

# Hmmm, What if?

BY CINDY LANDRUM | STAFF

THERE ARE a ton of ideas out there on how Greenville and Greenville County could be improved.

But many of them don't get anywhere because the person with the idea doesn't know the person capable of making it happen, said Brock Koonce, program director at Greenville Forward.

That will change thanks to a new website, WhatifGreenville.com, where people can finish the sentence, "What if Greenville..." with ideas of ways to improve Greenville County.

Greenville Forward will compile a monthly list of the most popular ideas for civic leaders, governmental groups, community visionaries and others who could help get some of them implemented, Koonce said.

Like, for instance, what if Greenville had an entertainment complex/night-life like the Epicenter in Charlotte?

Or, planted fruit trees in parks?

Or, made Main Street strictly a pedestrian street?

## New website wants ideas to improve Greenville County

"We want to champion those great ideas that may not otherwise get past the kitchen table," he said.

The idea for "What If Greenville" came from an article about "Give a Minute," a website where residents of Memphis, Chicago, San Jose and New York can submit ideas on how to improve their cities in short note form.

"This is an idea generation portal," Koonce said.

"WhatifGreenville..." has been up for about a month although the website's official launch isn't until Aug. 16, Koonce said. A launch party is scheduled for Aug. 16. It is already sold out. The price of admission is one idea.

Most of the ideas appearing on the site so far have come from volunteers from Greenville Forward's various task forces, from OrangeCoat Web Design and peo-

ple who have stumbled across the site or saw one of its posts on a social network channel such as Twitter or Facebook.

In addition to the fruit tree idea and entertainment complex ideas, Greenville Forward personnel also have liked "what ifs" that had a movie being played in the park once a week, taxis that regularly drove through downtown, a connected transit system that could take a person all the way from Travelers Rest to Fountain Inn, and a quick-stop bistro on Main Street that catered to healthy, vegan and vegetarian palates.

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Have an idea about how to improve Greenville?

Go to [www.WhatifGreenville.com](http://www.WhatifGreenville.com).

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Those ideas are creative as well as feasible, said Kate Hofler, Greenville Forward's communications director.

Ideas must be no more than 99 characters long. Ideas may be submitted to the site via computers, smart phones or tablet devices. The website tracks posts and refreshes every 20 seconds.

"It's a simple idea, simple platform," said Koonce, "but it has the potential to improve our community."

If a person is walking down the street and sees a corner that would make a

great place for a community garden, they can post the idea. Ideas can be very general or they can be very specific as long as they are ways to improve Greenville, address a concern or foster community with other citizens.

"So many times politicians and business leaders can't see possibilities other than the ones they are directly working on," Koonce said. "But there are a whole lot of ideas out there that people need to hear."

Some of the other ideas posted on the website so far are:

- Had sidewalks on all streets.
- Had "walk" signals at crosswalks that were actually long enough to walk across.
- Gave away ice cream on a really hot Saturday
- An adult science fair.
- Motorcycle parking spots.
- Had an artists-in-residence program.
- Created a wall of Greenville history... or put history stuff in the sidewalks.
- Take traffic off I-85 rather than adding lanes. The only major town without a bypass.

Koonce said Greenville Forward would like to have a quarterly event around the ideas generated on the website.

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Contact Cindy Landrum at 679-1237 or [clandrum@greenvillejournal.com](mailto:clandrum@greenvillejournal.com).