

REQUEST FOR BOARD ACTION

HENDERSON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Meeting Date: August 12, 2008

Subject: Public Hearing regarding NCDOT 2009 Rural Operating Assistance Funds (ROAP) Application.

Attachments: 1. Application
2. Certified Statement (Appendix A)

SUMMARY OF REQUEST:

The Henderson County Board of Commissioners has scheduled for August 12, 2008 a public hearing on an application for a North Carolina Department of Transportation Rural Operating Assistance Grant (ROAP) in the amount of \$249,440. If awarded, the funds will provide assistance for Apple Country Transit Operations in the rural areas of the County.

These grant funds are received each year by Henderson County and are passed through to WCCA, the designated transit provider in Henderson County. WCCA agrees to performance standards and pays the required match to the grant funds. The purpose of the project is to provide for senior and disabled transportation programs, transportation for a WorkFirst educational program, and to continue the Edneyville transit service.

A notice of Public Hearing was published in the Hendersonville Times-News on July 15, 2008 which fulfills the NCDOT requirements for this grant application.

The Board of Commissioners must hold a public hearing on the application, receive public comment, approve the Certified Statement attached as Appendix A, and authorize staff to file the application with the North Carolina Department of Transportation subject to any comments at the hearing.

BOARD ACTION REQUESTED:

Planning Staff requests the Board of Commissioners hold the scheduled public hearing; approve the Certified Statement (Appendix A); and authorize staff to file the ROAP application with NCDOT.

Suggested Motion:

I move the Board approve the application and Certified Statement and authorize the Chairman and Staff to execute and submit any required documents, assurances, and statements for the 2009 ROAP application.

Application for Operating Assistance FY09 Rural Operating Assistance Program Funds

Name of Applicant (County)	Henderson County
County Manager	Steve Wyatt
County Manager's Email Address	swyatt@hendersoncountync.org
County Finance Officer	Carey McClelland
CFO's Email Address	cmcclelland@hendersoncountync.org
Mailing Address	213 First Avenue East Hendersonville, NC 28732
Person Completing this Application	Hope Bleecker, Transportation Planner
Email Address	hbleecker@hendersoncountync.org
Phone Number	(828) 697-4819 x 1059
Supplemental ROAP Funding Request Included:	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

Application Completed by: _____ Date: August 12, 2008
Signature

Application Reviewed by: _____ Date: August 12, 2008
Signature

Application Instructions

- Read each question carefully. Be sure to answer all the questions.
- Answer questions with complete sentences, providing enough detail to completely answer the question.
- Click on the **gray rectangle** and type each answer. If needed, the text will automatically wrap to the next row. The answer may wrap to the next page if necessary.
- If there are questions regarding this application, contact the NCDOT-PTD Mobility Development Specialist assigned to the area served by the transit system.
- Outreach and public involvement in the use of the ROAP funds is key to providing service that meets the needs of individuals within the community. County managers and finance officers are encouraged to discuss the Limited English Proficiency (LEP) requirements with the local system transportation directors.

I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION FOR FORMULA FUNDS – EDTAP

These funds may be sub-allocated to the transit system or human service agencies in the county. EDTAP funds will be used to provide transportation services for elderly and disabled individuals when other funding sources are not available. If an individual meets the eligibility criteria of both EDTAP and an agency transportation program, the agency's program funds will be used as long as they are available before using EDTAP funds.

EDTAP-1 Describe the process for determining which organizations will receive a sub-allocation of EDTAP funds. The response should address:

- (1) assessment of needs in the service area
- (2) equity in requesting and disbursement of funds
- (3) criteria for determining amount of funds sub-allocated to each organization and
- (4) projected units of service.

(1) Henderson County and transportation operator WCCA conducted a needs assessment through notification of Human Service Agencies in the area. We held a brainstorming meeting of agency representatives to determine what EDTAP transportation program would be appropriate based on available funding. The Council on Aging and Vocational Rehabilitation specified various needs.

(2) Trip estimates were based on the demand balanced against the amount of funding available. The requests for service were not "cut", but rather were balanced with the amount of funding available for the program as well as the productivity of the 2008 program. Henderson County expects to provide 6,234 passenger trips this year with formula EDTAP based on the requests

(3) Criteria used to determine distribution to programs was based largely upon productivity of the allocated funds during previous year, as well as the general need of client base.

(4) The EDTAP program will include 6,234 trips at a cost of \$11 per passenger and approximately 2100 service hours.

EDTAP-2 Describe the transportation or other services that will be provided by the transit system or human service agencies with EDTAP funds (i.e. trips by transit system or private providers, agency staff transportation, volunteers, mileage reimbursement, etc.)

WCCA is the sole operator of transportation service and will provide transportation by van and wheelchair lift-equipped buses.

EDTAP-3 Not all elderly and disabled citizens in the service area are human service agency clients. Describe efforts to reach out to these citizens who may need transportation to medical appointments, grocery stores or other destinations. (Public Outreach)

Provider WCCA runs newspaper advertisements, radio advertisements, and has flyers placed in local doctors' offices and throughout hospitals and physical rehabilitation facilities in our area. The director of WCCA speaks to local civic groups and operates a website that advertises the service.

EDTAP-4 Describe the process for monitoring the EDTAP Program throughout the year to assure that (1) EDTAP funded services are provided to elderly and disabled individuals not receiving transportation assistance from another funding source and (2) that all expenditures are allowable. (See Eligible Transportation Expenses Matrix)

(1) The WCCA dispatcher asks various questions of each caller, including age, address, and whether they are on Medicaid to determine if there is any other funding source that could sponsor transportation service for the individual (such as Medicaid, HCCBG, ADA paratransit, etc). Depending on the answers to eligibility questions, the riders may be offered general public transportation, depending on where they live (e.g. within City limits vs. rural areas.)

(2) Trip logs are checked by the Henderson County staff weekly to ensure that all expenses are allowable.

EDTAP-5 Does the transit system or any human service agency prioritize or restrict EDTAP funded services based on the purpose, origin or destination of the trip? If yes, describe the prioritization process or restrictions.

Henderson County does not restrict EDTAP services based on purpose origin or destination of the trip.

EDTAP-6 What is done by the transit system and/or agencies to assure that EDTAP funded services are provided for as long as possible during FY2008-FY2009?

Expense and revenue reports are received from the finance office of WCCA. These reports contain the amount of available funding left to cover a specified period. This information is balanced against performance measures to ensure the service is being operated appropriately. WCCA provides necessary matches to the transit grants in order to cover shortfalls. Program estimates are for the twelve month period July1, 2008 through June 30, 2009.

EDTAP-6a What will the county do to keep the services operating if the EDTAP funds are expended in less than twelve months?

WCCA is responsible for delivering services within specified cost parameters. WCCA pays the local match on the grant and guarantees cost coverage of the program for a twelve month period. The County evaluates ridership records and expense reports to measure effectiveness and efficiency quarterly. Efficiency is defined as the number of service miles per revenue mile which determines how efficiently vehicles were used to provide revenue services. The performance measures supplied in the grant application are based on the actual records of the previous year. Programs are not duplicated unless WCCA meets performance standards.

EDTAP-7 What objectives will the county use to evaluate the effectiveness/efficiency of the program?

Effectiveness is defined as the number of revenue trips per service mile. This determines how effectively revenue trips are coordinated or provided for each service mile. The performance measure for EDTAP will be .09 revenue trips per service mile. The program will be monitored to ensure acceptable standards in terms of cost per trip. Hours of service, passengers per hour, repeat riders, origins and destinations, and all cost records will be examined to make sure that productivity and costs are within acceptable ranges for the program. If these indicators show any deviations from normal patterns, we will make appropriate modifications to ensure that we are meeting standards.

EDTAP-7a When will the EDTAP funded services be evaluated?

EDTAP services are evaluated on an ongoing basis and at least quarterly.

II. PROJECT DESCRIPTION FOR FORMULA FUNDS –Employment Transportation Assistance Funds

These funds can only be sub-allocated to the Department of Social Services, Workforce Development Programs and/or the Community Transportation System in the county. Funds can only be transferred to EDTAP and RGP following certification by the county manager that the employment transportation needs of the county have substantially been met.

EMP-1 Describe the transportation or other services that will be provided by the transit system or DSS with EMP funds. (i.e. trips by transit system or private providers, agency staff transportation, volunteers, mileage reimbursement, automobile repairs, etc.)

WCCA will provide demand responsive employment trips for WorkFirst participants as requested through

DSS throughout all areas of Henderson County.

EMP-2 Describe the process for monitoring the EMP Program throughout the year to assure that expenses by the transit system and/or DSS are allowable. (See Eligible Transportation Expenses Matrix)

The WCCA dispatcher asks various questions of each caller, including age, address, and trip purpose to make sure that the trip corresponds to the WF/EMP goals. If there is any other funding source that could sponsor transportation service for the individual such as Medicaid, HCCBG, ADA paratransit, etc., the trip is not served. Depending on the answers to eligibility questions, the person may be offered another type of transportation depending on where they live (e.g. within City limits vs. rural areas.)

EMP-3 What is done by the transit system and/or DSS to assure that EMP funded services are provided for as long as possible during FY2008-FY2009?

Expense and revenue reports are received from the finance office of WCCA. These reports contain names, date and time as well as the service provided. WCCA provides necessary matches to the transit grants in order to cover any shortfalls. Program estimates are for the twelve month period July 1, 2008-June 30 2009.

EMP-3a What will the county do to keep the services operating if the EMP formula allocation is expended in less than twelve months?

WCCA operates the program through an agreement with Henderson County and guarantees matching funds to meet all revenue deficits through the twelve month period.

EMP-4 Describe the process for determining when it is appropriate or necessary to transfer EMP funds to EDTAP or RGP funds as allowed in the program guidelines?

Performance of the program and available funds will be measured along with an assessment of the demand for the program. Typically after the second quarter a decision to transfer funds is made based on performance of the other programs and available funds in this program.

EMP-5 Define the objectives that the county will use to evaluate the effectiveness/efficiency of the program?

Efficiency is measured by service miles per revenue mile, which determines how efficiently vehicles were used to provide revenue services. Effectiveness is measured by revenue trips per service mile, which determines how effectively revenue trips were coordinated or provided for each service mile. The performance measure for demand response trips will be .09 revenue trips per mile. The program will be monitored to ensure acceptable standards in terms of cost per trip. WorkFirst transportation trips are typically scheduled to collect more than one to two passengers from origins/destinations since passengers travel to classes and events together. During the first quarter of operation, these standards will be re-evaluated and all cost records will be examined to make sure that productivity and costs are within acceptable ranges for the program as defined for NCDOT. If these indicators show any deviations from normal patterns, we will make appropriate modifications so that the program meets acceptable ridership and cost standards.

EMP-5a When will the EMP funded services be evaluated?

The County will evaluate records to measure effectiveness and efficiency at least quarterly.

EMP-6 Describe the public outreach efforts for this program.

WCCA maintains public outreach with the local WorkFirst program that operates through the Henderson County Department of Social Services. WCCA is actively involved in Headstart, self-sufficiency programs,

housing, and weatherization initiatives, which provides an excellent basis for advertising this particular aspect of ROAP transportation funding. Programs are advertised in newspaper and radio, brochures are offered in Spanish and we also use local AM radio WHKP and their electronic billboard for advertisement programs.

III. PROJECT DESCRIPTION FOR FORMULA FUNDS –Rural General Public Funds

These funds are intended to provide transportation services for individuals who are not human service agency clients. These funds can only be sub-allocated to the community transportation system.

RGP-1 Describe the process for (1) assessing transportation needs in the service area and (2) determining the projected units of service.

Henderson County and operator WCCA conducted needs assessments through notification of Human Service Agencies in the area. We held a brainstorming meeting of agency representatives to determine what RGP use would be appropriate based on available funding. RGP funding has been used in the past for medical trips without age restriction. It was determined that the program has grown through the years and that the needs for RGP medical are well satisfied. Based on the previous program that operated in 2006, we anticipate providing service to 4,670 passengers during the FY09 year. In addition to continuing with the local demand response program, we are expanding the demand response service area into Edneyville which has previously operated as a fixed route bus through the eastern part of the county. We plan on continuing this route with reduced hours to meet the current productivity standards. The county receives continuous requests for service in that area. There are a large number of residents who need transportation services to get to local jobs around Edneyville and to shop at the neighboring commercial centers. The estimate of projected units of service is based on current program history- 1 riders per hour which compares to other demand response services currently provided.

RGP- 2 Describe the transportation services that will be provided with RGP funds and the geographic area in which the services will be provided.

County-wide demand responsive medical transportation without an age limit. This service will be provided throughout all areas of the County on an as needed basis. Service is available from 6:30 am through 6:30 p.m. Budget for the services is approximately \$65,879. WCCA expects to carry 4300 passengers. The formula allocation will also be covering the non-medical trips to the Edneyville area on the fixed route with deviation bus. Formula allocation dedicated to this effort is forecasted at \$5,767 to cover 370 trips.

RGP- 3 Will a passenger pay a fare for RGP service?

X Yes No

The fare for RGP medical trips is \$2.00 per one-way.

RGP- 4 Describe the process for monitoring the RGP Program throughout the year to insure that all expenses by the transit system are allowable? (See Eligible Transportation Expenses Matrix)

For the medical trip component, the WCCA dispatcher asks various questions of each caller, including age, address, whether they are on Medicaid, to determine if there is any other funding source that could sponsor transportation service for the individual such as Medicaid, HCCBG, ADA paratransit, etc. Depending on the answers to eligibility questions, the person may be offered rural general public transportation if no other sources are available, depending on where the trip begins and ends. (eg within City limits vs. rural areas.)

RGP- 5 Describe how the local match requirement for RGP funds will be met.

Fares will supply the match and WCCA will pay any shortfalls

RGP-6 Does the transit system prioritize or restrict RGP funded services based on the purpose, origin or destination of the trip? If yes, describe the prioritization process or restrictions.

No

RGP-7 What does the transit system do to assure that RGP funded services are provided throughout FY09 with these funds?

Expense and revenue reports are received from the finance office of WCCA. These reports contain number of riders and pick up locations. WCCA provides necessary matches to the transit grants. Program estimates are for the twelve month period July 1, 2008 through June 30, 2009.

RGP-8 What will the county do to keep the services operating if the RGP funds are expended in less than twelve months?

WCCA supplies the matching funds for the project and guarantees operation of the service during the contract period.

RGP-9 What objectives will the county use to evaluate the effectiveness/efficiency of the program? When will the RGP funded services be evaluated?

The County will evaluate ridership records and expense reports to measure effectiveness and efficiency quarterly. Effectiveness is defined as the number of revenue trips per service mile. This determines how effectively revenue trips were coordinated or provided for each service mile. The performance measure for RGP demand response will be .09 revenue trips per mile. The program will be monitored to ensure acceptable standards in terms of cost per trip. Hours of service, passengers per hour, repeat riders, origins and destinations, and all cost records will be examined to make sure that productivity and costs are within acceptable ranges for the program. If these indicators show any deviations from normal patterns, we will make appropriate modifications.

The fixed-route experimental service goal is five riders per hour. The county will monitor ridership statistics quarterly to measure efficiency and effectiveness as described for the EDTAP and the WorkFirst

RGP-10 Describe public outreach efforts for this program.

WCCA will use print and radio advertisement in both English and Spanish. We will work with any service organizations, including the Latino Advocacy Group to help get information to the Hispanic population and to advertise the route to residents in the area. This effort will include the announcement that Henderson County will add service to the area. The service description will be included in the current website www.applecountrytransit.com. WCCA will advertise through residential centers located in Edneyville such as public libraries, the Justice Academy, area churches, local granges, civic clubs and community centers.

IV. PROJECT DESCRIPTION – SUPPLEMENTAL ROAP Funds

Complete responses to the following questions are necessary to make an assessment of the eligibility of the proposed service. Incomplete responses will delay PTD review of the application.

Describe the proposed new or expanded service? (demand response/subscription/fixed route; within or outside normal service area, i.e. out of county employment route; days and hours of operation; service area; fare structure; provision of gas vouchers, volunteer reimbursement, etc.) Describe each program separately.

- **SuppEDTAP** The County proposes transportation for disabled residents of Henderson County to several programs at Vocational Solutions for work-related training activities. The service will operate on a subscription basis five days per week. The service will carry four to five clients per day on a year round basis. The service will be free of charge to the users. A donation will be suggested
 - **SuppEMP - WorkFirst** Henderson County would like new service to transport clients to Goodwill Industries in Brevard and Asheville, NC for a Certified Nurse Assistant training. The total cost estimated is \$11,401.00 to allow three groups of six to eight participants to complete the training each year. We anticipate operating subscription services which may include demand response transportation. The service is free of charge to the users, however a donation is suggested.
- SuppRGP** - Henderson County proposes a fixed route with deviation to Edneyville which will operate with a wheelchair lift equipped bus. The bus will serve 64 east to the Edneyville post office and tie into the commercial areas east of I-26. Hours for the service will be M-F 9:00 AM to 12:00 noon and in the afternoon from 3:00 PM until 5:00 PM. Since the route will operate outside of the UZA as an extended County service, the fare is anticipated to be \$1.50, which is double the fixed route fare within Hendersonville. This route will tie to the White Route on Public Transit Route that gets to Wal-Mart on the hour M-F 7:00 AM to 6:00 PM. The route improves passenger mobility options that currently do not exist in the eastern area of the county. We anticipate that the service will be funded by a combination of formula & supplemental RGP in the amount of \$43,373.00 and anticipate that it will carry a total of 2,770 persons or roughly 10 riders per day.

How were the projected units of additional service with supplemental EDTAP, Employment and RGP funds determined? What will be done to assure that the service to be provided throughout the twelve months of FY08-09. (CT System requirement). Describe each program separately. *See the Supplemental ROAP Sub-allocation Worksheet in Appendix B*

SuppEDTAP - EDTAP Vocational Solutions was based on 7 trips per day annually. EDTAP supplemental amount was determined by calculating operating costs of equipment and driver for about 120 miles round trip each day for 2 days a week for the Sammy Williams Center

SuppEMP - WorkFirst Employment CNA transportation was estimated at 115 miles round trip, twice a day for fifteen days three different sessions a year. This was multiplied by our operating costs and driver costs.

SuppRGP - RGP was based on twenty miles round trip times 5 round trips per day multiplied by operating costs and driver costs.

The supplemental EDTAP, Employment and RGP funds must be used to provide an increased level of service, including serving eligible individuals not currently served by the regular ROAP program. Describe how the agencies that receive the supplemental funds will notify eligible users about the new Supplemental EDTAP funded service. Be specific. Describe each program separately.

SuppEDTAP - The agencies will notify users through flyer and advertisements at their places of business. We have established contact persons at Vocational Solutions, Sammy Williams and Henderson County DSS

SuppEMP - We will continue to meet with these professionals and monitor progress in order to ensure that clients are properly served.

SuppRGP - On the RGP service, Henderson County is posting the Edneyville route on its website and will advertise through residential centers located in Edneyville such as public libraries, the Justice Academy, area churches, local granges, civic clubs and community centers. We have established a client base of users with whom we meet regularly at Wolfpen and Sugar Hill Apartments.

Describe in detail efforts made to reach out to the community to make them aware of the additional funding and to identify service needs beyond those currently provided with the formula allocation.

On June 24, a meeting was held to identify various agency service needs. We brainstormed with the Vocational Solutions, Sammy Williams Center, Henderson County, and WorkFirst managers. We developed a needs list and formulated a draft application. Henderson County then scheduled a public hearing and placed advertisements in the Henderson County DSS and local libraries as well as the Hendersonville Times News and the Spanish Newspaper La Voz.

Describe how the Supplemental ROAP funded services will be monitored throughout the year to assure that services are provided to eligible individuals and expenses and service statistics are tracked separately from the regular ROAP program.

The Supplemental funds will be monitored quarterly. Henderson County maintains a contract with WCCA to monitor performance standards and maintain appropriate controls.

What objectives will the county use to evaluate the effectiveness/efficiency of the supplemental funded services? When will these services be evaluated?

WCCA has performed ridership surveys to maintain quality and gage demand. We also monitor a number of operating statistics and measure productivity of the services quarterly to determine if any changes are necessary.

State of North Carolina

County of Henderson

**APPENDIX A
CERTIFIED STATEMENT
FY 2008 - 2009**

RURAL OPERATING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Whereas Article 2B of Chapter 136 of the North Carolina General Statutes and the Governor of North Carolina have designated the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) as the agency responsible for administering all federal and/or state programs related to public transportation, and grants NCDOT authority to do all things required in applicable federal and/or state legislation to properly administer the public transportation programs within the State of North Carolina;

WHEREAS, G.S. 136-44.27 established the Elderly and Disabled Transportation Assistance Program;

WHEREAS, funds will be used for transportation related expenditures as specified in the FY 2008 - 2009 Rural Operating Assistance Program (ROAP) application;

WHEREAS, information regarding use of the funds will be provided at such time and in such a manner as NCDOT may require;

WHEREAS, it is the policy of the North Carolina Department of Transportation that Disadvantaged Business Enterprises, Minority Owned Business Enterprises and Women Owned Business Enterprises shall have the opportunity to participate in the performance of contracts financed in whole or part by Federal and State funds in order to create a level playing field, and the county shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, or sex in the performance of this contract.

WHEREAS, ROAP funds will be used to provide eligible services during the period July 1, 2008 through June 30, 2009;

WHEREAS, any interest earned on ROAP funds will be expended for eligible program uses as specified in the ROAP application; and

WHEREAS, the County will include ROAP funds received and expended in its annual independent audit on the schedule of federal and state financial assistance. Funds passed through to other agencies will be identified as such.

This is to certify that the undersigned is duly elected, qualified and acting chairperson of the Board of County Commissioners of the County of Henderson, State of North Carolina, and that the following statements are true and accurate:

Elderly and Disabled Transportation Assistance Program

1. The funds received from G.S. 136-44.27 will be used to provide transportation services for the elderly and disabled allowing individuals to reside for a longer period in their homes, thereby enhancing their quality of life.
2. The funds will not be used to supplant or replace existing federal, state or local funds designated to provide elderly and disabled transportation services in the county.

Employment Transportation Assistance Program

1. The purpose of these transportation funds is to support transitional transportation needs of Work First participants after eligibility for cash assistance has concluded and/other specified general public employment transportation needs
2. The funds are limited to use by the local Department of Social Services, Work Force Development Program or the community transportation system.
3. The funds may be transferred to the Elderly and Disabled Transportation Assistance Program or the Rural General Public Program after an assessment of employment transportation needs in the service area indicates that employment transportation needs are substantially being met. This assessment will occur prior to any transfer of funds and following submission of a statement to that effect from the County Manager to the Public Transportation Division.

Rural General Public Program

1. The funds are limited to use by the community transportation system.
2. The funds will not be used to provide human service agency trips.

WITNESS my hand and official seal this 12th day of August, 2008

Attest:

Elizabeth Corn
Certifying Official
Clerk to the Henderson County Board of Commissioners

William L. Moyer, Chairman
Henderson County Board of Commissioners

Steve Wyatt, County Manager
Henderson County