THE CITY OF ASHEVILLE

# STAFF REPORT

**Council Meeting Date:** January 13, 2026

**Subject:** Helene Recovery Recycling Infrastructure Grant

**Staff Resource(s):** Amy Deyton, Public Works Director; and Jes Foster, Sanitation Division Manager

**Action Requested:** Adoption of a resolution authorizing the City Manager to apply for a Helene Recovery Recycling Infrastructure grant, and if awarded funding, enter into a contract with the NC Department of Environmental Quality (NCDEQ) to accept funding as a subrecipient of the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) grant; and to further authorize the City Manager to sign all necessary documents to this effect.

**Background**:

- NCDEQ has received grant funding from the EPA to provide grants to local governments in Western North Carolina to improve recycling and waste reduction infrastructure.
- North Carolina local governments can apply for EPA funding through NCDEQ for the Helene Recovery Recycling Infrastructure Grant for up to $5,000,000 with a project life of up to 3 years, with no match required.
- NCDEQ is currently accepting viable, well-planned proposals for projects that will expand, rebuild, or improve waste reduction, composting, and recycling programs to improve the resiliency of the region's waste reduction infrastructure.
- Hurricane Helene has resulted in an excess of vegetative and organic waste materials in Western North Carolina, overloading our local yard waste processing facilities.
- This excess of vegetative waste has resulted in significant price increases for residential yard waste disposal, as well as an inability of local yard waste facilities to accept residential leaves.
- The City's disposal site for concrete and asphalt waste (inert material) is approaching capacity and a long-term solution for this waste is needed.
- The City intends to apply for a grant to build our capacity to internally process wastes; to evaluate and provide recommendations for operational changes and infrastructure to process larger volumes of organic and inert waste; and to fund implementation of feasible recommendations.
- NCDEQ has indicated that applicants may receive partial funding, as well as that additional grant funding may be available after the initial grant award.
- The City will prioritize items within the grant application, and align the scope of the initial contract with NCDEQ with the amount awarded.
- If a feasibility study recommends tasks that are beyond the grant capacity, the City will amend the contract with NCDEQ and/or seek additional grant funding.
- This grant will align well with the solid waste master planning process, and tasks that remain unfunded, but needed, can be integrated into the long term solid waste plan.

**Vendor Outreach Efforts:**

- N/A

**Council Goal(s):**

- A Clean, Safe, and Healthy Environment
- Fiscally Resilient City

**Committee(s)**:

- N/A

**Pro(s):**

- Leverages available recovery funding to improve the City's capacity to manage and reduce waste with no City-funded match required
- Supports City efforts to meet waste reduction goals

**Con(s):**
- None

**Fiscal Impact**:
- Grants are available for up to $5,000,000. No local match is required.

**Suggested Motion:**
- Motion to authorize the City Manager to apply for a Helene Recovery Recycling Infrastructure grant, and if awarded funding, enter into a contract with the NC Department of Environmental Quality (NC DEQ) to accept funding as a subrecipient of the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) grant; and to further authorize the City Manager to sign all necessary documents to this effect.

## Attachment(s):
- Resolution

RESOLUTION NO. 26-___

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO APPLY FOR A HELENE RECOVERY RECYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE GRANT, AND IF AWARDED, ENTER INTO A CONTRACT TO ACCEPT FUNDING

WHEREAS, the City of Asheville has authority pursuant to G.S. 160A-17.1 to apply for and accept grants from the federal and state government; and

WHEREAS, City Council executed Resolution 14-27 to adopt a waste reduction goal of 50 percent by 2035; and

WHEREAS, North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality (NCDEQ) has received grant funding from the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to provide grants to local governments in Western North Carolina to improve recycling and waste reduction infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, NCDEQ is currently accepting proposals for projects that will expand, rebuild, or improve waste reduction, composting, and recycling programs to improve the resiliency of the region's waste reduction infrastructure, in an amount up to $5,000,000 with no match required; and

WHEREAS, Hurricane Helene has resulted in an excess of organic waste materials in Western North Carolina, overloading our local yard waste processing facilities, increasing disposal prices, and limiting accepted materials; and

WHEREAS, the City's disposal site for concrete and asphalt waste (inert material) is approaching capacity and a long-term solution for this waste is needed; and

WHEREAS, the City intends to apply for a grant to build our capacity to internally process wastes; to evaluate and provide recommendations for operational changes and infrastructure to process larger volumes of organic and inert waste; and to fund implementation of feasible recommendations;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ASHEVILLE THAT:

The City Manager is hereby authorized to apply for a Helene Recovery Recycling Infrastructure grant, and if awarded funding, enter into a contract with the NC Department of Environmental Quality (NCDEQ) to accept funding as a subrecipient of the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) grant; and is further authorized to sign all necessary documents to this effect.

Read, approved and adopted this the 13th day of January, 2026.

City Clerk

Mayor

Approved as to form:

City Attorney