Sidewalks Grant Update

Presented on Tuesday, October 6, 2026

Kevin Madsen, Helene Recovery Officer

Background

- April 29, 2025: NC Commerce launched a Helene recovery grant opportunity, the **Small Business Infrastructure Grant Program (SmBIZ)**
- In partnership with the **NC Department of Transportation**, staff began developing several projects to fund pedestrian infrastructure repairs and extensions throughout the Swannanoa Commercial Corridor
- Staff successfully submitted two applications for funding to repair and extend sidewalks in Swannanoa
  - “Whitson Avenue,” awarded $979K
  - “Railroad, Alexander, and South” awarded $786K
  - **Total awards to date $1.7M**

Applications and Awards

First Application:

Whitson Avenue

- Improve 1,280 square yards of pedestrian infrastructure
- Construction management to be provided by NCDOT
- $979K awarded

Second Application:

Railroad, South, Alexander

- Improve 1,000 square yards of pedestrian infrastructure
- Construction management to be provided by NCDOT
- $763K awarded

Project will result in approximately 2,900 feet (0.55 miles) of ADA accessible sidewalks



Map of Awards

Awarded projects shown in Blue.

Next Steps & Request

Next Steps

- Finalize Grant Agreement with N.C. Commerce
- Begin working with NC Department of Transportation on implementation

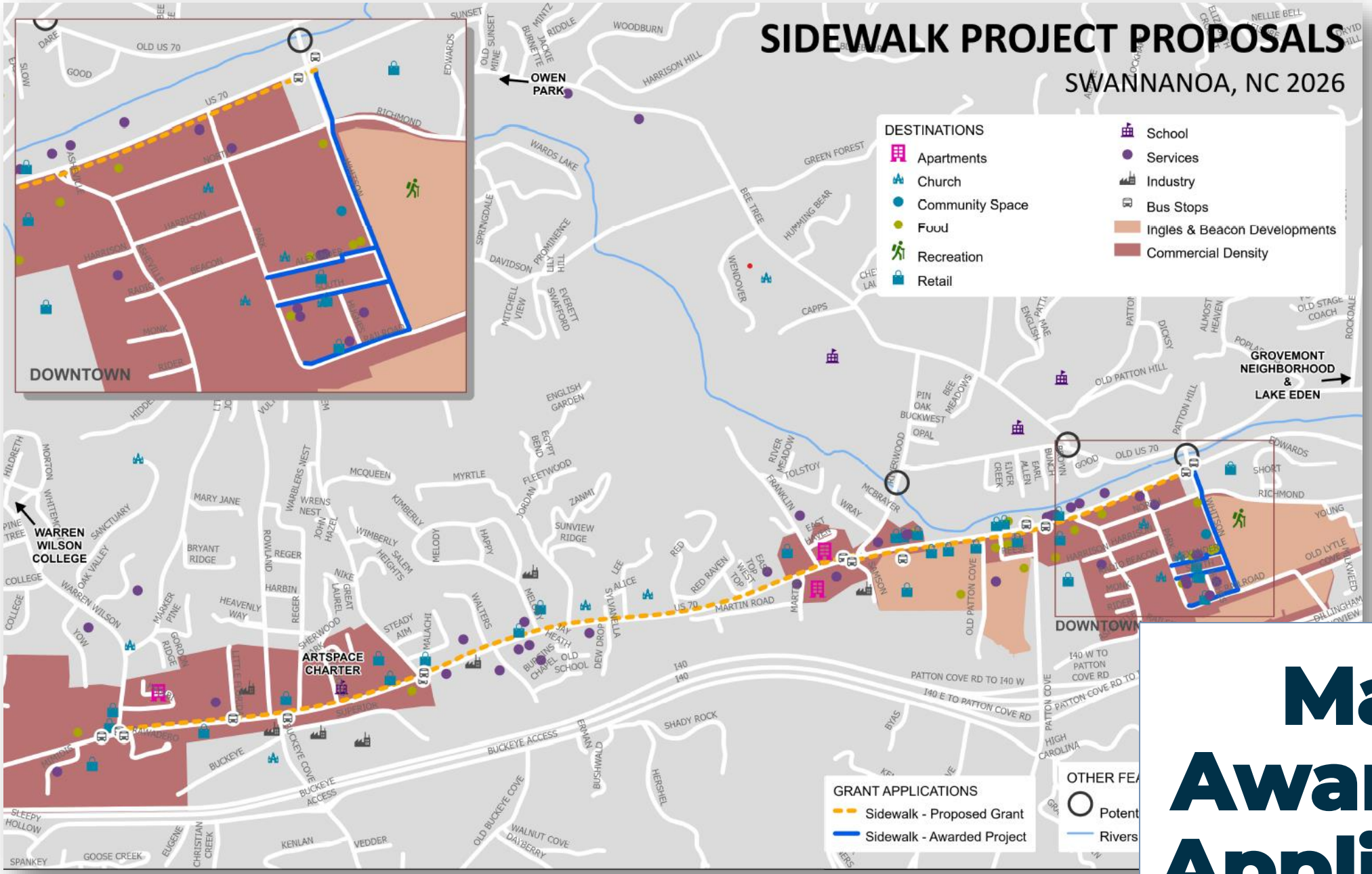
Request for Board Action

- Accept the two Small Business Infrastructure Grant program awards and approve their respective budget amendments

Appendix

Pursuing Additional Funds

- Additional requests have been submitted to the state
  - Commercial District Revitalization, Community Development Block Grant – Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) funding
  - Request: $10M
  - Project Area: Highway 70, between Whitson Ave and Warren Wilson Road
  - Deliverables: 2.25 miles of contiguous sidewalks
- Pending opportunity with Rural Economic Development Division
  - CDBG-Neighborhood Revitalization (CDBG-NR)
  - Request: up to $750K
  - Project: Right of way acquisition and assessment, to complement SmBIZ
- Continue to seek additional funding



Map of Awards and Applications

BUNCOMBE COUNTY