THE CITY OF ASHEVILLE

STAFF REPORT

City Council Meeting Date: January 27, 2026

Subject: Helene Recovery Grant for PARTF 2025-2026 | North Carolina

Staff Resources: D. Tyrell McGirt, Director, Parks & Recreation; Pete Wall, Assistant Director

Action Requested: Adoption of a resolution authorizing the City Manager to apply for grants in the Helene Recovery Fund for Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF) 2025-2026 in the State of North Carolina, and authorizing the City Manager to accept funds if granted, and to execute all documents related to implementation and management of Helene Recovery funds for PARTF 2025-2026 North Carolina Grant Program.

Background:

- The Disaster Recovery Act of 2025 (SL 2025-26, House Bill 1012) was ratified on June 27, 2025, allocating $4,158,875 to the Parks and Recreation Trust Fund for eligible uses in the affected area for local governments.
- The Helene Recovery Grant Program will be administered through the Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF) administrative code and awards will be selected by the NC Parks & Recreation Authority.
- Prioritization will be given to applicants from qualifying counties designated by the US Dept. of Housing & Urban Development as most impacted and distressed counties from Hurricane Helene. Buncombe County is a qualifying county.
- North Carolina counties and incorporated municipalities are eligible for Helene Recovery through PARTF grants.
- Applicant attests that (i) the application for funds is for repair, replacement, or construction of equipment, buildings, or natural features due to damage or effects from Hurricane Helene, including capacity-building, and (ii) the amount of funds requested is the amount of unmet need above the amount paid by insurance and available federal aid.
- The program prioritizes funding of capital projects to repair, renovate, or replace damaged parks, trails, and facilities that will support long-term community resilience, environmental recovery, and equitable access to outdoor recreation following damage or effects from Hurricane Helene, not eligible for Federal funding or insurance.
- Funds are disbursed as a reimbursement once the grant contract is executed.
- The application deadline is January 30, 2026.
- A 1:1 match is required for awarded projects, with no maximum request requirement. FEMA or other grant funds may be used for the match.
- The anticipated project period for Helene Recovery Fund projects is May 1, 2026, to April 30, 2029.
- If awarded, Council will approve all applicable procurements.

Council Goal(s):

- Clean, Safe and Healthy Environment
- Financially Resilient
- Thriving Local Economy
- Well-planned and Livable Community

Committee(s):

- Infrastructure Recovery Board, February 10, 2026

Pro(s):

- Provides 1:1 matching state funding for mitigation projects, easing local budget burdens.
- Enhances public safety, infrastructure resilience, and community preparedness.
- Aligns with long-term mitigation and capital planning goals.
- Projects ineligible or denied for FEMA Public Assistance can still receive support.

Con(s):

- Applications are due by January 30, 2026; with no rolling submissions.
- All grant funds must be spent by April 30, 2029; which may limit long-term or phased projects.
- Evaluation is highly competitive.
- Funds are disbursed as a reimbursement once the grant contract is executed, requiring available capital.

Fiscal Impact:

- No action at this time. A budget amendment will be presented to City Council for each individual project grant award.
- Grant funding will be disbursed as a reimbursement once the construction is executed, requiring the City to have available capital for initial project funding. The grantee will need to report expenses for the grant project to NC State Recreation Resources for reimbursement.

Suggested Motion:

- Motion to adopt a resolution authorizing the City Manager to submit an application for the Helene Recovery Grant Program; accept grant funds if awarded; and execute all forms, agreements, and documents, as approved by the City Attorney, needed to implement and manage the Helene Recovery Grant Program.

Attachment(s):

- Resolution

RESOLUTION NO. 26-___

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO APPLY FOR HELENE RECOVERY GRANT PROGRAM, ACCEPT FUNDS IF GRANTED, AND EXECUTE ALL RELATED DOCUMENTS NECESSARY TO GIVE EFFECT TO THIS RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the City of Asheville has authority pursuant to N.C.G.S. § 160A-17.1 to accept grant-in-aid from other governmental entities; and

WHEREAS, on September 25, 2024, Governor Roy Cooper issued Executive Order 315 declaring a statewide State of Emergency, and on September 26, 2024, President Joseph R. Biden approved a federal disaster declaration for the City of Asheville; and

WHEREAS, on or about September 27-28, 2024, Tropical Storm Helene ("storm") devastated portions of the City of Asheville; and

WHEREAS, the Helene Recovery Grant Program provides capital funding to local governments in FEMA-designated western North Carolina areas to repair or replace Hurricane Helene–damaged recreation facilities

WHEREAS, the application for funds is for repair, replacement, or construction of equipment, buildings, or natural features due to damage or effects from Hurricane Helene, including capacity-building, and the amount of funds requested is the amount of unmet need above the amount paid by insurance and available federal aid; and

WHEREAS, the City of Asheville has identified additional unmet needs for recreation facilities that exceeds what insurance or federal aid will provide;

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

The City Manager is hereby authorized to: apply for Helene Recovery Grant Program; accept grant funds if awarded; and execute all forms, agreements, and documents, as approved by the City Attorney, needed to implement and manage the Helene Recovery Grant Program.

Read, approved, and adopted this 27th day of January, 2026.

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City Clerk Mayor

Approved as to form:

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City Attorney