

REQUEST FOR BOARD ACTION

HENDERSON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

MEETING DATE: April 15, 2009

SUBJECT: Transportation Funding for Transit Center

ATTACHMENTS:

- 1) Staff Memo
- 2) Power Point Presentation
- 3) Conceptual Transit Center Site Plan
- 4) Project Cost Estimate

SUMMARY OF REQUEST:

Planning Staff has researched possible grant sources for a transit center which have become available since stimulus funds have been awarded for vehicle replacement. Staff is asking the Board to approve a local match in the form of land for a \$1,200,000 STP-DA (Surface Transportation Program Direct Attributable Funds) grant for a transit center. STP-DA applications are due April 30, 2009 to the French Broad Metropolitan Planning Organization.

A staff memo outlining the details of the proposal, including funding strategies is attached. Staff is actively considering alternative sites for the transit center but due to deadlines for publishing the agenda, that information was not available at the time of printing. Additional information for alternative sites for the transit center will be provided at the meeting.

Motion Requested:

Approve the required local match for a grant application for STPDA funds in the amount of the future value of the parcel (\$300,000).

Sample Motion:

I move the Board approve the requested local match for STP-DA funding, in the form of parcel donation to supply the required 20% match for a \$1,200,000 STP-DA grant.

HENDERSON COUNTY
Planning Department

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Phone 828-697-4819 • Fax 828-697-4533

MEMORANDUM

TO: Henderson County Board of Commissioners
County Manager Steve Wyatt
Assistant County Manager Selena Coffey

FROM: Anthony W. Starr, AICP, Planning Director
Hope Bleecker, AICP, Transportation Planner

DATE: April 15, 2009

SUBJECT: Stimulus Funds for CNG Facility and Transit Vehicles

Henderson County Planning Staff is proposing improvements to the existing County transit transfer site located in downtown Hendersonville, adjacent to Martin Luther King, Jr. Park on Fourth Avenue. The present site is a gravel parking lot with a passenger bus stop shelter and two benches. Staff proposes leveraging available grant funding to construct a passenger waiting facility with restrooms and new offices for the County's transit operator WCCA. Staff recommends the Board consider several funding opportunities for the eventual construction of the transit center project, including seeking grants from the Federal Transit Administration and locally awarded Surface Transportation Program dollars. The full scope of the project includes completing architectural design, engineering, and construction of the building. This memo outlines the benefits of the project and proposed funding strategies.

Project Location

The proposed project location is a County owned existing gravel parking lot. It provides overflow parking for the County Courthouse on high traffic days and is the site of the transit shelter and bus pull in area. Three buses supply hourly service at this primary transfer location.

Justification

The County operates two types of bus service under contract with operator WCCA. The recorded annual ridership number for the urban and rural programs is 135,000. Rural area service includes elderly and disabled and general public transportation assistance. The service supplied over 48,000 annual one-way trips in FY08 (a 7% increase over FY07). The urban fixed route operation transported over 87,000 one-way trips in FY08. The fixed route bus service this year is expected to surpass 9% growth over last year and will provide approximately 95,000 one-way trips by July 1. Demand for services is somewhat related to County population increase. However, the significant growth in ridership this year is primarily linked to two other causes: a growing number of elderly and disabled citizens throughout the county who require transportation and increased automobile operation costs. An estimated 200-300 riders use transportation services everyday primarily for work, but also for medical and shopping activities. Recently, a slight increase in the number of fixed route choice riders has occurred. These riders use the service once or twice a week instead of their automobiles.

A recently completed transit operations analysis reveals the potential for significant growth among all aspects of the County's transit program, provided more passenger amenities (such as shelters) are installed and advertisement of available services is improved.

The benefits of constructing a transit center include:

- Increased transit system visibility
- Improved customer amenities
- Office space for the transit operator, potentially decreasing contract costs
- A state of the art dispatch facility (beneficial to rural elderly and disabled transportation users)
- The ability to attract a higher number of choice riders into the downtown area.
- Potentially higher ridership as a result of improved information dissemination

Project Description

The proposed project would include a passenger waiting facility, Apple Country Transit staff offices, and a bus staging area capable of accommodating 35 foot buses. The facility would include passenger waiting and restrooms, as well as a customer service desk for selling passes and providing bus information. Apple Country Transit staff offices would be located on the second floor of the facility and would supply needed space for operations staff to dispatch and schedule riders, driver training areas and break areas. Existing WCCA offices are unsuitable for daily operations as they lack day lighting and adequate ventilation. Work spaces are small, training rooms are insufficient in size, and maintenance costs on the existing building are increasing. Attached is a conceptual site plan for the transit facility.

Estimated Costs and Funding Options

The present day cost estimate to build the facility is \$1,485,910, including design, construction, and construction administration costs. (See attached cost estimate). Enclosed building area costs are estimated at \$275 per square foot as the proposal includes LEED certification. If construction is delayed for several years, a 5% increase per year should be factored for inflation. Since construction would not be scheduled to take place until 2013, the facility costs are estimated at approximately \$1,720,127.

Stimulus and Recovery Act Dollars

Staff has previously recommended leveraging a 5340 stimulus allocation for the purchase of buses. Surface Transportation Program-Direct Attributable (STP-DA) funding is currently available which could pay for part of the project cost without a required match. Staff is not recommending pursuit of stimulus dollars for this project because completion of the environmental documentation process is unlikely by October 1. Another requirement of the STP-DA stimulus dollars would be that the construction project be completed no later than September, 2010. Although the project is relatively small, this option does not allow for sufficient time to complete the project and still follow required federal compliance practices.

FTA 5307 Capital Funds

Each year the County receives approximately \$450,000 through a sub-allocation formula with Asheville Transit. The 5307 funds require a 20% match which can be supplied in the form of land or cash. The funds must be spent within four (4) years. Staff recommends the County utilize a total of \$425,000 in FTA dollars over three years from FY2011 through FY2013. This amount would require a 20% cash match of \$106,250. The local share amount can be budgeted from the fund balance annually if necessary.

Surface Transportation Program–Direct Attributable (STP-DA) These funds are awarded directly to local governments through the metropolitan planning organization, Land of Sky Regional Council. Types of projects available include sidewalks, greenways, bike trails, intersection improvements, and transit projects. Monies must be spent by the end of fiscal year 2014, which would allow sufficient time to complete required environmental processes and meet other federal requirements. Projects require a 20% match, which can also be leveraged in the form of the parcel's value. Staff recommends pursuit of an STP-DA grant for \$1,200,000. The required match to this amount would be \$300,000 which can be credited in the form of the parcel value if it appraises at \$300,000 by 2013. The current estimated tax value of the current parcel is approximately \$250,000. The dollars would not have to be spent until 2014 and can be obligated toward other projects in the region if the County were to find other grant sources which might augment the cost of the project. A funding commitment that reserves the parcel as a donation to meet the match is necessary prior to April 30, 2009 when funding applications are due to Land-of-Sky Regional Council.

Local Funds The estimated amount of local funding required for the project would include a cash match to FTA dollars of \$106,250 and the value of the parcel. Other sources could possibly offset this amount such as other local contributions or an additional 10% supplemental capital grant from NCDOT which would reduce the required cash amount by up to 50% (\$53,125).

Fiscal Impact

The total amount needed to construct the project by the year 2013 will be approximately \$1,720,000 by the year 2013. The budget funding sources recommended include the following:

Federal Transit Center 5307	\$ 425,000
<i>(three allocations of \$133,333 2011-2013)</i>	
STP-DA	\$1,200,000
Local (<i>cash match for FTA funds</i>)	<u>\$ 106,250</u>
	\$1,731,250

Recommended Action

Pursue a grant for STP-DA in the amount of \$1,200,000 by authorizing donation of the parcel value as the local match for the project.

Surface Transportation Grant Funding Proposal

Board of Commissioners Meeting
April 15, 2009

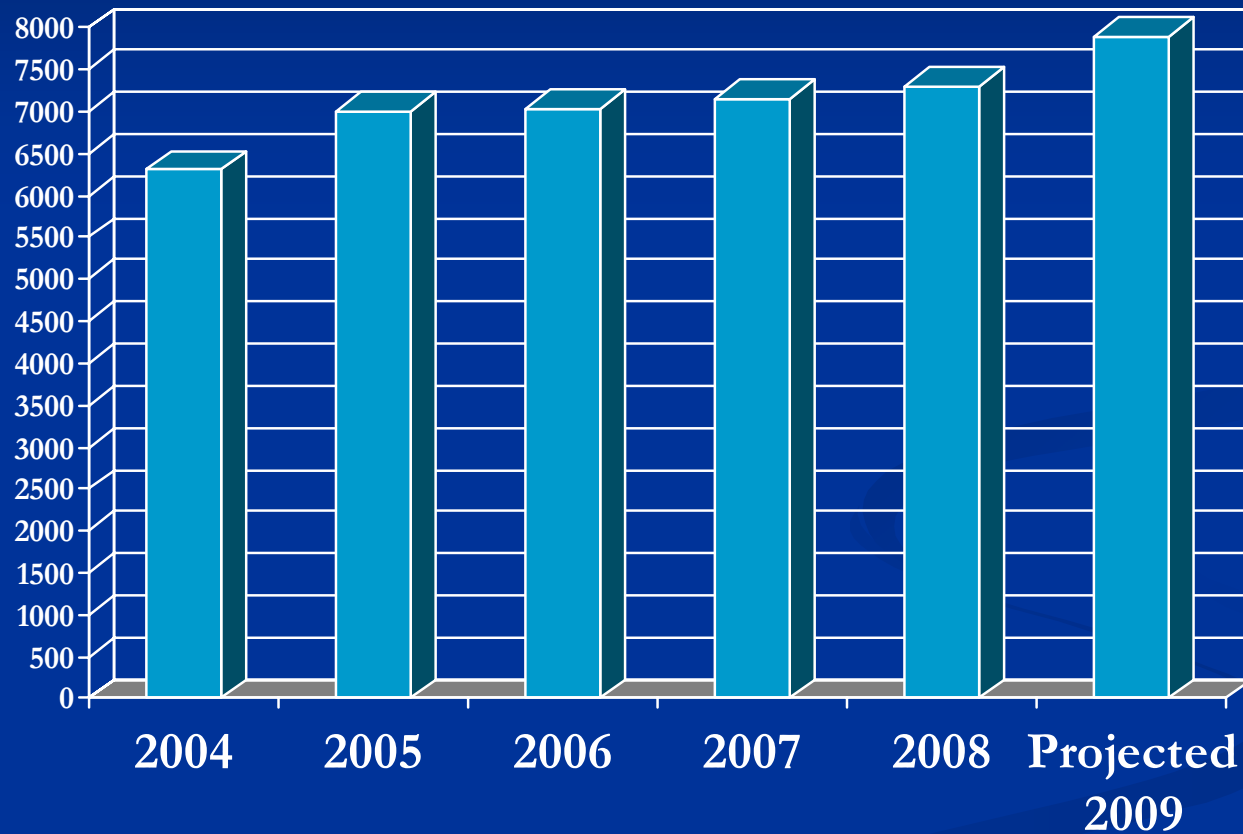
Grant Funding Opportunities

- Surface Transportation Program Grants are now being awarded locally to the MPO
- MPO has a \$3,000,000 award annually between 2012 and 2014 for a total of \$9,000,000. STP-DA Application process now in effect-deadline April 30, 2009
- Bus System continues to experience growth and will need passenger enhancements such as shelters and waiting areas.

Transit Program Ridership Increases

Program	YTD July 07- Feb 08 FY08	YTD July 08- Feb 09 FY09
Rural ROAP and Other Medical	28,010	30,529
Urban Fixed Route	56,741	61,783
Urban Paratransit	1,231	1,594
8-month Comparisons	85,982	93,906

Fixed Route Average Monthly Ridership



Fixed Route 8-Month Transit Ridership Comparisons

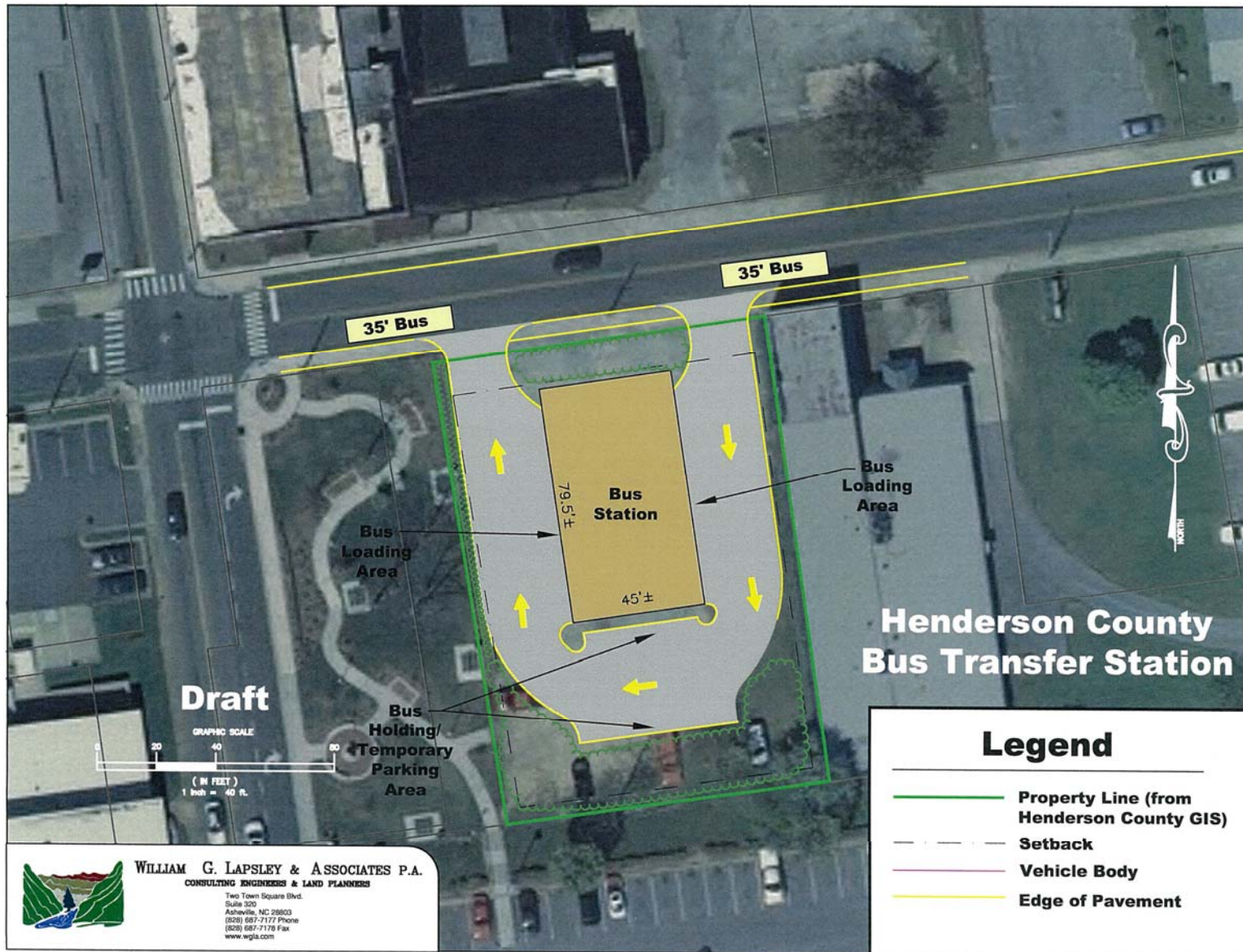
FY 2008		FY 2009		% Change
Jul-07	7131	Jul-08	8837	24%
Aug-07	8177	Aug-08	8100	-1%
Sep-07	8277	Sep-08	8266	0%
Oct-07	8115	Oct-08	9461	17%
Nov-07	6679	Nov-08	6837	2%
Dec-07	6083	Dec-08	7411	22%
Jan-08	6114	Jan-08	6336	4%
Feb-08	6165	Feb-08	6535	6%
Eight Month Total	56,741		61,783	9%

Existing Transfer Site – Proposed Transit Center



- Operations Staff Offices (would reduce office rent of contractor)
- Reduce operating costs to County (higher match required for operating expenses)
- Dispatch Center (improves efficiency)
- Passenger Waiting and Restrooms (improves customer service)
- Vehicle Layover Space
- Provides Added Visibility for Transit System
- Provides sufficient space for future growth
- Could act as a transportation staging area during events such as Apple Festival

Conceptual Transit Center Layout



WILLIAM G. LAPSLEY & ASSOCIATES P.A.
 CONSULTING ENGINEERS & LAND PLANNERS

Two Town Square Blvd.
 Suite 300
 Asheville, NC 28803
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STP-DA Funds

- STP-DA (Surface Transportation Program – Direct Attributable) \$3,000,000 available annually for 3 years (2012-2014)
- MPO can decide to spend these funds on a wide range transportation projects, including transit
- French Broad (MPO) is accepting applications for the STP-DA funds by April 30, 2009
- Requires 20% match funding commitment in the form of future appraisal value of parcel
- Unlike stimulus funds, these monies can be spent through the end of FFY 2014 (September 30, 2015)

FTA 5307 Requirements

- All expenditures must be transit related
- Funds can be carried forward and reserved for future projects for up to 3 years
- Requires a 20% match for capital
- For facility construction projects such as garages and transit centers, land value meets or exceeds 20% land value no cash required
- Requires Feasibility Study & Environmental Assessment which are generally not funded with federal sources and require local funds

Federal 5309 Discretionary Program

- Monies are distributed to the states in varying amounts each year for capital bus and bus facilities.
- Highly competitive process among transit agencies in NC
- Capital only, non-operating
- Same requirements as FTA 5307
- Staff would apply for these funds in order to minimize 5307 expenditure

Transit Center Project Funding Recommendations

5307 FTA Future Allocations	\$ 425,000	To be set aside from 2011-2013
5309 FTA Discretionary	TBD	Would augment 5307
STP-DA	\$ 1,200,000	Requires local funding commitment of 20% \$300,000 Match commitment will be parcel value in 2013
Local Match	\$ 106,250	Matches 5307 requirement
Total Estimated 2013 Revenues	\$ 1,731,250	Total local match of \$106,250 is 6% of overall cost

Recommendations

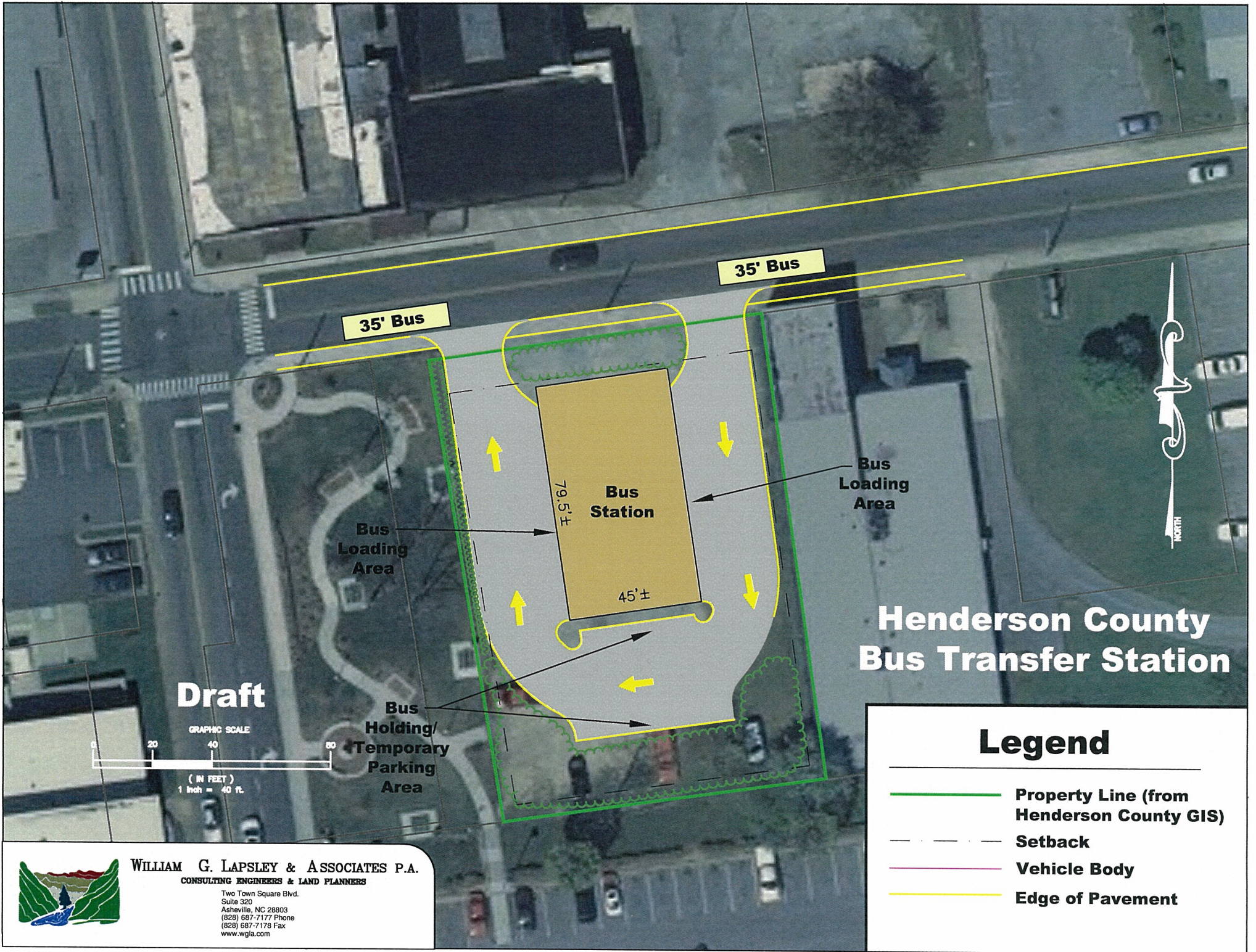
- Submit STP-DA fund grant in the amount of \$1,200,000 which requires a local match in the amount of \$300,000 (estimated future parcel value)
- Reserve \$425,000 in future 5307 grant allocations over three years 2011-2013. Reserve required cash match amount of \$106,250 through transit fund balance for during 2011-2013.
- Pursue other grant opportunities to augment the cost of 5307 and local match funding such as 5309 discretionary grants and state capital funding.

Benefits

- Passenger Facility
- New offices for contractor which can reduce operating cost for County
- State of the art dispatching facility will enhance ridership and improve customer service
- Total improvements estimated at 1.73 million with a 6% local match (\$106,250) plus the estimated future parcel value in the amount of \$300,000.

Board Action

- Approve applying for grants as outlined; Reserve future parcel value for the STP-DA funding application which is due April 30.

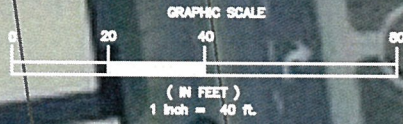


Henderson County Bus Transfer Station

Legend

- Property Line (from Henderson County GIS)
- - - Setback
- Vehicle Body
- Edge of Pavement

Draft



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Preliminary Cost Estimate
Henderson County Bus Transfer Station

Date: 02/10/09

Project #:

SITE WORK IMPROVEMENTS

<u>Item</u>	<u>Quan.</u>	<u>Unit</u>	<u>Unit Price</u>	<u>Total Price</u>
Site Grading	1	LS	\$35,000.00	\$35,000.00
Stone Base (8") Heavy Duty	600	TN	\$28.00	\$16,800.00
Stone Base Under Building	175	TN	\$28.00	\$4,900.00
Heavy Duty Asphalt	1,000	SY	\$22.00	\$22,000.00
24" Concrete Curb & Gutter	950	LF	\$20.00	\$19,000.00
HDPE Storm Drainage Piping	375	LF	\$26.00	\$9,750.00
Storm Drainage Inlets	8	EA	\$2,000.00	\$16,000.00
Outlet Structure	1	EA	\$7,500.00	\$7,500.00
Sidewalks	450	LF	\$70.00	\$31,500.00
Sediment Traps	2	EA	\$3,500.00	\$7,000.00
Silt Fencing (Erosion control)	550	LF	\$5.00	\$2,750.00
Construction Entrance	1	EA	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00
Rip Rap Outlet Protection	8	EA	\$300.00	\$2,400.00
Stormwater BMP	2	EA	\$25,000.00	\$50,000.00
Temporary Seeding & Mulching	1	LS	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
Landscaping & Signage Budget	1	LS	\$75,000.00	\$75,000.00
Site Benches	1	LS	\$30,000.00	\$30,000.00
Site Lighting	1	LS	\$25,000.00	\$25,000.00
TOTAL ESTIMATED SITE CONSTRUCTION COST				\$360,600.00

BUILDING CONSTRUCTION

Bus Overhang Area	2325	SF	\$75.00	\$174,375.00
Building Area	2500	SF	\$275.00	\$687,500.00
TOTAL ESTIMATED BUILDING COST				\$861,875.00

TOTAL ESTIMATED CONSTRUCTION COST

				\$1,222,475.00
Contingency (10%)				\$122,247.50
Architecture (10% of Building Cost)				\$86,187.50
Site Engineering, Design & Permitting				\$15,000.00
Construction Administration & Observation				\$25,000.00
QA/QC Testing				\$15,000.00
TOTAL ESTIMATED PROJECT COST				\$1,485,910.00

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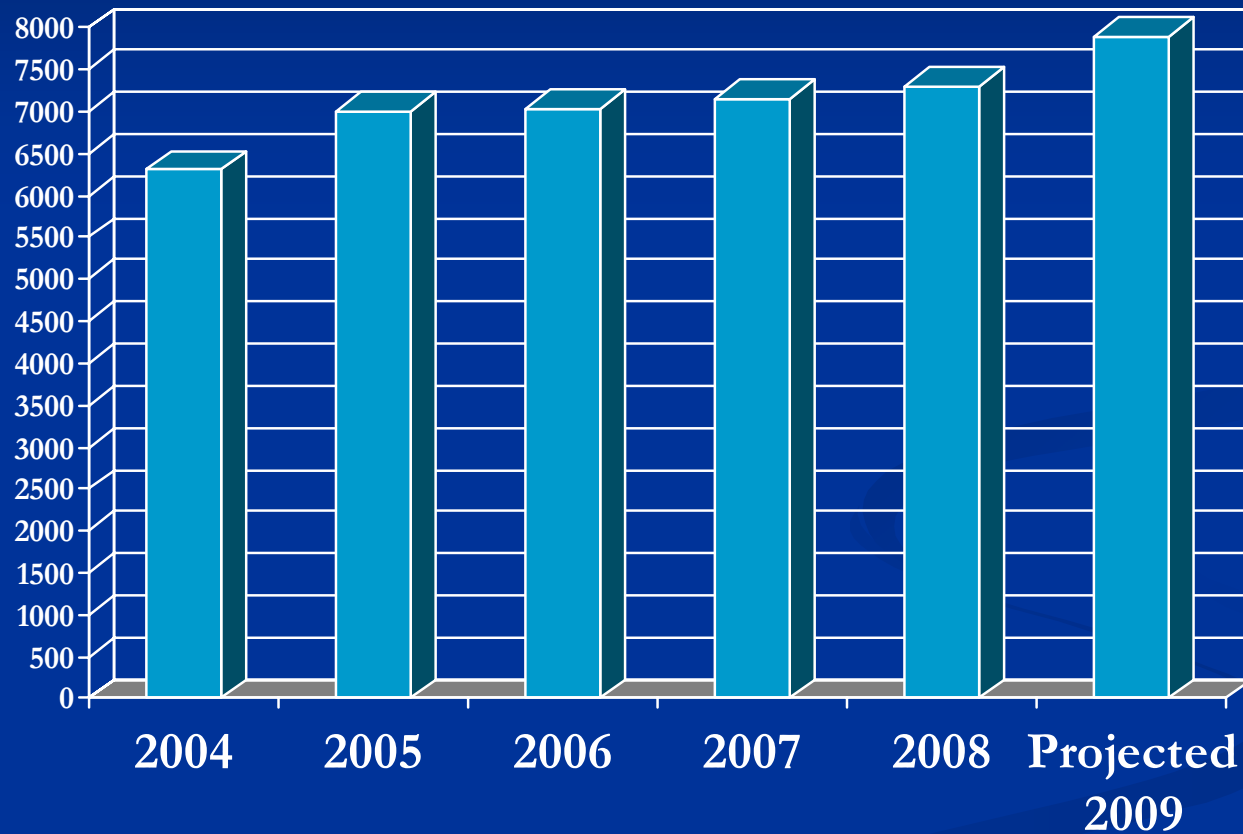
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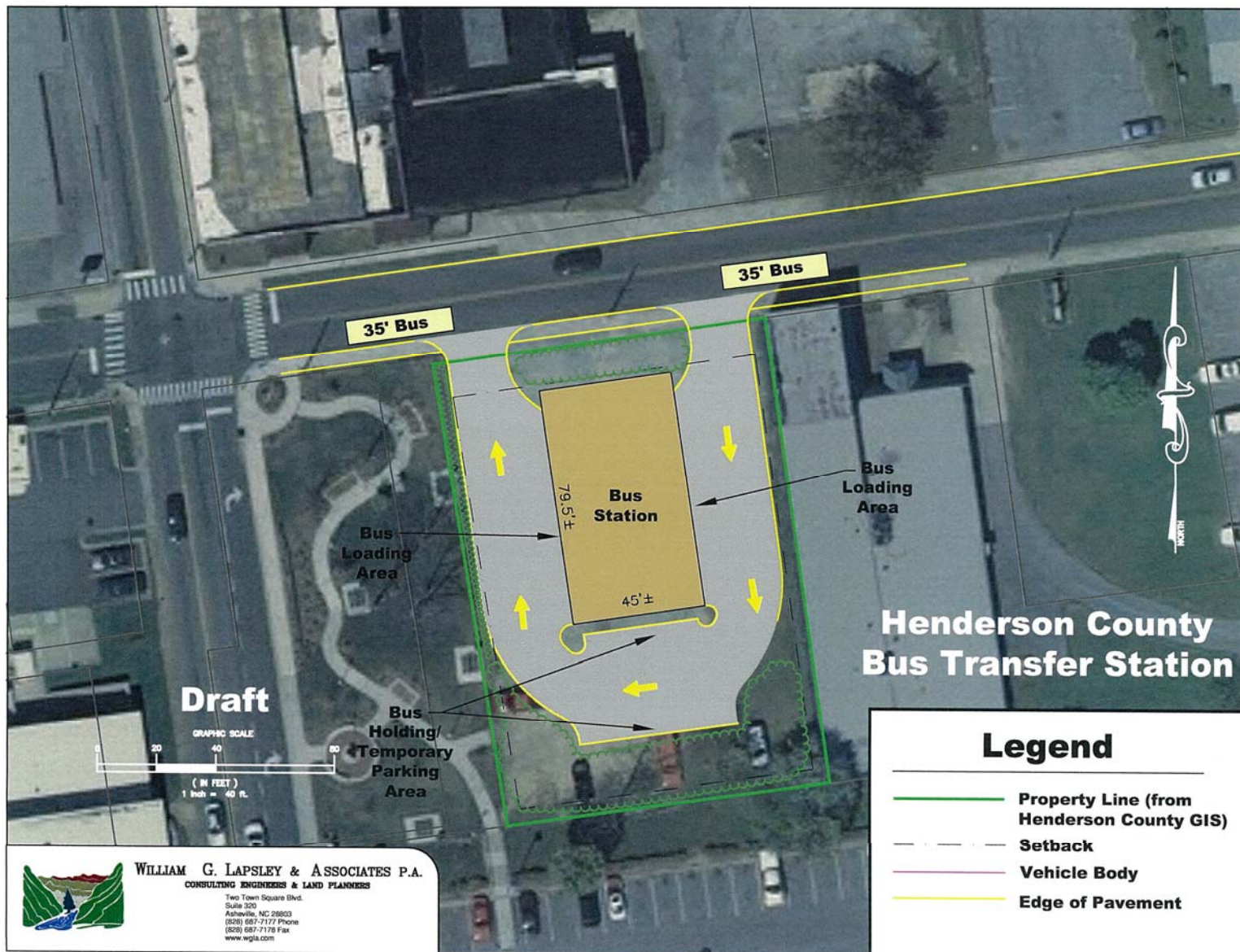
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