City of Asheville Staff Report

City Council Meeting Date: June 23, 2026

Staff Resources: Mike Cayse, Fire Chief, Jessica Hughes, Fire Administration Manager

Action Requested: Adoption of a resolution authorizing the City Manager to enter into a mutual aid agreement for fire protection services with Buncombe County.

Background:

- Pursuant to this Agreement, the Asheville Fire Department (AFD) will supplement emergency services—including fire protection, rescue, and emergency medical services—as part of the Buncombe County Emergency Services System within the designated Insurance District.
- AFD will provide the necessary equipment and personnel to offer emergency services protection in accordance with minimum requirements from OEMS and the State Fire Marshal.
- AFD will comply with specific Fire Department Service Standards, including:
    - Providing 4 firefighters on the scene of a structure fire (including automatic aid) within 8 minutes from enroute to arrival, 80% of the time.
    - For Suburban Response Districts, providing 22 firefighters on the scene within 10 minutes, 80% of the time.
    - For Rural Response Districts, providing 22 firefighters on the scene within 25 minutes, 80% of the time.
- This Agreement will be valid for a term of one (1) year, beginning July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2027, and may be extended for additional one (1) year terms based on written consent of both County and AFD.
- Either party may cancel this Agreement for convenience by giving the other party ninety (90) days advance written notice. In such case, AFD shall be paid for services rendered up to the date of termination.
- Buncombe County will pay $576,609 annually for the services rendered.

Vendor Outreach: N/A

Council Vision 2036 Focus Area(s):

- A clean, safe and healthy environment

Council Priority Recovery Area(s):

- People

Committee(s):

- N/A

Fiscal Impact:

- The City of Asheville will receive $576,609 in FY27 to provide fire protection services to Buncombe County fire districts. Funds are originally budgeted in the FY 2026-27 Special Revenue Fund and subsequently transferred to the General Fund.

Suggested Motion:

- Motion to adopt a resolution authorizing the City Manager to enter into a mutual aid agreement with Buncombe County.

Attachment(s):

- Resolution

City of Asheville Resolution Number 26-___

Resolution authorizing the City Manager to enter into a mutual aid agreement for fire protection services with Buncombe County.

Whereas, pursuant to North Carolina General Statutes Section 160A-461, the City is authorized to enter into contracts or agreements with other units of local government in order to execute any undertaking; and

Whereas, pursuant to North Carolina General Statutes Section 160A-293, the City is authorized to provide fire protection services outside of its corporate limits to rural or unincorporated areas pursuant to agreements between the City and the County; and

Whereas, the Asheville Fire Department (AFD) is requested to supplement emergency services, including fire protection, rescue, and emergency medical services, within the Buncombe County Emergency Services System.

Whereas, this agreement will establish a one-year term beginning July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2027, with a provision for extension upon written consent of both parties.

Whereas, Buncombe County agrees to pay the City of Asheville $576,609 in FY27 for providing fire protection services to Buncombe County fire districts.

Now, Therefore, be it resolved by the City Council of the City of Asheville that:

The City Manager is hereby authorized to execute a mutual aid agreement with Buncombe County for the provision of fire protection services, as detailed in the Staff Report dated June 23, 2026.

Now, Therefore, be it resolved by the City Council of the City of Asheville that:

Read, approved and adopted this 23 day of June, 2026.

_____
Esther E. Manheimer, Mayor

_____
Brad Branham, City Attorney

_____
Magdalen Burleson, City Clerk