Helene Recovery Plan & Preparedness Action Plan

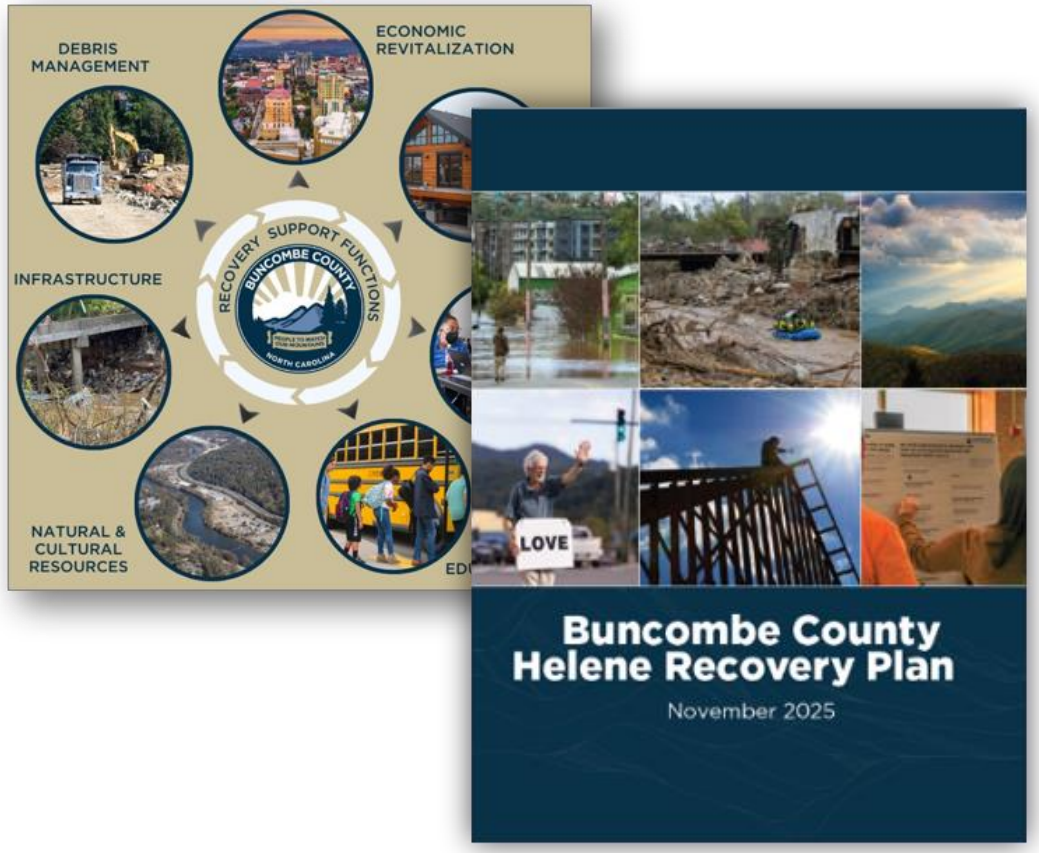
Presented by

Kevin Madsen, Helene Recovery Officer

Max Taintor, Strategy and Innovation Management Analyst

Briefing Agenda

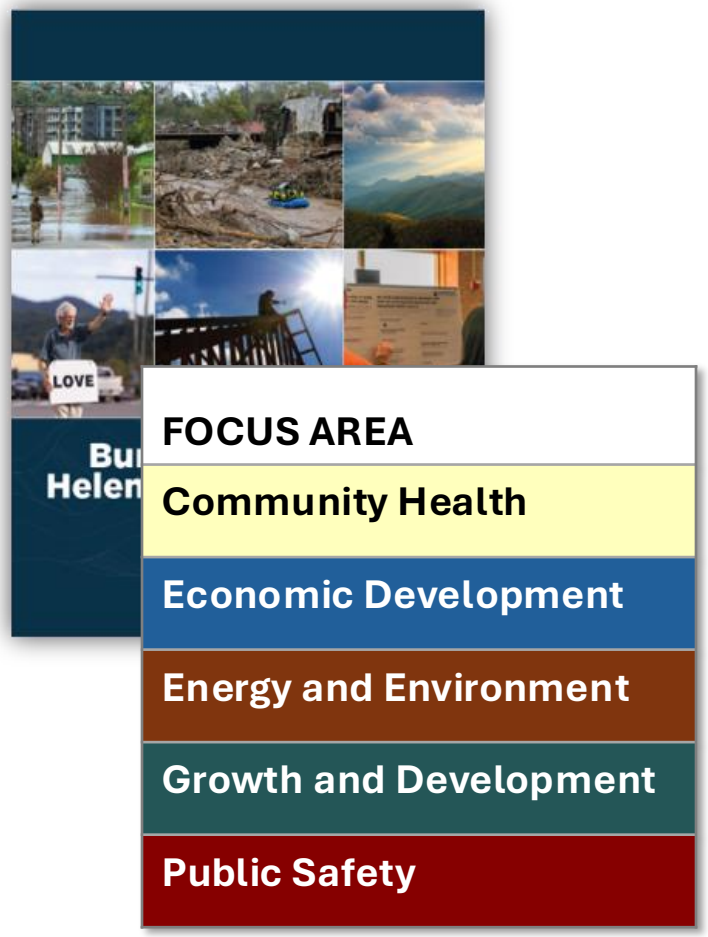
- Background
- Program Information
- Project Updates
  - Community Health
  - Economic Development
  - Energy and Environment
  - Growth and Development
  - Public Safety
    - Preparedness Action Plan
  - Foundational
- Next Steps



Background | Structure & Reporting

- Helene Recovery Office
  - Project management/coordination with county departments
  - Grant research, application, and management for recovery efforts
  - Coordination with local, state, and federal partners
- Buncombe County Departments
  - Meeting monthly for recovery updates and project alignment
  - Integration of recovery efforts into existing operations
- Briefings for Board of County Commissioners
  - Quarterly updates on active projects and grants management
  - Updates include status of the Preparedness Action Plan
  - Foundational activities and other recovery efforts included

Background | Helene Recovery Plan



- Buncombe County Helene Recovery Plan
  - 114 projects across 7 jurisdictions
  - 31 county focused projects
  - Actively collaboration between jurisdictions
- County Projects
  - Each project are assigned a focus area
  - Assigned to a lead county department
  - Mixture of programmatic and capital improvement
  - Projects may include multiple sub-projects
  - Identified complexity, timing, and funding ranges

Community Health

Buncombe County Food Security

Community Memory Project

Cultural Asset Restoration

Mental Health Training & Support

Social Services Emergency Response Plan

Community Memory Project

Buncombe County Helene Recovery Plan Complexity: High | Cost: Low | Timing: Short-term

Community Health

"Come Hell or High Water" project collected, indexed, preserved and presents records that convey stories and impacts of Tropical Storm Helene while creating pathways for community reflection, and healing

- The project has been completed and is available in Special Collections
- The Buncombe County Library team will assess anniversary editions and relevant updates to the collection



Community Health

Cultural Asset Restoration

Buncombe County Helene Recovery Plan Complexity: Medium | Cost: High | Timing: Medium

Focus on restoration of county parks, libraries, and community centers to address storm damages while enhancing and expanding cultural and recreational amenities

- Owen Park
  - Currently in design and assessment phase
  - First public input session at the end of the month (3/30)
  - FEMA Public Assistance funds for restoration
  - Multiple grant applications are in development



- PARTF application was submitted for boat launches and ADA access improvements at Hominy Creek, Glen Bridge, and Bent Creek River parks

Mental Health Training & Support

Buncombe County Helene Recovery Plan Complexity: Medium | Cost: Low | Timing: Medium

Community Health

Focused on development and delivery of a comprehensive plan for effective community mental health support during and after disaster events, including series of trauma-informed mental health support trainings

- Health and Human Services recently awarded $100,000 from North Carolina Community Foundation (NCCF) Long-Term Recovery Grant Program

Upcoming activities:

- Design a community partner engagement strategy
- Train for program design & curriculum development
- Community resource identification and dissemination
- Community Mental Health Disaster Response Plan development

Economic Development

Commercial District Revitalization

More than a Job Program (Formerly STEP)

Public Art

Small Business Grants

Commercial District Revitalization

Buncombe County Helene Recovery Plan Complexity: High | Cost: High | Timing: Medium

Project focused on revitalization of commercial districts damaged by Helene in unincorporated areas such as Barnardsville, Fairview, and Swannanoa to support commercial recovery, encourage economic opportunities, and support jobs

- County has been awarded $979,620 to date for sidewalk construction in Swannanoa's Beacon Village

Upcoming Activities:

- Developing CDBG-DR project applications for greenways and sidewalks
  - Project submission to the NC Department of Commerce pre-screening tool
  - Align efforts with other plans and projects
- Collaborating with state and federal partners on project development
  - Additional funding sources sought for further sidewalks projected under $10 million

More than a Job Program

Buncombe County Helene Recovery Plan Complexity: Low | Cost: Low | Timing: Medium

Project outcome is to increase enrollment and program graduation rates to serve Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recipients with opportunities to earn a living wage by offering reskilling through continuing education courses and living wage job access

- Collaborative effort with Health and Human Services and AB Tech
- Program Benefits:
  - Training and certifications for in-demand jobs
  - Advising and career coaching
  - Supportive services and transportation assistance
  - Financial assistance with books, testing materials, uniforms, etc.
  - Help with navigating the college enrollment process
  - Assistance with resumes, cover letters, interviewing skills, and employer connections
- Program website: More Than a Job (MTAJ-NC) | Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College

Public Art

Buncombe County Helene Recovery Plan Complexity: Medium | Cost: Low | Timing: Short-term

Commission and install public art pieces across key public spaces in Buncombe County, focusing on neighborhoods, commercial corridors, and community gathering areas

- Multiple projects in progress including a mural at Pack Library and a near art piece at Cane Creek Park
  - Partnership with Echoes in the Forest at Cane Creek Park for a piece created from trees that fell during Tropical Storm Helene
  - Cane Creek Park was a temporary debris site following Helene with over 1.36 million cubic yards of debris processed at the site

Energy & Environment

Fleet and Facilities Restoration

Open Space Property

Stream Stabilization

Open Space Property

Buncombe County Helene Recovery Plan Complexity: High | Cost: High | Timing: Medium

Create and implement a land use and management plan for hazard mitigation properties acquired by the county as a result of Tropical Storm Helene to ensure open space, natural resource conservation, floodplain management, and allowable recreational and agricultural uses

- NC Emergency Management, in partnership with Buncombe County, has 284 identified properties with active applications for acquisition (buyout)
- FEMA recently approved the initial 47 properties and state contractors are in progress of scheduling and conducting appraisals
- Buncombe County is assessing the property locations and identifying potential solutions for management of the open space property

Growth & Development

Affordable Housing Development

Code of Ordinance Amendments

Down Payment Assistance

Home Repair

Sewer Extension and Septic Mitigation

Swannanoa Small Area and Resilience Plan

Home Repair

Buncombe County Helene Recovery Plan Complexity: High | Cost: High | Timing: Medium

Grant program to assist low- and moderate-income survivor households with home repair needs beyond what other disaster resources can meet

RenewNC Program

- Applications submitted from Buncombe County residents accounts for 27% of the total 7,466
- Homeowner grant agreements signed include:
  - 26 Reconstruction
  - 10 Rehabilitation
  - 5 Replacement

Renew NC Timelines	
Rehabilitation including move-out and move-in	66 Days
Replacement including move-out and move-in	81 Days
Reconstruction including move-out and move-in	171 Days

Buncombe County	
Applications	2,030
Signed Agreements	41

Public Safety

Community Organization Support

Community Risk Reduction Campaign

Critical Facilities Upgrades

Disaster Response Heavy Equipment

Emergency Operations Center

Emergency Shelter Facility

Public Safety

Landslide Mitigation

Natural Hazard Monitoring

Public Safety Communications Resilience

Resilience Hubs

Vehicle Resilience

Wildfire Protection Plans

Preparedness Action Plan

Community Organization Support

Buncombe County Helene Recovery Plan Complexity: Medium | Cost: Low | Timing: Short-term

Public Safety

Enhance disaster preparedness, response, and recovery capacity by partnering with community-based organizations such as nonprofits, faith-based groups, and local initiatives that collaborate to address the needs of communities affected by disasters

- Community Organizations Active in Disasters (COAD)
  - The purpose of this team is to strengthen local resilience by leveraging community resources and relationships for disaster preparedness & response
  - Active during steady state for disaster preparedness
  - An all-hazards approach for the entire county
- Buncombe County's planning team is identifying roles and responsibilities; and developing applicable guidance documents

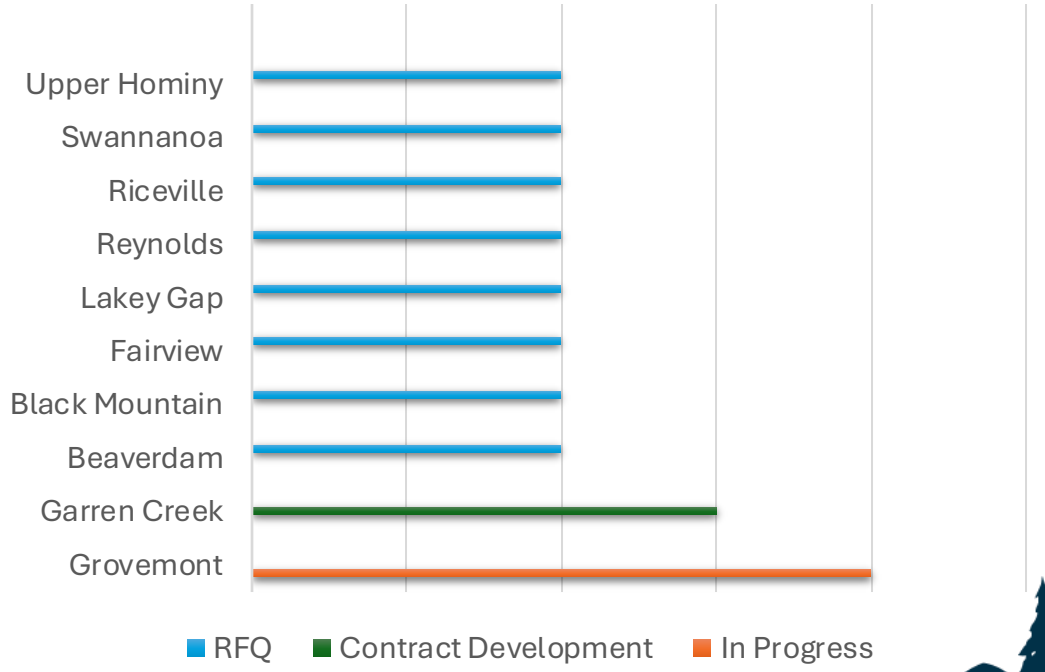
Landslide Mitigation

Buncombe County Helene Recovery Plan Complexity: High | Cost: High (*FEMA PA*) | Timing: Long-term

Public Safety

Conduct assessments of landslides on county-owned and private property to identify imminent threats to life, property, and infrastructure. Seek mitigation or buyout opportunities through state and federal partnerships for qualifying slides on impacted properties to avoid future damage

- Project Components
  - Phase One | Design and Engineering
  - Phase Two | Mitigation*
- Funding
  - FEMA Public Assistance | Phase One only
- Locations
  - Grovemont – Contracted work in progress
  - Garren Creek – Scope in development
  - Beaverdam
  - Black Mountain
  - Fairview
  - Lakey Gap
  - Upper Hominy
  - Reynolds
  - Riceville
  - Swannanoa



Grovemont and Garren Creek

Buncombe County Helene Recovery Plan Complexity: High | Cost: High (*FEMA PA*) | Timing: Long-term



- Grovemont
  - Contracted with ECS Southeast, LLC
  - $595,650 Received from NCEM (75% of Contract Amount)
  - All ROEs signed for properties containing initiation zones
  - UAV based aerial LiDAR scan completed
  - Field reconnaissance by ECS completed
  - Developing recommendations for review prior to engineering
- Garren Creek
  - RFQ review identified contractor
  - Developing scope of work and proposal

Resilience Hubs

Buncombe County Helene Recovery Plan Complexity: Medium | Cost: High | Timing: Medium

Public Safety

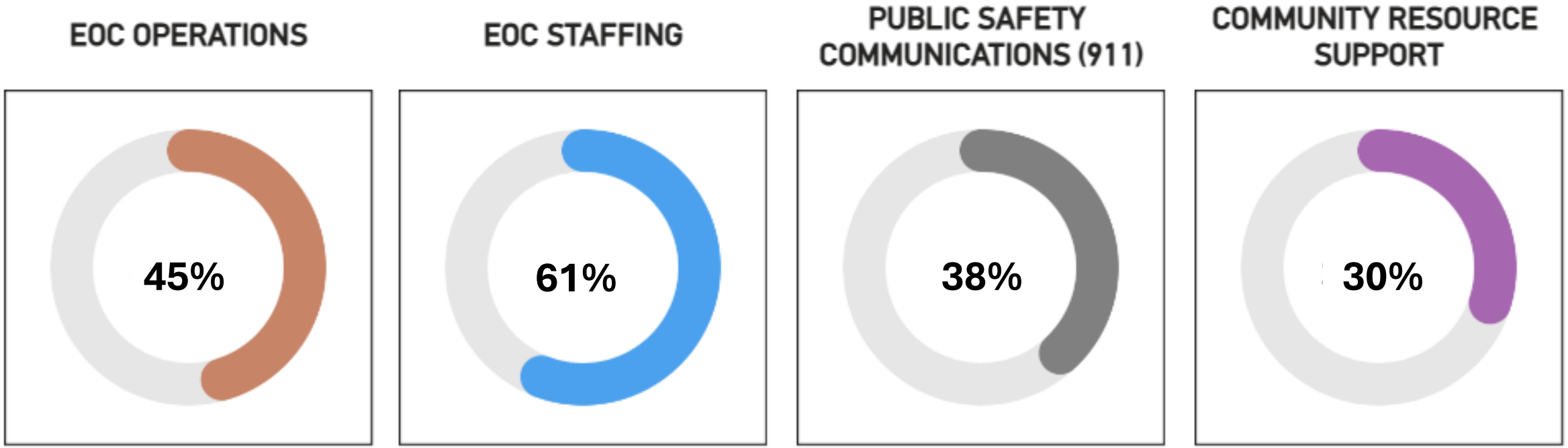
The project is currently assessing features to public facilities for resilience before, during, and after emergencies

- Potential features may include alternative energy sources, telecommunications, wind hardening and floodproofing, water hookups and storage, enhanced air filtration systems, accessibility, and adaptable multi-use spaces
- Multiple applications have been submitted to the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) for infrastructure projects
- Buncombe County staff attended the western North Carolina resilience hub summit at the end of February

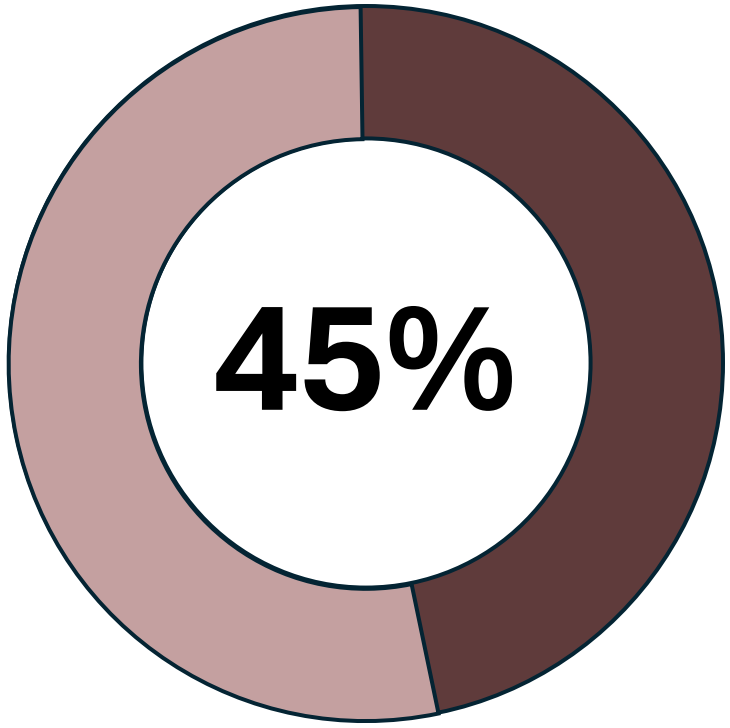
Preparedness Action Plan Update

Buncombe County Helene Recovery Plan Priority: High | Cost: High | Timing: Long-term

Public Safety



Category: EOC Operations



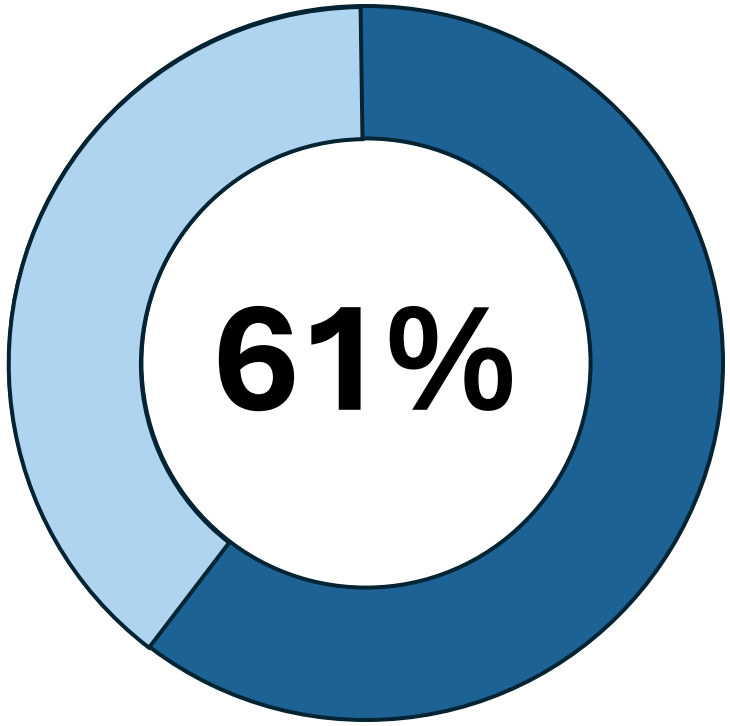
This category focuses on building the core systems that support coordinated emergency response across Buncombe County. Projects address operational structure, communication systems, infrastructure resilience, and interagency coordination to improve the County's ability to respond to and sustain operations during disasters.

High-Priority Projects:

- Update the Emergency Operations Plan and document the operational structure
- Procurement of Emergency Operations Center
- Pre-position contracts for emergencies
- Implement PACE model for IT infrastructure

Public Safety

Category: EOC Staffing

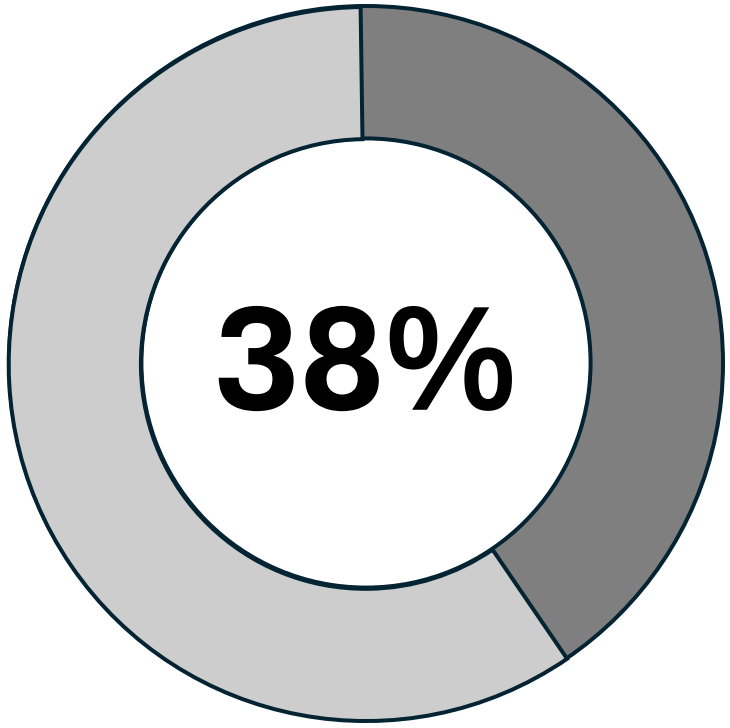


This category strengthens Buncombe County's ability to staff and sustain emergency operations through clear role assignments, workforce planning, and coordinated training. Projects also address internal communication systems, staff support resources, and policies that ensure employees are prepared and supported during disaster response.

High-Priority Project:

- Develop an emergency staffing plan for all EOC positions

Category: Public Safety Communications (911)

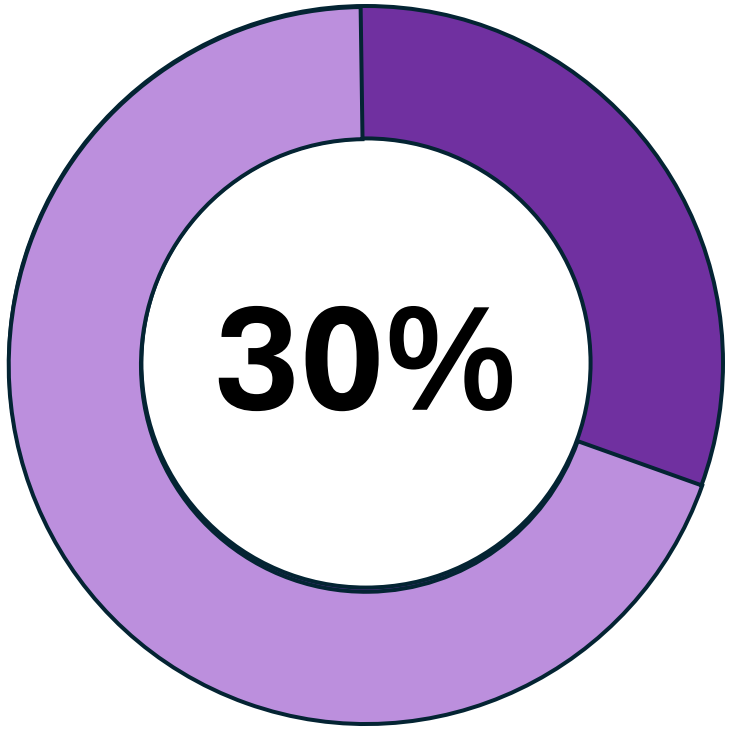


This category strengthens the resilience of Buncombe County's 911 operations during emergencies. Projects focus on redundant communication systems, operational procedures, external partnerships, and training to ensure continuity of critical public safety communications.

High-Priority Project:

- Create a PACE model for 911 operations.

Category: Community Resource Support



This category prepares Buncombe County to manage and distribute community resources during disasters. Projects focus on supply distribution sites, warehouse and donation management, volunteer coordination, and systems for tracking and delivering critical resources to residents.

High-Priority Project:

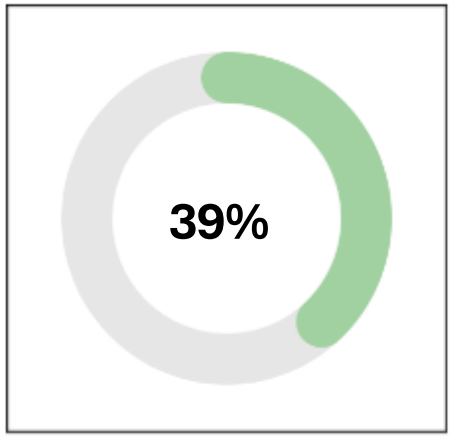
- Establish a comprehensive warehouse operation plan.

Preparedness Action Plan Update

Buncombe County Helene Recovery Plan Priority: Medium | Cost: High | Timing: Long-term

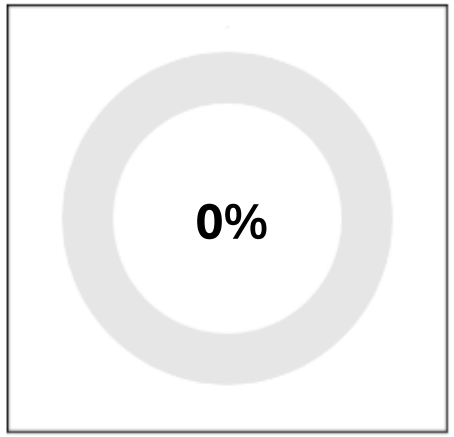
Public Safety

EOC LOGISTICS



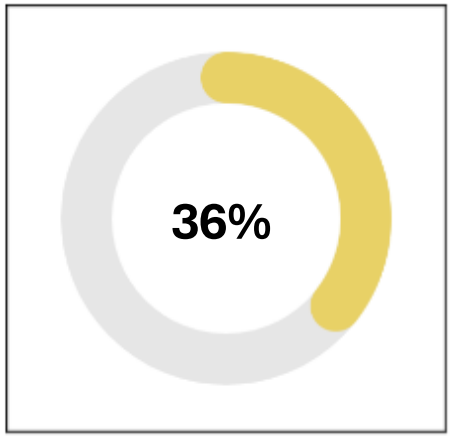
- Create a process for logistics operations
- Establish contracts for logistical needs
- Ensure disaster-related policies are in place

FAMILY REUNIFICATION



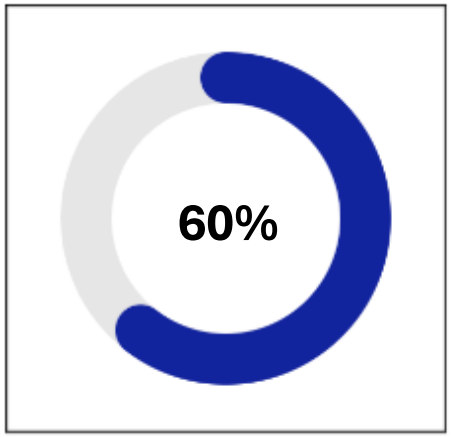
- Establish a family reunification plan and assistance model
- Create a database for family reunification efforts

SHELTER OPERATIONS



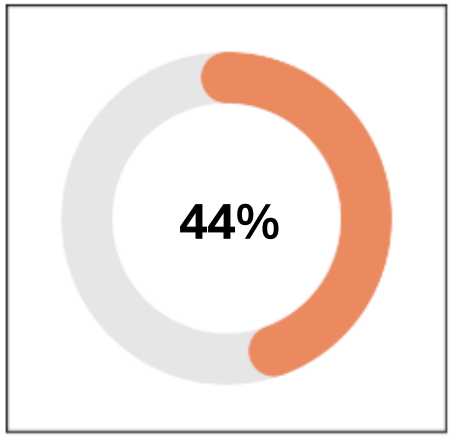
- Update the County's shelter plan
- Create a shelter security plan
- Establish a shelter supply inventory system

NON-EMERGENCY CALL CENTER



- Create a year-round non-emergency call center and related operating guidelines

DAMAGE ASSESSMENT



- Develop guidelines for standardizing damage assessments
- Establish a data collection tool

Foundational

FEMA Public Assistance

Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (FEMA | NCEM)

Community Development Block Grant – Disaster Recovery (HUD)

Helene Resource Center

Community Partnerships

FEMA Public Assistance

Helene Recovery Grants and Funding

Foundational

- 57 projects submitted to FEMA
  - 44 obligated projects at $37M
  - $18.5M reimbursements | $18.5M up-front costs
  - $15.4M received by the County from NCEM
- Current Activity
  - 12 additional projects for $2.8M
  - Category A and B projects continuing program
  - Permanent Work (Cat C-G) and other non-emergency projects are on hold

FEMA PA Obligations	Amount
A - Debris Removal	$7.4M
B- Emergency Protective Measures	$24.9M
C - Roads and Bridges	$1.3M
E - Building and Equip	$259.9K
G - Parks, Rec, Other	$2.2M
Z - Management Costs	$904K
Total Obligations	**$37M**

Hazard Mitigation Grant Program

North Carolina Emergency Management (NCEM) Administration | FEMA Funds

Foundational

Acquisitions | Kickoff Meeting Completed

- Group 1 & 2 | 47 Properties in progress

Acquisitions | Awaiting FEMA Review and Decision

- Group 3 | 166 Applications submitted
- Group 4 | 71 Applications submitted

Elevations | Awaiting FEMA Review and Decision

- Group 1 | 44 Applications submitted
- Group 2 | 17 Applications submitted
- Group 3 | 23 Applications submitted

Type	Qty
Acquisition	284
Elevation	84
Mitigation Reconstruction	8
Land Stabilization	42
Slope Stabilization	4
Total applications	**422**

HMGP Infrastructure

North Carolina Emergency Management (NCEM) Administration | FEMA Funds

Foundational

- 22 project applications submitted to NCEM
- Projects total $76.8M with $3.8M in management costs

Project Examples
Warning and detection systems
Facility and power resilience
Community education projects
Wildfire protection plans
Erosion control
Emergency operations

Foundational

Helene Resource Center

- Shifting approach from walk-in to appointment based
- Team will move to 200 College Street on the 2nd floor
  - Offices for RenewNC and Disaster Case Management
  - Conference room and office space for HMGP
  - HRC and Helene Recovery Office staff co-located
- Schedule
  - Final day of operations at 94 Coxe Avenue is Friday, March 27
  - Appointments available at 200 College Street starting Monday, March 30



Helene Resource Appointments

- To schedule an appointment at 200 College Street on the 2nd floor:
  - Call One Buncombe Call Center at (828) 250-6100
  - Email the Helene Recovery Office at helenerecovery@buncombenc.gov
  - Contact your RenewNC representative or Disaster Case Manager
- Operations are between Monday through Friday 8:00a.m.-5:00p.m.

Foundational

Buncombe County Long Term Recovery Group

- A network of nonprofits, churches, grassroots organizers, and neighbors who have united to make sure that long-term disaster recovery is coordinated and compassionate
- Connect those affected by Hurricane Helene with:
  - Personalized case management
  - Help understanding options and support accessing housing support, food, counseling, rebuilding funds, and more
  - Support through every stage of recovery
- We work to identify gaps, strengthen partnerships, and get resources to the people who need them, efficiently and equitably.

Buncombe County Long Term Recovery Group

What the BCLTRG has done:

- Mobilized over 2,000 community members and 50 organizational partners
- Processed 615 intakes of storm-impacted households
- Facilitated 1,245 requests for services
- Disbursed $520,000 to storm-impacted clients for rental assistance and eviction prevention
- Committed over $100,000 to date in construction repairs and rebuild projects

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How to get help?

- https://www.buncombeltrg.org/get-help | info@buncombeltrg.org | (828) 393-5628
- Available in multiple languages through the toggle at the top of the form

Next Steps

- Continued project development and coordination with departments
- Further engagement with community and municipal partners
- The Helene Recovery Office is developing public awareness capabilities for project updates

Next Helene Recovery Plan briefing to the Board of County Commissioners is Tuesday, June 16 at 3:00 p.m.

End of Presentation

Thank you