City of Asheville Staff Report

City Council Meeting Date: August 25, 2026

Staff Resources: Assistant Chief Jeremy Knighton (Asheville Fire), Nancy Watford, Stormwater Plan Review Supervisor (Public Works), Bridget Herring, Director (Recovery and Resilience)

Action Requested: Adoption of a resolution adopting the Buncombe Madison Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Background:

- Local governments are vulnerable to an array of hazards that can cause loss of life and damage to public and private property, and seek ways to mitigate situations that may aggravate such circumstances.
- Developing and implementing a hazard mitigation plan can result in actions that reduce the long-term risk to life and property from natural hazards. It allows local governments to protect their community and property from the effects of natural hazards by preparing and maintaining a local hazard mitigation plan.
- Hazard mitigation techniques include both structural measures (strengthening or protecting buildings and infrastructure) and non-structural measures (adopting sound land-use policies and creating public awareness programs).
- Under North Carolina General Statutes, Chapter 166A: North Carolina Emergency Management Act and Section 322: Mitigation Planning, of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, approval of a hazard mitigation plan is required to remain eligible to receive state and federal assistance in the event of a declared disaster affecting the organization.
- In coordination with Buncombe and Madison Counties and the participating municipalities within those Counties (including the City of Asheville), a multi-jurisdictional hazard mitigation plan has been developed with input from the appropriate local and state officials.
- The focus of the Buncombe Madison Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan is hazards considered to be high or moderate risks (determined from a detailed hazard risk assessment) that enable us to prioritize mitigation action.
- The City of Asheville has adopted a county-wide all-hazards mitigation plan since 2011 and the Buncombe Madison Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan since 2016.
- North Carolina Emergency Management and the Federal Emergency Management Agency have reviewed the Buncombe Madison Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan for legislative compliance and have approved the plan, pending completion of local adoption procedures.

Vendor Outreach:

- N/A

Council Vision 2036 Focus Area(s):

- A well-planned and livable community
- A clean, safe and healthy environment
- A connected and engagement community

Council Priority Recovery Area(s):

- People
- Infrastructure & Environment

Committee(s):

- Public Safety Committee - July 29, 2026 - Vote 3-0 to approve and move forward to City Council

Fiscal Impact:

- None at this time

Suggested Motion:

- Motion to adopt a resolution adopting the Buncombe Madison Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Attachment(s):

- Resolution
- Buncombe Madison Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan

City of Asheville Resolution Number 26-_____

Resolution adopting the Buncombe Madison Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan

Whereas, the citizens and property within the City of Asheville are subject to potential threats to life and property posed by natural hazards, with certain areas of the county being particularly vulnerable to drought, extreme heat, hailstorm, hurricane and tropical storm, lightning, thunderstorm wind/high wind, tornado, winter storm and freeze, flood, hazardous material incident, and wildfire; and

Whereas, the City of Asheville desires to seek ways to mitigate the impact of identified natural hazard risks; and

Whereas, pursuant to North Carolina General Statutes Section 166A-19.15(f)(2), counties and municipalities are authorized to direct and coordinate the development of emergency management plans and programs in accordance with the policies and standards set out by the Division of Emergency Management, consistent with federal and state laws and regulations; and

Whereas, pursuant to North Carolina General Statutes Section 166A-19.41, a hazard mitigation plan approved pursuant to the Stafford Act is required in order for the City to be eligible for state emergency assistance fund public assistance grants in a state of emergency declared pursuant to G.S. 166A-19.20(a); and

Whereas, Section 322 of the Federal Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000, as amended, states that local governments must develop an All-Hazards Mitigation Plan in order to be eligible to receive future Hazard Mitigation Grant Program Funds and other disaster-related assistance funding and that said Plan must be updated and adopted within a five-year cycle; and

Whereas, the City of Asheville has performed a comprehensive review and evaluation of each section of the previously approved Hazard Mitigation Plan and has updated the said plan as required under regulations and at 44 CFR Part 201 and according to guidance issued by the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the North Carolina Division of Emergency Management, and that the plans have been updated in accordance with federal laws including the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, as amended; the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968, as amended; the National Dam Safety Program Act, as amended; as required under regulations at 44 CFR Part 201, and according to guidance issued by the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the North Carolina Division of Emergency Management; and

Whereas, it is the intent of the City Council of the City of Asheville to fulfill this obligation in order that the City will remain eligible for federal and state assistance in the event that a state of disaster is declared for a hazard event affecting the City;

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

1. The City adopts the 2026 Buncombe Madison Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan; and

2. The City agrees to take such other official action as may be reasonably necessary to carry out the objectives of the Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Read, approved and adopted this 25th day of August, 2026.

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Esther E. Manheimer, Mayor

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Brad Branham, City Attorney

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Magdalen Burleson, City Clerk