TDA LIFT 2026
Grant Planning

Briefing

January 6th, 2026

TPDF and LIFT

	Tourism Product Development Fund	**Legacy Investment from Tourism**
Applications Open	Odd years (2025, 2027, etc.) Opens in April.	Even Years (2026, 2028, etc.) Opens in April.
Type of Project	Construction, shovel ready projects	Design and engineering allowed, in addition to construction costs
Permissible Use of Funds	Construction of a new location/relocation or expansion of an existing location	Restoration or rehabilitation of an existing location, maintenance, project management of a project, enhancement of natural resources, or expansion of necessary infrastructure

Tourism Development Authority (TDA) Grant Program Eligibility

- Located in Buncombe County*
- Major Tourism Capital Project that furthers economic development of Buncombe County*
- Demonstrate ability to increase patronage of lodging facility in BC*
- Must not solely benefit a single lodging owner
- Legal control of the property through recorded deed or long-term lease at the time of application
- **Minimum of 1-to-1 funding match**

* Required by Statute

Grant Match

- Longer term planning
- Align with budget process
  - Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)
  - Grant Justification Form
- Leverage existing projects and department needs
- Seek other grants and funding sources where appropriate

TDA Investments – Buncombe County Projects

	Project Name	Description	Award	Type	Year of Award
A	**Enka Recreation Destination – Phase 2b**	Add turf and lights for fields 3,4, and 5 at Buncombe County Sports Park. Turf and lights will increase playable hours. Additional destination amenities include playground, pavilion, and visitor amenities (e.g., concessions, lockers).	$1.9M (TPDF)	Public Recreation, Sports Tourism	2025
B	**Ferry Road Greenways and Trails**	Construct greenway and trail system at the Ferry Road Community	$4M (LIFT)	Public Recreation	2024
C	**Enka Recreation Destination – Phase 2a**	Add turf and lights for fields 3,4, and 5 at Buncombe County Sports Park. Additional destination amenities include playground, pavilion, and visitor amenities (e.g., concessions, lockers).	$4M (TPDF)	Public Recreation, Sports Tourism	2023
D	**Enka Recreation Destination Phase 1a & b**	Add turf and lights for fields XX, XX, and XX at Buncombe County Sports Park. Increase parking and restroom facilities.	$6.75M (TPDF)	Public Recreation, Sports Tourism	2018 & 2022

Note: Other 2025 major investments show significant trend towards Sports Facilities: Beacon Park, Warren Wilson Aquatic Center, JBL sports fields, etc.

LIFT Application Spring 2026

Potential Projects for Discussion – Long Term Planning

Note for discussion only. Projects are subject to change based on planning efforts in progress, such as the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and the ongoing Parks and Rec Master Plan.

	Project Name	Description	Estimated Total Cost	Year
A	**River Park Restoration**	Improve park facilities at Hominy Creek, Glen Bridge, and Bent Creek, including updates such as boat launches, bathrooms, and adding parking	$4M	2026
B	**Indoor Recreation Facility**	Build new indoor gymnasium with locker rooms and event amenities; improve entry and exit to the facility	$22M	2026
C	**Lake Julian Improvements**	Replace boat launch, bathroom, and shelters to increase accessibility of Lake Julian	$6M	2027
D	**Art in the Parks Installations**	Work with partners to install public art in multiple County park locations	$2M	2027
E	**Ball Fields Restoration**	Improve network of Buncombe County baseball and softball fields to recruit youth sports tournaments and increase sports tourism	$10M	2028
F	**Enka Recreation Destination – Phase 3**	Build a competitive sports court system on fields as well as additional parking, safety measures, and lighting	$6M	2029

Potential Projects – LIFT 2026 Application Concepts

	Project Name	Description	Estimated Total Cost	Year
A	**River Park Restoration**	Improve park facilities at Hominy Creek, Glen Bridge, and Bent Creek, including updates such as boat launches, bathrooms, and adding parking	$4M	2026
B	**Indoor Recreation Facility**	Build new indoor gymnasium with locker rooms and event amenities; improve entry and exit to the facility	$22M	2026

Discussion

Next Steps

- Anticipating the LIFT Cycle will open in April 2026
  - Awards would be announced in Fall 2026
- Current Projects
  - Phases 1 and 2 of Enka Recreation Destination
  - Ferry Road Greenway and Trail System