City of Asheville Staff Report

City Council Meeting Date: August 25, 2026

Staff Resources: Assistant Chief Jeremy Knighton, Jessica Hughes, Fire Administration Manager

Action Requested: Adoption of a budget amendment, in the amount of $15,000, to purchase forest fire protection shelters using a Duke Energy Emergency Response Grant.

Background:

- On March 19, 2026, Duke Energy announced Emergency Response grants to help communities better prepare for severe weather, natural disasters, and emergency response challenges.
- On July 29, 2026, the Asheville Fire Department was notified that it would receive a $15,000 grant to purchase forest fire protection shelters to support ongoing fire response and preparedness.
- The purchase of forest fire protection shelters will be limited to the $15,000 grant award, and no additional City operating funds will be used to support the purchase.
- These forest fire protection shelters serve as a critical last-resort safety tool designed to protect firefighters from extreme heat and flame exposure during complex wildland fire events, ensuring our responders have the best possible protection as we manage the increasing fire risks in our region.

Vendor Outreach: Staff will perform outreach through solicitation processes which include posting on the State's Interactive Purchasing System and require prime contractors to perform outreach to subcontractors in accordance with applicable purchasing policies.

Council Vision 2036 Focus Area(s):

- A well-planned and livable community

Council Priority Recovery Area(s):

- Infrastructure & Environment
- People

Committee(s):

- N/A

Fiscal Impact: The Asheville Fire Department will use grant funds to purchase forest fire protection shelters totalling $15,000. A city-match is not required.

Suggested Motion:

- Motion to adopt a budget amendment in the amount of $15,000 to accept and appropriate the Duke Energy Emergency Response Grant for the purchase of forest fire protection shelters.

Attachment(s):

- Budget Amendment

City of Asheville Budget Amendment Ordinance Number ____

Be it Ordained by the City Council of the City of Asheville:

That Section 2 of the City of Asheville Annual Operating Budget Ordinance be amended to provide an appropriation of $15,000 to the Special Revenue Fund for the purchase of forest fire protection shelters. The purchase will be funded through a grant as follows:

Special Revenue Fund

Revenues:

Duke Energy Emergency Response Grant - $15,000

Expenditures:

Equipment - $15,000

That this ordinance shall be in full force and effect upon the date of final passage.

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