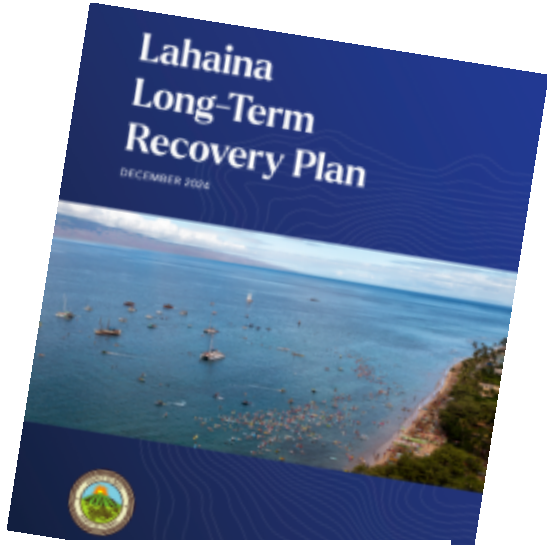
Helene Recovery Plan Update

Board of Commissioners Briefing

The Plan: Importance and Approach

- Guides to help a community rebuild and recover after a major disaster
- Assists in securing funding/resources from state & federal agencies
- Project Specific - Names what is important to accomplish for recovery
- Aligns to existing County plans (Strategic, Comprehensive, etc.)
- Unified plan reflective of all jurisdictions within Buncombe County while retaining independent authorities for each to approve, establish, fund & carry out projects





Helene Recovery Plan Development

- Spring & Summer:
  - Community engagement
  - Envision Buncombe Survey
  - Board of County Commissioners engagement & feedback
  - Project submission & evaluation
  - Draft plan development
- Fall 2025
  - Review draft Recovery Plan with elected officials
  - Public comment period
  - Helene Recovery Plan adoption



Community Engagement Results

Envision Buncombe Overview

- Community Engagement: April 10th -May 31st
- 28 in-person events
  - Held in 13 distinct zip codes across Buncombe County
- Digital survey marketing campaign
- **2,622 survey responses**

Participation, by Locality	
Alexander	1%
Arden	5%
Barnardsville	2%
Buncombe County – other	7%
Candler	7%
City of Asheville	35%
Fairview	6%
Fletcher	1%
Leicester	6%
Ridgecrest	Less than 1%
Swannanoa	10%
Town of Biltmore Forest	3%
Town of Black Mountain	5%
Town of Montreat	1%
Town of Weaverville	6%
Town of Woodfin	3%

2025 Envision Buncombe Survey Results

Focus Area	Recovery Ranking
Community Health	1
Public Safety	2
Economic Development	3
Education	4
Energy & Environment	5
Growth & Development	6

QUALITATIVE ANSWER TRENDS

- **Need for Smart Recovery:** Calls for sustainable, climate-resilient rebuilding.
- **Equity in Recovery:** Prioritization of vulnerable populations, especially low-income households and rural communities.
- **Speed of Recovery:** Desire to increase the pace of aid from governments.
- **Resilient Infrastructure and Housing:** Emphasis on building for the future, not just restoring the past.

Priorities by Recovery Support Function

Economic Revitalization

1. Providing funding for small businesses
2. Revitalizing business districts
3. Job retraining or workforce development initiatives
4. Support for impact on the outdoor recreation industry

Health & Social Services

1. Funding to promote food security in food deserts or vulnerable areas in the community
2. Investing in mental health services
3. Responding to student or youth homelessness
4. Support for childcare
5. Trauma-informed and mental health first aid-style trainings for community members
6. Efforts to understand and address storm impacts on well and septic systems
7. Investing in substance use disorder harm reduction and treatment
8. Addressing trauma for students
9. Investing in air safety monitoring and assurance activities

Priorities by Recovery Support Function

Housing

1. Building more affordable housing
2. Support for renters

Infrastructure

1. Investing in infrastructure: water, roads, bridges, telecommunications
2. Disaster preparedness and resiliency investments
3. Floodplain management
4. Preserving flood-prone property from development
5. Landslide stabilization

Natural & Cultural Resources

1. Wildfire prevention
2. Restoring stream banks
3. Rebuilding parks
4. Replanting trees

Recovery Project Priorities

2025 Envision Buncombe Survey Results

Percentages below reflect the proportion of Envision Buncombe survey respondents who selected that category as one of their top 10 recovery priorities

1. Investing in infrastructure: water, roads, bridges, telecommunications – 74%
2. Disaster preparedness and resiliency investments – 55%
3. Wildfire prevention – 53%
4. Floodplain management – 49%
5. Restoring streambanks – 48%
6. Rebuilding parks – 47%
7. Preserving flood-prone property from development – 46%
8. Landslide stabilization – 46%
9. Building more affordable housing – 45%
10. Funding to promote food security in food deserts or vulnerable areas in the community – 45%

Next Steps

June-July

Project Evaluation & Selection

Draft plan Development

August

BOC Briefing

September

BOC Draft Plan Review

Open public comment period

November

Plan Adoption

Additional Questions?