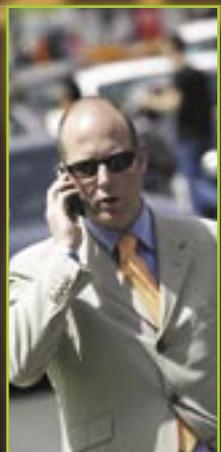
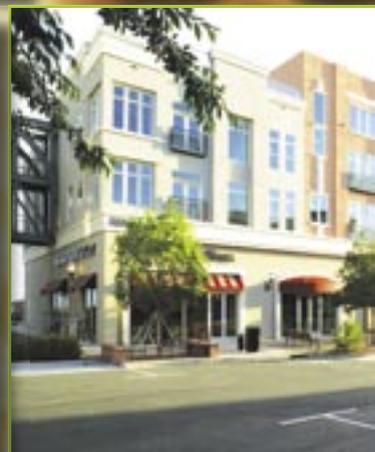


July 8, 2005

IN BUSINESS Las Vegas

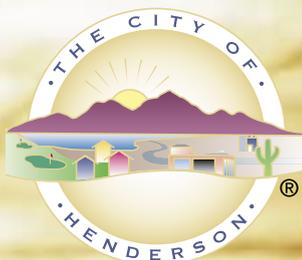
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FROM THE EDITOR



Dear readers,

When cities such as Milwaukee, Sacramento and Palm Springs come to mind, small isn't usually one of the buzzwords bandied about in conversations. After all, two

of the three are home to professional sports teams and the other hosts several high-profile golf events annually.

It may surprise you to know that, when it comes to a city's size, Henderson falls right in line with that trio. That's right — each of these cities measures approximately 95 square miles.

Boy, has Henderson come a long way in its 52 years of existence. The city incorporated back in 1953 with 7,410 residents. It isn't difficult to call a city "young" when it has "living" residents who remember when everything got started.

Now, Henderson is the second largest city in the state of Nevada and boasts more than 240,000 people. Estimates put its population at 310,000 by 2010, mostly

because a large chunk of the 6,000 people moving into the Las Vegas Valley each month are calling it home.

Henderson has nearly a dozen golf courses, 40 developed parks totaling more than 1,000 acres, and nine aquatic facilities. Additionally, 29 elementary schools, eight middle schools and nine high schools serve the city's residents. That's not even including the half dozen private schools and dozen colleges.

Amazingly, 4,400 new business licenses were issued last year, while the number of active licenses grew 8 percent to 13,250. Places like The District — located next to Green Valley Ranch Resort, Casino and Spa — have come into the picture to give people a new place to live, work and play.

The Pavilion at Liberty Pointe has also taken a new approach to usage, booking more events and some big name acts. Water Street is undergoing a facelift and expansion. New housing developments are popping up on all sides of the city. Lake Las Vegas is growing as fast as ever.

Life is changing in Henderson, and it seems to be all for the better.

Rob Langrell
Special Publications Editor
Rob.Langrell@gmgvegas.com

complex, the City of Henderson, the State of Nevada Fish Hatchery and the National Park Service today under the terms of the original federal entitlement.

Q. What city brought the first natural gas line to Nevada?

A. Southwest Gas brought a natural gas pipeline out of California to supply the Henderson plants, the first natural gas pipeline in Nevada.

Q. What is the City of Henderson's slogan today?

A. "Henderson — A Place to Call Home"

Q. In 1965, what was the Chamber of Commerce's theme for Industrial Days?

A. "Our Home Town — Henderson"

Q. What does the "B" on the River Mountains represent?

A. The large "B" on the River Mountains, which is visible from US95/I515, was placed there by proud Basic High School students and is the third "B" to announce school pride. Students from the original Basic High School painted the first "B" in lime, high on Black Mountain. The second "B" was placed along the hillside behind the original school, now Burkholder Middle School. Although the first two have now weathered and can barely be seen, Basic High School students still make an annual trip up the River Mountains with buckets of lime to keep the tradition alive.

Q. What are the towers on top of Black Mountain?

A. The top of Black Mountain is privately owned and primarily used as a site for communication towers. Television channels 3, 5, 21 and 39 transmit from the east end of Black Mountain, and channels 8, 13, 15 and 33 transmit from heights above Seven Hills.

—Courtesy City of Henderson

FROM THE SPONSOR



Dear readers,

For more than a decade Henderson has been in the national spotlight as one of the fastest growing cities in America, and we always have prided ourselves on our ability to chart that

growth in a way that has made Henderson one of the most attractive places to live, work and recreate in Nevada and the West.

The City of Henderson has had great success in sustaining our levels of growth, but even more impressive is the way we have worked to become leaders in shaping that growth to best compliment the tremendous quality of life our residents have come to expect and enjoy.

We have come a long way since our first master-planned community. With the recent approval of the new West Henderson project, we will soon break ground on one of the most innovative, well-planned and forward thinking master-planned projects in the entire country.

Residents will enjoy a community unlike any other in Nevada, where they can live, work and recreate all within walking distance of their homes. This "new urbanistic" approach to development will continue the tradition of quality and style for which Henderson has become legendary.

Other projects, including the remediation and development of 2,200 acres near the historic Timet plants, are visionary and have drawn national attention for their scope and potential. These coincide with our downtown redevelopment, which is right on track and promises to continue to transform

downtown Henderson into a vibrant cultural and community center.

The Nevada State College is going stronger than ever, forming partnerships to benefit our community in education and health care. The Medical Educational Research Institute (MERIN) recently opened as the newest member of our educational and medical diversification efforts and infrastructure, and doctors from around the world are now coming to Henderson to be trained on the most advanced surgical techniques and tools.

Our economic indicators continue to surge ahead, with our city receiving the highest bond rating in the state, equaled only by Clark County and the State of Nevada itself. In 2004 we succeeded in bringing in more than 1,100 new jobs to the city along with \$34.5 million in new payroll, \$3.4 million in new local business purchases and \$48.5 million in new construction.

Our city is already benefiting from the results of an aggressive physical infrastructure program that includes the completion of improvements on many of our major roadways, including the completion of the second largest roadway project in the history of Nevada with the new interchange at I-215 and U.S. 95. Our total assessed value grew 13 percent to \$7.4 billion during the past year.

There are other multiple projects underway in our city that are just too numerous to mention, but all are progressive and will continue to expand on the tremendous success that makes Henderson so vibrant and exciting. We invite you to join us and experience for yourself what has made the City of Henderson one of the fastest growing and most successful cities in the country.

Sincerely,

James B. Gibson
Mayor

HENDERSON TRIVIA

How well do you know Nevada's second largest city? Try your hand at this ...

Q. What was the original name for the site where the City of Henderson is now located?

A. Jericho Heights. In 1918, the only habitation in what is now known as the City of Henderson was that of R. B. Jefferson, who had a ranch in the area. After President Calvin Coolidge signed the Boulder Dam Bill in 1928, Jefferson wasted little time in taking advantage of his unique location midway between Las Vegas and the new dam site on the newly constructed highway into Las Vegas. He had constructed a small dwelling in 1927 and early in 1929, with a partner named Bearden, he subdivided a 40-acre tract that was then called Jericho Heights. Jericho Heights boasted one of the first air strips in Clark County, which was situated between the tract and the highway. It's more popular purpose was as a "speakeasy" where workers stopped after a dusty day for more potent liquids.

Q. When was Henderson officially incorporated as a city?

A. Henderson was officially incorporated as a city in 1953 with a population of 7,410.

Q. For whom was the City of Henderson named?

A. When the Basic Townsite Post Office was completed and dedicated in 1944, the town was named Henderson after the late Senator Charles B. Henderson.

Q. How did Water Street get its name?

A. Water Street, where City Hall now sits, is so named because the original raw water transmission line that first brought water to the plants during World War II runs directly under the street. It supplies water to the BMI

IN BUSINESS Las Vegas

Publisher

Bruce Spotleson, 990-2442, bruce@gmgvegas.com

EDITORIAL

Special Publications Editor

Rob Langrell, 990-2490, rob.langrell@gmgvegas.com

Special Publications Administrator

Terry Martin, 990-8170, terry.martin@gmgvegas.com

Staff Writers

Allen Grant, 990-8991, allen.grant@gmgvegas.com

Damon Hodge, 990-2530, damon.hodge@gmgvegas.com

Contributing Writers

Lisa McQuerrey

Deborah Roush

ADVERTISING & CREATIVE

Creative Director

Scott Lien, 990-2430, scott.lien@gmgvegas.com

Advertising Creative Director

Thomas Jackman, 990-2458, thomas.jackman@gmgvegas.com

Designer

Bradley Samuels, 990-2521, bradley.samuels@gmgvegas.com

Account Executives

Debbie Donaldson, 990-2457, debbie.donaldson@gmgvegas.com

Hilary Scott, 990-2502, hilary.scott@gmgvegas.com

Michael Skenandore, 990-2508, michael.skenandore@gmgvegas.com

Carol Skerlich, 990-2503, carol.skerlich@gmgvegas.com

General Advertising Information

Janine Wells, 990-2486, janine.wells@gmgvegas.com

CIRCULATION

Circulation Director

Ron Gannon, 990-2420

Client Relations

Rhona Cameron, 461-6434

Subscription Director

Jackie Sieta, 990-2431

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Henderson Redevelopment Agency brings fresh look to downtown

Several projects designed to increase Water Street's appeal



SWISHER & HALL

By Allen Grant
Staff writer

Henderson is becoming accustomed to record population growth and new-home construction. After all, it is one of the fastest growing cities in the country.

But, what Henderson and its residents haven't seen is equal growth to its downtown — specifically the Water Street District. In fact, the area hasn't welcomed a new mixed-use building project in more than three decades.

Times are changing.

Downtown Henderson is undergoing several beautification changes, including sidewalk improvements, utility upgrades and the revamping of pedestrian areas on and around Water Street. In addition, the city has developed standards to require more ground-floor retail and mixed-use buildings to create a more diverse and exciting setting.

With more than 230,000 square feet of downtown retail, residential and office construction projects planned for 2005, Henderson officials have a goal — bring new businesses and vibrancy to Water Street and the surrounding downtown area.



Rob Ryan

"Downtown Henderson is one of the few traditional downtown areas in the valley," said Rob Ryan, redevelopment manager for the Henderson Redevelopment Agency. "This is one of the few places (with an emphasis on pedestrians and walkways). For Henderson, we need to have a vibrant downtown as the center of our community."

Created nearly a decade ago, the Henderson Redevelopment Agency (HRA) was established to assist with the redevelopment of the city's central portion. The group focuses on the downtown Water Street District, Tuscan Hills and Cornerstone areas.

Utilizing tax increment financing funds to pay for public improvements to struggling

areas, relocate businesses, clean neighborhoods and public rights-of-way, improve decaying buildings and assist with the construction of developments and market-rate housing, agency officials said they expect rapid growth.

Nearly five years ago, the HRA adopted the Downtown Investment Strategy (DIS), a guide outlining the development

of downtown Henderson. DIS identified four target niche-business types for recruiting efforts including specialty retail, convenience retail, arts and culture and market-rate housing.

"We have 8,000 day-time workers within one mile of downtown," Ryan said. "We want to give those people a reason to frequent downtown (with more activity)."

Several agency projects are in full swing, including a number of mixed-use developments. "We are building some retail, office and residential spaces," Ryan added. "These projects are very important to rebuilding downtown."

Ryan said the overall downtown plan is

similar to The District at Green Valley Ranch featuring ground-level retail and office space with residential units on the higher floors.

"That's the scale we see," he said. "Our problem in the past has been we haven't had the space (available downtown for building)."

With the city's redevelopment plan, downtown now boasts available spots and several projects are already in various stages of development.

The Pinnacle

Developed by VLP Investments and located on the northeast corner of Water Street and Atlantic Avenue, The Pinnacle is a three-story, 15,000-square-foot, Class A office and retail project. Slated to open in October, the project is the first mixed-use building to break ground on Water Street in more than 30 years.

"We're really excited about this venture," said developer Vicki Pullen, owner of VLP Investments. "It's the first woman-led development in the state of Nevada from what can find out and the first development in a long, long time in downtown Henderson."

Pullen said she thinks the project will help pave the way for more construction in the area. "We would like to think we're set-

ting the trend toward the redevelopment of downtown Henderson," she said. "Over the past six months or so, we're hearing about several other projects (in various stages of planning or construction)."

This downtown project is the first to help jump-start the trend, agreed HRA's Ryan, whose agency provided low-interest, interim project financing. "This project is something we need, but don't have in downtown," he said.

At a cost of \$3 million, The Pinnacle will feature Cinnamon Styx, a ground-level coffee house/bakery and restaurant, along with executive suites and virtual office space on the second and third floors.

The Pinnacle is designed with a "Modern" style in conjunction with the overall downtown historical context and guidelines of focusing on classical 1940s industrial aesthetic with its emphasis on horizontal lines, smooth surfaces, curvaceous corners and symmetrical facades.

According to Ryan, the project is a wonderful opportunity for smaller insurance and attorney firms looking to take advantage of a great location at a reasonable cost. "Executive suites will be perfect for some of those types of businesses," he said.

Pullen said she believes small businesses will benefit from a number of advantages. "The biggest advantage is convenience and costs as utilities are included and we supply a full-time reception to handle phones," she said. "I think it's great for CPAs and attorneys, and other small firms based in Henderson or even Las Vegas firms looking for a satellite office."

Water Street Executives Suites at The Pinnacle plans to lease 26 units — some arranged in a type of timeshare agreement. These "Virtual Offices" can be leased for as little as one day a week and from month-to-month.

Pullen said "Virtual Offices" are designed for businesses looking for more exposure. "It offers a professional address for home-based businesses, for example, that want to secure a more professional image."

Water Street South

Located at the corner of Water Street and Basic Road in downtown Henderson, Water Street South is a 30,000-square-foot, mixed-use building project. Developed by John Simmons and Ron Hall, the \$7.5 million project features retail and Class A office space.

"We're under construction right now," Hall said. "A project of this stature is important for downtown. It should bring activity and some excitement back to the area. It's the first step in showing people that downtown Henderson is the place to be."

Water Street South is expected to attract \$55,417 annually for the city, once construction is completed in early November and it is added to the city's tax rolls. According to Hall, the project is approximately 55 percent pre-leased.

The property's key clients include the Clark County Credit Union (CCCU), which is providing financing for the project, and Nevada State College. Hall said he believes the state college, which will have a nursing-program branch at Water Street South, will help bring a renewed youth to downtown.

"Having the state college (in Water Street South) will help bring some students and youth to downtown," he said. "That should help feed other businesses as a result."

Ryan agreed. "We want to support the college, so this is a great addition to downtown. It brings a group of people who might be ultimately interested in living downtown, especially with the condo projects coming online."

Clark County Credit Union officials said they are excited about the upcoming downtown location. The Henderson branch of CCCU will be occupying a sizable 4,500-square-foot area in the building.

"We have been looking for space in Henderson for quite some time," said Wayne Tew, CEO of Clark County Credit Union. "We couldn't find what we were looking for until now. (The building) is close to Henderson city buildings and several employees are part of our credit union, so it's convenient."

Tew said the building project benefits downtown Henderson and offers the CCCU more flexibility to grow, similar to the other CCCU branches in the valley. "This (project) provides some Class A business space that can hopefully bring more business to downtown to help revitalize the whole area."

Meridian

Located on the southeast corner of Atlantic Avenue and Water Street, Meridian is a three-story, 21,500-square-foot project featuring retail and office space. The top floor has a developer's discretion to become either additional office or market-rate apartment space.

"We're partnering up with the Redevelopment Agency on this project," said Koko Darakjian, managing partner of RLK Investments. "(The project) means a tremendous amount to the revitalization of downtown Henderson."

To pave the way for RLK Investments to develop the project, the city will have

two vacant, older and decaying buildings removed. "Meridian will really enhance (downtown's vibrancy)," said Darakjian.

From a retail standpoint, Darakjian said he expects the project to attract fast-food retailers or a lunchtime deli to help serve area workers. On the office space side, he said they are "trying to attract businesses affiliated with the city of Henderson such as court reporting (firms) near city hall or architectural firms."

According to Darakjian, the developers are leaning toward apartment units for the top-floor space. "We're looking at probably five two-bedroom apartments ranging from 900 to 1,100 square feet," he said.

Five ground-floor retail spaces range from 800 to 1,200 square feet with the second floor accommodating five office suites of up to 1,400 square feet. With construction set to begin in October, Meridian could be open by March 2006.

Downtown's bright future

Along with their streetscape plan to widen sidewalks and plant more shade trees for an enhanced pedestrian atmosphere, Henderson Redevelopment Agency officials said they expect additional new construction projects to continue to boost the city's downtown renovation.

"We're expecting more mixed-use projects coming up," Ryan said. "Over the last year, and especially during the last six months, we're seeing a lot of (construction) interest in downtown."

Virtual offices take shape in Henderson

Cost-effective space could help small businesses grow

By Allen Grant
Staff writer

"Virtual" offices — think office-space timeshares for business owners — are coming to downtown Henderson.

A portion of the office space located in the Water Street Executive Suites at The Pinnacle includes units that can be leased for as short as one day a week to a month-to-month basis.

"It's a unique option for small businesses," said developer Vicki Pullen, owner of VLP Investments. "It's a chance for companies to customize your own (lease) package."

Scheduled to open in October across from the Henderson Convention Center, The Pinnacle is a mixed-use, three-story building featuring both retail and office space, measuring 15,000 square feet. The building's office units are comprised of executive suites and virtual offices. There are 26 total units.

The virtual office space is an attractive, low-cost option to many small businesses, Pullen said, because of the amenities associated with a lease. For example, complimentary amenities with every office include:

- On-site receptionist
- Mail service and utilities
- Janitorial services
- Phone line
- Conference and break rooms
- Property taxes

Pullen said she expects the advantages of virtual offices will make it an easy sell.

"Home-based businesses will appreciate a public office to meet clients," she said. "It's also a cost-effective way to increase their professional image."

With a lease agreement, several optional amenities are also available. They include: high-speed internet and wireless access, access to copiers, outgoing mail, and secretarial and courier services. Companies can even arrange a furniture package.

For Pullen, a long-time Henderson resident, the beautification and interest in downtown makes the project not only a professional one, but also a personal one.

"The area needs more projects like this," she said. "We're located in a great spot and hopefully we can attract people to see the variety of options in the area."



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Planned community to redefine neighborhoods through 'New Urbanism'

Focus Property Group has big expectations for 1,953-acre parcel acquired in BLM auction

By Damon Hodge
Staff Writer

Eons from now, anthropologists excavating the valley might point to 2005 as a watershed year.

Amid the remains of the tens of thousands of homogenous stucco homes with Spanish-style roofs, they'll unearth remnants of a Henderson community built on the concept of new urbanism. They'll find architecturally distinct homes and multistory residences with office and retail components, neighborhoods with village squares, abundant trails and bike paths, parks and athletic fields, schools and cultural outlets.

The man behind the company planning this community, on a 1,953-acre swath of land south of the Henderson Executive Airport, thinks the project could be just the beginning.

"New urbanism, neo-traditional design, traditional neighborhood design, smart-city concept — I call it new design — will become a trend in master-planned neighborhoods," said John Ritter, president and chief



John Ritter

executive officer of Focus Property Group. A Focus-led consortium bought the land for \$557 million in a Bureau of Land Management auction in June 2004,

At build-out, the tentatively titled "South Edge" will be the nation's second largest new urbanist community (just behind a 4,700-acre project in Denver) and the first such development in Nevada. Construction



Jim Widner

on the first model is expected to start by early 2006, with homes ready by Fall 2006.

Ritter says the consortium decided on the new design concept after the auction, keyed largely by a desire to tackle three major challenges facing the valley: the lack of affordable housing, the need to preserve water and the desire to combat social isolation in neighborhoods. New urbanism's basic te-

nets — pedestrian-oriented design, connectivity between residential, commercial and public open space and inclusionary housing — seemed like a tailor-made solution.

"From a practical standpoint, unless you're talking about government subsidies, which haven't been successful throughout the U.S., you have to talk about increasing density in terms of creating affordable housing," Ritter says. "But when you shove units together, you have to do it in a way that makes it aesthetic and livable. We'll provide a relief from density with natural open space, a system of arroyos and ridges."

On the water issue, Ritter says, "Most of waste is residential landscaping. So you need smaller yards and more community space. The community centers will have pools, so each house doesn't have to have one. There will also be drought-tolerant landscaping, no front-yard turf."

On neighbors socializing: "Social isolationism is a result of the way neighborhoods have been growing in the last few decades. Take your typical walled suburb. Each subdivision is walled and each home is walled.

South Edge specifics

- Seven villages of 200 to 250 acres apiece
- Each village will contain at least four pods or mini neighborhoods ranging in size from 20 to 60 acres.
- Each village will have between 1,268 to 2,258 dwellings
- Four elementary schools, one middle school and a high school
- Each neighborhood has a central park gathering place with a community center, recreational amenities, passive areas for sitting and reading.
- 300-acre Town Center.

The garage is the most prominent feature of the house. You pull up and into the garage, go into the house; the backyard is also walled. So there's not much opportunity to meet your neighbors."

Ritter says creating a live-work-play aesthetic — plans also call for multistory residential buildings with office and retail components and a 300-acre town

"At some point, you have to start changing the way communities are designed. You have to have alternatives to development styles of the recent past."

— Jim Widner
KB Homes

center — is especially critical in Las Vegas, which lacks the vast expanses of land that enable cities like Phoenix to sprawl for decades. Much like New York, San Francisco and Hong Kong, Ritter says population density will press local developers to go vertical and force residents to get used to living in smaller spaces.

Designing such a community is a feat in itself. South Edge is Focus' most expensive project on a per-acre basis, and its most advanced architectural and design undertaking. Though lengthy, the process of getting builder buy-in paid off; most developers are creating entirely new projects.

"There's a joke: If you're new home builders, then why are you building things today that you built five, 10 and 15 years ago? Seriously, the builders have become the hero in this project," Ritter says. "The houses are not going to look like boxes. There will be variations in colors, styles and design. We wanted to get away from the cookie-cutter, suburban, sprawl-type project that has been built in the southwest since World War II: stucco, red-tile roofs, Spanish

architecture, 40-acre subdivision, every house looks the same."

Because it costs more to build less-expensive housing and to design communities that emphasize pedestrian over vehicular traffic, new urbanist developments typically cost more to build. The increased density helps reduce most of the costs, according to Jim Widner, division president of KB Homes Nevada—which owns 48.5 percent of the project, the largest of any member of the consortium. Widner says South Edge is a natural evolution of the valley's current high-rise craze.

"At some point, you have to start changing the way communities are designed," he says. "You have to have alternatives to development styles of the recent past."

New urbanism isn't without critics, some claiming that it's a forced solution to sprawl; some people actually like it, they say. Gerrit Knapp, executive director of the College Park, Md.-based National Center for Smart Growth, warns that new urbanist developments can sometimes be a bit insular. Most people like the amenities but actually prefer living in cul-de-sacs, which harm neighborhood connectivity. It's a battle of what people want and what's good for the neighborhood.

"People like pedestrian-friendly environments, accessibility to commercial uses, open spaces. People don't like density in general, but prefer living in relatively homogenous subdivisions. They like connectivity to road networks but don't like traffic. Everyone would like to live on a 10-acre parcel," Knapp says. "New urbanism is becoming increasingly popular, but it's not quite mainstream. So it's going to be hard to fix Las Vegas with one development, but you have to start somewhere. I think it will do well in Las Vegas."

Ritter agrees: "They will become a trend in the master-planned neighborhoods. The cities of Henderson and Las Vegas are embracing these types of projects. North Las Vegas seems interested. If it sells like Mountain's Edge (Focus' development in the southwest valley will sell 2,500 to 3,000 homes this year), the residential portion will be sold out in four or five years. I think it will. I think it will set a new bar for master-planned communities."

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PARTY FOR A CAUSE.

Technology, new branches online for libraries

By Deborah Roush
Contributing writer

At least once a week Henderson resident Meredith Collins takes her three children, ages 8, 7 and 4, for a visit to the Paseo Verde branch of the city's library to borrow books, videos and DVDs or play computer games.

But before she goes, the busy stay-at-home mom visits the Henderson library's Web site and selects a few books for herself, then picks them up at the checkout counter at the library.

"That way I don't have to spend time in the adult section when I'm there with the kids with me. It's so much easier," she said. "I also go online to renew books and put new releases on hold."

Collins is just the type of person the Henderson District Public Libraries is working to please by adding more high-tech capabilities — busy people who use technology from their homes and offices, according to director Tom Fay.

All Henderson library buildings are already equipped with wireless technology for computer users. "We have guys sitting in trucks in the parking lot (with their laptops) before we even open using our wireless access," Fay said.

"Those who want to do research can get on the library Web site and have full access to

text articles or citations to other periodicals and journals. We're talking about magazines we get electronically before they even hit the shelves in the book store or library. We also have things people like to read, like People Magazine or Newsweek," he added.

Collins said logging on to the library Web site is easy. "You just type in your library card number and create a password. Then you're good to go," she said.

And more technology is on the way, Fay promises.

By January, the library will be in the first stages of implementing an automation system that will allow patrons to self-check books. "We're also moving toward being able to pay for overdue item fines online," he said.

Fay said he hopes to bring downloadable audio material to the Henderson libraries by the beginning of next year as well.

"Popular books are digitized ... you can download books onto a CD, for example, or into a PDA or onto a memory stick for a work or home computer. We're looking at a grant to bring that here and hopefully will have it funded by January," Fay added.

While the library is looking to expand its services, particularly those related to technology, there are additional plans to add more branches.

Before that is done, however; Henderson must staff and stock the Green Valley branch that will transfer its jurisdiction from the Las

Vegas-Clark County Library District in January 2009, thanks to an agreement reached between the two library districts in April.

Since 1988, the Green Valley branch has been within the Las Vegas-Clark County Library District boundaries that were set 30 years ago, Fay said.

"They will vacate the building and build a new (branch), probably in northwest Las Vegas. Once they're out, we will staff Green Valley, buy new materials and put in new computer technology. Just to get the physical materials in is projected to cost \$2 million," Fay said.

Then, in the next five to eight years, the library plans to add smaller, storefront locations that are easy for Henderson residents to access. "They will be closer to people's homes. A serious library user will drive to a library, but the average user will only go two to four miles," he said.

The new branches — similar to the 6,000-square-foot Lydia Malcolm branch that opened in February,

at 2960 Sunridge Heights Pkwy. in Seven Hills — will have less overhead and will be cheaper to manage.

"We're looking at a warehouse-type of model where we can have perhaps 50,000 to 80,000 square feet of storage and feed the branches as the need comes up. We would have smaller neighborhood locations but a large collection of materials on demand," he said.

It's a new model not yet proven in libraries but certainly a success in businesses like Wal-Mart or Costco, Fay said.

It's needed here, since the library has seen its usage in every category jump more than 100 percent in the last five years but has a budget of only \$6.5 million — not enough to add materials and big buildings at the same time, Fay added.

"If we can keep costs down and be creative, like this plan is, we hope we can do both after the Green Valley transfer," he said.



Tom Fay



Jim Widner

In the meantime, to get a baseline of library service to all residents, the library district recently purchased its first out-reach bookmobile.

“It has 2,000 library materials on it at any one time and we will rotate the collections or bring fresh materials in once a month,” Fay said.

The bookmobile will go to all parts of Henderson including senior centers, assisted living facilities and parks and recreation facilities.

Fay said he hopes, too, to use the bookmobile to take successful library programs directly to those who need them.

One such program, Reading with Rover, allows students struggling with reading to read to therapy dogs under the watchful eye of a handler. “The dogs are non-judgmental and kids are assigned to a dog that meets their stature. A small kid gets a small dog. The kids really get into it and their reading skills (drastically) improve,” he said.

If the bookmobile is successful, Fay wants to add more to the fleet, he said.

“One of the things that sets us apart is that while we’re turning into a mid-sized library system, we’re very flexible and adaptable,” he said.

The library’s greatest strength, he added, is a staff that is willing to change to meet demand. “We have a staff that understands tradition, that comes from the traditional concept, but is very much on the leading edge of providing new services to the patrons.”

Henderson Libraries

James I. Gibson Library

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Henderson, NV 89015
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Fri - Sat 9-5
Sun 12-4

Lydia Malcolm Library

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(formerly 1425 S. Green Valley Parkway)
Henderson, NV 89052
(702) 263-7522
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Mon and Wed: 11-7
Tues and Thurs: 10-6

Paseo Verde Library

280 S. Green Valley Parkway
Henderson, NV 89012
(702) 492-7252
Mon-Thurs 9-9
Fri - Sat 9-5
Sun 12-4

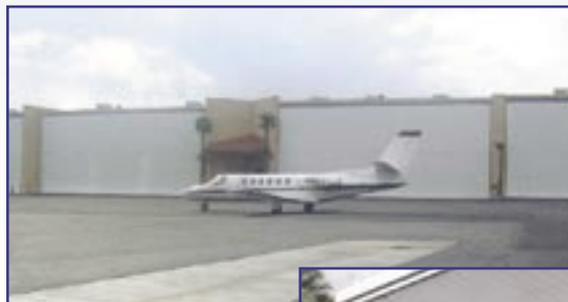
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20 Questions

Henderson Mayor Jim Gibson took a few minutes recently to discuss the state of the city

By Lisa McQuerrey
Contributing writer

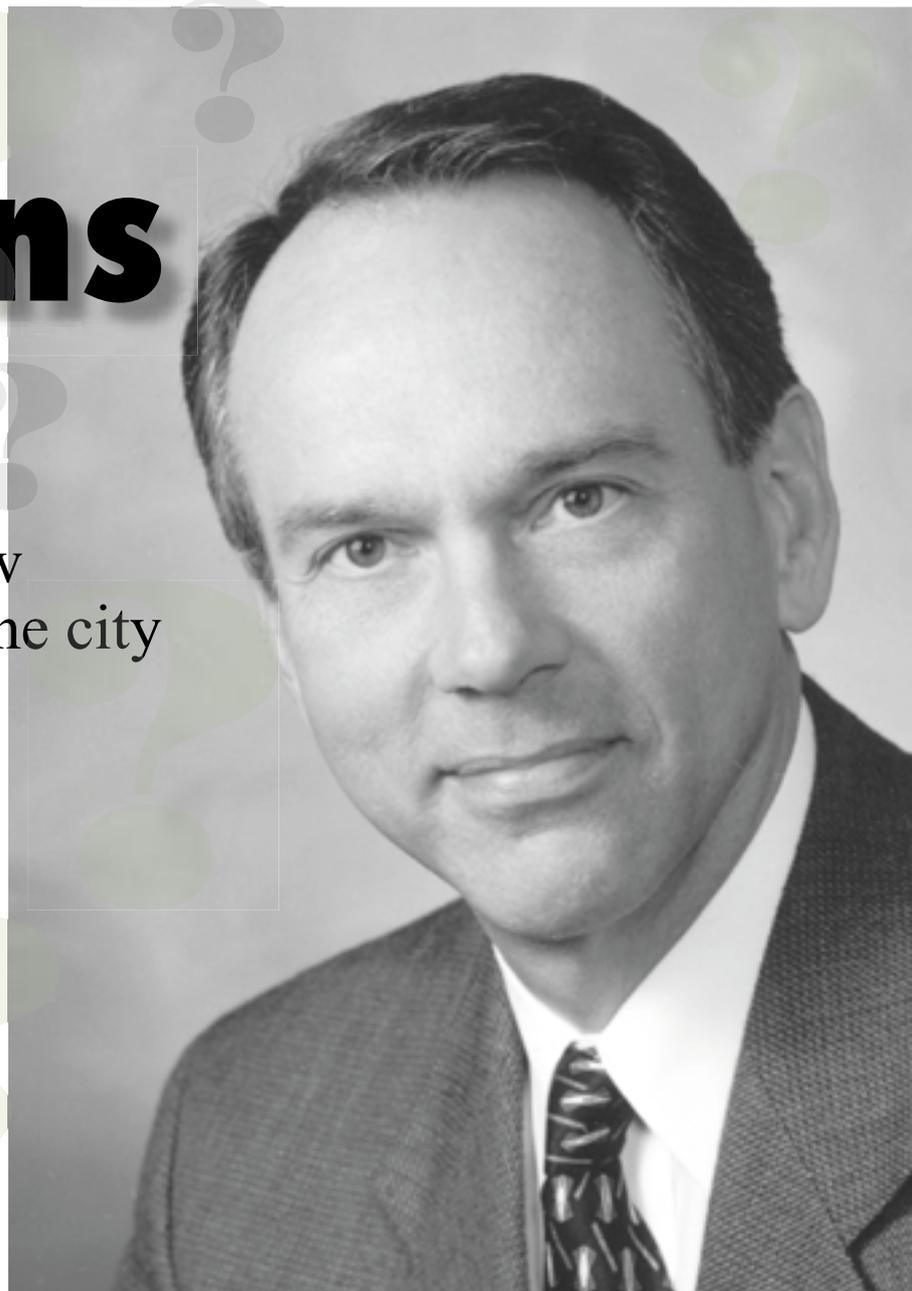
Q You noted in your recent State of the City address that each year the city's growth has "pushed us and allowed us to explore new venues." Can you elaborate on the specifics of that statement?

Henderson Mayor Jim Gibson: "That was a statement addressing the physical size of the State of the City audience. The first year we did it at Railroad Pass and we were set in a horseshoe configura-

tion and had curtains up to make the room feel not so large. Every year we've moved the address because of the interest that continues to be generated in Henderson. Nearly 1,000 people attended this year, and that was during a legislative session."

Q. You have often noted Henderson's philosophy for "growing well." What does that mean in terms of the way both residential and business development takes place?

GIBSON: "It has never been our objective to be the fastest growing,




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or even the second fastest growing city. As we've done things well we've attracted developers and others who want to be part of what's going on. Our parks and recreation system reaches into the community to bring all age groups into participation. Residential planning — a hallmark of Henderson — has been done with a critical eye on designing parks, schools, and fire and police stations so that we get from growth the kinds of amenities we need for the people who are moving in. We have an ongoing open space planning process whereby we define what 'open space' means to us. We've faced the difficult task of holding the line on zoning around the Henderson Executive Air Terminal, which is becoming more and more important as McCarran nears capacity. We've also maintained the same tax rate for 16 years and received a number of awards related to accountability in government. Even our bond rating has improved."

Q. What are some of the aspects of the city's strategic plan that will be of particular importance during the next 12 months?

GIBSON: "Quality development is a key issue to ensuring a stable, sustainable community. To maintain our quality of life, we need a certain type of infrastructure. Public safety is another priority. Response times are critical, and we're doing all we can at our current funding level. We're also working very hard on transportation issues. Our natural resource management efforts have been successful and we've been working with citizens who are very responsive. We've also been

proactive in our financial planning. Our bond rating achievement is something no one would have ever imagined we could do."

Q. You've said the city works diligently to allocate its resources according to its priorities. What are some of the city's current priorities?

GIBSON: "If you look at the city budget and see where new dollars and growing dollars are going, you'll see we feel an obligation to do all we can to give the people of Henderson something in return for their investment. It's a business-like approach. When you look at where we spend discretionary money, you'll see it is being used for the projects outlined in the city's strategic plan."

Q. Is the city's growth placing particular challenges on city services?

GIBSON: "Lots of challenges. The growth challenge is the most difficult, but we have incredible employees and Henderson City Manager Phil Speight gives his people room to be creative. We don't tend to look at how big a challenge might be, but rather, we think about how many resources we have to put to that challenge."

Q. What type of progress is Henderson making in diversifying its economic base?

GIBSON: "The last 15-20 years have been really important to forming the foundation for our economic diversification efforts. We've had wonderful and successful gaming operations in the city,

but we're working hard to bring in other industry. Today we're attracting high-tech industry. MERIN (Medical Education and Research Institute of Nevada, located inside Touro University) will train surgeons and physicians from around the world on the latest surgical equipment and technologies. We're expecting to see a better-educated and more diverse workforce in the future."

Q. The District at Green Valley Ranch is being used as a national model of successful mixed-use development. What does this say about the city's progressive development plans?

GIBSON: "It says that we are as creative as we need to be to accommodate the creativity of the private sector. It has had a tremendous impact and it has raised the bar for much of the development taking place across the valley. There are various types of brand new concepts being introduced over the next several years — such as our West Henderson development — that will include new design concepts. We're willing to explore new options as long as the objective is to make life better for those who live here."

Q. Can you discuss ways in which the city's Development Services Center is working to keep pace with population growth?

GIBSON: "It's a phenomenal concept. We're taking the notion that to be the best in business, you have to be the best at what you do to survive. The cost/benefit analysis must always be in your favor. We sat down with the development community to

find out ways we could improve, and we found they were willing to pay for better service. It's run like a business and we're now more than 99 percent on time turning around projects such as permits, inspections and plan reviews. That's important to developers and residents because the cost of delays can be passed along to homeowners."

Q. The city has made major investments in infrastructure projects over the past several years. What projects have been most significant?

GIBSON: "We've completed improvements to the Gibson Road and Sunset corridor. Horizon Ridge Parkway paving should be completed by year-end. There's the U.S. 95-215 project. We've made improvements to Eastern Avenue, widening it to its maximum designed width. The Auto Show Drive off-ramp was huge — it's a lifeblood element to the community — the largest single sale tax generator is the Valley Auto Mall. We've also been working on St. Rose Parkway widening and we're working on the issue of water treatment capacity. These are all very important investments."

Q. How will the city's current \$130 million in road improvement projects benefit residents and business owners?

GIBSON: "When complete, the I-515-215 projects will give us all mobility around the community. There's enough happening in both the east and the west that we need that connectivity."



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Q. Henderson is being recognized for its growing base of post-secondary educational institutions. How does this impact the city?

GIBSON: "It gives residents better access to educational opportunities and it provides a critically needed workforce. The schools also help entice new business. An atmosphere of academia leads to an improved stature and image of a community. We will be a better community as a result of these educational institutions."

Q. In what ways does the city support its primary and secondary schools?

GIBSON: "We get schools from de-

velopers so the schools don't have to pay for land and we try to design it so parks are adjacent to schools where possible. Our APPLE partnership - All People Promoting Literacy Efforts - provides incentives and support to teachers and families. Our Safe Key staff recently met with every principal to discuss how we could better support the program. We train school crossing guards and share in school ground maintenance. We look for opportunities of stewardship and try to leverage our resources to provide our schools with greater benefits."

Q. You've noted that Henderson has a "small town atmosphere" with "big city benefits." How long can the city

maintain this atmosphere?

GIBSON: "We've got 250,000 residents, and when you think about the fundamentals we've talked about, you see that we don't think of 'developments;' we think of 'neighborhoods.' We've worked hard so that when you drive around, you see an ocean of neighborhood schools, parks, recreation centers and wonderful properly placed retail."

Q. With some of the oldest and newest neighborhoods in the valley, how are Henderson's increasing property and land values affecting residents and business owners?

GIBSON: "We're very concerned about the effect on residents. If you look

at the typical Henderson demographic, you'll see we need to accommodate the housing needs of our residents or the face of our community will change. The Focus Property Group project being developed in West Henderson with high-density residential will help."

Q. Do you see a huge difference between "old Henderson" and "new Henderson?"

GIBSON: "I think we have some of the most exciting things going on in the 'old' part of Henderson, where we already have lake Las Vegas, Calico Ridge, downtown lofts and redevelopment projects and new class A office space on Water Street. I live in the 'old' part of Henderson and I'm very happy there. I think we're doing a good job with it. Soon the older part of the city will have more 'new' amenities than the 'new.'"

Q. In what ways does Henderson maintain its strong sense of community?

GIBSON: "Growth presents challenges, but the benefits outstrip everything. We have incredible human resources who have moved into our city. They volunteer and they make our programs work."

Q. How do Henderson residents influence quality of life issues at the city planning level?

GIBSON: "We try to keep City Hall open. Our telephone numbers are all listed and people know who we are. Many of us (city administrators) grew up or went through school in Henderson and we want to know the people in this community. We meet, we sit down and we discuss. Our many boards and commissions also provide an opportunity for people to serve."

Q. Are there any community-oriented projects currently in the works?

GIBSON: "I'm most proud of our partnership with Nathan Adelson Hospice. Parks & Recreation will donate land adjacent to Nevada State College (NSC) and we'll help raise money and partner with NSC to supplement the facility's nursing staff. The wonderful part is that this will meet a serious and critical community need."

Q. If you could change one thing about the city of Henderson, what would that be?

GIBSON: "I think the changes I'd like to see are projects that are currently underway."

Q. On a personal note, do you have any political aspirations you'd like to discuss?

GIBSON: "I'm being encouraged by a lot of people, but I don't have any announcement to make at this time."

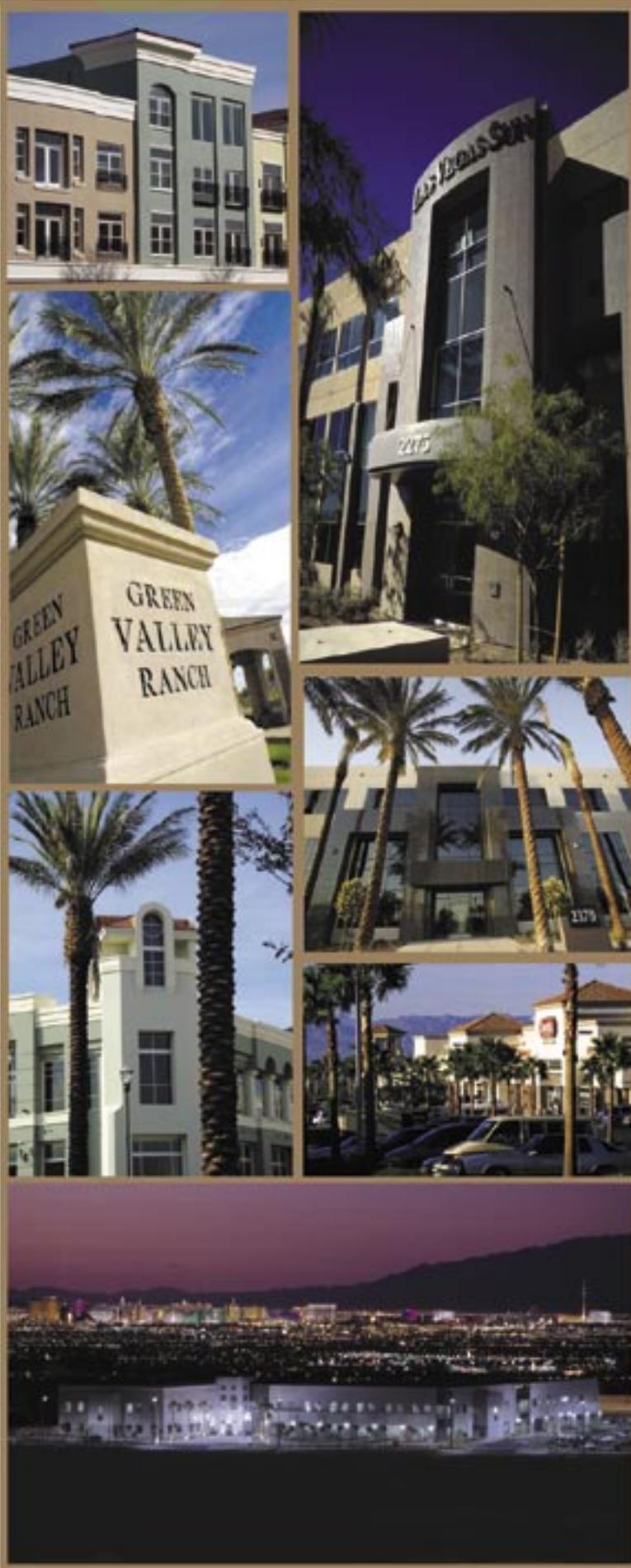
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Chamber evolving to meet changing needs of membership

By Lisa McQuerrey
Contributing writer

As Henderson's business community continues to expand and diversify, the Henderson Chamber of Commerce (HCC) has stepped up and taken a unique and proactive approach to identify and address the specific needs of business across a broad spectrum of business and industry.

"The evolution of the Henderson Chamber of Commerce is common for organizations of its kind in rapidly growing communities," said D.J. Allen of Imagine Marketing of Nevada. Allen has been active in the HCC since 1997 and was recently elected to the organization's board of directors. "Twenty years ago — even 10 years ago — serving Henderson's businesses meant producing community events that focused on driving traffic to the area to create economic growth. Over the past few years, with a booming population and the economy becoming so diversified, it was crucial for the HCC to evolve into an organization that focuses primarily on promoting and supporting business."

Celebrating its 60-year anniversary during 2005, the HCC boasts 1,500 members. Executive Director Alice Martz said the chamber's evolution has been a challenge, with the organization working to redesign many of its programs to fit the changing needs of its membership.

"A lot of our members join because we

provide business support in a personal manner," Martz said. "We find that for us, some businesses feel they are not being heard. We don't want to lose that personal touch and Henderson doesn't want to lose its community spirit. It takes a lot of work."

The Henderson chamber has been doing just that: hitting the streets and asking business owners what they need from a chamber of commerce.



Alice Martz

"We're talking to people and asking questions," Martz explained. "The Henderson Development Authority (HDA) is asking people, as are council members and supporters of economic development. We're making weekly visits to different types of businesses and we find out what their needs are. Then we ask ourselves, 'What can we do? Who can we bring together to address this?'"

The chamber's hands-on approach is evolving to include a series of focus groups, each zeroing in on one of the city's leading industries. Most recently, in May the HCC, HDA, Community College of Southern Nevada and Southern Nevada MAP (Management Assistance Partnership), in conjunction with Ocean Spray, Kerr-McGee and Southwest Gas, formed a partnership to develop the Manufacturing Industry Educational Focus & Development Workshop. The workshop included a discussion with leaders from numerous manufacturing plants on topics related to

skill gaps and training needs. As a result of the workshop, CCSN is now developing programs designed to help cultivate a pool of candidates skilled in specialized areas — such as manufacturing.

"We invited 60 manufacturers to the forum and they broke into groups and discussed concerns and needs," said Martz. "We found out they are having problems finding certain types of skilled employees. We listened to them and gauged their concerns. We now have specialized training programs being created at CCSN and we hope to see them start in July of this year."

The manufacturer's forum was so successful that the HCC has developed a similar focus group directed at addressing the needs of Henderson's medical community.

"We'll find out what their needs are, we'll pull in the universities and the HDA and we'll communicate with each other," Martz said.

Henderson's growing academic community is enthusiastically embracing the chamber's efforts to bridge the gap between industry and education. National University Nevada campus Vice President Dr. Charlotte Bentley called the chamber's efforts a "win-win" for universities and businesses, noting that relocating and expanding businesses have, in the past, been leery of the quality of Henderson's workforce.

"The chamber, the city and the Henderson Development Authority researched and looked at a number of national, reputable universities before issuing invitations to open campuses," explained Bentley. "Businesses moving in

now understand the city has a number of diverse educational institutions."

Bentley chairs the HCC's Henderson Leadership program, now entering its sixth year, and is involved in creating an internship opportunity aimed at connecting businesses with local institutions. "It's something that can be challenging for business owners and students to do, so the chamber is creating that bridge."

The chamber will host a higher education expo later this summer, and in late October, will hold an education fair at the Henderson Pavilion. The idea behind the fair is to bring together community members, business owners and educational institutions and provide information on programs and opportunities across the board.

Besides its focus groups and educational outreach, the HCC is partnering with the Latin, Asian and Urban chambers, along with the HDA, Nevada Commission on Economic Development and the U.S. Department of Commerce to develop a workshop on doing business with China.

According to Allen, going forward, the HCC will continue its efforts to support and promote business by providing exposure for members, supporting programs that help businesses and representing business at the legislative level.

"Most businesses can't afford to have a say in the legislative process," noted Allen. "Through the Chamber's efforts, businesses are given the assurance that someone is watching out for their best interests."



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Project aims to bring slice of Soho to Henderson

By Damon Hodge
Staff writer

Lips in a half-moon smile and chopsticks in hand, the slender brunette hoists a piece of sushi mouthward. Six inches away, a bronzed, bikini-clad woman catches some rays, while a young couple, martini glasses filled with fruity-colored drinks, raises a toast. As a divaish blonde sashays by them, fancy purse hanging on her right forearm, her scarf fluttering, a tanned man with a swimmer's physique relaxes on a lawn chair.

The whole atmosphere oozes in-crowd chic.

But this is neither a snapshot from a Strip pool party nor a clip from a "What Happens Here Stays Here" commercial. The scene comes from the interior of a brochure touting 17th & Vine, a 22-acre project on the corner of Stephanie and Wigwam near Interstate 215 that aims to bring a slice of Soho to Henderson. The brainchild of longtime developer Dan Shaw, the 17th & Vine project incorporates the urban village concept popular opponents of sprawl. They see going



Dan Shaw

vertical (17th & Vine has mid-rises, three levels of condos atop ground-level retail), creating mixed uses (incorporating residential, retail and office space)



The 17th & Vine project will include grass areas at the mid-rise project.



The project will include 466 units, priced from about \$275,000.

and adding accommodating civic spaces as a sophisticated way to blunt growth's deleterious impact on infrastructure and quality of life.

The projects 466 units, priced from \$273,800 (for a 976-square-foot condo) to \$722,500 (2,461 square feet, with three bedrooms, three bathrooms, balcony and lofts), target two-income households, young professionals and baby boomers and feature such amenities as secured underground parking and private elevator access in each building. Also incorporated are aspects of new urbanism, an approach to community design emphasizes walkable neighborhoods, civic space and regional connectivity. Plans call for a clubhouse with a business center, juice bar and theater, a special events outdoor amphitheater, pedestrian walking trails,

sitting areas and access to 48,000 square feet of retail and 17,000 square feet of office space.

As communities struggle with keeping housing affordable and making communities more livable, Stephen Filmanowicz, communications director for the San Francisco-based Congress of New Urbanism, says planners, developers and activists are increasingly turning to new urbanism. The nonprofit congress coaches folks on the concept. "New urbanism should work there," he says.

Shaw, who is chief executive officer of LVBM and co-founder and CEO of Realty Management, is betting on it.

"This is really the only project of its type in Henderson and an evolution of a city that is not only the second largest city in the state but the fastest growing

city in the nation," Shaw said. "The city has its own business centers, it's generating jobs and has been very progressive in working with developers to address growth issues while still creating environments that are pleasing for residents to live in. The District is part of that work. 17th and Vine is the next step. It's taking the concept of metropolitan living a step further."

The metropolitan 17th & Vine is a far cry from Shaw's first project, the Renaissance Center, built 22 years ago at Tropicana and Eastern Avenues — much of his early work centered on commercial development — as well as the 12,000 multifamily, residential developments he's built over the last 15 years, including Bay Breeze at Warm Springs Road and Green Valley Parkway, his first Hen-

derson project. Public meetings were held about the project, with the point being to educate residents on the benefits of going vertical.

"Certainly there are growing pains when you're the fastest growing city in the nation. Residents supported 17th & Vine because we're creating attractive living environments. If you want to go away for a month, you can feel safe that your investment is safe," says Shaw, whose companies have developed more than \$1 billion worth of commercial and residential projects. "As a whole, Henderson has taken the lead on the issue of better planning. Mary Kay Beck (director of planning for the city of Henderson) was recently elected president of American Planning Association, which has more than 25,000 members. She's



Residents will have access to a recreation center, walking distance from their homes.



The 17th & Vine project was modeled after the SoHo area of New York City.



There will be 48,000 square feet of retail space and 17,000 square feet of office space.



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A playground area, above, and a pool will provide attractive incentives to families.



gone to China and Australia to speak on what's going on in Henderson."

As chairman of the Henderson Planning Commission, and through his work with the city's Parks and Recreation Department and Urban Land Institute, Shaw's been involved with Anthem Development, Lake Las Vegas and Seven Hills, and projects that have radically redefined the city President John F. Kennedy once tabbed "Hooterville."

"I think he regretted saying that later on," Shaw says of Kennedy. "Henderson is a great community to live in. You've got proximity to parks and recreation, churches, schools, shopping and it's easy to get around. The products we build, develop and manage appeal to the type of people who like this lifestyle."

St. Rose Hospitals grow to meet city's health care demands



St. Rose Hospitals expects to open the San Martin campus in the southwest in 2006. That will join two campuses that currently serve Henderson.

By Deborah Roush Contributing writer

When Amy Blansett had her two children, son Riley, 10, and daughter Abby, 7 she chose a physician, specifically, who could deliver at St. Rose Dominican Hospitals Rose de Lima campus in Henderson.

"I could have gone anywhere in the Valley but I wanted St. Rose because they were thought to be the best," Blansett said. "They took care of you on a personal as well as a physical level. The nurses talked to me like I was a friend."

So it doesn't surprise her that in the decade since she first was a patient at St. Rose, the hospital has more than doubled in size and stands ready to open a third campus next year.

High praise like Blansett's is good news for St. Rose Dominican Hospitals Chief Executive Officer and President Rod Davis, who is responsible for overseeing the growth of the hospital. It opened in 1947 with about 40 beds.

"St. Rose de Lima was built by seven Adrian Dominican (Catholic) sisters from Michigan who came to take over the small government hospital," Davis said.

Today that campus, at 102 E. Lake Mead Parkway, is a general acute care hospital with a full range of services and houses a wound healing center and acute rehabilitation center.

To meet the needs of one of the fastest growing cities in the nation, St. Rose opened its Siena campus in 2000 at 3001 St. Rose Parkway with 140 beds. It now has 214 beds, an open heart surgery program, a joint replacement center, full-service pediatrics with an intensive care unit, a neurosurgery program and a level-two neonatology unit.

"And we expect state approval to open a level-three trauma center this summer," Davis added.

And St. Rose continues to grow. In July 2006, the San Martin campus will open on Warm Springs Road between Durango Drive and Cimarron Road in southwest Las Vegas with 140 beds.

"We'll be able to expand quickly to 200 beds and will offer full-service acute care with

a level-two neonatal unit, pediatrics, a joint replacement center and the latest technology for diagnostics and treatment, Davis said.

To ensure that each campus' technology is equally state-of-the-art, new tools are added all the time, including one at the Siena campus that will help doctors treat patients with aneurysms, brain tumors and strokes without "opening up the skull," Davis said.

"We just added biplane imaging technology, which allows two images to be taken at once. Those images are reconstituted to create a three-dimension view," Davis said, adding that St. Rose is only the fifth hospital in the nation with a biplane flat panel detector.

"We've added a new cath lab at the Siena campus with some of the newest

Rod Davis

technology in cardiology and we recently did some renovations to our emergency department to prepare for receiving level-three trauma designation," Davis added.

It's challenging, Davis admitted, to keep up with Henderson's growth.

"Hospital construction costs are very expensive and it takes a great deal of planning to expand health care facilities. There has been a strain (on the system) in terms of overall capacity and particularly emergency room capacity, although we've been able to respond very effectively," he said.

Recruiting health care professionals is another daunting task, Davis said.

"We've had to really develop extensive programs to recruit physicians, nurses and other clinical staff. That continues to be an ongoing problem."

Added to that is "a serious challenge in our health care system in our country that is created by downward pressure on reimbursement for government paid patients, whether it is Medicare, Medicaid or other programs. It puts additional pressure on employers and other managed care plans," Davis said.

"Then, we continue to see growth in the uninsured population, which adds to the cost

pressure of operating a hospital.

"And (throughout), we operate in the fastest growing area of the country so we have the additional challenge of trying to add new capacity and build new facilities to serve a rapidly growing population," he added.

St. Rose Dominican Hospitals, Davis said, is important to all residents of Southern Nevada. "We're different. We're the only not-for-profit religiously sponsored hospital in Southern Nevada," he said.

"As part of that we can make a profit — we have to make a reasonable profit in order to be able to continue to expand. But what makes

us different is that we are required to return that profit back to the communities we serve," he added.

"Another thing that sets us apart is the values that are the foundation of how we operate. The Adrian Dominican sisters set the standard nearly 60 years ago to provide high quality care in an environment with compassion, respect and dignity with a focus on those with special needs and serving the poor," Davis added.

Blansett, for one, appreciates the organization's mission. "You can be confident living in Henderson because such a high caliber hospital is part of the community," she said.

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Henderson housing market dips compared to other Vegas markets

By Deborah Roush
Contributing writer

Henderson, one of the fastest-growing cities in the nation for the last decade, has fewer people buying new homes compared to other, faster growing areas of the Las Vegas Valley, according to local real estate professionals.

A recent study by Restrepo Consulting Group, a Las Vegas-based economic research firm, shows that when the Henderson submarket is compared to three others — North Las Vegas, Northwest Las Vegas and Southwest Las Vegas, it virtually ties for last in the number of new home sales.

“When you look at the numbers for Henderson as a percentage of the whole, they’re actually declining,” said John Restrepo, the firm’s principal.

Still, Henderson’s housing numbers are impressive.

“Between 1999 and 2004 there were 21,000 new home sales in Henderson within 58 subdivisions or projects,” Restrepo said.

That represents 19 percent of the overall new homes built in the Valley.

“Comparatively, however, the biggest submarket as far as sales captured is the

Southwest with 32,000 new home sales, or 29 percent, of the market.

“The Northwest followed with 24,000 homes built, or 21 percent of the pie and North Las Vegas virtually tied with Henderson with 20,000 new home sales — or 18 percent,” Restrepo said.

The reason North Las Vegas’ and Henderson’s numbers are sliding — and will continue to fall — is because of “new and upcoming” developments in the Northwest and Southwest, Restrepo said.

“It comes down to availability of land. Henderson’s share of available land has decreased over time. And Henderson doesn’t have much land left to be released by the Bureau of Land Management,” he added.

While other areas of the Valley may beat out Henderson when it comes to new home sales, it continues to lead the pack in terms of resales, said Mary Baca, a real estate agent with Las Vegas’ Century 21 MoneyWorld.

“When it comes to the highest appreciation rate, year after year it’s between Henderson and Summerlin, and last year Henderson’s Green Valley had the highest appreciation rate. That’s one of the reasons people want to buy homes there,” Baca said.

Even with the median price of a home on the rise — it’s now about \$300,000 for a new home and \$250,000 for a resale — buyers are on the move, she added.

“Typically Green Valley Ranch is the most promising area of Henderson, and the minimum you will pay for a home there is from \$350,000 or \$375,000 and they go into the millions,” Baca said.

“Then you have McDonald Highlands and McDonald Ranch, which also are very popular, although prices start at \$1 million and go up from there,” she added.

Anthem and Seven Hills are other leading Henderson communities among resale buyers, Baca said.

Financial advisor Michael Moore, who handled more than \$24 million in mortgage loans for Morgan Stanley’s Henderson office last year, said the appeal of Henderson is that it is “Smalltownesque.”

“People move out here and see the Valley as one complete entity. Once they start shopping for homes they discover Henderson as its own community.

“You can live here and maintain the typical American lifestyle of living, working, taking care of kids and going about a normal life; but when you want it you have access to Las Vegas’ glamour, glitz, world-renowned chefs and restaurants,

and entertainment,” he added.

“That’s the main reason Henderson attracts so many home buyers — it’s convenient easy access to that lifestyle when the mood strikes,” Moore said.

And the experts predict it will stay that way — at least while there’s vacant land.

“Of course different experts have different opinions, but it looks like when you’re talking strictly about home building there’s about five years of land left. And projections for total build out are around 10 years,” said Monica Caruso, a spokesperson for the Southern Nevada Home Builders Association.

Until then, Restrepo predicts Henderson will see a lot of “higher density single family or mixed-use residential,” he said.

And Moore expects housing prices to stabilize.

“A lot of people discuss housing here as a bubble, as though it’s going to burst. I honestly don’t see that happening. I just see us returning to regular Henderson or Las Vegas growth rates.

The recent spikes in home values have “brought us more in line with other retirement communities,” he said.

“I don’t think we’re overpriced at this point in time,” he added.



New-home construction in Henderson, including the Highlands model in Anthem, is flourishing at a record pace.

Henderson Pavilion quickly becoming major hub of city's cultural activities

By Damon Hodge
Staff writer

The Henderson Pavilion is an impressive structure, a hill of green grass sloping downward toward a 2,000-seat amphitheater roofed by a pointy white tent.

Three years after opening — much to the consternation of some residents concerned if Henderson needed such a large cultural venue; the \$13.5 million facility was financed by a 1997 voter-approved bond — the Henderson Pavilion is beginning to find its groove. Booked for events roughly half of last year — nearly 40,000 people attended concerts, dances, festivals, plays and special events in 2004 — the pavilion is on pace for a busier 2005.

On July 15, three-time Grammy Award winner Bruce Hornsby (10 million records sold since his 1986 debut) drops in for a three-day stint at the pavilion. In September, four-time Grammy winner Aaron Neville is slated for an engagement.

“The city has a vision of arts,” says Annette Mullins, a recreation supervisor in the city's Parks and Recreation Department. She also oversees Henderson's cultural arts programming. “And with cultural opportunities growing in the area, the pavilion is a perfect fit and a perfect venue to help with that growth. It's the (valley's) only outdoor amphitheater with professional theater space. The county (government) amphitheater is not really made for professional theater.”

Mullins says the pavilion, which is part of 40-acre Liberty Point complex — the Paseo Verde Library, Henderson Multigenerational Center, a large promenade and police substation — is popular among churches and educators; school and private colleges have rented the facility for graduation celebrations.

Among the pavilion's biggest beneficiaries/cheerleaders is the Arts Council of Henderson, an 18-year-old nonprofit whose three-day Nevada Shakespeare in the Park is Henderson's largest event, drawing more than 15,000 visitors. When the annual festival grew too big for Foxridge Park (Warm Springs and Valle Verde), Sandra Bird, the council's executive director, looked around for new digs.

The pavilion had some plusses: central location; it was equipped to handle professional theater; plentiful seating (2,000 seats under the shaded white tent, a 4,500-seat capacity in the grass). One visit and she was sold.

“Once people come there, they realize what a great facility it is,” Bird says. “It's a great place to draw people all over the city. There was some discussion of having Shakespeare in the Park elsewhere, but not anymore. Now people can have professional theater in their back door.”

As word gets out about the pavilion, Bird expects the caliber of entertainment, especially theater, will improve. As evidence, she points to the council's selection last year for a National Endowment for the Arts grant for its Shakespeare in the American Communities program; the three-year-old initiative brings top-quality theater to small and mid-size communities. The funding allowed the arts council to host the Arkansas Repertory Theater, one of the top touring groups in the country, for a

showing of “Romeo and Juliet.”

“Those folks (from the Arkansas Repertory Theater) loved the facility,” Bird says.

Bird says the pavilion is as useful at the other end of the spectrum — the novice theatergoer. The council hosts the annual Shakespeare in the Schools program in the Clark County School District. In the week leading to the performances, actors hit campuses to perform parts of plays, talk about the artistic elements of staging a production and give history lessons on the Elizabethan era. Last year, 20

schools participated.

Bird says Henderson's population explosion — the nation's fastest growing city 10 years running — has brought a slew of migrants hungry for the cultural opportunities they had back home. They want the ability to recreate where they live and work; want a venue where that showcases local, regional and national artistic talent; want all the amenities associated with metropolitan living.

“The potential is huge for marketing for the pavilion,” she says. “What better way to finish a

concert at the Pavilion, than to go get a drink or eat at The District?”

Mullins expects the pavilion's popularity will continue to increase as it draws high-profile acts like Hornsby. In anticipation, parks and recreation officials expanded box office hours to 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Saturday. Event attendees can also buy tickets on the Web site. Tickets for Hornsby's shows run from \$10 to \$30. This year's Shakespeare in the Park event is slated for Oct. 21-23. The featured play is “Much Ado About Nothing.”

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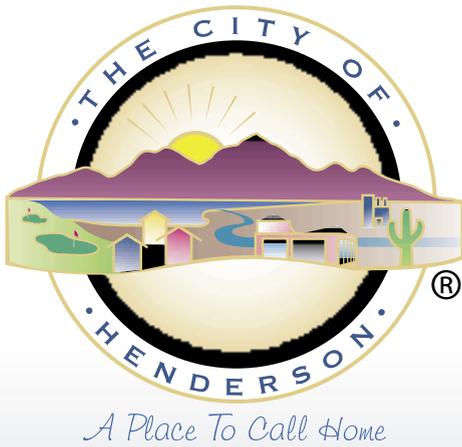
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