City of Asheville Staff Report

City Council Meeting Date: June 9, 2026

Staff Resources: Dana Frankel, Downtown Planning Manager; Stephanie Dahl, Planning and Urban Design Director

Action Requested: Adoption of a budget amendment transferring $1,464,337 in previously received Mellon Foundation funds from the Special Revenue Fund to the General Capital Projects Fund for the Eagle and Market Street Enhancements Project.

Background:

- April 11, 2023 - Asheville City Council authorized staff, via resolution 23-73, to apply for and receive $3,000,000 in grant funds from the Mellon Foundation to support implementation of the Pack Square Plaza Vision Plan
- June 19, 2023 - The City was awarded $3,000,000 through the Mellon Foundation's Monuments Project to advance elements of the Pack Square Plaza Vision Plan, including: "Boosting the Block", an initiative focused on better connecting The Block and enhancing its cultural character through design, engineering and construction.
- May 28, 2024 - City Council adopted a resolution authorizing execution of a $180,000 contract with Illumined Leadership Solutions for community engagement, facilitation and overall support for the Boosting the Block initiative and approved an associated budget amendment in the amount of $3,000,000 to accept the grant funds.
- The Mellon Foundation grant included $1,464,388 designated for design/engineering and construction of streetscape and public space improvements associated with the Boosting the Block project. City Council authorization is required to transfer these funds to the City's Capital Projects Fund for utilization as part of the Eagle and Market Street Enhancements Project.
- The Eagle and Market Street Enhancements capital project will implement the key physical elements of Boosting the Block and leverage additional transportation bond funds to develop and implement a cohesive and community-inspired design for key corridors on The Block intended to enhance walkability and wayfinding, strengthens visual and cultural identity, and invest in infrastructure that supports community gathering and programming.
- City staff will also submit a Phase II TDA LIFT application to pursue additional funding that could further enhance elements of the Eagle and Market Street Enhancements project and/or extend the project area.
- In early 2026, the City administered a competitive RFQ process to select a Design/Engineering team for the Eagle and Market Street Enhancements project; City Council is scheduled to consider contract authorization on June 23, 2026.

Vendor Outreach:

- Not applicable

Council Vision 2036 Focus Area(s):

- Thriving Local Economy
- Well-Planned and Livable Community
- A Clean, Safe and Healthy Environment

Council Priority Recovery Area(s):

- Infrastructure
- Economy
- People and Environment

Committee(s):

- Not applicable specific to the budget amendment; the ability to apply for and accept this award was already approved by City Council vote.
- Updates on the Boosting the Block initiative and the approach to the Eagle and Market Street Enhancements capital project were presented to PEDE on December 17, 2025.

Fiscal Impact:

- An increase of $1,464,337 in the City's General Capital Projects Fund.

Suggested Motion:

- Motion to adopt a budget amendment in the amount of $1,464,337 in order to transfer Mellon Foundation funds previously received from the Special Revenue Fund to the General Capital Projects Fund for the Eagle and Market Street Enhancements Project.

Attachment(s):

- Budget Amendment

City of Asheville Budget Amendment Ordinance Number ____

Be it Ordained by the City Council of the City of Asheville.

That Section 2 of the City of Asheville Annual Operating Budget Ordinance be amended to transfer an appropriation of $1,464,337 received from the Mellon Foundation from the Special Revenue Fund to the General Capital Projects Fund.

General Capital Projects Fund

Revenues:

Mellon Foundation Design/Engineering and Construction - $1,464,337

Expenditures:

Design and Engineering for the Eagle and Market Street Enhancements project - $166,325
Design, fabrication and construction of cultural gateway - $275,000
Construction for the Eagle and Market Street Enhancements project - $1,023,012
Total Expenditures - $1,464,337

That this ordinance shall be in full force and effect upon the date of final passage.

Read, approved and adopted this 9th day of June, 2026.

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Esther E. Manheimer, Mayor

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Brad Branham, City Attorney

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Magdalen Burleson, City Clerk