City of Asheville Staff Report

City Council Meeting Date: October 27, 2026

Staff Resources:

- Bridget Herring, Recovery & Resilience Director, Shannon Simpson, Stormwater Quality Supervisor

Action Requested:

- Adoption of a resolution authorizing the City Manager for the City of Asheville to become an official Emergency Watershed Protection sponsor to assess damage, stabilize streambanks, remove debris, and protect homes and infrastructure from future flooding at approved sites and enter into any agreement documents necessary for such acceptance; and approval of an associated budget amendment of $20,773.45 for streambank stabilization, to be reimbursed by Natural Resources Conservation Service.

Background:

- The City of Asheville was severely impacted by Hurricane Helene on Sept. 27, 2024.
- The Emergency Watershed Protection Program, administered by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), safeguards lives and property from an imminent hazard through debris removal and streambank erosion.
- Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), an agency of the United States Department of Agriculture, pays up to 100 percent of eligible construction costs and Sponsor pays 0 percent of construction costs per NRCS programmatic waiver for the Helene event.
- NRCS will contribute up to $2,709 for administration and technical services and $18,063.00 for construction costs.
- Responsibilities of the city as a sponsor will be:
    - Obtaining any necessary real property rights, water rights, and regulatory permits.
    - Agreeing to provide for any required operation and maintenance of the completed emergency measures.

Vendor Outreach: N/A

Council Vision 2036 Focus Area(s):

- A Clean, Safe, and Healthy Environment

Council Priority Recovery Area(s):

- Infrastructure & Environment

Committee(s):

- N/A

Fiscal Impact:

- This grant will be used to cover streambank stabilization and other watershed protections above what is covered by other recovery funds. The NRCS will provide a grant of $20,772.45.
- There is no match required and no direct financial cost to the City of Asheville.

Suggested Motion:

- Motion to adopt a resolution authorizing the City Manager for the City of Asheville to become an official Emergency Watershed Protection sponsor to assess damage, stabilize streambanks, remove debris, and protect homes and infrastructure from future flooding at approved sites and enter into any agreement documents necessary for such acceptance; and approval of an associated budget amendment of $20,773.45 for streambank stabilization, to be reimbursed by Natural Resources Conservation Service.

Attachment(s):

- Resolution
- Budget Amendment

City of Asheville Resolution Number 26-___

Resolution authorizing the City Manager for the City of Asheville to become an official Emergency Watershed Protection sponsor to assess damage, stabilize streambanks, remove debris, and protect homes and infrastructure from future flooding at approved sites and enter into any agreement documents necessary for such acceptance

Whereas, the City has authority, pursuant to North Carolina General Statutes Section 160A-17.1, to make contracts for and to accept grants-in-aid from the federal and State governments and their agencies for performing any function which the city is authorized by general law to provide or perform; and

Whereas, the Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) Program, a U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) program, works with local sponsors to assess damage, stabilize streambanks, remove debris, and protect homes and infrastructure from future flooding.

Whereas, the Environmental Watershed Protection Program offers technical and financial assistance to help local communities relieve imminent threats to life and property caused by floods, fires, windstorms and other natural disasters that impair a watershed.

Whereas, the City of Asheville sustained significant impact from Hurricane Helene and seeks funding to manage recovery, meet unmet needs and strengthen the City's infrastructure.

Now, therefore, be it resolved by the City Council of the City of Asheville that the City Manager is authorized to accept official Emergency Watershed Protection sponsorship on behalf of the City of Asheville at approved sites and enter into any agreement documents necessary for such acceptance.

Read, approved, and adopted this the 27th day of October, 2026.

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Esther E. Manheimer, Mayor

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Brad Branham, City Attorney

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Magdalen Burleson, City Clerk

City of Asheville Budget Amendment Ordinance Number ____

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

That Section 2 of the City of Asheville Annual Operating Budget Ordinance be amended to provide an appropriation of $20,773.45 to the General Capital Projects Fund for streambank stabilization, to be reimbursed by the US Natural Resources Conservation Service as follows:

General Capital Projects Fund

Revenues:

Federal Grant - $20,773.45

Expenditures:

Streambank Stabilization - $20,773.45

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

Read, approved and adopted this 27th day of October, 2026.

_____
Esther E. Manheimer, Mayor

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Brad Branham, City Attorney

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Magdalen Burleson, City Clerk