BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

200 College Street, Room 326
Asheville, NC

September 15, 2026 – 5:00 PM

WORKING AGENDA

Public Comment is taken at the beginning of the meeting.

CALL TO ORDER

CONSENT

1. Approval of the September 1, 2026 Meeting Minutes
2. Approval of the August 18, 2026, Combined Meeting Minutes
3. Resolution Approving Pyrotechnic Expert for Fireworks Display
4. Budget Amendment and Acceptance of Governor's Crime Commission (GCC) Violence Reduction 2026 Grant

PUBLIC COMMENT

GOOD NEWS

MANAGER'S REPORT

PRESENTATIONS

1. First Step Farm of WNC 50th Anniversary Month Proclamation
2. National Manufacturing Day and Month Proclamation
3. National Hispanic & Latino Heritage Month Proclamation
4. Buncombe County Soil and Water Conservation District's 75th Anniversary Proclamation
5. Human Resources Professionals Day Proclamation

PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. FY28 NCDOT Community Transportation 5311 Application

OLD BUSINESS

1. Low-Income Housing Tax Credit & CDBG-DR Awards for LIHTC Projects Update

NEW BUSINESS

1. Approval of the Deaverview Master Planning Contract
2. Budget Amendments for Conservation Easements

BOARD APPOINTMENTS

1. Board Appointments for September 15, 2026

BOARD UPDATES

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CLOSED SESSION

[MEET_FOOT]

MINUTES OF THE BUNCOMBE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS'

REGULAR MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 1, 2026.

BE IT REMEMBERED: That the Board of Commissioners met to hold a Regular Meeting on September 1, 2026, in the Chamber at 200 College Street in downtown Asheville, North Carolina at 5:00 p.m.

Present: Chair Amanda Edwards; Vice-Chair Martin Moore; Commissioner Terri Wells, Commissioner Al Whitesides; Commissioner Jennifer Horton; Commissioner Drew Ball; and Commissioner Parker Sloan.

The Chair opened the meeting and provided opening remarks. Additionally, she stated that although she does not have a personal financial impact, she will be requesting a motion to recuse her from discussion and the vote on the Future Factories grant item under New Business on the agenda.

CONSENT

1. Approval of the July 2026 Tax Collection Report

2. Resolution Approving Pyrotechnic Experts for Firework Displays

3. Road Closure Petition to Delete a Section of SR-1495 from the NCDOT State System

4. Budget Amendment for Library Donations

5. Approval of the Interlocal Agreement Between the City of Asheville and Buncombe County Governing the General Assistance Program

Commissioner Horton made the motion to approve the Consent agenda and agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Moore and carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Thomas Schieber – expressed concern about County spending and property taxes. He urged the Board to reduce spending, focus on core government services, eliminate or consolidate non-mandated programs and funding, address fraud and waste, consider selling County property, and explore voluntary taxpayer donations to support non-mandated initiatives.

Jeff Fager- discussed ongoing flooding issues in Beacon Village, identifying damaged and improperly installed residential culverts as a contributing factor. He requested County assistance in identifying the appropriate department or enforcement mechanism to address the culvert issues and improve drainage in the neighborhood.

Gino Perez – Better Together Transportation - expressed concern about driver shortages affecting Mountain Mobility and resulting in canceled or delayed transportation for seniors and people with disabilities. He encouraged the County to consider placing a quarter-cent transit referendum before voters to provide additional funding and increase transportation capacity.

GOOD NEWS

1. **LEAD Fellow Madison Harms Introduction**

Manager Pinder introduced Madison Harms as the new Lead for North Carolina (LFNC) fellow. She explained that LFNC is a state affiliate of Lead for America, a nonpartisan fellowship program across the United States. She stated that Harms is a recent graduate from Appalachian State University and earned her degree in Political Science with a Minor in Community and Regional Planning.

NEW BUSINESS

1. **Approval of Pharmacy Benefit Changes and New Pharmacy Benefit Manager**

Shauna Shepherd, Human Resources Director with Roberta Ferdinand, USI provided background information. They explained the two recommendations: 1) The GLP-1 savings strategy for 2027; and 2) a new pharmacy benefit manager. Ferdinand explained both recommendations in detail. She said that the first is a recommendation for the County to remove GLP-1 medications prescribed for weight management from the BCBS formulary, eliminating coverage through the medical plan. Instead, the County would implement an RxSaveCard program to provide financial assistance for eligible employees prescribed these medications. The second recommendation is related to Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Carolina announcing that Prime Therapeutics will no longer serve as its Pharmacy Benefit Manager (PBM) beginning in 2027. As part of our renewal strategy, USI conducted a PBM market evaluation and identified two primary options: to either remain with BCBSNC and transition to their default PBM, Optum, or to carve out pharmacy benefits from BCBSNC and contract directly with Employers Health-CVS (EHCVS) as the PBM. While both BCBS Optum and Employers Health - CVS involve formulary changes and some level of employee disruption, USI projected $1.43 million in additional savings, making Employers Health - CVS the stronger financial option.

The Board asked clarifying questions. They further clarified that GLP-1 medications for diabetes will remain on the pharmacy formulary, while coverage for weight management will transition to the RxSaveCard program as a cost-saving measure. Discussion also addressed premium increases, payment and reimbursement requirements, continued access to nutrition and lifestyle medicine services, employee communication regarding the pharmacy benefit changes, and the ability for employees using GLP-1 medications for weight management to work with their personal primary care providers.

Commissioner Wells asked about the total cost of the health plan and the increase in premiums. Manager Pinder answered that the health plan is approximately $40 million and that premiums increase amounts vary between 7%-20% based on the plan type. She further explained that claims data and utilization trends are reviewed annually to identify cost drivers and inform programs focused on prevention, early detection, and management of high-cost conditions.

Commissioner Horton noted that she was excited for employees to have this option and Board members expressed their appreciation for staff's continued evaluation of health plan costs and benefits.

Commissioner Horton made the motion to support the Health Insurance Plan as presented by Staff. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Sloan and carried unanimously.

2. **Authorization to Submit Proposed Projects for CDBG-DR Community Infrastructure**

Kevin Madsen, Helene Recovery Officer, provided background information. He explained that in response to the State of North Carolina's "Community Infrastructure" Community Development Block Grant - Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) grant opportunity, staff have prepared three proposed applications for funding; 1) The "Buncombe County Parks Recovery & Resilience" project proposes to rebuild Buncombe County Parks damaged by Hurricane Helene, restore park service to pre-Helene levels, and mitigate against future disasters; 2) The "Ferry Road Infrastructure to Enable Affordable Housing" project proposes to build and improve essential infrastructure that will enable the development of affordable housing on the Ferry Road Affordable Housing Community site; And 3) the "Community Resilience at County-Owned Facilities" project seeks to provide comprehensive permanent power redundancy systems for the county's critical facilities. He explained that this grant application requires one public hearing and the County has opted to include a public comment period. The public hearing was held on August 18th and the public comment period was open between July 31st and August 28th. He stated that the proposed action is to provide authorization to submit the three grant applications by the September 16th, 2026 deadline.

Commissioner Wells asked if the County has heard about Public Assistance for Owen Park yet. Madsen said that we have not heard back at this point and noted that staff continues to work with FEMA partners and that we hope to hear back soon.

Commissioners discussed potential future funding opportunities, including whether a subsequent round of Community Infrastructure funding could support stormwater improvements in Swannanoa if additional funding is needed after NCDOT completes its assessment. Madesen confirmed that an inquiry has been submitted to the State regarding eligibility and staff is awaiting a response.

Madsen further clarified that that the remaining $137 million is part of the same funding allocation, with approximately $55 million available in the first round. Awards under the program range from $500,000 to $15 million, with commercial district projects capped at $10 million.

The Board also discussed how CDBG-DR funding interacts with FEMA Public Assistance (PA) and other funding sources. Madesen explained that CDBG-DR is considered funding of last resort, with insurance and FEMA PA pursued first. Any remaining funding gaps, such as those associated with Owen Park, could potentially be considered in a future CDBG-DR funding round once FEMA PA determinations are known.

Commissioner Wells made the motion to approve the resolution and authorize staff to submit proposed applications for the Community Infrastructure CDBG-DR Helene Recovery Grant program. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Sloan and carried unanimously.

3. Notification of Award for WNC Future Factories and Authorization for the County Manager to Execute Agreement

Josh Hallingse, Intergovernmental Relations Director, provided background information. He explained that the WNC Futures Factory is a development of a 70,000-square-foot workforce training and innovation center designed to support Western North Carolina’s economic recovery following Tropical Storm Helene. AB Tech, Buncombe County, and Land of Sky collaborated to

pursue funding through the EDA's FY2025 Disaster Supplemental program, ultimately securing a total project budget of more than $37 million. The award was announced on July 27, 2026, with grant agreements issued shortly thereafter and requiring signatures by September 8, 2026. He explained that a 60-day special conditions period must be completed before funds can be used, including the subdivision and transfer of a 13.18-acre property from Biltmore Farms to AB Tech. He further explained the 52-month project timeline encompassing design, construction, review, and closeout phases. Hallingse highlighted that the County co-applicant and is managing construction and financial administration of related project expenses, while Land of Sky is the primary point of contact for the EDA and is leading grant management and AB Tech is the lead applicant, overseeing programming and procurement for innovation components, programming if workforce space and the lead procurement of innovation operating partner while also being a participant in construction-related procurements.

Hallingse noted that for construction awards, recipients must report job creation/retention and private investment leverage at three, six and nine years after the EDA investment. Lastly, Hallingse explained the upcoming steps, which include finalizing a subrecipient agreement between the County and AB Tech and the Board is asked to authorize the County Manager to accept the grant award and execute all necessary agreements to implement the project.

Vice-Chair Moore made the motion to recuse Chair Edwards from the vote in the interest of avoiding any appearance of conflict of interest due to employment purposes and/or fiduciary potential gain. Commissioner Whitesides seconded the motion, and it was carried unanimously. Vice-Chair Moore presided over the following Board discussion and vote.

Commissioner Wells asked about the County's financial responsibilities. Hallingse explained that project funding consists of approximately $30 million from the EDA grant, a previously authorized $5 million local match, and approximately $3.1 million previously awarded by the State. He said that the EDA grant does not reimburse County staff time associated. Manager Pinder noted that staff are exploring whether local option sales tax funding could cover those costs or whether construction oversight could be contracted to preserve staff capacity.

Commissioner Wells asked about reporting. Hallingse stated that A-B Tech would provide information related to project deliverables, while the County and Land of Sky would participate in reporting milestones to EDA.

Commissioner Horton asked whether the County could be held liable to repay the grant if the project is not carried out, and whether there is an agreement on whether AB Tech or the County would be responsible for repayment. Hallingse explained that the County is a co-recipient of the grant alongside AB Tech and is subject to its terms for nonperformance, although staff does not foresee performance issues, and stated that this is among the matters the Board was being asked to authorize the County Manager to address through subsequent agreements.

Commissioner Sloan asked if there could be more than one innovation partner(s). Hallingse confirmed. Commissioner Sloan asked for further clarification that the property is being transferred to AB Tech and that the building will be theirs. Hallingse confirmed that AB Tech is intended to own the building and lead its design and internal operating model. He further explained that the County will participate as a partner in discussions around procurement, but AB Tech will be the lead. He said that additional agreements between the County and A-B Tech will be formalized as the project progresses.

Commissioner Sloan asked about future ownership of equipment or machinery provided for the facility. Manager Pinder said that those details have not yet been determined and may depend on arrangements with A-B Tech and future innovation partners.

Vice-Chair Moore requested that Commissioners provide the County Manager with concerns or priorities to consider as agreements and negotiations proceed. Manager Pinder requested feedback as soon as possible due to the project's timeline.

Commissioner Wells made the motion to authorize the County Manager to accept the grant award and execute all necessary agreements to implement the project. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Ball and carried 6-0 with Chair Edwards recused from voting.

4. Budget Amendment for the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program Subrecipient Management Funds

John Hudson and Kevin Madesen provided background information. Madsen explained that the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) is a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) fund administered by North Carolina Division of Emergency Management. He said that Buncombe County has been awarded a total of $4,124,262.76 to serve as the point of contact with homeowners from application intake to project completion. He said that the Program will acquire and demolish residential structures and return the land to green space. Hudson said that this is the third group of properties for which the County has received Subrecipient Management Funds, which is 5% of the total of the project: Group 3: $4,124,262.

He noted that there are currently two groups of properties for which the County has already received Subrecipient Management Funds, which is 5% of the total of the projects: Group 1: $406,010 and Group 2: $550,950 with the total for all three groups: $5,081,222.

Manager Pinder clarified that the property acquisition program was established following Tropical Storm Helene and is entirely voluntary. She explained that property owners whose homes were impacted by flooding or landslides had the opportunity to apply; the County does not determine which properties will be acquired or demolished. The State reviewed and accepted applications through the state-led program, and the County is now implementing applications submitted more than a year ago.

Commissioner Horton asked how many properties are in group three. Madsen said that group three currently has 152 properties. 142 were approved in batch one and the County was recently notified last week of 10 additional properties in batch two for a total of 152.

Madesen noted that the program is funded 75% federally and 25% by the State, with funding administered at the state level. The approximately $4 million before the Board today would reimburse County staff costs associated with overseeing contractors and implementation of the program.

Commissioner Wells asked about the elevation applications. Madesen said that 53 application packets for Buncombe County properties have been submitted to FEMA for federal review. He said that the State completed engineering studies and determine if the properties meet HMGP eligibility requirements for elevation. He noted that eligibility considerations include foundation type and structural condition and further explained that because this is the first group of elevation projects to reach federal review, staff does not have an estimated approval timeline

at this point. Madsen noted that an additional group is anticipated and that a comprehensive Helene Recovery update, including additional program data, will be presented to the Board at an upcoming Briefing meeting.

Commissioner Horton made the motion to approve the budget amendment. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Wells and carried unanimously.

5. FY2026 Budget Carryforwards

John Hudson, Budget Director, provided background information. He explained that the attached ordinance provides information regarding departments or functions that have requested FY2026 budget in the amounts indicated to be carried forward into FY2027 for the following reasons:

- Purchases in FY2026 not delivered prior to June 30, 2026 due to shipping or vendor delays;
- Services obligated in FY2026 however were unable to be completed prior to June 30, 2026;

Total annual budget requested to be carried forward by fund are as follows:

- General Fund: $126,981
- Mountain Mobility Special Revenue Fund: $392,147
- Health, Employment, Property & Casualty Insurance Internal Service Fund: $33,483.

Hudson said that the total amount of annual budget to be carried forward is $552,611; $58,335 of the budget carried forward in the General Fund will transferred to the Capital Fund to be budgeted in the FY26 Ambulances project to cover an overage identified in FY2026 that was covered by the General Fund where the purchase was not made in the fiscal year.

Commissioner Sloan made the motion to approve the budget amendments. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Horton and carried unanimously.

BOARD APPOINTMENTS

Mountain Area Workforce Development Board - Commissioner Whitesides made the motion to reappoint Eric Watts, Tara McCracken, Michael Horvath, John Gossett. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Sloan and carried unanimously.

Asheville-Buncombe Continuum of Care – Commissioner Sloan made the motion to appoint Commissioner Ball to replace Commissioner Horton. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Whitesides and carried unanimously.

Juvenile Crime Prevention Council – Commissioner Sloan made the motion to appoint Commissioner Horton to replace Commissioner Ball. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Whitesides and carried unanimously.

The Board scheduled interviews for September 15, 2026, at 1:00 p.m. for the following boards:

- Strategic Partnership Grants Committee

- Asheville Buncombe Technical Community College Board of Trustees
- Historic Resources Commission
- County Board of Adjustment

BOARD UPDATES

The Board members provided updates to the various Boards and Commissions they regularly attend. Commissioner Wells provided an update on the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners' Conference in which she and other Board members recently attended.

Commissioner Ball provided an update from the Continuum of Care (COC) meeting, noting that he was recently appointed and attended their last meeting. He said that the COC is working to coordinate local homelessness strategies, track data, and secure funding. They have identified funds to hire an individual or firm to help find additional funding opportunities and currently have a request for quotes out for that work. They also issued an RFQ for strategic communications to improve public understanding and engagement. Additionally, the COC recently conducted a community cleanup on Tunnel Road, collecting 69 bags of trash plus larger discarded items in efforts to keep the community safe and clean.

Meeting adjourned at 6:32 p.m.

MINUTES OF THE BUNCOMBE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS'

BRIEFING MEETING OF AUGUST 18, 2026.

BE IT REMEMBERED: That the Board of Commissioners met to hold a Briefing Meeting on August 18, 2026, in the First Floor Conference room at 200 College Street in downtown Asheville, North Carolina at 3:00 p.m.

Present: Chair Amanda Edwards; Vice-Chair Martin Moore; Commissioner Terri Wells, Commissioner Al Whitesides; Commissioner Jennifer Horton; Commissioner Drew Ball.

Absent: Commissioner Parker Sloan

The following items were reviewed.

1. **UNC Health Letter of Support**

Chair Edwards provided background information. She explained that the proposed letter expressed support for UNC Health's Certificate of Need application to build a new 92-bed hospital in western Asheville, citing documented regional need and the benefits of improved access for rural counties. The letter highlights lessons from Hurricane Helene, noting that limited road access underscored the importance of distributed emergency care. The letter concludes that the project will enhance public health, safety, and economic development and urges state approval. Commissioners consented to adding the letter to the New Business agenda for review and approval.

2. **NCACC Legislative Goals**

Josh Hallingse provided background information and provided the timeline and structure for the NCACC 2026 Legislative Goals process, including deadlines for goal submissions. Commissioner Wells further outlined the proposed goals which included:

<u>State-level NCACC Legislative Goals</u>

- Support additional resources for mental and behavioral health, including emergency responders, law enforcement, and state employees.
- Ensure any restructuring of the behavioral health system accounts for county fiscal/operational impacts and protects community-based crisis capacity.
- Encourage state funding for essential medical, mental health, substance use disorder, and social services for individuals in local detention facilities.
- Advocate for statewide support to address detention facility bed shortages and in-custody treatment challenges.
- Seek state funding for K–12 and community college employees and related capital needs.
- Adjust state programs to improve property tax relief for low-income seniors, veterans, and disabled residents.
- Preserve local taxing authority and local control over locally delivered services.

- Fund and support affordable housing initiatives, including closing the property-tax loophole related to nonprofit ownership.
- Pursue increased recurring state funding for farmland preservation initiatives.

Federal-level NCACC Legislative Goals

- Support increased funding for disaster preparation, assistance, and mitigation, and seek policy changes to streamline and improve access to FEMA assistance.
- Oppose unfunded mandates or cuts to essential health programs such as Medicaid and SNAP.
- Improve food assistance programs at both state and federal levels.

The Board discussed and consented to sending a letter on behalf of the Board to the NCACC outlining the stated goals.

3. Update on Benefits and Pharmacy Offerings

Shauna Shepherd provided background information. USI consultants further detailed the proposed 2027 health plan changes, focusing on pharmacy benefits and weight-management medication strategies. The County recommends removing GLP-1 weight-loss drugs from the BCBS formulary and adopting an RxSaveCard program, which would provide lower direct-to-consumer pricing and yield an estimated annual savings of over $565,700. Employees would pay a $100 copay under this program, while the County funds the remaining cost through the RxSaveCard mechanism. USI also reviewed options due to BCBSNC's transition away from Prime Therapeutics, with USI recommending Employers Health-CVS because it delivers approximately $1.43 million in savings compared to the BCBS/Optum renewal. Though either PBM option would involve formulary changes and some disruption, Employers Health-CVS offers stronger rebate guarantees and wide pharmacy network access. Additional updates for 2027 include required IRS-related HDHP deductible increases, higher HSA contributions, and vendor changes for FSA and Dependent Care FSA programs. The proposed timeline targets implementation beginning in early September, with final approval expected at the September 1 Board of Commissioners meeting.

MINUTES OF THE BUNCOMBE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS'

REGULAR MEETING OF AUGUST 18, 2026.

BE IT REMEMBERED: That the Board of Commissioners met to hold a Regular Meeting on August 18, 2026, in the Chamber at 200 College Street in downtown Asheville, North Carolina at 5:00 p.m.

Present: Chair Amanda Edwards; Vice-Chair Martin Moore; Commissioner Terri Wells, Commissioner Al Whitesides; Commissioner Jennifer Horton; Commissioner Drew Ball.

Absent: Commissioner Parker Sloan.

The Chair opened the meeting and provided opening remarks.

CONSENT

1. Approval of the August 4, 2026 Combined Meeting Minutes

2. Justice Resource Advisory Council Name Change to Criminal Justice Coordinating Councils and Membership Change Resolution

3. Resolution Approving Pyrotechnic Experts for Firework Displays

Commissioner Wells made the motion to add UNC Health Letter of Support to New Business. The Motion was seconded by Commissioner Moore and carried unanimously.

Commissioner Moore made the motion to approve the consent agenda and the amended agenda. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Horton and carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

R.J. Taylor - Swannanoa resident - member of the Small Area Plan steering committee - voiced support for the plan and commended the planning staff for their extensive work. He highlighted the plan's focus on safety, connectivity, and transportation improvements that will help make Swannanoa a safer community.

Jennifer Eby – described her concerns about conditions at the Detention Center, stating that incarcerated individuals often lack outdoor time, exercise opportunities, and functional access to reading materials. She urged the board to investigate these conditions.

Dan Slagle –retired postal employee from Swannanoa - thanked the board for its support in efforts to restore the local post office and shared that residents have been told a fully funded 10-year lease has been signed. He requested that the board help obtain formal written confirmation from the Postal Service to reassure the community.

John Dennis – president of the Blue Ridge Bicycle Club - spoke on behalf of 10,000 regional cyclists to highlight the safety issues they face from a minority of aggressive drivers. He expressed support for Lennie's Law and Buncombe County's effort to advance it in the General Assembly to improve road safety for all users.

Maddie Barondeau – shared her personal story of losing her boyfriend, Lenny Antonelli, in the 2025 NC251 crash and urged the board to take actions that improve safety for vulnerable

road users. She expressed gratitude for recent safety improvements and emphasized the importance of bicycle safety zones to prevent future tragedies.

Adam Smith - Chair of the Woodfin Parks and Community Enrichment Committee- described how the deaths of Lenny Antonelli and Jake Hill inspired the creation of “Lennie’s Law,” a proposed bicycle safety zone initiative aimed at reducing speeding and protecting cyclists. He highlighted the widespread local support already secured and urged Buncombe County to join other communities in endorsing the proposal to help advance it at the state level.

GOOD NEWS

1. Elevate Buncombe Guide Award Winners

Shauna Shepherd and Richard Bell introduced the new employee recognition program. Bell explained that the program is designed to celebrate the incredible contributions our employees make every day. Built with feedback from departments across the County, the program aims to strengthen the County’s commitment to living the core values while creating more ways to highlight exceptional work throughout the year. Elevate Buncombe is designed with a two-tiered structure, featuring both quarterly awards and a distinguished annual award. Fifty-nine nominations were received, and 13 employee winners were recognized including Rocio Borghini (Human Resources), Tom Braine (Information Technology), Robert Brown (General Services), Lauren Couch (Health & Human Services), Matt Evans (Finance), Tracie Franklin (Health & Human Services), Sergeant Bryan Freeborn (Buncombe County Sheriff’s Office), Kelly Houston (Risk & Compliance), Neggy Rodriguez-Fox (Election Services), Felissa Vazquez (Health & Human Services), Jen Waite (Libraries), Conner White (Recreation Services), and Jack Wright (General Services).

PRESENTATIONS

1. Strategic Partnership Grants Committee Annual Update

Members of the Strategic Partnership Grants Committee shared an overview of the work of the board and their mission to grant funding to nonprofit organizations working toward outcomes in alignment with Buncombe County’s Strategic Plan and Helene recovery priorities. The board oversees a budget of $1 million in projects and each project can apply for up to $85,000 in funding. Sixteen projects received funding in environmental, community health, education, and economic development focus areas.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. Southeastern Container Economic Development Agreement

Josh Hallingse provided background information. He explained that on February 19, 2026, Southeastern Container announced its plans to expand at its existing facility in Enka, North Carolina. Southeastern Container is an injection molding and blow molding manufacturer that produces preforms, bottle closures, and pallets.

Southeastern Container plans to invest $31.3 million in capital expenditures and create 12 new full-time jobs, averaging $32.90 per hour. Prior to the February expansion announcement, Southeastern Container requested, and the County agreed, subject to formal approval by the Board of Commissioners at a Public Hearing, to provide economic development incentives to induce the Company to make capital investments and create jobs in Buncombe

County. The Buncombe County incentives will total $85,000. $5,000 of these incentives will be leveraged as the required local government match for the State of North Carolina's Building Reuse Program. The Building Reuse grant program requires a 5% local match and this project received a $100,000 Building Reuse grant award. In addition to the grant match incentives, per the Buncombe County Economic Development Policy, Southeastern Container is eligible for a one-time incentive of $80,000 based on capital investment and job creation targets. Additionally, a portion of the grant may only be earned if Southeastern Container demonstrates its ability to hire employees from workforce development programs. In total, between State Building Reuse grant incentives ($100,000) and Buncombe County incentives ($85,000), Southeastern Container is eligible to receive up to $185,000 in total incentives.

Hallingse said that staff have analyzed the economic impact of the expansion project, drafted an Economic Development Agreement (EDA) between Southeastern Container and Buncombe County, and are requesting the Board's formal approval for the incentive Grant and are also requesting approval for a budget ordinance that would establish the building reuse grant fund.

The Chair opened the public hearing at 5:48 p.m. There were no comments. The public hearing was closed at 5:48 p.m.

Commissioner Wells made the motion to approve the 1) Building Reuse Grant Agreement with N.C. Commerce and Southeastern Container 2. Economic Development Incentives for Southeastern Container; and; 3. Economic Development Agreement between Southeastern Container and Buncombe County; and 4. Establishing a $105,000 budget for the NC Commerce Building Reuse Grant. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Whitesides and it passed 5-1 with Commissioner Ball voting nay.

2. CDBG-DR Community Infrastructure - Public Hearing #1

Tyler Henry provided background information. He explained that this first funding round makes approximately $55 million available statewide, with individual projects capped at $15 million. Three potential projects aim to address unmet needs after Helene including parks recovery projects, infrastructure on the County-owned Ferry Road Affordable Housing site, and resiliency projects at critical county facilities focused on power redundancy. He noted that the Helene Recovery Plan outlined the need to recover parks, build more affordable housing, and invest in resiliency measures and preparedness.

Henry further explained that the public comment period will remain open through Aug. 28 to gather feedback before final applications are due Sep. 16. Public comment can be shared with the Helene Recovery Office by email, by phone at 828-250-6100, or in writing to the attention of the Buncombe County Helene Recovery Office at 200 College St., Asheville, NC 28801. Staff will incorporate public feedback for the Board’s review and approval at the September 1, 2026 meeting. Lastly, he noted that other infrastructure projects will be considered as more recovery funding streams become available.

The Chair opened the public hearing at 5:58 p.m. There were 8 speakers. The public hearing closed at 6:19 p.m.

Public Hearing comments:

David Nutter- Chair of the Connect Buncombe Advocacy and Partnerships Committee, voiced support for incorporating the recovery of Owen Park into the broader Swannanoa River and Fonta Flora Greenway plan, noting its alignment with existing French Broad River greenway efforts. He emphasized the regional importance, resilience needs, and long-term connectivity benefits of completing each segment of the Swannanoa River Greenway.

Jeff Fager- resident of Beacon Village in Swannanoa, described ongoing flooding issues caused by clogged culverts and inadequate stormwater infrastructure, exacerbated by recent development at the old Beacon plant site. He asked the board to intervene, noting that county and state departments have not coordinated effectively and that residents need support to address the persistent flooding.

Dan Slagle – described significant flooding in Swannanoa caused by clogged culverts that were only partially cleared after Hurricane Helene, resulting in repeated water backups into homes and streets. He asked the county to help coordinate with DOT to fully inspect, repair, or replace the drainage infrastructure using CDBG funds to protect the unincorporated community.

Rebecca Williams –Swannanoa resident, echoed neighbors' concerns about repeated flooding in Swannanoa and emphasized that rebuilding homes without addressing drainage problems is not sustainable. She also voiced strong support for the CDBG-DR grant, highlighting the importance of park restoration, particularly Owen Park, as part of the community's emotional, physical, and environmental recovery.

Shelly Mckechnie - executive director of the Friends of the Fonta Flora State Trail, thanked the county for its disaster recovery grant application and emphasized the importance of fully restoring Owen Park. She urged the county to ensure a greenway connection in the planning process, noting its significance for the Fonta Flora State Trail and the broader regional trail network

Liesl Erb – Warren Wilson College staff member, echoed neighbors' concerns about Swannanoa's flooding and expressed strong support for the county's disaster recovery grant focused on resilience. She highlighted the importance of restoring Owen Park as both a community gathering space and a model for regional resilience, emphasizing its role in local well-being and broader research on disaster recovery.

Jevald Pope – Swannanoa resident, urged the board to support the Owen Park project, emphasizing that the community has lacked a central gathering place since the mill closed and that Owen Park once served as its social heart. He noted how the park brought neighbors together and asked commissioners to remember the strong public support when the project comes up for a vote.

James Thomas –Swannanoa resident, voiced strong support for the Owen Park project and emphasized the importance of parks and greenways for healthy, vibrant communities. He also described ongoing flooding in downtown Swannanoa and urged the county to address the drainage issues impacting homes and businesses.

3. ZPH2026-00024 KOA Map Amendment (US Hwy 70)

Shannon Capezzali provided background information. She explained that the ZPH2026-00024 KOA Map Amendment: Kampgrounds of America Inc. applied to rezone two (2) parcels of land with the addresses 517 Lazy Bear Blvd. and 99999 US Hwy 70 further identified as PINs 9699-70-6736 and 9699-71-5166 from CS Commercial to R-3 – Residential. She further explained that the property is currently used as a recreation vehicle park with cottages and camping available with a vacant commercial space. This zoning change would allow for more residential uses like mobile homes and RV parks. Capezzali stated that the hearing was properly noticed in accordance with applicable General Statutes and County Code, including publication of a legal advertisement, mailed notices to property owners within 1,000 feet, notice on the County website, and physical posting of the property and noted that the Planning Board approved the amendment at their July 20, 2026 meeting.

Commissioner Wells asked about a rezoning request involving a flood hazard area and how staff's impact analysis applied. Capezzali explained that while the rezoning would reduce the intensity and range of permitted uses, it would not reduce allowable residential density, which remains 12 units per acre; a lower-density district such as R-1 or R-2 would be more consistent with the hazard-area considerations. Staff further explained that the impact analysis considers existing and potential uses and their effects on surrounding properties and hazard areas, noting that because this proposal is a downzoning, its potential impacts would generally be less than those associated with an upzoning.

The Chair opened the Public Hearing opened at 6:26 p.m. there was one public commenter. The Public Hearing closed 6:28 p.m.

Public Comment:

Liesl Erb – Ecologist and Buncombe County resident, urged commissioners to avoid permitting development in flood-prone areas, stressing that repeated flooding reflects a new climate reality requiring long-term, science-based planning. She encouraged the county to think broadly and act as a national model for resilient land-use decisions.

Commissioner Whitesides made the motion to approve the rezoning of the subject property as it is consistent with the Buncombe County 2043 Comprehensive Plan. Commissioner Wells seconded the motion and passed 5-1 with Commissioner Horton voting nay.

Commissioner Horton asked to be recognized to speak to her nay vote. She stated that as a lifelong resident of Buncombe County, as a resident who was affected greatly by Hurricane Helene, as someone who lost family and close friends, and having seen the devastation on US 70, she could not support building in a known floodplain and changing the rezoning.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Resolution in Support of Lennie's Law

Commissioner Ball read the resolution. He said that the Board of Commissioners expresses support for the Leonard Antonelli and Jacob Hill Bicycle Safety Zone Act of 2025 ("Lennie's Law"), created in response to the death of Alex Rozos who tragically lost his life in a hit-and-run collision while riding his bicycle on Swannanoa River Road in 2024 and the tragic

crash that killed two cyclists, Leonard “Lennie” Antonelli and Jacob “Jake” Hill while injuring Griffin Tichenor on NC 251 in 2025.

The resolution highlights the region’s high rate of bicycle-related crashes and emphasizes the urgent need for enhanced roadway safety. It supports establishing Bicycle Safety Zones, implementing traffic-calming measures, and collaborating with NCDOT, the French Broad MPO, and local municipalities to improve safety along NC Scenic Byway 251 and other key corridors. Additionally, the resolution honors the victims and underscores the community’s commitment to preventing future tragedies.

Commissioner Ball made the motion to pass the Resolution in Support of Lennie’s Law. Commissioner Moore seconded the motion and it was carried unanimously.

2. Indoor Recreation Center Design Services Contract Approval

Ronnie Lunsford provided background information. He explained that as part of the FY27 Capital Improvement Plan, the Board of Commissioners approved a project to design an Indoor Recreation Center located on County-owned property at the Buncombe County Sports Park. Consultants are needed to facilitate this design project and their services will include the following:

- Space Programming
- Schematic Design
- Design Development
- Construction Documents
- Cost Estimating
- Bid and Construction Administration

He further explained that pursuant to General Statute, General Services released a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to select a consulting firm. Ten responses to the RFQ were received, and a scoring committee made up of Parks and Recreation and General Services staff evaluated and scored those responses. Of the ten, Method Studio received the highest score and was selected as the design firm. After negotiations, their contract amount is $1,599,220, which is within budget for this project and no new funds are needed.

Commissioner Horton made the motion to approve the contract. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Whitesides and carried unanimously.

3. UNC Health Letter of Support

Chair Edwards noted that this was added from the Briefing and noted that the letter of support signaled their strong support for the Certificate of Need application filed by UNC Health West Medical Center to develop a new 92-bed acute care hospital on the western side of Asheville. The proposed site located west of the French Broad River near the interstate interchange is positioned to serve as a point of entry for patients traveling into Buncombe County from Clay, Graham, Madison, and Yancey Counties. The letter emphasizes the need for a well-distributed network of accessible emergency and inpatient care throughout Buncombe County in the aftermath of Helene

Commissioner Ball made the motion to approve the letter of support. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Wells and carried unanimously.

BOARD APPOINTMENTS

1. Board Appointments for August 18, 2026

- **Strategic Partnership Grants Committee –** The Board requested to keep accepting applications to be reviewed at the September 1 meeting and schedule interviews for September 15.
- **Asheville Buncombe Technical Community College Board of Trustees –** The Board requested to keep accepting applications to be reviewed at the September 1 meeting and schedule interviews for September 15.

Adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

Buncombe County Board of Commissioners

Request for Board Action

Meeting Date: September 15, 2026

CONSENT

Department: Governing Body **Presenter(s):** Kevin Tipton, Fire Marshal

Contact: Kevin Tipton, Fire Marshal

Subject: Resolution Approving Pyrotechnic Expert for Fireworks Display

Brief Summary:

Request from Joshua Caleb Webb and Pyrotecnico Inc. to conduct a fireworks show on December 31, 2026 at The Inn On Biltmore, 1 Antler Hill Dr. Asheville, N.C. 28803.

Recommended Motion & Requested Action:

Approve resolution.

Attachments:

1. Pyrotechnics Display 9-15-26 mtg

RESOLUTION #:

RESOLUTION APPROVING PYROTECHNICS EXPERTS FOR CONDUCTING FIREWORKS DISPLAYS

WHEREAS, pursuant to NCGS §§ 14-410 and 14-413 the Board of Commissioners is authorized to review and approve the qualifications of persons applying for approval as pyrotechnics experts for the purpose of conducting fireworks displays; and

WHEREAS, application has been made by Joshua Caleb Webb and Pyrotecnico, Inc. for a pyrotechnic display;

WHEREAS, the Fire Marshal has reviewed and determined that the application meets the standards set forth in the general statutes and the required proof of insurance has been provided; and

WHEREAS, this Board is of the opinion that the application received to conduct a firework pyrotechnic display should be approved.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Board of Commissioners for the County of Buncombe as follows:

1. That the following be granted permission to conduct a fireworks display at the location and on the date shown, to-wit:

NAME	LOCATION	DATE
Joshua Caleb Webb & Pyrotecnico	The Inn On Biltmore 1 Antler Hill Drive Asheville, NC 28803	December 31, 2026

That should inclement weather prevent the presentation of said display on said date(s), then the pyrotechnics display may be rescheduled to a postponement date with the consent of the fire Marshal or designee.

2. That pursuant to NCGS §§ 14-410 and 14-413 this Board finds that the above-named individual/company is a qualified pyrotechnic expert for the purpose of conducting fireworks displays.

3.

ADOPTED this 1st day of September, 2026.

ATTEST

_____
Sarah Gross, Clerk to the Board

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FOR THE COUNTY OF BUNCOMBE

By: _____
Amanda Edwards, Chair

APPROVED AS TO FORM

_____
County Attorney

Buncombe County Board of Commissioners

Request for Board Action

Meeting Date: September 15, 2026

CONSENT

Department: Justice Services **Presenter(s):** John Hudson, Budget Director

Contact: Regenia Herring, Justice Services Director

Subject: Budget Amendment and Acceptance of Governor's Crime Commission (GCC) Violence Reduction 2026 Grant

Brief Summary:

Buncombe County justice services has been awarded $200,000 from the Governor's Crime Commission to continue its community-based public health approach to violence reduction, with a focus on gun violence. The project will strengthen a comprehensive violence prevention, intervention, and response strategy designed to build community cohesion, increase protective factors, and reduce firearm violence in communities disproportionately impacted by gun violence. Grant funds will support the Community Safety and Violence Prevention (CSVP) Coordinator (an existing position, already filled), technical assistance, research and data analysis, and coalition engagement activities to enhance cross-sector collaboration and inform evidence-based violence reduction efforts.

Recommended Motion & Requested Action:

Receive the grant, accept the award terms and conditions, and approve the budget amendment.

Attachments:

1. Budget Ordinance

ORDINANCE # _____

BUNCOMBE COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA
Grant Projects Ordinance

BOARD MEETING DATE: September 15, 2026

WHEREAS, the Budget Director recommends and the Board now desires to amend the FY2026-2027 Grants Projects outlined below in Exhibit "A" to the budget,

NOW THEREFORE,

BE IT ORDAINED by the Board of Commissioners for the County of Buncombe as follows:

1. That the FY2026-2027 amendments listed in Exhibit A below be hereby adopted.
2. That this ordinance shall be effective upon adoption.

ADOPTED this 15th day of September, 2026

Granting Agency: U.S. Dept. of Justice (DOJ), Office of Justice Programs (OJP)
Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) & NC Govenor's Crime Commission (GCC)
Grant Name: BJA Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) Program
Violent Crime Reduction Grant

Description:
Buncombe County justice services has been awarded $200,000 from the Governor's Crime Commission to continue its community-based public health approach to violence reduction, with a focus on gun violence. The project will strengthen a comprehensive violence prevention, intervention, and response strategy designed to build community cohesion, increase protective factors, and reduce firearm violence in communities disproportionately impacted by gun violence. Grant funds will support a Community Safety and Violence Prevention (CSVP) Coordinator (an existing position, already filled), technical assistance, research and data analysis, and coalition engagement activities to enhance cross-sector collaboration and inform evidence-based violence prevention efforts.

Funding Source: BJA Edward Byrne Memorial (JAG) Program
CFDA Listing: 16.738

Exhibit A:	**Increase (Decrease)**	
Account Description	**Revenues**	**Expenditures**
FY27 GCC Violence Reduction Grant	$ 200,000	$ 200,000
TOTAL	$ 200,000	$ 200,000

ATTEST:

Clerk to the Board

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FOR THE COUNTY OF BUNCOMBE:

By: _____
Chairman of the Board

Buncombe County Board of Commissioners

Request for Board Action

Meeting Date: September 15, 2026

PRESENTATIONS

Department: Governing Body **Presenter(s):** Sarah Gross, Clerk to the Board

Contact: Stacey Woody, Deputy Clerk to the Board

Subject: First Step Farm of WNC 50th Anniversary Month Proclamation

Brief Summary:

Proclamation to proclaim September as First Step Farm of WNC's month in honor of their 50th Year Anniversary.

Recommended Motion & Requested Action:

No action needed.

Attachments:

1. First Step Farm 50th Year Anniversary 2026

FIRST STEP FARM OF WNC
50th ANNIVERSARY MONTH
SEPTEMBER 2026

WHEREAS, First Step Farm of WNC, Inc. was chartered in 1976 and has provided a unique and supportive pathway to recovery for adults overcoming substance dependency for five decades; and,

WHEREAS, located in Candler, it is a valued member of the Buncombe County community, serving individuals from throughout North Carolina; and,

WHEREAS, the Farm provides a long-term residential program that combines counseling, self-help, healthy living, and meaningful work to help individuals build confidence, self-respect, responsibility, and the skills needed for a life in recovery; and,

WHEREAS, through its innovative Work Therapy Program, residents gain practical vocational, social, and life skills while contributing to the operation of the farm, greenhouses, and other programs, providing opportunities to develop a strong work ethic and prepare for employment and independent living; and,

WHEREAS, the Farm has grown from its beginnings as a residential recovery program into a productive agricultural operation, with farming beginning in 1978 and greenhouse operations beginning in 1980, providing opportunities for residents to develop valuable skills while producing agricultural products for communities in the region; and,

WHEREAS, more than 4,000 North Carolina residents have benefited from First Step Farm's clinical counseling and work therapy programs, with former residents throughout the state who have gone on to lead productive lives in recovery; and,

WHEREAS, First Step Farm will celebrate its 50th anniversary during its annual "Pig Pickin" on September 19, 2026, bringing together members of the First Step Farm community to commemorate five decades of service and recovery; and,

WHEREAS, the Buncombe County Board of Commissioners recognizes and celebrates First Step Farm of WNC for 50 years of service, hope, opportunity, and commitment to helping individuals take the first steps toward a life of recovery and independence,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Buncombe County Board of Commissioners proclaims **September 2026** as **First Step Farm of WNC 50th Anniversary Month** and encourages all residents to join First Step Farm in celebrating this significant milestone and honoring its five decades of service, recovery, and positive impact throughout the state.

This 15th day of September, 2026.

Amanda Edwards

Amanda Edwards, Chair
Buncombe County Board of Commissioners

Buncombe County Board of Commissioners

Request for Board Action

Meeting Date: September 15, 2026

PRESENTATIONS

Department: Governing Body **Presenter(s):** Clark Duncan
EDC

Contact: Stacey Woody, Deputy Clerk to the Board

Subject: National Manufacturing Day and Month Proclamation

Brief Summary:

Proclamation proclaiming National Manufacturing Day and October 2026 as National Manufacturing Month in Buncombe County.

Recommended Motion & Requested Action:

No action needed.

Attachments:

1. National Manufacturing Day and Month 2026

NATIONAL MANUFACTURING DAY AND
NATIONAL MANUFACTURING MONTH
OCTOBER 2026

WHEREAS, advanced manufacturing is an important part of the economies of North Carolina and Buncombe County, locally supporting over 12,800 jobs, generating total annual wages of nearly $900 million, with a diverse range of industries investing $1.16 billion in capital over the last six years; and,

WHEREAS, Buncombe County is home to a strong and innovative manufacturing community, including companies in aerospace, navigation, automotive, food and beverage, energy technology, industrial machinery, medical devices, outdoor products, and other advanced manufacturing industries; and,

WHEREAS, local schools, community colleges, universities, and workforce partners help prepare students and workers for rewarding careers in advanced manufacturing and connect employers with the talent they need to grow; and,

WHEREAS, National Manufacturing Day and National Manufacturing Month provide opportunities for students, educators, workforce partners, and the community to learn more about modern manufacturing and the career opportunities it offers; and,

WHEREAS, recognizing the contributions of local manufacturers and the people who work in this sector helps highlight their significant role in the economic vitality and quality of life of Buncombe County,

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Buncombe County Board of Commissioners proclaims **October 2, 2026** as **National Manufacturing Day** and **October 2026** as **National Manufacturing Month** in Buncombe County. We encourage residents to learn more about the people, businesses, innovation, and career opportunities that contribute to the County's advanced manufacturing community.

This 15th day of September, 2026.

Amanda Edwards, Chair
Buncombe County Board of Commissioners

Buncombe County Board of Commissioners

Request for Board Action

Meeting Date: September 15, 2026

PRESENTATIONS

Department: Governing Body

Presenter(s): Noreal Armstrong, Access and Human Affairs Director

Contact: Noreal Armstrong, Access and Human Affairs Director

Subject: National Hispanic & Latino Heritage Month Proclamation

Brief Summary:

Recognition of National Hispanic and Latino Heritage Month in Buncombe County for 2026. Hispanic Heritage Month is a month-long celebration of Hispanic and Latino history and culture. While Hispanic and Latino communities are celebrated beyond this month, from September 15 to October 15 extra recognition is given to the many contributions made to the history and culture of the United States, including important advocacy work, vibrant art, popular and traditional foods, and much more.

Recommended Motion & Requested Action:

No action needed.

Attachments:

1. National Hispanic and Latino Heritage Month 2026

NATIONAL HISPANIC AND LATINO HERITAGE MONTH
SEPTEMBER 15 – OCTOBER 15, 2026

WHEREAS, in 1968, President Lyndon B. Johnson established Hispanic Heritage Week, and in 1988, President Ronald Reagan expanded the observance to a 30-day period, now recognized as National Hispanic and Latino Heritage Month; and,

WHEREAS, September 15 marks the beginning of National Hispanic and Latino Heritage Month and recognizes the independence anniversaries of several Latin American countries; and,

WHEREAS, the Hispanic and Latino population in Buncombe County has grown significantly, with more than 25,000 residents who contribute to the cultural, economic, and civic life of our community; and,

WHEREAS, Hispanic and Latino residents, families, workers, entrepreneurs, educators, community leaders, and organizations strengthen Buncombe County through their contributions to our community; and,

WHEREAS, Dr. Sarah Nuñez, a Latina educator, business owner, organizer, cultural worker, healing justice practitioner, and community leader, has contributed to Buncombe County by strengthening community organizations, cultivating emerging leaders, and preserving cultural traditions of Latin American and diasporic communities; and,

WHEREAS, community members, including Sonia Kay, whose work supports youth and families and uplifts the Latino community through social work and her Ripple Podcast Studio, and Tamara Olmedo, owner and co-founder of Cuentos y Café, a local pop-up and online bookstore that highlights often-silenced voices and works to make resources more accessible to the Latino community; and,

WHEREAS, Buncombe County's art initiative purchased local artwork for the upcoming Swannanoa Small Area Plan, including Carolina Corona's painting "A Nice Place to Live," featuring a vibrant mountain landscape with scarlet bee balm flowers and a group of ruby-throated hummingbirds; and;

WHEREAS, through the Buncombe County community investment initiative, the Early Childhood Education and Development program has partnered with El Telar, an affiliate of Colaborativa La Milpa, to provide affordable, culturally relevant, home-based childcare for families; and

WHEREAS, local schools, community colleges, universities, workforce partners, and community organizations help create opportunities for Hispanic and Latino students and workers to pursue education, meaningful careers, and greater economic opportunity; and,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Buncombe County Board of Commissioners proclaims **September 15 - October 15, 2026** as **National Hispanic and Latino Heritage Month** in Buncombe County and encourages the community to celebrate the achievements and contributions of Hispanic and Latino Americans to our county, state, and nation.

This 15th day of September, 2026.

Amanda Edwards

Amanda Edwards, Chair
Buncombe County Board of Commissioners

Buncombe County Board of Commissioners

Request for Board Action

Meeting Date: September 15, 2026

PRESENTATIONS

Department: Agriculture and Land Resources

Presenter(s): Jennifer Harrison, Agriculture and Land Resource Director

Contact: Jennifer Harrison, Agriculture and Land Resource Director

Subject: Buncombe County Soil and Water Conservation District's 75th Anniversary Proclamation

Brief Summary:

Celebrating Buncombe County Soil and Water Conservation District's 75th Anniversary.

Recommended Motion & Requested Action:

No action.

Attachments:

1. Soil and Water 75th Recognition

Buncombe County Soil and Water Conservation District Day

WHEREAS, on January 8, 1951 in partnership with the General Assembly, the Buncombe County Soil and Water Conservation District was established, and;

WHEREAS, the Buncombe County Soil and Water Conservation District's mission is to conserve the soil, water, workinglands and related natural resources of Buncombe County by providing education, technical assistance, conservation resources and economic incentives to county residents, and;

WHEREAS, the Buncombe County Commissioners recognize the work the Soil and Water District's Farmland Preservation Program has done to preserve 54 family farms totaling over 3,118 acres and counting and supports agritourism through the development of the award-winning Farm Heritage Trail, and;

WHEREAS, the Buncombe County Commissioners recognize the significant impact the Soil and Water Conservation District provides via cost-share programs which support local farms in their efforts to protect waterways and build healthy and fertile soils, and;

WHEREAS, the Buncombe County Commissioners recognize the Soil and Water Conservation District for their strong development of the next generation of environmental stewards as evidenced by the award-winning environmental education programs, and;

WHEREAS, the Buncombe County Commissioners recognize the Soil and Water Conservation District's contribution to Tropical Storms Fred and Helene recovery by conducting over 700 site assessments which resulted in 257 projects funded through the Emergency Watershed Protection and Streamflow Rehabilitation Assistance programs (EWP/StRAP) totaling nearly $40 million in joint funding, and;

WHEREAS, the Buncombe County Commissioners celebrate the 75 years of dedicated service from the staff and Board of Supervisors;

NOW THEREFORE, the Buncombe County Board of Commissioners hereby resolves and declares September 15, 2026 as **"Buncombe County Soil and Water Conservation District Day."**

Buncombe County Board of Commissioners

Request for Board Action

Meeting Date: September 15, 2026

PRESENTATIONS

Department: Human Resources

Presenter(s): Shauna Shepherd, Human Resources Director

Contact: Rocio Borghini, Employee Engagement Manager

Subject: Human Resources Professionals Day Proclamation

Brief Summary:

Human Resources Professionals Day 9-26-26 Proclamation

Recommended Motion & Requested Action:

No action needed.

Attachments:

1. Human Resources Professionals Day 2026

HUMAN RESOURCES PROFESSIONALS' DAY
SEPTEMBER 26, 2026

WHEREAS, HR Professionals Day is celebrated nationwide every year on September 26, honoring the dedicated individuals who help shape positive workplace cultures, champion employee well-being, and keep organizations thriving behind the scenes; and,

WHEREAS, Human Resources (HR) professionals provide essential services in both public and private organizations throughout Buncombe County; and,

WHEREAS, these professionals help employers and employees adapt to an ever-changing and competitive work environment, responding to workplace needs and economic challenges; and,

WHEREAS, HR professionals demonstrate expertise in talent acquisition, employee development, employee wellness and benefits, performance management, human resources information systems, employee relations, workforce planning, and organizational effectiveness, helping align organizational goals with the well-being of employees; and,

WHEREAS, HR professionals across Buncombe County are committed to identifying and addressing the workplace issues that affect our local workforce and community; and,

WHEREAS, these professionals work collaboratively with local government representatives and community partners to review and discuss the human resources matters facing Buncombe County employers and employees; and,

WHEREAS, the work of human resources professionals highlights the critical role they play in supporting employees, strengthening workplaces, and fostering a positive and supportive employment experience for all; and,

WHEREAS, Buncombe County recognizes the importance of human resources professionals and the valuable contributions they make to our county,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Buncombe County Board of Commissioners proclaims **September 26, 2026** as **Human Resources Professionals Day** in Buncombe County, and recognize the valuable contributions of Human Resources professionals to our workplaces and community.

This 15th day of September, 2026.

Amanda Edwards, Chair
Buncombe County Board of Commissioners

Buncombe County Board of Commissioners

Request for Board Action

Meeting Date: September 15, 2026

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Department: Planning - Community Development Division

Presenter(s): William High, Lead Transportation Planner (Planner III)

Contact: William High, Lead Transportation Planner (Planner III)

Subject: FY28 NCDOT Community Transportation 5311 Application

Brief Summary:

Approval of Chair to execute a Section 5311 application for rural public transportation program funding.

Recommended Motion & Requested Action:

Hold a public hearing and adopt the Resolutions Authorizing the Chairperson to Execute an Application for FY 2027 Public Transportation Program Funding, Enter Into Agreement with the North Carolina Department of Transportation, and to Provide the Necessary Certifications and Grant Documents.

Attachments:

1. Grant Presentation
2. 2 Summary Memo FY 2028 5311 Grant Applicaiton
3. 3a FY 2028 5311 Grant Master Authorizing Resolution
4. 3b FY 2028 5311 Grant Master Certification

FY28 SECTION 5311 GRANT APPLICATIONS

Presented by

William High

Community Development Division

FY28 5311 GRANT FUNDING SUMMARY

$937,739	Federal Funds
$96,939	State Funds
$137,497	Local Match
$1,172,175	Total

GRANT AND LOCAL FUND PURPOSES

Administration Support

- Management Contracts, Data Processing, Utilities, Lease of Office Space

Capital Acquisition

- 3 – Raised Roof Lift Vans with Propane Conversion
- 2 – Non-lift Van with Propane Conversion
- 1 – 25’ Light Transit Vehicle with Lift with Propane Conversion
- Push-To-Talk Radio System
- Vehicle Lettering for Mountain Mobility Vans



REQUEST FOR BOARD ACTION

- Hold a public hearing
- Adopt the Resolutions Authorizing the Chairperson to Execute an Application for FY 2028 Section 5311 Public Transportation Program Funding, Enter Into Agreement with the North Carolina Department of Transportation, and to Provide the Necessary Certifications and Grant Documents.

MEMORANDUM

TO: **Buncombe County Board of Commissioners**

FROM: **William High, AICP, Lead Transportation Planner**

DATE: **September 15, 2026**

RE: **FY 2028 Section 5311 Community Transportation Program Grant Applications Summary**

Applications for Section 5311 include both an Administrative and a Capital Grant Application.

Administrative Grant

Federal Funds:	$324,443 (80%)
State Funds:	$ 20,277 (5%)
Local Match:	$ 60,834 (15%)
Total Application:	$405,554

Administrative funds are available to offset technology and communication costs of software and systems used for eligibility, reservations, scheduling, dispatching, data communications, etc., as well as operational facility costs, employee training and development, vehicle insurance, and other eligible administrative costs related to providing Mountain Mobility services and programs.

Capital Grant

Federal Funds:	$613,296 (80%)
State Funds:	$ 76,662 (10%)
Local Match:	$ 76,663 (10%)
Total Application:	$766,621

Capital funds will be used to purchase new or replace the following items that have met state/federal mileage or age criteria for replacement of:

- Three (3) lift-equipped vans with propane conversion;
- Two (2) high top vans with propane conversion;
- One (1) 25’ lift-equipped light transit vehicle with propane conversion;
- Forty-five (45) hand held Push-To-Talk radios; and
- Thirty-eight (38) vehicles lettering and logos.

Total Administrative and Capital Grants

Federal Funds:	$937,739 (80%)
State Funds:	$ 96,939 (8%)
Local Match:	$137,497 (12%)
Total:	$1,172,175

e. william.high@buncombenc.gov
p. (828) 250-4844

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM RESOLUTION

FY28 RESOLUTION

Section 5311 (including ADTAP), 5310, 5339, 5307 and applicable State funding, or combination thereof.

Applicant seeking permission to apply for Public Transportation Program funding, enter into agreement with the North Carolina Department of Transportation, provide the necessary assurances and the required local match.

A motion was made by _____ (*Board Member's Name*) and seconded by _____ (*Board Member's Name or N/A, if not required*) for the adoption of the following resolution, and upon being put to a vote was duly adopted.

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 federal and state public transportation funds; and

WHEREAS, the North Carolina Department of Transportation will apply for a grant from the US Department of Transportation, Federal Transit Administration and receives funds from the North Carolina General Assembly to provide assistance for rural public transportation projects; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of these transportation funds is to provide grant monies to local agencies for the provision of rural, small urban, and urban public transportation services consistent with the policy requirements of each funding source for planning, community and agency involvement, service design, service alternatives, training and conference participation, reporting and other requirements (drug and alcohol testing policy and program, disadvantaged business enterprise program, and fully allocated costs analysis); and

WHEREAS, the funds applied for may be Administrative, Operating, Planning, or Capital funds and will have different percentages of federal, state, and local funds.

WHEREAS, non-Community Transportation applicants may apply for funding for "purchase-of-service" projects under the Capital Purchase of Service budget, Section 5310 program.

WHEREAS, Buncombe County hereby assures and certifies that it will provide the required local matching funds; that its staff has the technical capacity to implement and manage the project(s), prepare required reports, obtain required training, attend meetings and conferences; and agrees to comply with the federal and state statutes, regulations, executive orders, Section 5333 (b) Warranty, and all administrative

requirements related to the applications made to and grants received from the Federal Transit Administration, as well as the provisions of Section 1001 of Title 18, U. S. C.

WHEREAS, the applicant has or will provide all annual certifications and assurances to the State of North Carolina required for the project;

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved that the Chairperson of the Board of Commissioners for the County of Buncombe is hereby authorized to submit grant application (s) for federal and state funding in response to NCDOT's calls for projects, make the necessary assurances and certifications and be empowered to enter into an agreement with the NCDOT to provide rural, small urban, and urban public transportation services.

I Sarah Scarnecchia, *Clerk to the Board* do hereby certify that the above is a true and correct copy of an excerpt from the minutes of a meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the County of Buncombe duly held on the 15th day of September, 2026.

_____

Signature of Certifying Official

***Note that the authorized official, certifying official, and notary public should be three separate individuals.**

Seal Subscribed and sworn to me
(date) _____

Affix Notary Seal Here

_____

Notary Public *

_____

Printed Name and Address

My commission expires
(date) _____

5311 CERTIFICATION FORM

Resolution No. _____

Resolution authorizing the filing of applications with the North Carolina Department of Transportation– Integrated Mobility Division for grant years FY2028 – FY2032, for federal transportation assistance authorized by 49 U.S.C. 5311, United States Code, other federal statutes administered by the Federal Transit Administration or state statutes administered by the State of North Carolina.

WHEREAS, the North Carolina Department of Transportation has delegated authority to award federal financial assistance for transit projects as allocated throughout North Carolina by County;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Commissioners for the County of Buncombe as follows

1. That Chairperson is authorized to execute and file an application for federal assistance on behalf of Buncombe County with the State of North Carolina for federal assistance authorized by 49 U.S.C. Chapter 5311 United States Code, other federal statutes or state statutes authorizing a project administered by the Federal Transit Administration.
2. That Chairperson is authorized to execute and file with its applications the annual certifications and assurances and other documents the State of North Carolina requires before awarding a federal assistance grant or cooperative agreement.
3. That Chairperson is authorized to execute grant and cooperative agreements with the State of North Carolina on behalf of Buncombe County.

The undersigned duly qualified Clerk to the Board acting on behalf of Buncombe County, certifies that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of a resolution adopted at a legally convened meeting of the Buncombe County Board of Commissioners held on September 15, 2026 [If the Applicant has an official seal, impress here.]

_____
(Signature of Recording Officer)

_____
(Title of Recording Officer)

_____
(Date)

Buncombe County Board of Commissioners

Request for Board Action

Meeting Date: September 15, 2026

OLD BUSINESS

Department: Planning - Community Development Division

Presenter(s): Matthew Cable, Community Development Division Manager

Contact: Matthew Cable, Community Development Division Manager

Subject: Low-Income Housing Tax Credit & CDBG-DR Awards for LIHTC Projects Update

Brief Summary:

Community Development will provide an update on Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) and Community Development Block Grant - Disaster Recover (CDBG-DR) awards.

Recommended Motion & Requested Action:

No action requested.

Attachments:

1. Presentation

LOW INCOME HOUSING TAX CREDIT & CDBG-DR AWARDS FOR LIHTC PROJECTS

Matthew Cable

Planning Department

Community Development Division

ACRONYMS

- **HUD:** US Department of Housing and Urban Development
- **FEMA:** Federal Emergency Management Agency
- **NCDOC DCR:** North Carolina Department of Commerce Division of Community Revitalization
- **NCHFA:** North Carolina Housing Finance Agency
- **LIHTC:** Low-Income Housing Tax Credits
- **CDBG-DR:** Community Development Block Grant – Disaster Recovery

CDBG-DR HOUSING FUNDS

- Funds through the NCDOC DCR can primarily be used for projects outside the City of Asheville city limits
- CDBG-DR for LIHTC Projects in the recent cycle could be applied to projects within the City limits

- Funds through the City of Asheville can only be used inside the City of Asheville city limits.

DESTROYED HOMES IN BUNCOMBE

County	Owned	Rented	Total	Percent of Total
Buncombe (Outside City of Asheville)	174	111	285	75.20%
City of Asheville	27	67	94	24.80%
Total	**201**	**178**	**379**	**100.00%**

- February 2026 FEMA data used to calculate Buncombe County destroyed homes outside Asheville
- City of Asheville CDBG-DR Action Plan data used for City of Asheville destroyed homes.

DESTROYED HOMES IN DISASTER AREA

County	Owned	Rented	Total	Percent of Total
Buncombe (Outside the City of Asheville)	174	111	285	29.05%
Yancey	79	27	106	10.81%
Henderson	66	36	102	10.40%
McDowell	84	17	101	10.30%
Haywood	39	24	63	6.42%
Avery	36	≤10	≤46	≤4.69%
Burke	25	17	42	4.28%
Rutherford	27	11	38	3.87%
Ashe	27	≤10	≤37	≤3.77%
Watauga	19	≤10	≤29	≤2.96%
Mitchell	16	≤10	≤26	≤2.65%
Caldwell	13	≤10	≤23	≤2.34%
Madison	11	11	22	2.24%
Polk	11	≤10	≤21	≤2.14%
Cleveland	≤10	≤10	≤20	≤2.04%
Transylvania	≤10	≤10	≤20	≤2.04%
Total	**647**	**334**	**981**	**100.00%**

City	Owned	Rented	Total
Asheville	27	67	94

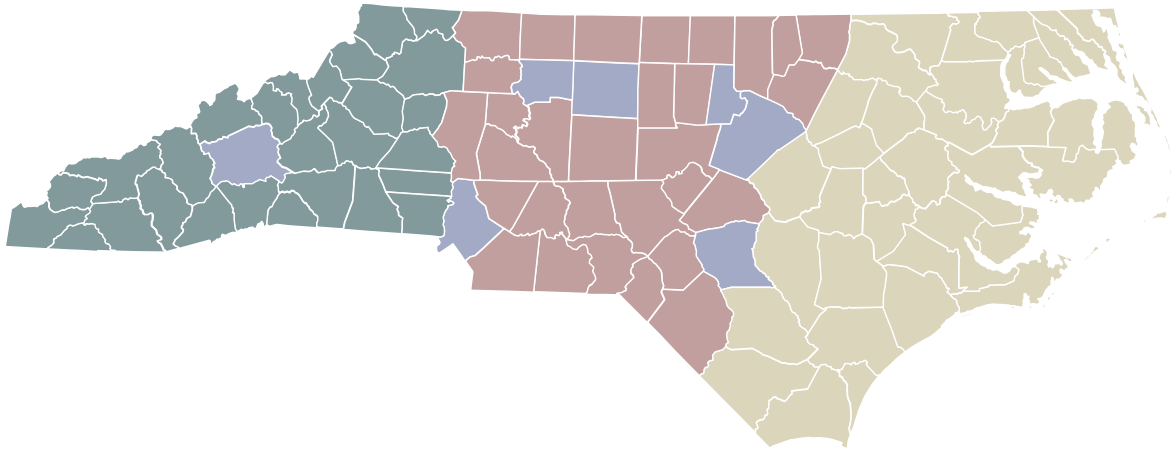
- April 2025 FEMA data for counties other than Buncombe
- February 2026 FEMA data used to calculate Buncombe County destroyed homes outside Asheville
- City of Asheville CDBG-DR Action Plan data used for City of Asheville destroyed homes.

- Note: The minimum increment reported by FEMA is 10 or fewer and this is reflected in the ≤10 value.

NCHFA LIHTC AWARDS BY REGION

Buncombe County is within the Metro Region

Region	Projects	9% Awards	4% Awards	RPP Loans	Tax Exempt Bonds	CDBG-DR	Units
West	12	$12,186,380	$3,133,698	$8,760,000	$22,700,000	$18,604,400	861
Central	7	$5,862,700	$2,791,565	$3,379,100	$23,551,400	$0	481
East	8	$6,877,700	$7,658,300	$5,594,600	$55,897,400	$0	796
Metro	**22**	**$11,430,420**	**$27,777,495**	**$9,785,000**	**$283,073,800**	**$1,727,500**	**2,584**
Total	**49**	**$36,357,200**	**$41,361,058**	**$27,518,700**	**$385,222,600**	**$20,331,900**	**4,722**



Geographical Set-aside
West 16%
Central 23%
East 23%
Metro 38%

FY 2026 NCHFA LIHTC ANNUAL APPLICATIONS FOR PROJECTS WITHIN BUNCOMBE COUNTY

Project	Organization	Location	9% Request	4% Request	CDBG-DR Request	Units
Alta Valley Trace	Taft-Mills Group, LLC	Asheville	$1,099,999		$3,000,000	94
Crescent Place Apartments	Mountain Housing Opportunities	Arden	$1,500,000		$1,727,501	60
District East Commons	The Commonwealth Companies	Asheville	$1,500,000		$2,883,000	93
Orchard Heights	Woda Cooper Companies	Asheville	$1,500,000		$3,000,000	62
Waterstone Terrace	Greenway Residential Development II, LLC	Woodfin	$1,500,000		$3,000,000	60
50 Coxe Avenue	Harmony Housing Affordable Development Inc	Asheville		$22,325,000	$15,000,000	203
Apex on Hazel Mill	Blue Ridge Atlantic Development	Asheville		$8,500,000	$8,000,000	89
Arden Terrace	Atlantic Housing Foundation	Arden		$12,500,000	$13,900,000	130
Bleumont	LDG Bleumont, LLC	Weaverville		$27,000,000	$15,000,000	168
Sweeten Creek Rd Apartments	Pennrose Holdings, LLC	Asheville		$13,500,000	$7,988,444	126
Terrace at River Hills	South Creek Development, LLC	Asheville		$21,000,000	$4,500,000	126
Vesta at Erwin	Mountain Housing Opportunities	Asheville		$15,000,000	$10,770,691	120
Vista Trace	Taft-Mills Group, LLC	Asheville		$15,000,000	$15,000,000	135
		Total	**$7,099,999**	**$134,825,000**	**$103,769,636**	**1,466**

NCHFA NOTICE OF LIHTC AWARDS

9% Projects*

Project	Organization	Location	9% Awards	Units	CDBG-DR
Crescent Place Apartments	Mountain Housing Opportunities	Arden	$1,355,420	60	$1,727,500

*Section II(B)(3)(b): If necessary, the Agency will adjust the awards under the Plan to ensure the overall allocation results in no less than one award for Buncombe County in the Metro region.

4% Projects**

Project	Organization	Location	4% Awards	Units	CDBG-DR
319-Biltmore	Laurel Street Residential	Asheville	$1,685,231	112	$0
Pine Lane (June Award)	The Affordable Housing Institute, Inc.	Asheville	$2,169,020	126	$0

**Projects awarded in this notice would have been part of the open call from May-October 2025. Projects in the regular annual cycle (January 2026 pre-application and May 2026 submittal timeframe) may receive 4% LIHTC awards later.

CDBG-DR FOR LIHTC PARAMETERS

CDBG-DR funds:

- Are available to projects in disaster impacted counties (16)
- Are awarded to new construction before rehabilitation
- Supplement but not supplant LIHTC awards

CDBG-DR is limited to:

- One award per County
- A second award per county may be provided if funds remain

LIHTC applicant requirement: All applicants must be willing to accept CDBG-DR funds if the project is in a disaster impacted county

CDBG-DR FOR LIHTC PARAMETERS

Maximums

- $69M program funding (amended mid-August to increase from $60M)
- $24M (of the $69M) maximum to support 9% projects
- $3M maximum loan request for 9% projects (DCR can override max)
- $15M maximum loan request for 4% projects (DCR can override max)

Loan terms: 0% interest, 30-year loan, balloon payment at maturity

CDBG-DR AWARDS NOTICED BY NCHFA

NCHFA Noticed 9% LIHTC awards receiving CDBG-DR on August 14, 2026

County	9% Award	CDBG-DR Request	CDBG-DR Award	Units
Buncombe	**$1,355,420**	**$1,727,501**	**$1,727,500**	**60**
Caldwell	$1,500,000	$3,000,000	$3,000,000	60
Cleveland	$1,500,000	$3,000,000	$3,000,000	84
Haywood	$265,000	$1,100,000	$10,554,400	60
Rutherford	$1,173,750	$2,050,000	$2,050,000	56
Total	**$5,794,170**	**$10,877,501**	**$20,331,900**	**320**

CDBG-DR AWARDS NOTICED BY STATE

Governor's Office Press Release Noticed 4% LIHTC applications receiving CDBG-DR on August 25, 2026

County	4% Bond Requests	CDBG-DR Request	CDBG-DR Award	Units
Ashe	$7,000,000	$8,811,985	$8,481,900	55
Burke	$11,360,670	$14,214,672	$13,347,500	144
Henderson	$21,500,000	$2,900,000	$2,900,000	132
Transylvania	$6,500,000	$13,100,000	$12,671,900	84
Watauga	$10,500,000	$11,964,691	$11,406,600	93
Total	**$56,860,670**	**$50,991,348**	**$48,807,900**	**508**

Note: Corresponding LIHTC awards for these projects are anticipated to be noticed by the NCHFA in early 2027.

AWARDS RANKED BY CDBG-DR INVESTMENT

County	LIHTC	CDBG-DR Award	Units	CDBG-DR per Unit	Percent of Units	Percent of CDBG-DR Funds
Burke	4%	$13,347,500	144	$92,691	17.39%	19.31%
Transylvania	4%	$12,671,900	84	$150,856	10.14%	18.33%
Watauga	4%	$11,406,600	93	$122,652	11.23%	16.50%
Haywood	9%	$10,554,400	60	$175,907	7.25%	15.27%
Ashe	4%	$8,481,900	55	$154,216	6.64%	12.27%
Caldwell	9%	$3,000,000	60	$50,000	7.25%	4.34%
Cleveland	9%	$3,000,000	84	$35,714	10.14%	4.34%
Henderson	4%	$2,900,000	132	$21,970	15.94%	4.19%
Rutherford	9%	$2,050,000	56	$36,607	6.76%	2.97%
Buncombe	**9%**	**$1,727,500**	**60**	**$28,792**	**7.25%**	**2.50%**
	Total	**$69,139,800**	**828**	**$83,502**	**100%**	**100%**

SUPPORTED UNITS RELATIVE TO DESTRUCTION*

County	Owned Destroyed	Rented Destroyed	Total Destroyed	CDBG-DR Supported Units Through the LIHTC Process	Percent of Supported Units as Percent of Rented Households Destroyed	Percent of Supported Units as Percent of All Households Destroyed
Buncombe*	**174**	**111**	**285**	**60**	**54.05%**	**21.05%**
Yancey	79	27	106	-	-	-
Henderson	66	36	102	132	**366.67%**	129.41%
McDowell	84	17	101	-	-	-
Haywood	39	24	63	60	**250.00%**	95.24%
Avery	36	≤10	≤46	-	-	-
Burke	25	17	42	144	**847.06%**	342.86%
Rutherford	27	11	38	56	**509.09%**	147.37%
Ashe	27	≤10	≤37	55	**≥550.00%**	≥148.65%
Watauga	19	≤10	≤29	93	**≥930.00%**	≥320.69%
Mitchell	16	≤10	≤26	-	-	-
Caldwell	13	≤10	≤23	60	**≥600.00%**	≥260.87%
Madison	11	11	22	-	-	-
Polk	11	≤10	≤21	-	-	-
Cleveland	≤10	≤10	≤20	84	**≥840.00%**	≥420.00%
Transylvania	≤10	≤10	≤20	84	**≥840.00%**	≥420.00%
Total	**647**	**334**	**981**	**828**	**247.90%**	**84.40%**

*April 2025 FEMA data for counties other than Buncombe

**February 2026 FEMA data for Buncombe County outside Asheville

CITY CDBG-DR MULTIFAMILY HOUSING AWARDS

Developer	Development	Units	CDBG-DR Award	LIHTC Status
Mountain Housing Opportunities	Terrace River Hills	126	$9,500,000	4% Submitted; No Award
The Commonwealth Companies	District East	93	$1,390,000	9% Submitted; No Award
Laurel Street Residential	319-B Biltmore	112	$7,000,000	4% Submitted; Awarded
	Total	**331**	**$17,890,000**	

County	Owned Destroyed	Rented Destroyed	Total Destroyed	CDBG-DR Supported Through City Process	Percent of Supported Units as Percent of Rented Households Destroyed	Percent of Supported Units as Percent of All Households Destroyed
Asheville***	27	67	94	331	**494.03%**	352.05%

***City of Asheville CDBG-DR Action Plan data for City of Asheville.

COXE AVENUE UPDATE

COXE AVENUE


PLAZA BRIDGING
SAWYER
TO DOWNTOWN ASHEVILLE
TISE·KIESTER ARCHITECTS
RESIDENCE GREEN ROOF AMENITY
ACTIVE SIDEWALK AND RE-TAIL
SITE PLAN
SAWYER
COXE AVE
CHURCH
RAVENSCROFT
RESIDENCE GREEN ROOF AMENITY
SOLAR PANELS
TO RIVER ARTS DISTRICT
SKETCH DIAGRAM
DOWNTOWN
ASTON
HUB OF THE WHEEL
RETAIL
HOUSING
COXE
RIVER ARTS

COXE AVENUE UNIT & AFFORDABILITY MIX

Proposed Unit Mix

Unit Size	Total
1BR	151
2BR	30
3BR	22
Total Units	**203**

Proposed Affordability Mix

AMI	Total Units
≤30%	46
≤60%	114
≤80%	43
Total Units	**203**

COXE AVENUE FUNDING GAP

LITHC Status: Not Awarded

CDBG-DR State Status: Not Awarded

CDBG-DR City Status: Not Awarded

Funding Gap: $15M (CDBG-DR)

COXE AVENUE NEXT STEPS

Buncombe County and Harmony Housing are collaboratively working together under our memorandum of understanding to evaluate and determine:

- If additional CDBG-DR opportunities will be made available through the NCDOC DCR/NCHFA and/or the City of Asheville
- Alternative sources for capital stack funding gap
- Project costs if CDBG-DR funds are not part of the capital stack
- Project alternatives to reduce funding gap

Harmony Housing is preparing to submit funding applications for:

- Alternative sources if identified
- 4% LIHTC (October pre-application or January pre-application window)

QUESTIONS

Buncombe County Board of Commissioners

Request for Board Action

Meeting Date: September 15, 2026

NEW BUSINESS

Department: County Manager

Presenter(s): Allison Dains, Parks and Recreation Director

Contact: Allison Dains, Parks and Recreation Director

Subject: Approval of the Deaverview Master Planning Contract

Brief Summary:

Approve the Deaverview Master Planning contract.

Recommended Motion & Requested Action:

Approve the resolution authorizing the County Manager to contract for Deaverview Master Planning.

Attachments:

1. Presentation

Deaverview Master Plan Contract

Allison Dains

Buncombe County Parks And Recreation

9/15/26

Background and Request

Background

- Deaverview Mountain (342+ acres) acquisition completed on March 19, 2026
  - Acquired by 100% grant funds
- Staff conducted a procurement process to secure vendor to develop master plan

Request for Board Action

- Approve resolution for the contract of Deaverview Mountain

Acquisition – March 2026

- ***Buncombe County*** - *Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership (ORLP) Program- $4,009,647 Million*

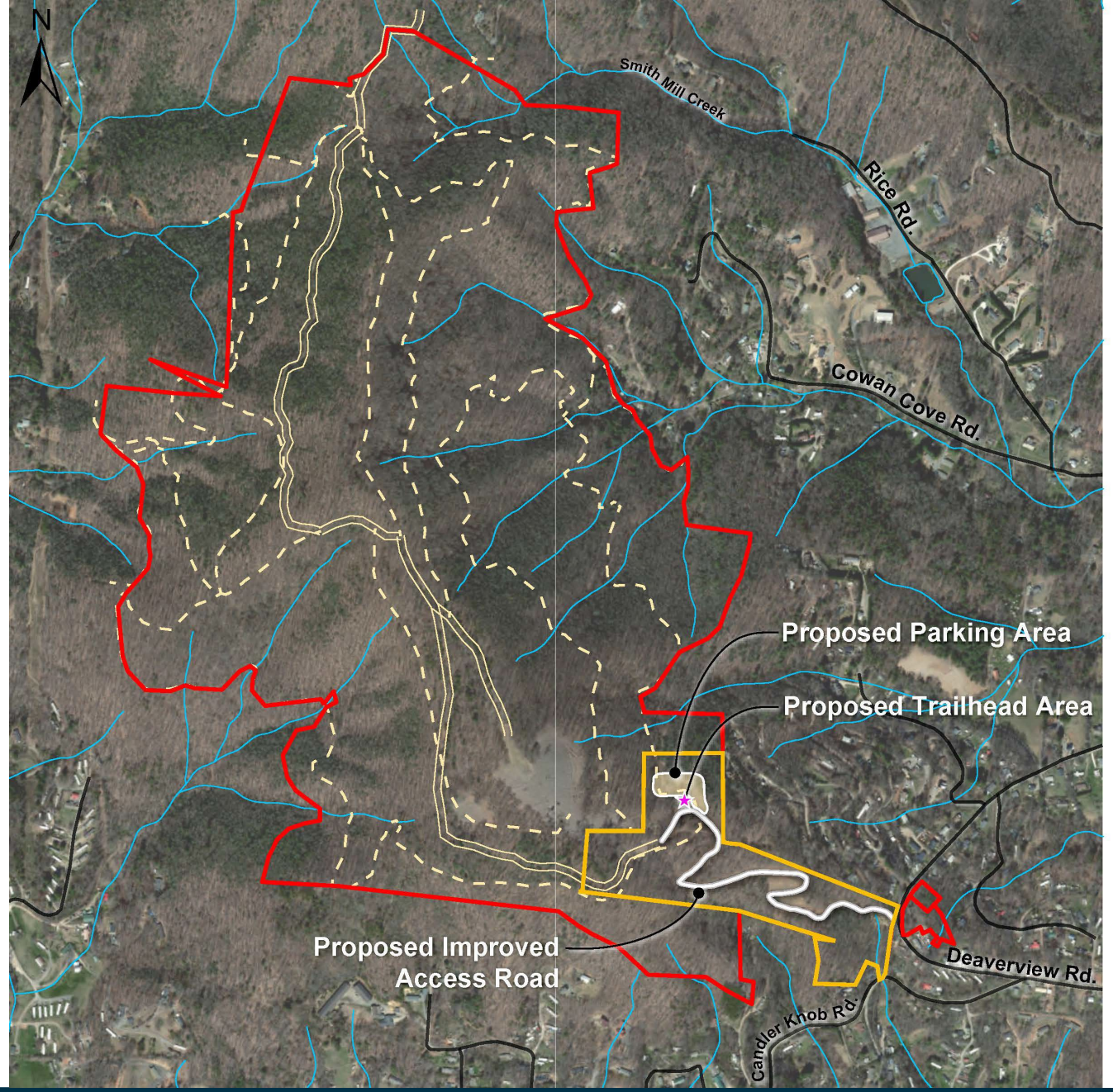
- **Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy -** North Carolina Land and Water Fund (LWF) -*$4,009,647* Million

Grant Requirements

ORLP and LWF Grants

- *Property must be open to the public in perpetuity*
  - *3 years to open to the public*
    - *Acquired property in 2026, must be open to the public by 2029*
- *319 acres preserved through a required conservation easement in perpetuity*
- *Protection of primary viewshed*
  - *Removal of invasive species*
- *Maintain trails and access points*
- *Passive recreation permitted*
  - *Includes hiking, wildlife viewing, and mountain biking*





Deaverview Mountain
342.14 acres (+/-)
Existing Double-track soil
Existing Gravel driveway
Existing Single-track soil trail
Existing Roads
DCR Area

0 400 800 1,200 1,600
Feet

Base Map by SHAC, 2025.

Master Planning Scope of Work

Components of the Master Plan

- Survey of 342+ acres
- Assessment of current trails
- Recommendations for restroom location and style, viewsheds, and other possible amenities
- Primary Engineering for Ingress/Egress
- 100% CDs for Driveway
- Completed Trail design for the property
- Community Outreach
- A study of current environmental considerations and documents
- Identify future possible funding sources

Master Plan Contract

Landscape Architecture Firm -
Equinox Environmental

- Two Phase approach for Master Planning
  - Phases will occur concurrently
- Future Phase Three includes development and construction of ingress/egress, trails and viewshed platforms/pavilions
- GO Bond funds allocated to development of Deaverview

Project Service	Fee
Phase One: Master Plan	$487,469.50
Phase Two: Engineering (Driveway Access, Parking & Trails	$852,045.90
Total Contract	$1,392,19040

Timelines

Phase I: Master Plan

Summer 2026 – Design Contract Approved

Fall 2026 (Phase I) - Project Kickoff & Community Engagement

Winter 2026 – Research Analysis & Assessments

Spring 2027 – Mast Plan Draft & Final Community Engagement

Summer 2027 – Master Plan Complete

Phase II: Engineering (Access & Trails)

Late Fall 2026 – Project kickoff and Survey

Winter 2026 – Stormwater Analysis

Spring 2027 – Geotech Analysis & Retain Walls

Summer 2027 – Parking Analysis & Trails

Fall 2027 – 100% Design and Engineering

Request for Action

- Approve the resolution for the contract of Deaverview Mountain

Buncombe County Board of Commissioners

Request for Board Action

Meeting Date: September 15, 2026

NEW BUSINESS

Department: Agriculture and Land Resources

Presenter(s): John Hudson, Budget Director
Ariel Zijp, Farmland Preservation Program Manager

Contact: Jennifer Harrison, Agriculture and Land Resource Director
Martha Ross, Farmland Preservation Program Coordinator

Subject: Budget Amendments for Conservation Easements

Brief Summary:

These Conservation Easement funding requests are being requested by both the Land Conservation Advisory Board and the Agricultural Advisory Board. All project requests are within Buncombe County Conservation Focus Areas.

The Buncombe County Land Conservation Advisory Board recommends one conservation easement project for funding. Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy will be the conservation easement holding entity for this project.

- **Camp Sequoyah Conservation Easement Expansion —** 80 acre conservation easement project in Weaverville —
    - $63,500 for transaction costs from the FY27 conservation easements allocation
    - $288,000 for easement purchase costs from Open Space Bond funds

The Buncombe County Agricultural Advisory Board recommends the following four conservation easements for transaction costs funding. Buncombe County Soil and Water Conservation District's Farmland Preservation Program is the conservation easement holder for these four projects. All of these conservation easement projects are within the Leicester/Sandy Mush Conservation Focus Area. The four projects total $235,800 in transaction costs from the FY27 conservation easements allocation.

- **Rymer-Davis Farm A -** $62,400 in transaction costs to protect a 60.7 acre farm in the Newfound community in Leicester
- **Rymer-Davis Farm B -** $60,600 in transaction costs to protect a 51.4 acre farm in the Newfound community in Leicester
- **Rymer-Davis Farm C -** $53,000 in transaction costs to protect a 17.8 acre farm in the Newfound community in Leicester
- **Ruby Brown Farm -** $59,800 in transaction costs to protect a 40.5 acre farm in the Newfound community in Leicester

Supplemental transaction cost budgets are necessary for these three existing conservation easement projects in order to complete them by their contract deadline. These projects are for easements that will be held by the Buncombe County Soil and Water Conservation District Farmland Preservation Program.

- **Slocumb Farm -** Adding $15,000 to the easement purchase budget funding from the Agricultural Growth Zone Project in the Open Space Bonds Fund. The property survey showed additional acreage than what was on the county GIS records, so the easement purchase estimate was adjusted to account for additional acreage.
- **Morgan Branch A** - $8,000 in transaction costs funding from the budget funding from the Agricultural Growth Zone Project in the Open Space Bonds Fund for an updated environmental assessment.
- **Cedar Hill Farm -** $4,000 in transaction costs funding from the FY27 conservation easements allocation due to the NCDA&CS ADFPTF grant requiring additional survey changes to meet their program requirements.

In 2024, Buncombe County Farmland Preservation Program received a $2,000,000 Agricultural Growth Zone grant from the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (NCDA&CS) that leveraged $2,000,000 from Open Space Bond funds. The grant requires a 1:1 match for funding. The program has earmarked all of these funds for existing conservation easement projects and will come to Board to commissioners for approval, and plans to re-apply in 2026 for a renewal of this grant. In this grant request, Buncombe County will ask for an additional $2,000,000 in NCDA&CS funding, which will require a 1:1 match from the Open Space Bond Fund. This request has been anticipated and noted within the Open Space Bond financial projections.

- **Agricultural Growth Zone Match** - $2,000,000 from Open Space Bond Funds

Recommended Motion & Requested Action:

Approve Budget Amendments

Attachments:

1. Presentation
2. Budget Ordinance - Bond Fund
3. Budget Ordinance - Special Projects Fund

Budget Amendment for Conservation Easements

Ariel Zijp

Farmland Preservation Manager

Buncombe County Ag & Land Resources

September 15, 2026

Land Conservation Requests

- **Agricultural Advisory Board Recommendations**
  - 4 Conservation Easements
  - Agricultural Growth Zone Grant Renewal Request

- **Land Conservation Advisory Board Recommendations**
  - Camp Sequoyah Conservation Easement

- **Tonight's request resulting in an RBA -**
  - Allocate $311,300 of the $750,000 FY27 Budgeted funds
  - Allocate $2,288,000 of the remaining Open Space Bond Funds

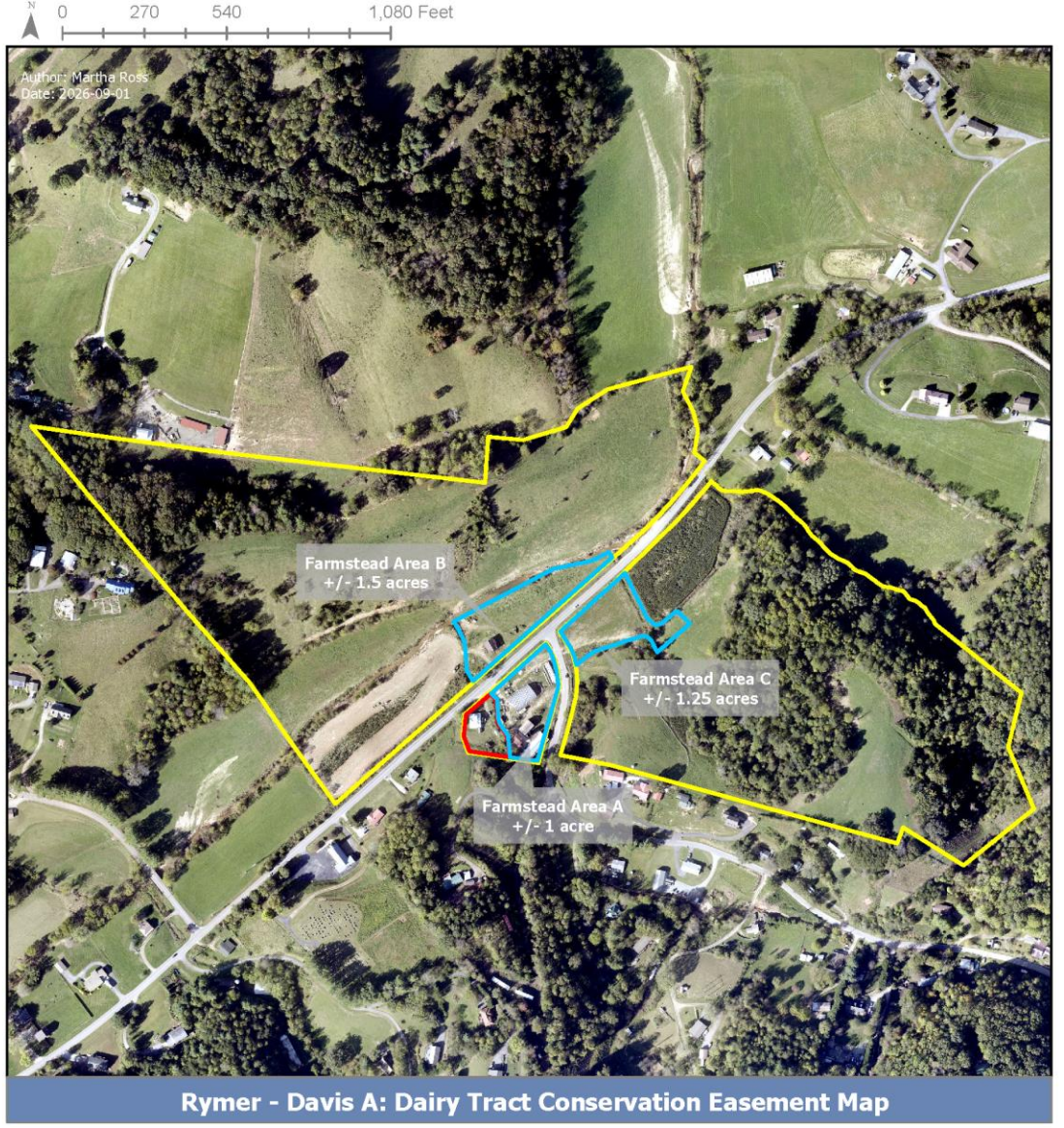
Rymer-Davis A: Dairy Tract

+/- 60.7 acres on Newfound Road

- 52% prime soils – pasture for cattle, crop fields for hay and corn
- Viewshed Protection along a commuting road
- Newfound Creek runs through the Property
- Leicester – Sandy mush Conservation Focus Area
- Meets 6 of the 7 Open Space Bond eligibility criteria

Budget:

- Current Transaction Cost Request (Fund 224): **$62,400**
- Future Easement Acquisition: 50% Easement Value
  - 25% Agricultural Growth Zone Grant - $159,500 (estimate)
  - 25% Open Space Bond - $ 159,500 (estimate)



Rymer-Davis B: Forest Tract

+/- 51.4acres on Newfound Road

- 15% prime soils – forested land for timber
- NC Century Farm
- Leicester – Sandy mush Conservation Focus Area
- Meets 5 of the 7 Open Space Bond eligibility criteria

Budget:

- Current Transaction Cost Request (Fund 224): **$60,600**
- Future Easement Acquisition: 50% Easement Value
  - 25% Agricultural Growth Zone Grant - $87,500 (estimate)
  - 25% Open Space Bond - $ 87,500 (estimate)



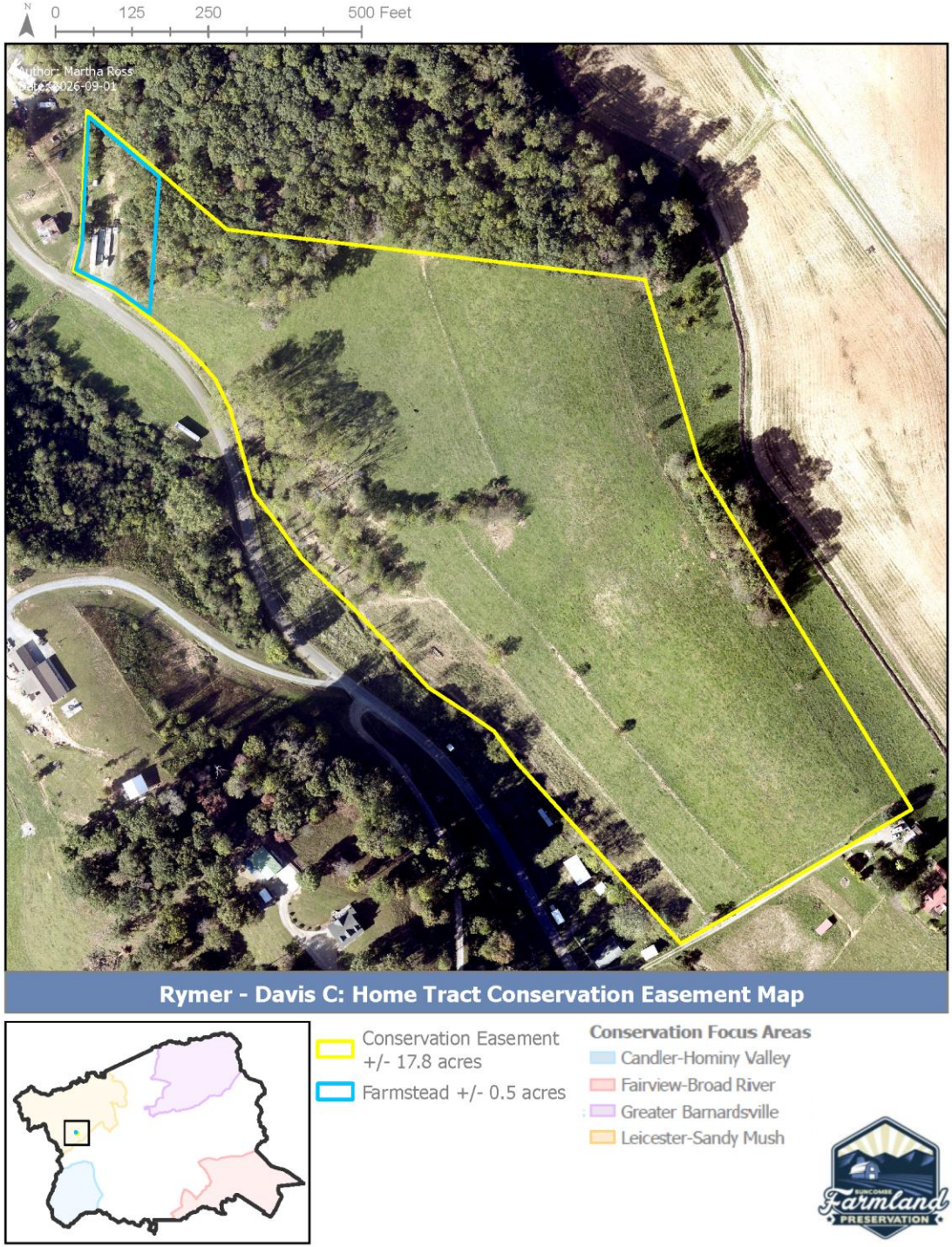
Rymer-Davis C: Home Tract

+/- 17.8 acres in Newfound

- 43% prime soils – pasture for cattle
- NC Century Farm
- Leicester – Sandy mush Conservation Focus Area
- Meets 5 of the 7 Open Space Bond eligibility criteria

Budget:

- Current Transaction Cost Request (Fund 224): **$53,000**
- Future Easement Acquisition: 50% Easement Value
  - 25% Agricultural Growth Zone Grant - $91,250 (estimate)
  - 25% Open Space Bond - $ 91,250 (estimate)



Ruby Brown Farm

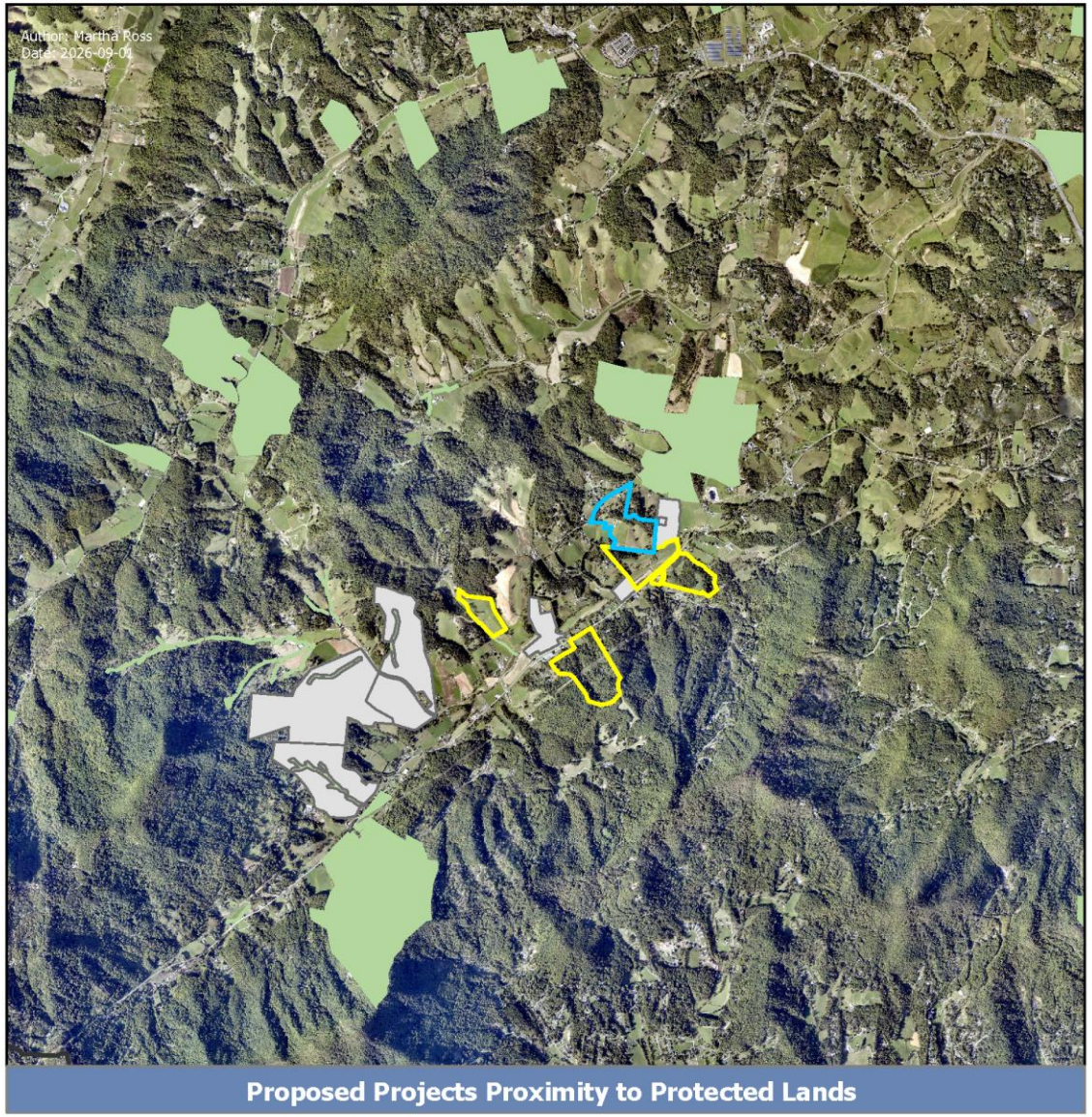
+/- 40 acres on Browntown Road

- 90% prime soils – pasture for cattle
- NC Century Farm
- Leicester – Sandy mush Conservation Focus Area
- Meets 5 of the 7 Open Space Bond eligibility criteria

Budget:

- Current Transaction Cost Request (Fund 224): **$59,800**
- Future Easement Acquisition: 50% Easement Value
  - 25% Agricultural Growth Zone Grant - $182,250 (estimate)
  - 25% Open Space Bond - $182,250 (estimate)



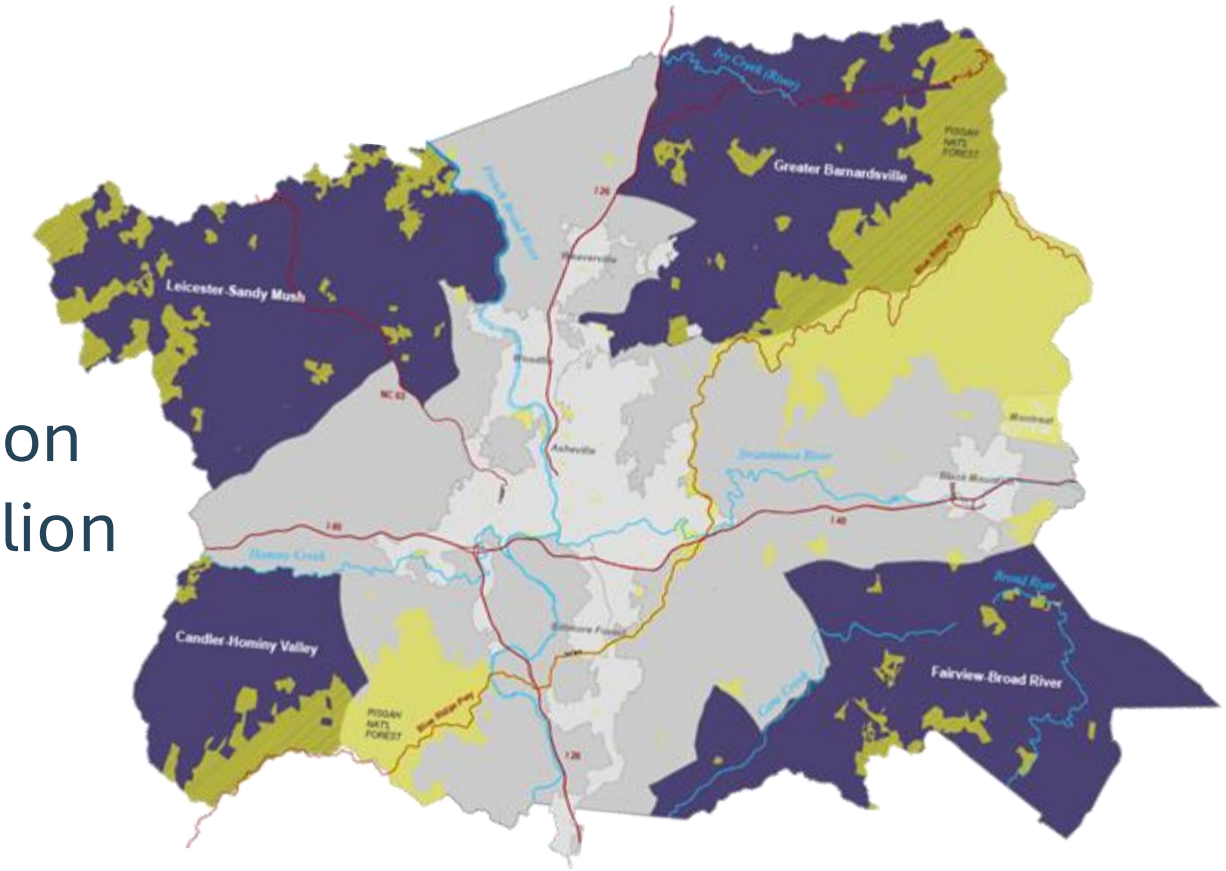


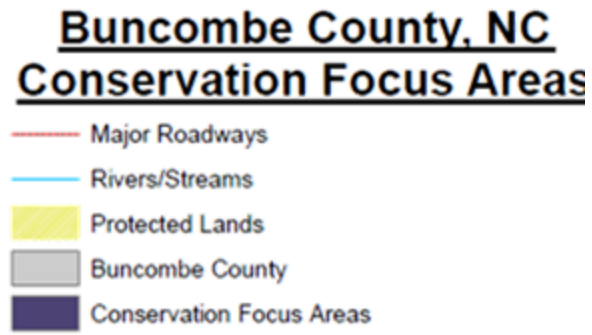
Proposed Project Proximity to Protected Lands and Ongoing Projects

Agricultural Growth Zone Grant Renewal

- 2024: AGZ Grant Received for $2 Million
  - Grant requires 50% match = $2 Million from Open Space Bond
  - Remaining funds earmarked for ongoing projects

- 2026: AGZ Renewal Application – $2 Million
  - Request for $2 Million from Open Space Bond for matching funds





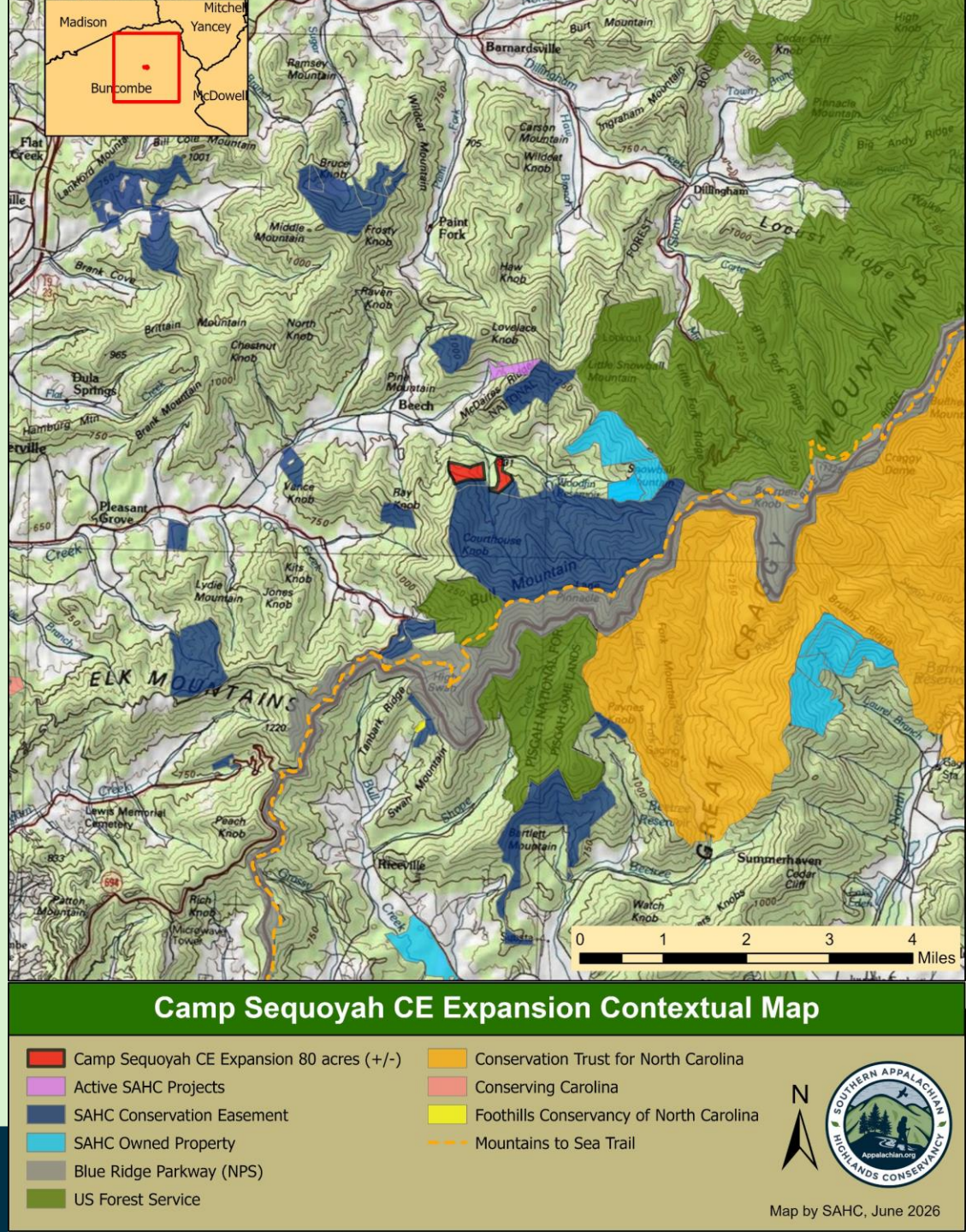
Buncombe County Open Space Bond

Camp Sequoyah Conservation Easement

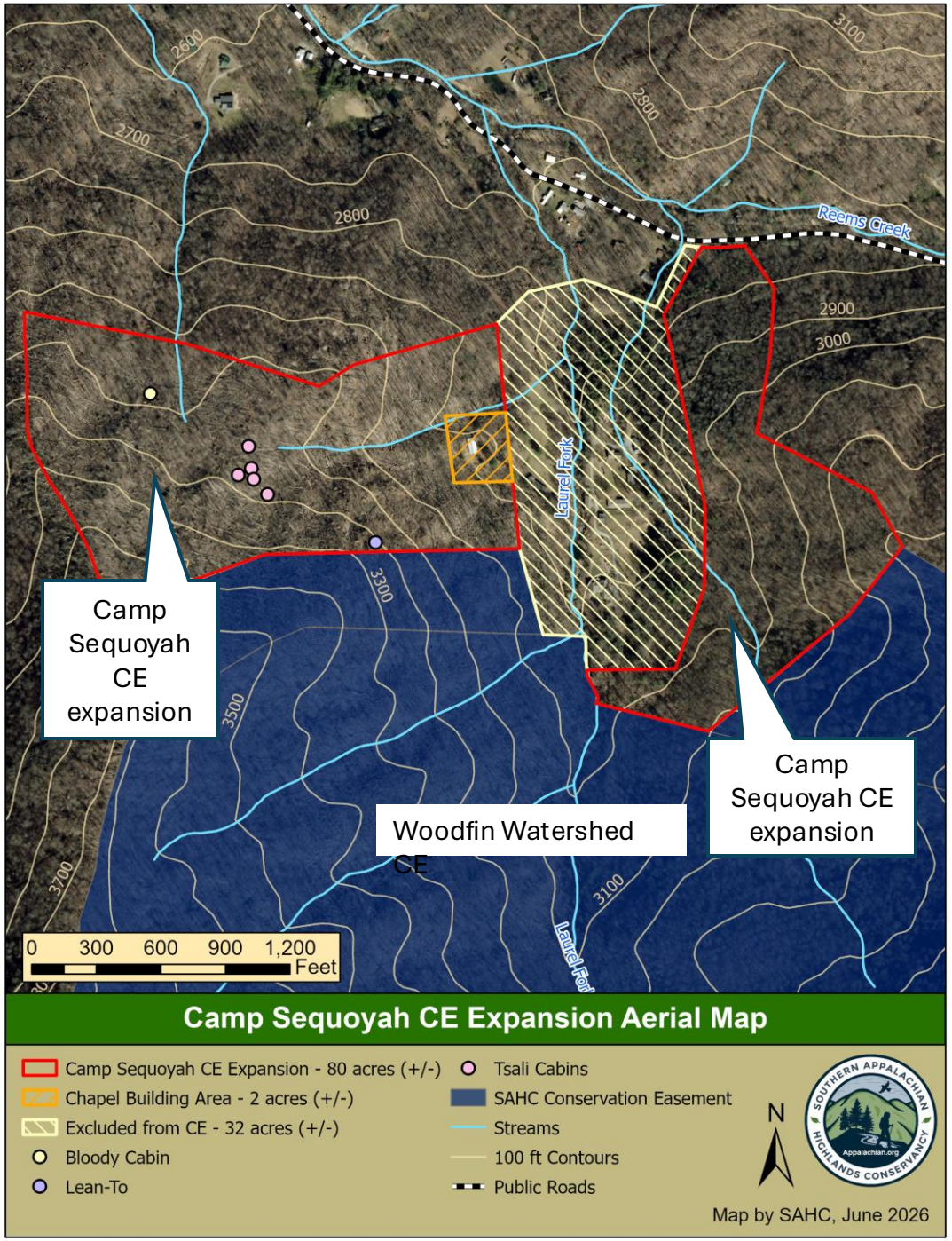
Michelle Pugliese, Land Protection Director
Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy

Camp Sequoyah CE Expansion

- **80 acres** (+/-), adding to existing 37-acre conservation easement
- 4 out of 7 Open Space Bond Easement Purchase Criteria. (only need 2 out of 7 for eligibility)
- Adjacent to SAHC's Woodfin Watershed conservation easement
- Close proximity to multiple SAHC protected lands
- Scenic views from Snowball Mountain Trail (Pisgah National Forest), Blackberry Inn Road, Reems Creek Road



BUNCOMBE COUNTY



Natural Resources Summary

- Within SAHC's Black Mountains Focus Area
- Ranks as Model Priority in SAHC's 2018 Land Protection Program Strategic Planning prioritization model
- Woodfin Watershed/Camp Sequoyah Natural Area (rank Very High)
- Wildlands Network's Wildlife Connectivity Corridor (Tier 1)
- Audubon Society's Black and Great Craggy Mountains Important Bird Area
- TNC's Black Mountains Forest Matrix Block
- Ranks Above Average in TNC's climate resilience model
- Four tributaries to Reems Creek, including main branch of Laurel Fork – Class B (primary contact recreation) and Trout waters
- Historic significance of Camp Sequoyah (1925-1978) with continued visitation and restoration by camp alumni and landowners

Camp Sequoyah CE Expansion Funding Breakdown

- SAHC paying 50% of CE value = $288,000
- Transaction cost estimate = $95,000
- Funding requests
  - Buncombe County–
    - $288,000 – Easement Purchase from Open Space Bond
    - $63,500 – Transaction Costs from FY27
  - Private donor - $34,000



Recap of Easement Requests

Owner	Holder	Board	Size	Region	Transaction Costs FY27	Bond Easement Purchase
Rymer-Davis A: Dairy Tract	BC	AAB	61	Newfound	**$62,400**	Future request
Rymer-Davis B: Forest Tract	BC	AAB	51	Newfound	**$60,600**	Future request
Rymer-Davis C: Home Tract	BC	AAB	18	Newfound	**$53,000**	Future request
Ruby Brown Farm	BC	AAB	40	Newfound	**$59,800**	Future request
Camp Sequoyah	SAHC	LCAB	80	Weaverville	**$63,500**	**$288,000**
Supplemental Funding Requests	BC	AAB			**$12,000**	
NCDA ADFPTF AGZ Grant Match	BC	AAB				**$2,000,000**
Totals					**$311,300**	**$2,288,000**

Open Space Bond Funds

Total Bond Funds	**$30,000,000**
Project Funds Allocated	$21,603,803
Admin Funds Allocated	$937,213
Recommended Allocations 9/15/26	$2,288,000
Projects Pending Future Approval	$2,442,775
Remaining Unallocated	**$2,728,209**



Request for Board Action:

Approve Conservation Easement funding requests:

- **$311,300:** FY27 Budgeted funds
- **$2,288,000:** Open Space Bond

Appendix

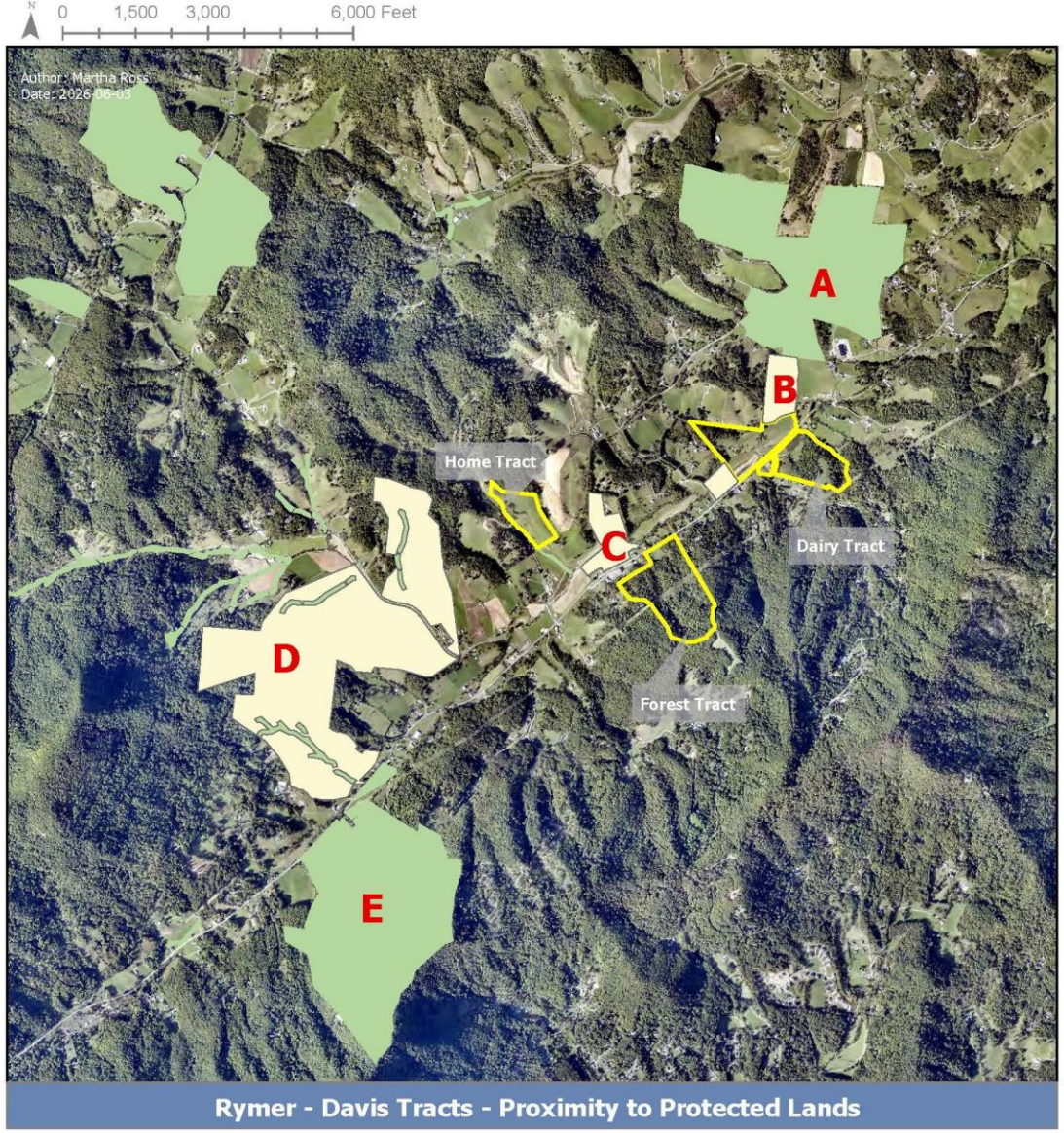
Proximity to Protected Lands

Rymer-Davis Farm

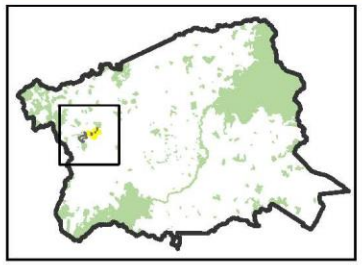
Previously Protected

A. Brown Family Farm
B. Brown Legacy Farm (ongoing)
C. Saddlebrook Farm (ongoing)
D. Morgan Branch Farm (ongoing)
E. Jasperwood Easements

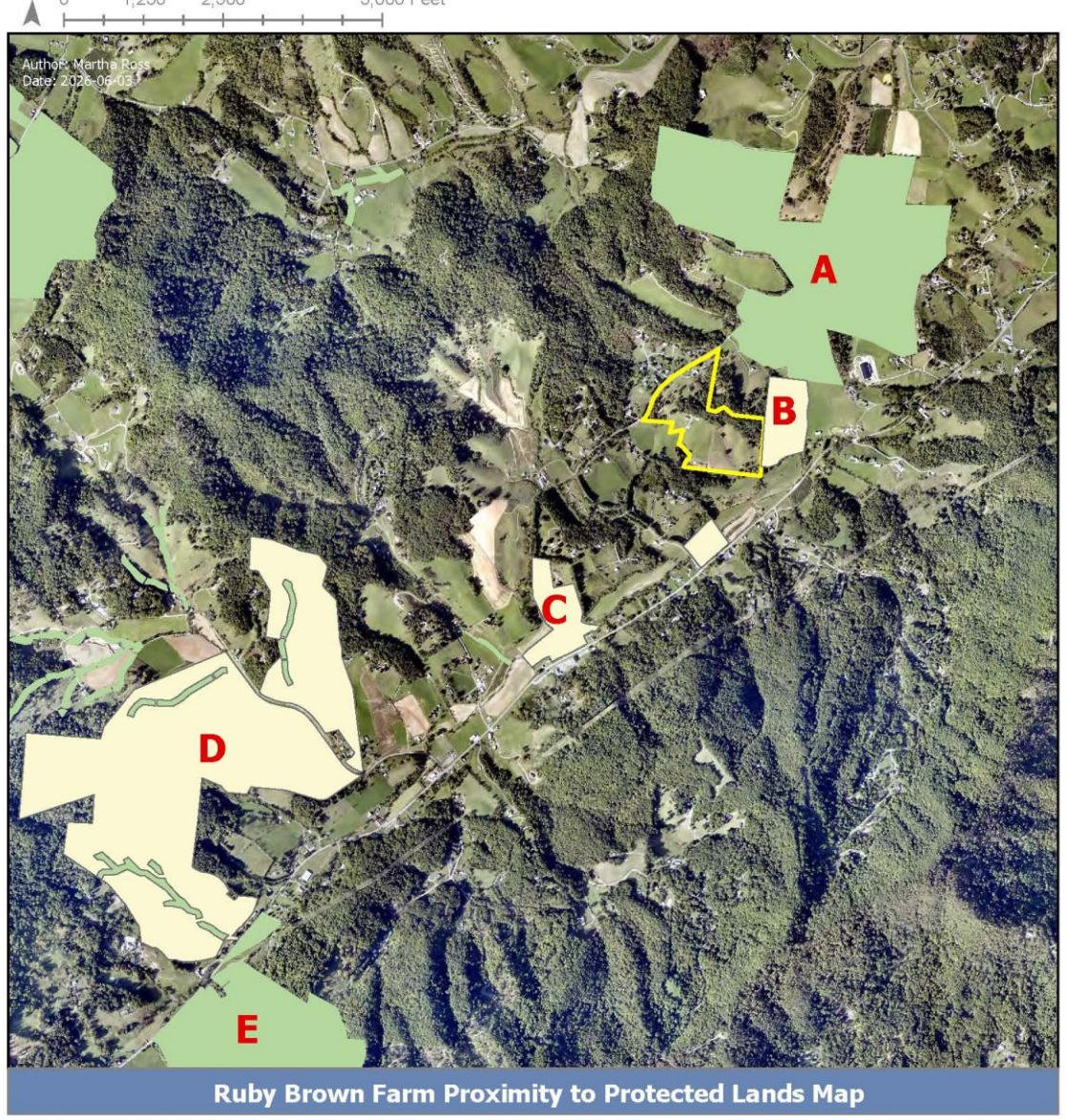




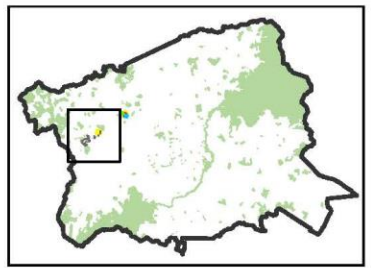
Rymer - Davis Tracts - Proximity to Protected Lands



Conservation Easements
Protected Lands
Ongoing Easement Projects



Ruby Brown Farm Proximity to Protected Lands Map



Conservation Easement +/- 42 acres

Protected Lands

Ongoing Easement Projects

Ruby Brown Farm

Previously Protected

A. Brown Family Farm
B. Brown Legacy Farm (ongoing)
C. Saddlebrook Farm (ongoing)
D. Morgan Branch Farm (ongoing)
E. Jasperwood easements



Open Space Bond Eligibility for County Easement Purchase Requirements

Meets 2 of the following criteria:

- ❑ Is this in one of our designated farmland priority regions?
- ❑ Is this property in proximity to other protected lands?
- ❑ Does this property have prime, unique, local, or statewide important agricultural soils?
- ❑ Is this a project with a significant environmental, or scenic importance?
- ❑ Is this an active working farm or century farm?
- ❑ Is the size of the property significant?
- ❑ Is this a time sensitive project? (Elderly landowner, financial hardship, forced sale)

ORDINANCE # _____

BUNCOMBE COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA

Housing/Open Space Bond Projects Fund

BOARD MEETING DATE: September 15, 2026

WHEREAS, the Budget Director recommends and the Board now desires to amend the FY2026-2027 Housing/Open Space Bond Projects Fund as outlined below in Exhibit "A" to the

NOW THEREFORE,

BE IT ORDAINED by the Board of Commissioners for the County of Buncombe as follows:

1. That the FY2026-2027 amendments listed in Exhibit A below be hereby adopted.
2. That this ordinance shall be effective upon adoption.

ADOPTED this 15th day of September, 2026

Project Name:	Camp Sequoyah, Slocumb Farm, Morgan Branch A, Agricultural Growth Zone Match, and Agricultural Growth Zone Match Phase 2

Description:

This amendment allocates a total of $2,288,000 from the Open Space Bond Fund for the following conservation easement activities:

The Buncombe County Land Conservation Advisory Board recommends the following new conservation easement project for easement purchase costs:

• **Camp Sequoyah** - $288,000 for an 80 acre conservation easement project in Weaverville

Additionally, the following two existing conservation easement projects require supplemental funding from the Agricultural Growth Zone Match project:

• **Slocumb Farm** - $15,000 for additional acreage
• **Morgan Branch A** - $8,000 for an updated environmental assessment

Lastly, the County will be applying for an additional round of Agricultural Growth Zone Grants requiring a 1:1 match from the County in the amount of $2,000,000.

Funding Source:	FY27 Conservation Easements Allocation. No new funding required.

Exhibit A:	Increase (Decrease)	
Account Description	**Revenues**	**Expenditures**
Camp Sequoyah	$ 288,000	$ 288,000
Slocumb Farm	$ 15,000	$ 15,000
Morgan Branch A	$ 8,000	$ 8,000
Agricultural Growth Zone Match	$ (23,000)	$ (23,000)
Agricultural Growth Zone Match Phase 2	$ 2,000,000	$ 2,000,000
TOTAL	$ 2,288,000	$ 2,288,000

ATTEST:

Clerk to the Board

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FOR THE COUNTY OF BUNCOMBE:

By:

Chair of the Board

ORDINANCE # _____

BUNCOMBE COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA

Special Projects Ordinance

BOARD MEETING DATE: September 15, 2026

WHEREAS, the Budget Director recommends and the Board now desires to amend the FY2026-2027 Special Projects outlined below in Exhibit "A" to the budget,

NOW THEREFORE,

BE IT ORDAINED by the Board of Commissioners for the County of Buncombe as follows:

1. That the FY2026-2027 amendments listed in Exhibit A below be hereby adopted.
2. That this ordinance shall be effective upon adoption.

ADOPTED this 15th day of September, 2026

Project Name:	Camp Sequoyah; Rymer-Davis Farm A, B, and C; Ruby Brown and Cedar Hill Farm

Description:

This amendment allocates a total of $303,300 from the FY27 conservation easmement allocation for the following conservation easement activities:

The Buncombe County Land Conservation Advisory Board recommends five new conservation easement projects for transaction costs totaling $299,300:

- **Camp Sequoyah** - $63,500 for an 80 acre conservation easement project in Weaverville
- **Rymer-Davis Farm A** - $62,400 for a 60.7 acre farm in the Newfound community in Leicester
- **Rymer-Davis Farm B** - $60,600 for a 51.4 acre farm in the Newfound community in Leicester
- **Rymer-Davis Farm C** - $53,000 for a 17.8 acre farm in the Newfound community in Leicester
- **Ruby Brown Farm** - $59,800 for a 40.5 acre farm in the Newfound community in Leicester

Additionally, the following existing conservation easement project requires supplemental funding for transaction costs:

- **Cedar Hill Farm** - $4,000 for required, additional survey changes

Funding Source: FY27 Conservation Easements Allocation. No new funding required.

Exhibit A:	Increase (Decrease)	
Account Description	**Revenues**	**Expenditures**
Camp Sequoyah	$ 63,500	$ 63,500
Rymer-Davis Farm A	$ 62,400	$ 62,400
Rymer-Davis Farm B	$ 60,600	$ 60,600
Rymer-Davis Farm C	$ 53,000	$ 53,000
Ruby Brown Farm	$ 59,800	$ 59,800
Cedar Hill Farm	$ 4,000	$ 4,000
Future Conservation Easements	$ (303,300)	$ (303,300)
TOTAL	$ -	$ -

ATTEST:

Clerk to the Board

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FOR THE COUNTY OF BUNCOMBE:

By:

Chair of the Board

September 15, 2026

Agricultural Advisory Board
(Advisory, 3-year term)
(2 reappointments)

NAME	ZIP CODE	EMPLOYER	REQUIREMENT	RACE/ GENDER	AGE
Charles Hubbard *reappointment*	28805	Fastmarkets	Northeast	White/Male	35-54
Mark Diaz *reappointment*	28748	Retired	At Large	White/Male	55+

Strategic Partnership Grants Committee
(Funding Advisory, 3-year term)
(4 appointments)

NAME	ZIP CODE	EMPLOYER	RACE/ GENDER	AGE
Sala Menaya-Merritt	28748	City of Asheville	Black/Female	55+
Sandy Feutz	28806	Unemployed	White/Female	55+
Rachel Dudasik	28801	Explore Asheville	White/Female	35-54
Christine Crespo Valentin	28806	Jacobs	Hispanic or Latino/Female	35-54

Asheville Buncombe Technical CC Board of Trustees
(Governance/Legislative, 4-year term)
(1 appointment)

NAME	ZIP CODE	EMPLOYER	RACE/ GENDER	AGE
Edward M. Willis	28806	CEW Consulting, LLC	Black/Male	55+
Byron Dixon	28759	AdventHealth	White/Male	35-54

Historic Resources Commission
(Quasi-Judicial, 3-year term)
(1 appointment)

NAME	ZIP CODE	EMPLOYER	RACE/ GENDER	AGE
Melody Oxendine	28704	Brevard High School	American Indian/Alaska Native/Female	18-34

Over →

County Board of Adjustment
(Quasi-Judicial, 3-year term)
(2 regular & 1 alternate appointments)

NAME	ZIP CODE	EMPLOYER	RACE/ GENDER	AGE
Scott Elliott	28803	Keller Williams	White/Male	18-34
James Diaz, Jr.	28804	Likewise Commercial Real Estate	White/Male	55+

Vaya Regional Board
(Managed by VayaHealth)
(1 reappointment)

NAME	ZIP CODE	EMPLOYER	RACE/ GENDER	AGE
***Ellis Matheson** *reappointment*		Buncombe County Government, Public Health Director		