Community Development Block Grant - Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) Workforce Development

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Economy Recovery Board

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Community Development Block Grant - Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR)

Workforce Development Program

Allocation: $5,000,000

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Community Development Block Grant - Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR)

Workforce Development Program

Purpose: To support economic recovery by connecting disaster-impacted residents with employment, training, and supportive services.

Program Goals

- Support economic recovery by addressing workforce disruptions & skill gaps
- Expand access to employment opportunities for LMI residents and other populations
- Build long-term community resilience by increasing the availability of trained workers
- Leverage partnerships to connect participants with job-driven programs & wraparound services

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CDBG-DR Workforce Development Program

- The $5M CDBG-DR Workforce Development Program is aimed at supporting economic recovery by connecting disaster impacted residents with employment, training, and supportive services.
- Dedicated to contributing to long-term economic resilience, the program will partner with subrecipients to deliver training in critical recovery sectors—such as housing construction, heavy equipment operation, and ecological restoration—prioritizing low- and moderate-income (LMI) residents.

Community Development Block Grant - Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR)

Workforce Development Program

Delivery Model: The City will **not fund** individuals directly. The Program will be administered by subrecipients (partners) through one or more competitive Notices of Funding Opportunity (NOFOs).



Min. award to partners: **$500,000**

Max. award to partners: **$5,000,000**

Award Structure: Grant

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Eligible Subrecipients (Workforce)

The City will award workforce development funds to qualified organizational partners to administer programs, rather than distributing funds directly to individual beneficiaries.

- **Eligible Entities:**
  - **501(c)(3) Nonprofits:** Organizations with documented experience in workforce development, disaster recovery, or related economic support services.
  - **Educational Institutions:** Accredited public or nonprofit universities, community colleges, or technical institutes with established training experience.
  - **Public Agencies:** Local public entities operating within or directly serving the Asheville community.
- **Geographic Requirements:** Must operate within Asheville city limits, or if based in Buncombe County, must explicitly make services available to and directly benefit City residents.
- **Ineligible Entities:** For-profit businesses seeking funds for their own benefit, individuals, political organizations, religious institutions conducting sectarian activities, or any entity listed as suspended or debarred on SAM.gov.

CDBG-DR Workforce Development Program

- The initiative is sequenced to be informed by progress in the CDBG-DR Small Business Support and Revitalization of Commercial Corridors Programs.
- In the meantime, staff are engaging key stakeholders within the local workforce development ecosystem to establish program frameworks ahead of publishing the official program manual by the end of December.

Steps to Deploy Workforce Development Program

Ecosystem Analysis

- Conduct professional stakeholder interviews & targeted outreach with key partners like the Mountain Area Workforce Board, Asheville Chamber, and AB Tech.
- Evaluate post-Helene impacts on workforce infrastructure, expansion needs, and program capacities.

Research & Integration

- Analyze foundational labor market studies to map high-growth industries and upskilling pathways for low-to-moderate-income residents.
- Synthesize findings with Small Business Support hiring trends, RFCD strategies, and CDBG-DR best practices.

Deliverables & Next Steps

- Compile key findings from research and outreach inform the required program manual (published December 2026)
- Leverage key findings from program manual development and lessons learned from the implementation of SBSP and RFCD to develop NOFO (published in the second half of 2027)

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Eligible Training & Potential Activities

Examples of programing eligible for funding under the program include:



Construction & Trades

- **Housing Construction:** Hands-on carpentry, plumbing, electrical, and licensing training.
- **Commercial Trades:** Structural masonry and commercial facility rebuilding certifications.
- **Heavy Machinery:** Specialized training and certification for heavy equipment operations.



Ecological & Green Resilience

- **Ecological Restoration:** Stream bank stabilization, land management, and environmental recovery.
- **Forestry & Arborist:** Hazard tree assessment, reforestation, and specialized arborist licensing.



On-the-Job & Applied Learning

- **On-the-Job Training:** Funded wage subsidies connecting participants directly to active employers.
- **Custom Technical Training:** Certification programs built alongside local trade union pipelines.

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Next Steps for Workforce Development Program

- Staff will continue to develop core elements of these programs, with an initial focus on publishing Program Manual by the end of December.
- Staff will engage with key organizations within the workforce development ecosystem to develop strategies to invest in catalytic training initiatives.

Questions

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Questions for ERB Discussion

- What are you hearing in your networks about employment obstacles and training barriers?
- What industries and skill sets from those provided in today's presentation represent opportunities for our community? Are there opportunities in fields not highlighted in this presentation?
- What recovery work are you seeing in our region that could be expedited or enhanced by the upskilling of Asheville based workers?
- What does a successful workforce program in the context of disaster recovery look like for our community?