



Governor's Advisory Committee on Western North Carolina Recovery

December 15, 2025 | 10:00am – 12:00pm

Today's Agenda

Call to Order | *Mayor Esther Manheimer, Co-Chair*

Remarks | *Governor Josh Stein*

Wildfire Prevention and Preparedness | *Greg Hicks, NC Forest Service, NC Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services*

Updates on FEMA Public Assistance and Hazard Mitigation Grant Program / *Don Campbell, Division of Emergency Management, NC Department of Public Safety*

Renew NC Single-Family Housing Program & Multifamily Housing Program / *Stephanie McGarrah, Division of Community Revitalization, NC Department of Commerce*

WNC Recovery Updates / *Matt Calabria and Emily Gangi, GROW NC*

Next Steps / *Matt Calabria, GROW NC*

Adjourn





Remarks

Governor Josh Stein





Helene Wildfire Prevention & Preparedness

Greg Hicks, Assistant Commissioner/State Forester,
North Carolina Forest Service, NCDA&CS

The N.C. Forest Service is a division of the N.C. Depart. of Agriculture & Consumer Services
Steve Troxler, Commissioner



NC Forest Service Helene Funding



HOUSE BILL 1012

Signed June 27th, 2025

SECTION 2A.3.(a)

- c. Fifteen million dollars (\$15,000,000) for the North Carolina Forest Service for wildfire assets and preparedness, including contract services and equipment to respond and fight wildfires in the affected area.



Helene Wildfire Funding Breakdown



- Equipment \$7.7 million
 - Examples include bulldozers, truck tractors, trailers, Initial Attack wildland engines, support vehicles and supplies to outfit wildland engines
- Wildfire Support Services \$7.3 million
 - These funds are reserved for large wildfires and severe wildfire conditions in the Helene Impacted area.
 - Examples include expenses related to moving resources into the affected area to support wildfire efforts.



Other Wildfire Efforts

USDA/USFS funding



- Forest Health
 - Invasive Species and Prescribed Fire Crews (2)
 - Hemlock Conservation
 - Spongy Moth Treatment



Other Wildfire Efforts

USDA/USFS funding

- State Fire Assistance (Response)
 - Equipment
 - Supplies
 - Contracts
 - Volunteer Fire Department Assistance



Other Wildfire Efforts

USDA/USFS funding



- State Fire Assistance (Mitigation)
 - Time-limited Personnel
 - Equipment
 - Masticators (skid steers), Excavators, woodchippers, service vehicles
 - Supplies
 - Contracts
 - Assistance Programs



Other Wildfire Efforts

USDA Disaster Relief Block Grant



- \$221 million
- Categories of eligible losses
 - Infrastructure Damage
 - Market Loss
 - Future Economic Loss
 - Timber Loss
 - “Timber Loss Relief Program”
 - Will provide a loss payment to eligible timber producers based on a percentage of the damage



Signing Ceremony September 5th, 2025





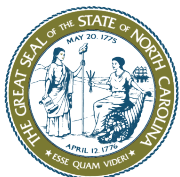
Updates on FEMA Public Assistance and Hazard Mitigation Grant Program

Don Campbell, Chief of Staff, Division of Emergency
Management, NC Department of Public Safety



Renew NC Program Update

Stephanie McGarrah, Deputy Secretary
Division of Community Revitalization



NC DEPARTMENT
of COMMERCE
COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION



CDBG-DR ALLOCATION BREAKDOWN



- **\$807M:** Single-Family Housing Program
- **\$191M:** Multi-Family Housing Program
- **\$53M:** Workforce Housing for Ownership



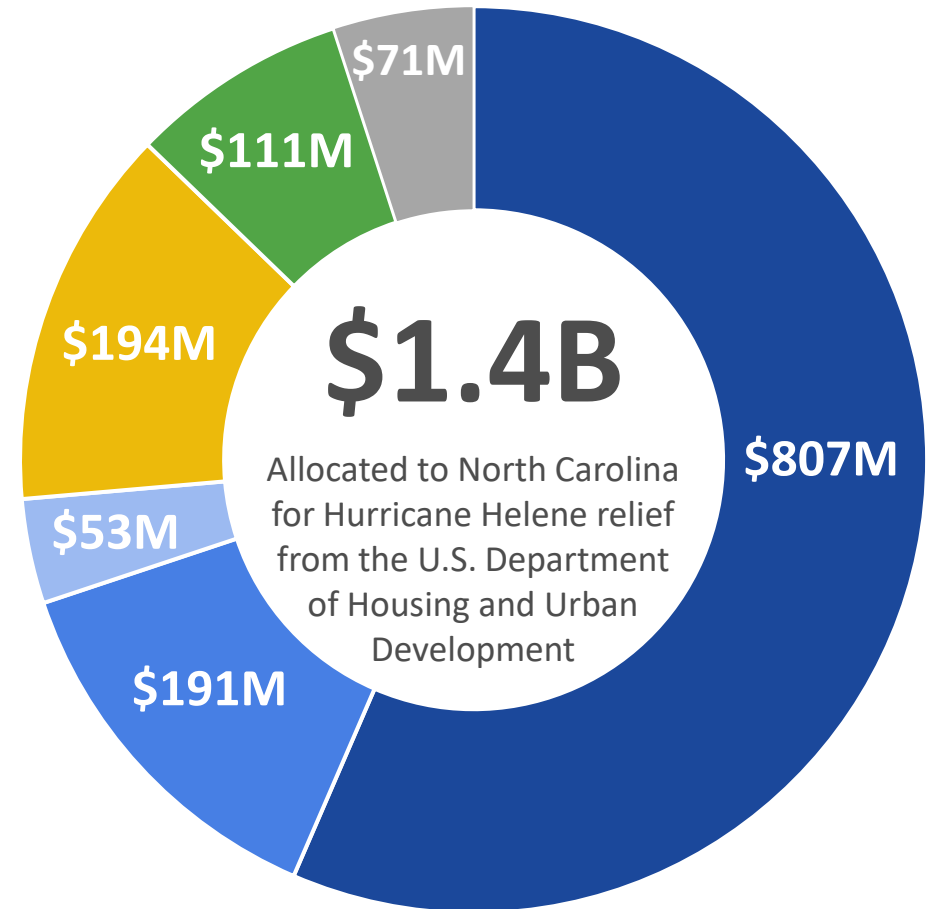
- **\$194M:** Community Infrastructure Program



- **\$111M:** Commercial District Revitalization



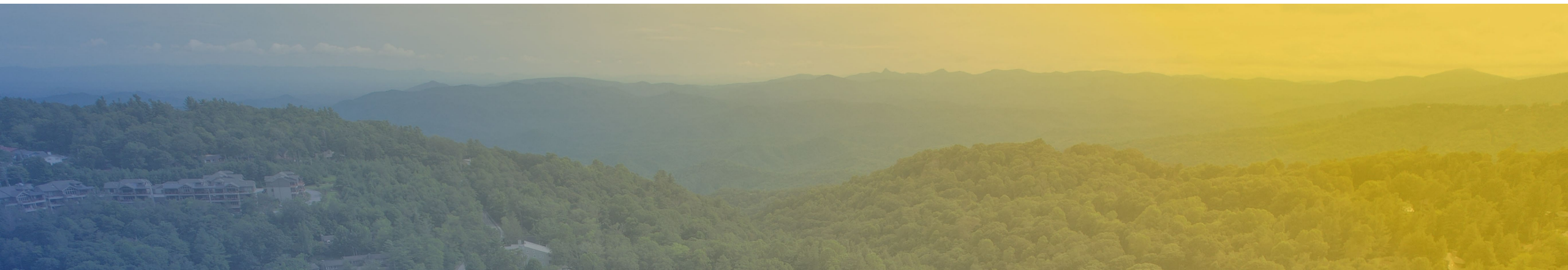
- **\$71M:** Administration



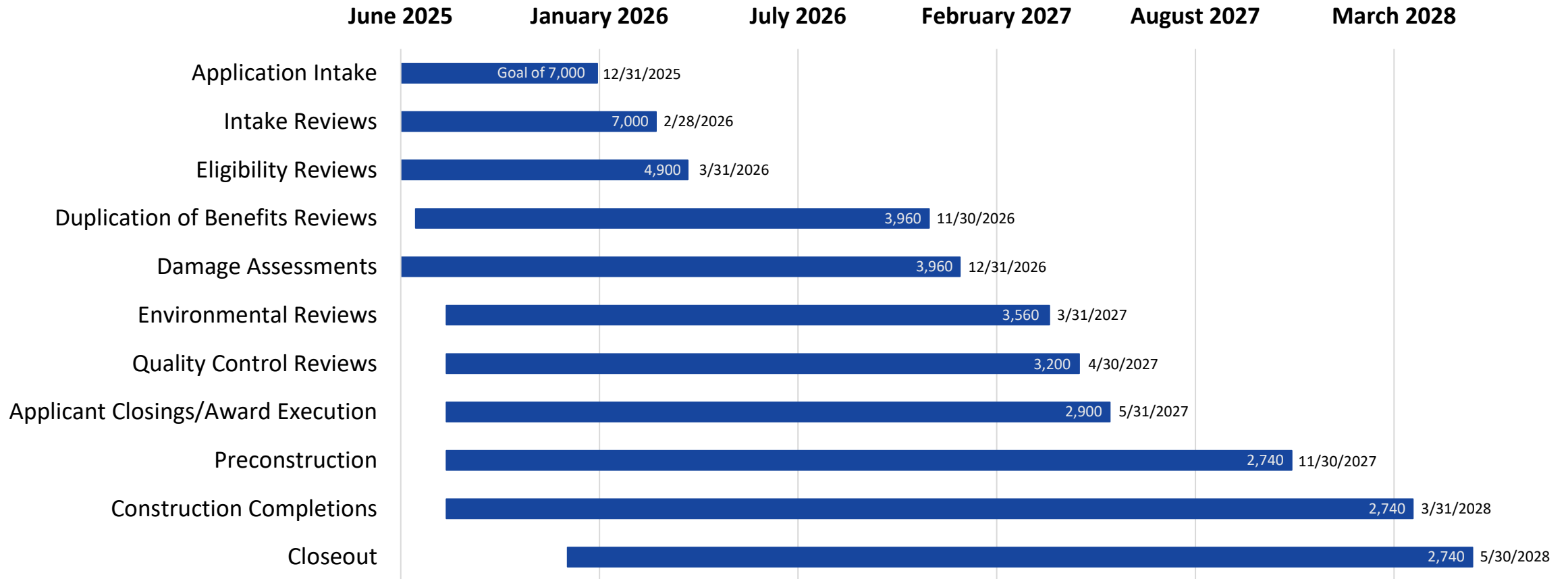


Single-Family Housing Program

Status and Updates



RENEW NC SINGLE-FAMILY HOUSING PROGRAM ROADMAP



*Total estimated program completions by stage noted for each step

Applications in Progress But Not Submitted	Total Applications Submitted	Total Active Applications	Inactive or Ineligible Applications
1,854	6,515	5,018 i	1,497 i

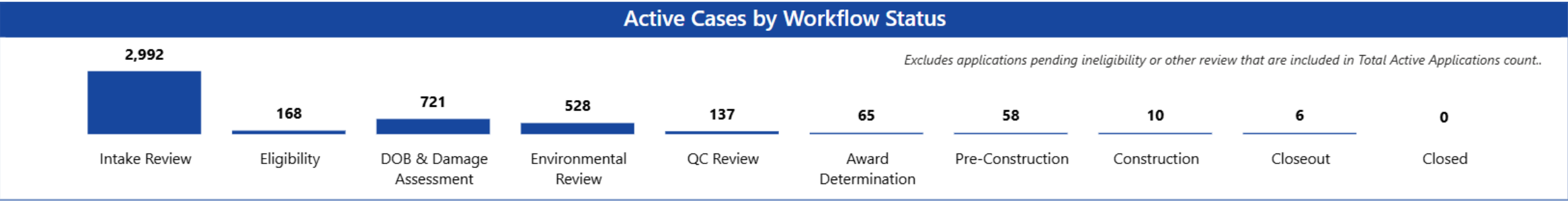
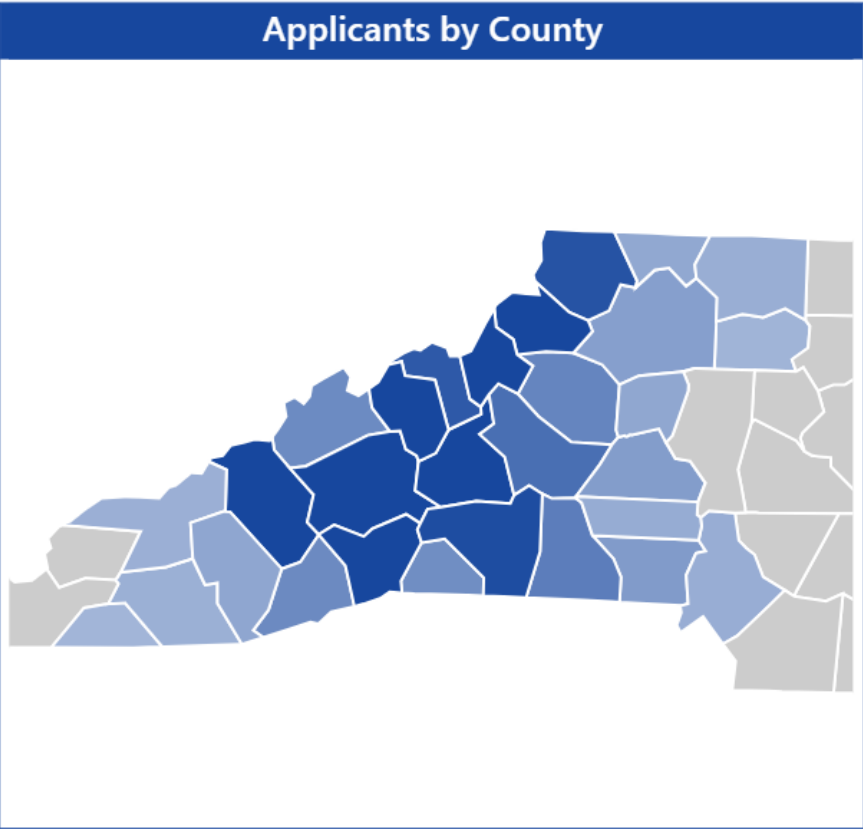
Application Submission Deadline
December 31, 2025

Verified Eligible Phase and Priority i

Phase	Priority 1	Priority 2	Priority 3	Priority 4	Total
Phase 1	823	155	54	8	1040
Phase 2	139	42	8	4	193
Phase 3	19	6	N/A	N/A	25
Phase 4	263	9	N/A	N/A	272

Hover over the information bubble for Phase and Priority definitions.

Applications will be processed beginning with Phase 1, followed by Phase 2, etc.

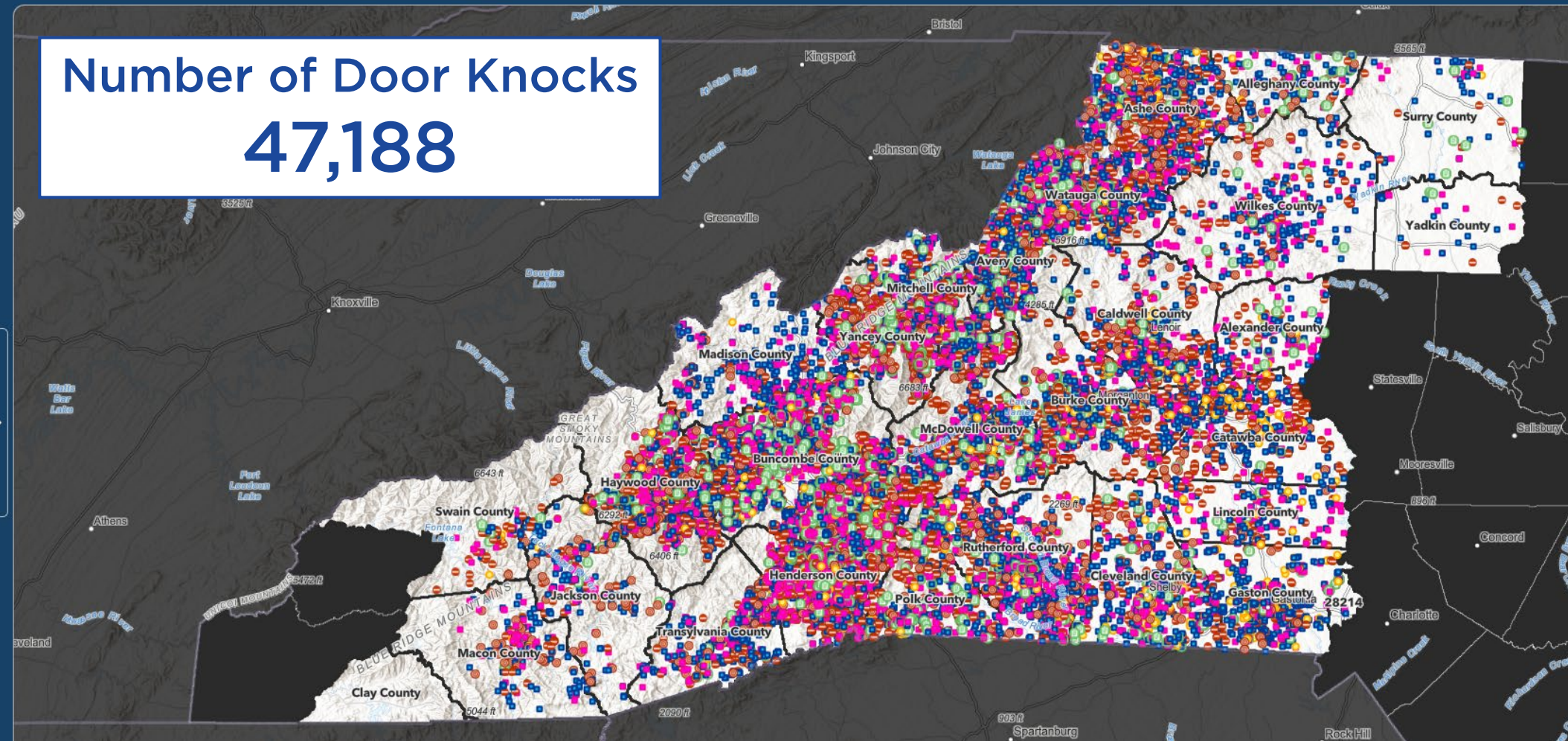


RENEW NC SINGLE-FAMILY HOUSING PROGRAM

DOOR KNOCKING CAMPAIGN

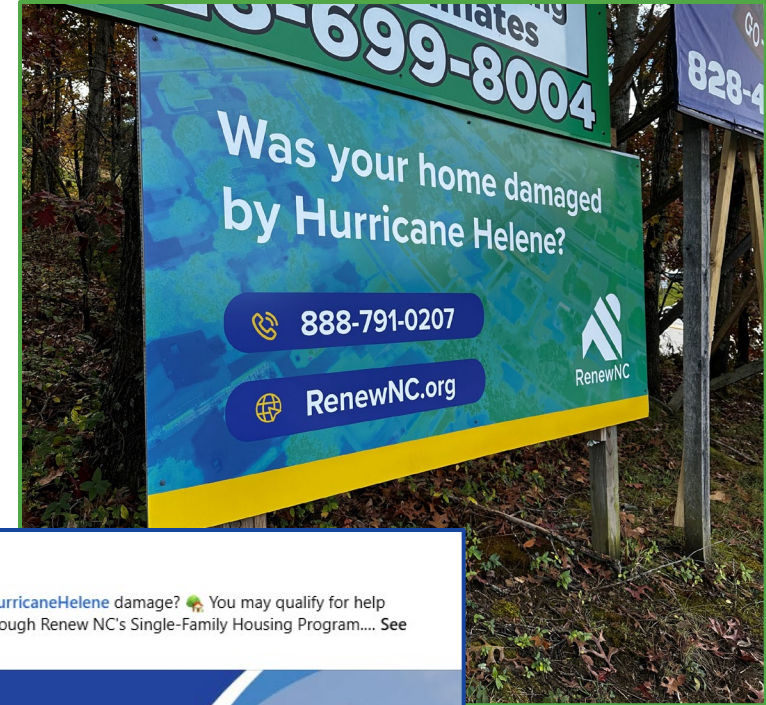
RenewNC Door Knock Campaign

Number of Door Knocks
47,188



RENEW NC SINGLE-FAMILY HOUSING PROGRAM OUTREACH DATA

- 23,400 phone calls made
- 43 outreach events throughout WNC
- iHeart Radio Ads – 802 ads across 8 radio stations, resulting in 3.4 million impressions
 - Additional ads through AudioGo (Pandora) and Spotify
- 4 billboards up from September 15-December 31
- 5 full page newspaper ads
- 2 million+ social media views/impressions between mid-June to now
- 10+ WNC media interviews conducted by DCR staff
- Weekly WNC local government and stakeholder meeting to coordinate outreach efforts
- 30+ meeting/presentation requests received and attended by DCR staff across WNC since June
- Monthly external newsletter launched October 2025





RENEW NC SINGLE-FAMILY HOUSING PROGRAM

APPLY BY DECEMBER 31, 2025



In-Person

Visit any **Renew NC Program Intake Center** open **Monday** through **Saturday** from **8 AM** to **6 PM**



Online Portal

Complete an application online at **www.RenewNC.org**



Mobile App

Download the “**Renew NC Housing Program**” mobile app from the Google Play Store or the Apple App Store



Phone Call

Call **888-791-0207** to be connected to a Case Manager

Asheville

128 Bingham Rd.
Suite 875
Asheville, NC 28806

Boone

379 New Market Blvd.
Suite 1
Boone, NC 28607

Marion

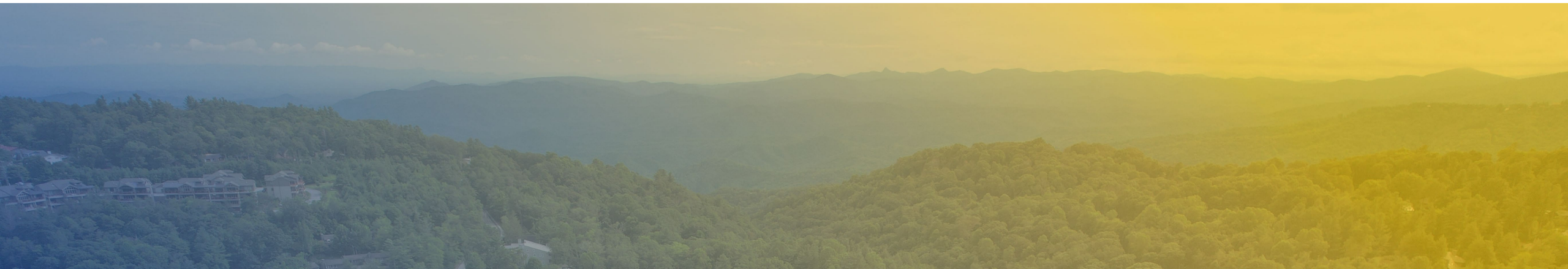
364 US Highway 70
Suite 3
Marion, NC 28752

Additional pop-up center locations and hours can be found at renewnc.org/contact.



Small Rental Rehabilitation Program

Launches December 15th



PROGRAM DETAILS

Eligible Properties

- 1-4 units
- Landlord-owned properties in HUD and State MID areas
- Damaged or destroyed by Helene

Award Range

\$250K - \$1.5M

Requirements

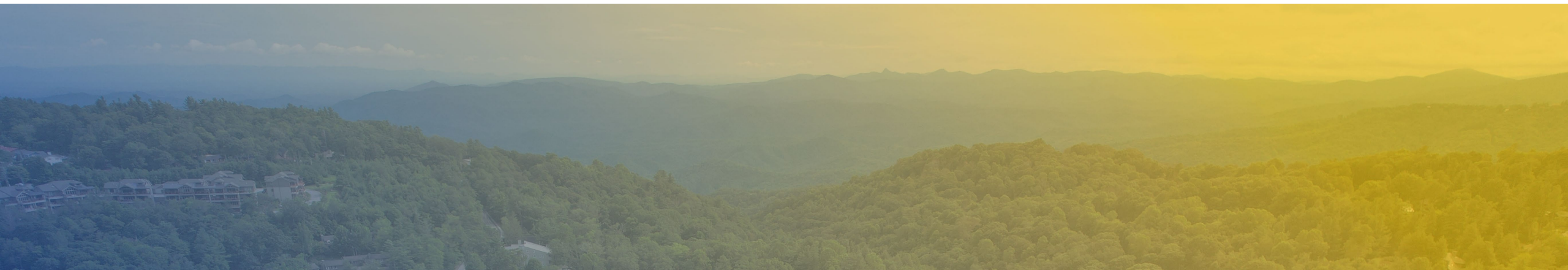
Landlords must agree to provide affordable rent rates for a 10-year period for 80% or less AMI.

Apply

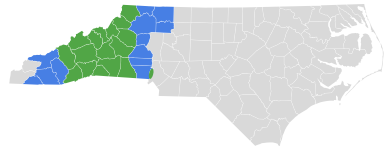
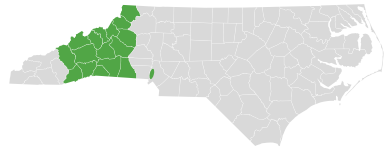
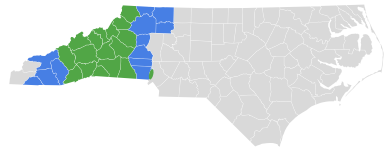
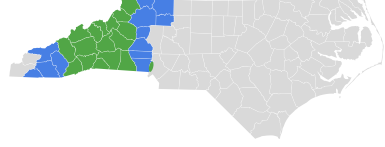
- Online at www.renewnc.org
- By phone at 1-888-791-0207
- Through the app

Upcoming Programs

Information and Road Maps

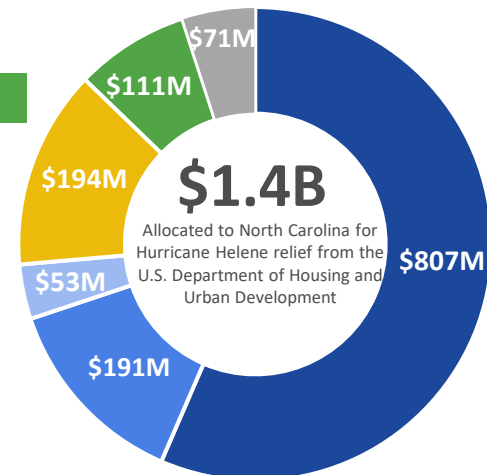
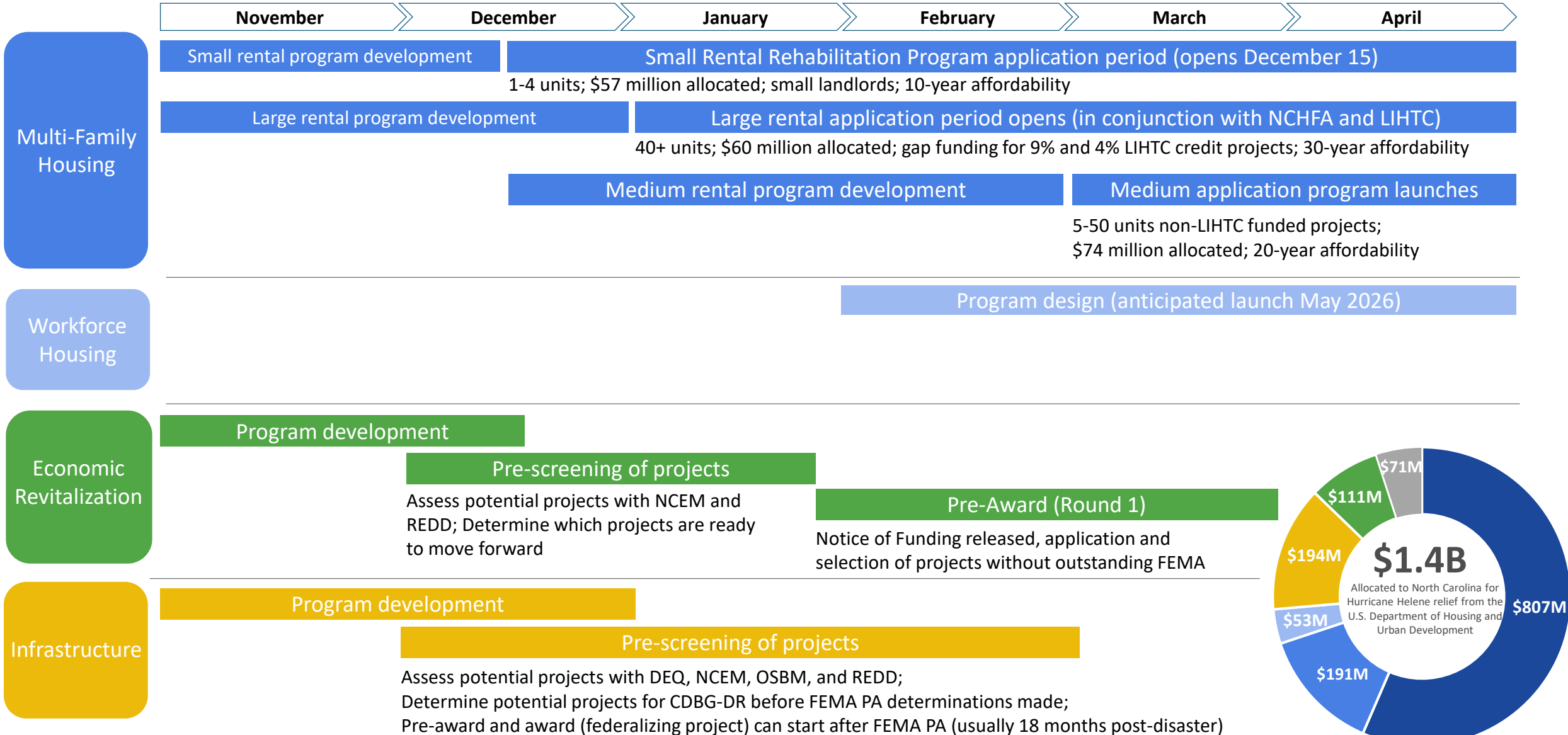


Renew NC Upcoming Programs

Program	Award Range	Description	Applicants	Locations	
Multi-Family Housing Program	Small projects: \$250K - \$1.5M Large projects: \$500K - \$15M	Competitive grant funding to support reconstruction, rehabilitation or construction of affordable rental housing	Private developers, local governments, public or non-profit organizations, and CHDOs/CBDOs		<i>HUD & State MID areas</i>
Workforce Housing for Ownership	\$2M - \$5M	Competitive grant funding for development and construction of units for purchase by LMI (low to moderate income) households	Local governments, public, private, or nonprofit organizations, and CHDOs/CBDOs		<i>HUD MID areas only</i>
Commercial District Revitalization Program	\$500K - \$10M	Grant funding to support revitalization activities (e.g., rehabilitation of commercial structures, small business locations) in impacted commercial areas	Local governments and non-profit organizations		<i>HUD & State MID areas</i>
Community Infrastructure Program	\$500K - \$15M	Competitive grant funding for infrastructure projects that will help Helene impacted communities become more resilient to natural hazards	Local governments		<i>HUD & State MID areas</i>



6-MONTH ROADMAP FOR ADDITIONAL PROGRAMS





WNC Recovery Updates

Matt Calabria, Director, GROW NC

Emily Gangi, Chief Deputy Director, GROW NC



Major recovery efforts underway

Rebuilding Safe Housing

- Residents received \$542M+ in FEMA Individual Assistance
- 6,900 households received temporary housing
- 6,300+ applications received for HUD single-family housing program
- 550+ homes repaired by volunteer organizations such as Baptists on Mission and Habitat for Humanity with state funds

Restoring our Infrastructure

- 7m+ cubic yards of right-of-way debris removed
- 8.3m+ cubic yards of waterway debris removed
- All site assessments (more than 6,500 in total) completed in State's Private Roads & Bridges Program
- \$33.5M in FEMA funds authorized to repair private roads and bridges

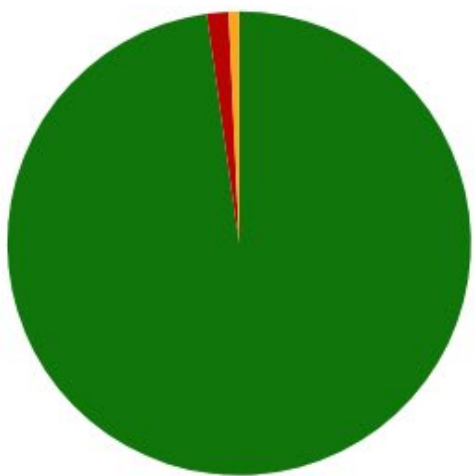
Revitalizing our Economy and Communities

- \$55M in state and philanthropically funded small business grants fully disbursed, with more than 2,100 recipients
- \$418M+ in SBA loans offered
- \$39M+ in disaster unemployment assistance distributed
- \$148M+ in loans offered to 90 local governments

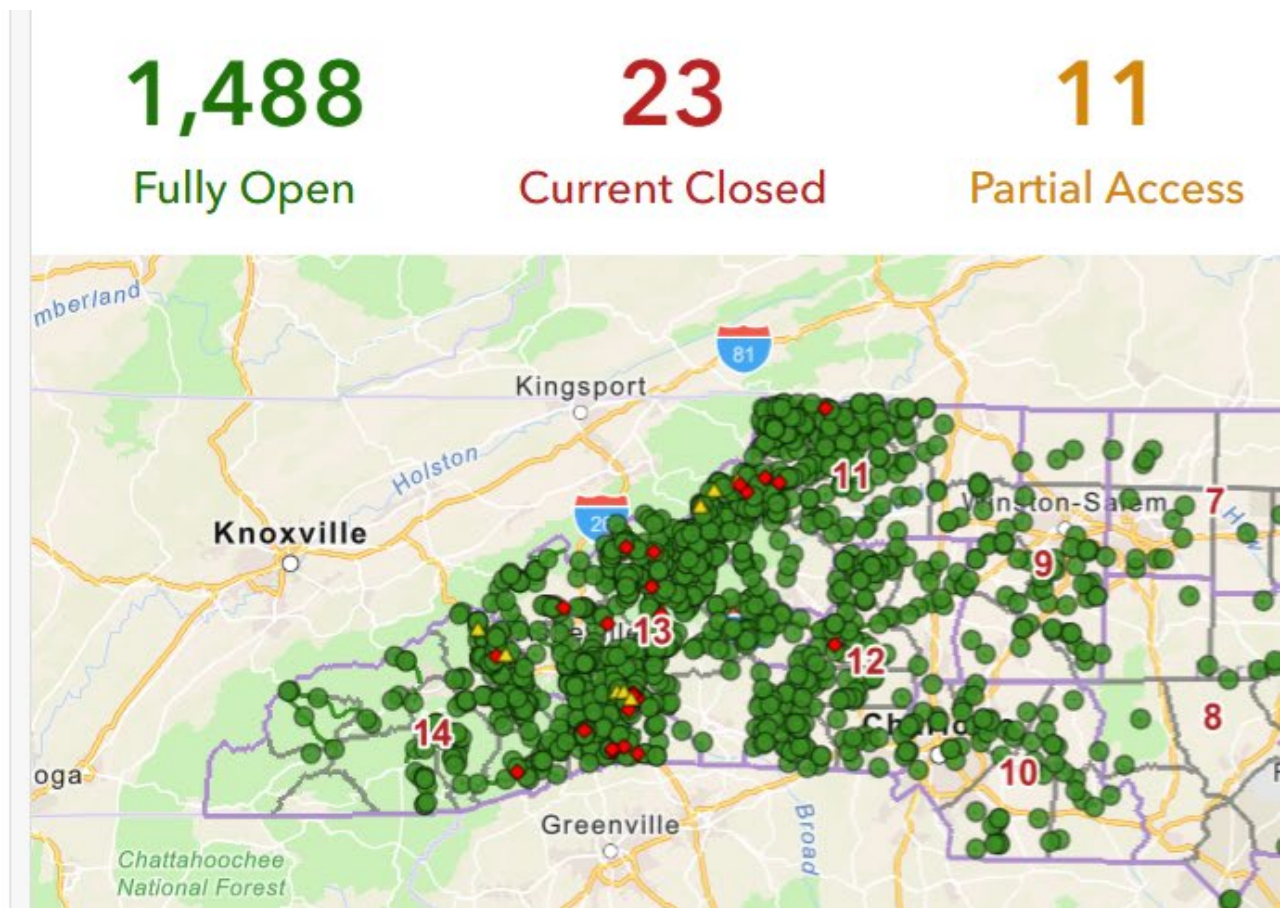
NC Department of Transportation has reopened more than 98% of state roads (97.8% fully reopened, 1% partially reopened)

Total Incidents
1,522
since beginning of Storm

Total Closures
1,511
since beginning of Storm



- Fully Open 1,488
- Current Closed 23
- Partial Access 11





Select State Program Updates



Over \$500,000 Announced for Home and Temporary Housing Winterization Efforts

Governor Stein, GROW NC, and NC Emergency Management announced \$500,000 in grants to Rebuild Haywood and the WNC Conference of United Methodist Churches to complete emergency repairs and temporary measures to prepare homes damaged by Hurricane Helene for winter.

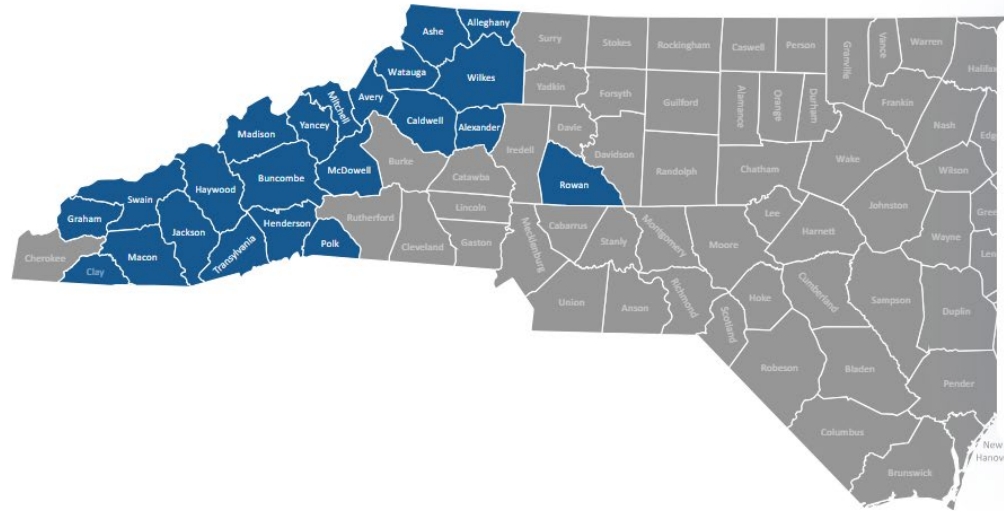
In addition, GROW NC announced nearly \$50,000 to The Beacon Network and Rebuild Haywood to support their work to winterize campers, trailers, and other temporary housing for families displaced by Helene.



WNC Thrive Program Launches to Support Children, Youth, and Families

WNC Thrive expands resources for children, youth, and families affected by Hurricane Helene. The program helps young people heal, reconnect, and thrive through safe, supportive, engaging activities—all at no cost to families.

WNC Thrive works with multiple organizations to offer after-school, weekend, and summer camp programs to children and families recovering from Hurricane Helene. All activities are free for eligible participants living in one of the 22 hurricane-affected counties Vaya serves.



County Map

Alexander, Alleghany, Ashe, Avery, Buncombe, Caldwell, Clay, Graham, Haywood, Henderson, Jackson, Macon, Madison, McDowell, Mitchell, Polk, Rowan, Swain, Transylvania, Watauga, Wilkes, and Yancey.

For more information: <https://www.vayahealth.com/wnc-thrive/>




DEQ Announced \$270 Million for Resilient Water Infrastructure Projects in Areas Impacted by Hurricane Helene in December

- The awards fund 54 water, wastewater and septic system projects across 26 counties as part of a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency program for disaster-affected states.
- North Carolina is the first state impacted by Hurricane Helene to make awards from this program
- The drinking water and wastewater award funds are directed to improve flood resilience in systems that were impacted by Helene, and septic system funds must be used to improve flood resilience to septic systems in Helene-affected areas.



75 Grants to Repair Infrastructure in Western NC Supporting Local Governments with Ongoing Hurricane Helene Recovery

- Announced by Governor Stein on Dec. 15
 - Nearly \$50 million in grants will support local governments in western North Carolina in their recovery efforts.
 - The grants, administered by the Office of State Budget and Management (OSBM), provide critical funding to repair, renovate, or replace storm-damaged infrastructure.
 - OSBM received 172 applications totaling over \$100M in needs.
- 
- The Helene Local Government Capital Grants Program was established when the General Assembly provided nearly \$50 million in state funds to local governments in FEMA-designated disaster areas.
 - Eligible projects for this program were ineligible for or denied FEMA Public Assistance reimbursement, and priority was given to communities with populations less than 300,000.

Deadline Extended to Dec. 31: Grants for Volunteer Organizations Active in Housing Repairs & Rebuilds

Phase 2 of \$28 million appropriations for nonprofit volunteer organizations aiding rebuild and reconstruction efforts in WNC. More than \$9M was awarded to 14 nonprofits in October.

Eligibility: Volunteer organizations actively involved in actual and ongoing repair and reconstruction projects for homeowners affected by Helene.

**Organizations do not need to be a member of NCVOAD.*

Deadline: December 31, 2025 (no later than 5 PM)

ncdps.gov/VOARDGrant



Applications Remain Open – Private Roads and Bridges Reimbursement Program

The application window is open for reimbursements through the NC-PRB program for private road and bridge repairs that are already completed.

Part of \$25M appropriation from the NC General Assembly. Reimbursements are permitted to cover up to 50 percent of a project's total cost.

(Pictured: A completed private bridge in Buncombe County)



wncrecovery.nc.gov/recovery-resources/nc-private-road-and-bridge-reimbursement-program

Agriculture Disaster Crop Loss Program

\$63 million distributed by the NC Department of Agriculture for crop losses resulting from Hurricane Helene. The Department hopes to complete crop payments by the end of the calendar year and begin payments for infrastructure losses in the new year.

The General Assembly appropriated nearly \$240 million for Helene impacted counties. The application window for these funds closed in May.

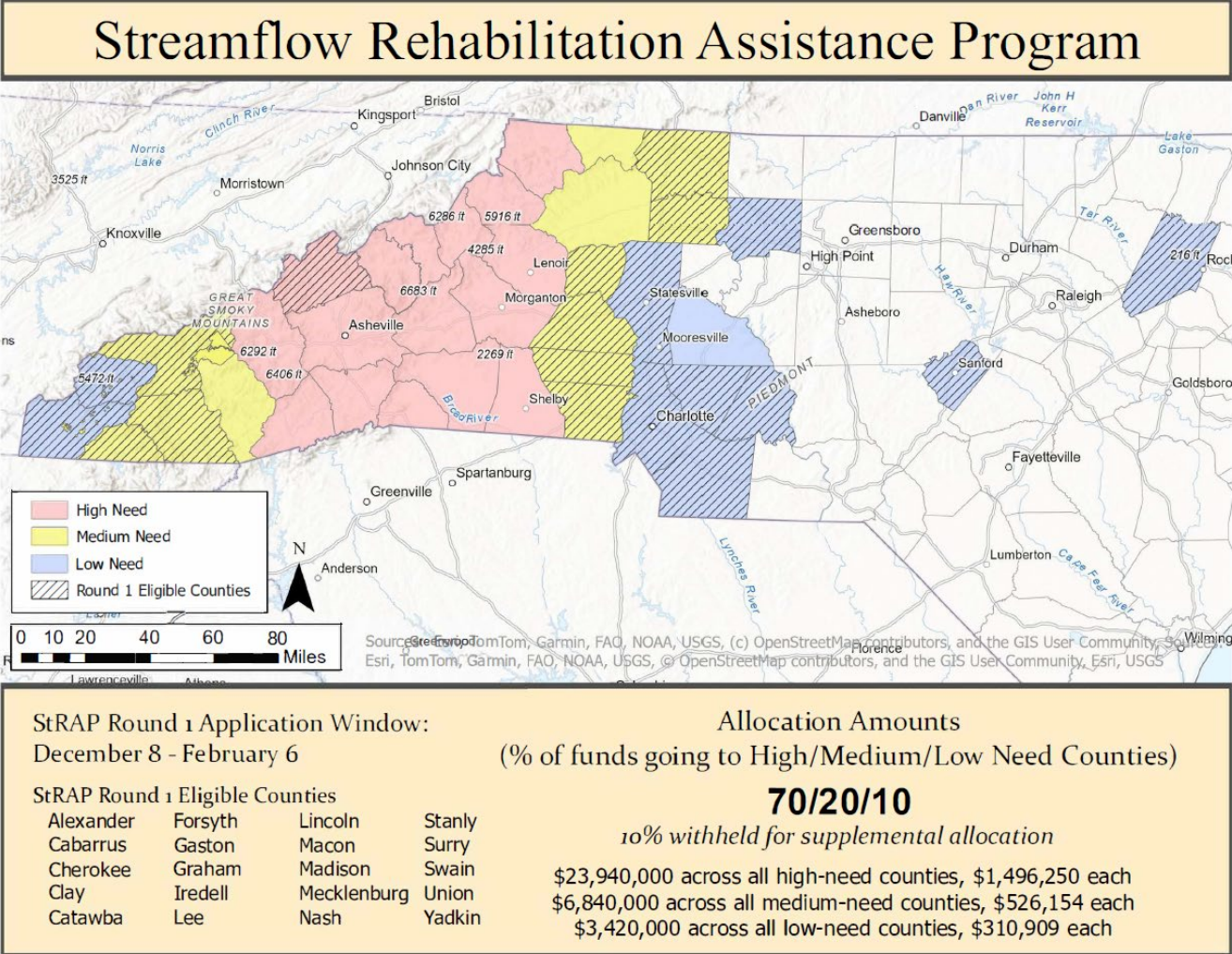


Streamflow Rehabilitation Assistance Program (StRAP)

Applications Open for Round 1 Eligible Counties

Funding to repair stream damage caused by Hurricane Helene. StRAP has \$38M available for grants over multiple rounds (by eligible county groupings). Soil & Water Conservation Districts, political subdivisions (city/county govt., water/sewer district, sanitary district, etc.), and nonprofit organizations are eligible to apply.

Deadline for Round 1 counties: 5pm, February 6, 2026 (additional application windows will be announced)



For more information: [Streamflow Rehabilitation Assistance Program](#)

Grant Funding to Support Recycling and Waste Reduction in WNC

Supports WNC communities in rebuilding and strengthening waste reduction and recycling systems following Hurricane Helene. The program provides up to \$25M in grants over multiple phases.

Eligibility: Local governments may apply for up to \$5M per project, with no local match. Eligible projects may include but aren't limited to:

- Construction or improvement of recycling or composting facilities;
- Development of regional collection (hub-and-spoke) systems;
- Upgrades to convenience centers or household hazardous waste programs;
- Purchase of recycling trucks, containers, or carts;
- Related feasibility studies or education and outreach

Deadline: January 30, 2026



For more information: [Helene Recovery Recycling Infrastructure Grant Program](#)

Free Grant-Writing Assistance Available



The NC Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) launched the Western NC Recovery Grants Program to help communities affected by Hurricane Helene rebuild and secure long-term recovery funding.

The program provides free grant-writing and technical assistance to towns, counties, councils of government, and eligible nonprofits across the 39 federally declared disaster counties in western North Carolina and the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians.

The program will remain open throughout the year, and there is no formal deadline to apply for assistance.



For more information: [Western NC Recovery Grants Program](#)

New Parks and Recreation Grants Available Through Helene Recovery Fund

- The Helene Recovery Fund provided through the Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF) offers dollar-for-dollar matching grants to local governments for the acquisition and/or development of park and recreational projects to serve the general public.
- Projects must be on a single site.
- No maximum award amount is specified.
- **Submit applications by 5 PM on January 30, 2026.**



For more information: ncparks.gov/about-us/grants/partf-helene-recovery-fund

Applications Open for NC Small Business Infrastructure Grants

Part of \$55M appropriation from the NC General Assembly to assist small businesses by expediting infrastructure repairs impacting the operation and patronage of small businesses in the affected area.

Nearly \$32 million remaining; max award per project: \$1 million.

Eligibility: Local governments impacted by Hurricane Helene and designated under a major disaster declaration from Helene. Special consideration given to local governments in Tier 1 and Tier 2 Counties.

Timeline: Applications accepted on a rolling basis; awards announced:

- June 30, 2025 – *\$7.3m announced*
November 12, 2025 – \$13.8m announced
- February 28, 2026 (anticipated)
- June 30, 2026 (anticipated)



For more information: commerce.nc.gov/SmBIZ

2026 Economic Development Tier Rankings Released

Annual assignment of each county by the NC Department of Commerce to a designation of Tier One (most distressed), Tier Two, or Tier Three (least distressed).

Of the eighteen counties statewide that will change tiers in 2026, eight are in the Helene region:

County	2025 Tier	2026 Tier	Change
Buncombe	Tier 3	Tier 2	More Distressed
Burke	Tier 2	Tier 1	More Distressed
Haywood	Tier 3	Tier 2	More Distressed
Henderson	Tier 3	Tier 2	More Distressed
Macon	Tier 2	Tier 3	Less Distressed
Madison	Tier 2	Tier 1	More Distressed
Surry	Tier 1	Tier 2	Less Distressed
Yancey	Tier 2	Tier 1	More Distressed

In addition to being used as a broad indicator of a county's economic status, the system is used as scoring criteria for various state grant programs, including determining eligibility and determining the amount of local grant match.



Select Federal Program Updates

EDA Disaster Supplemental Grant Program - \$1.45B in Economic Recovery Funds

Funds open to all 2023 & 2024 federally-declared disaster zones

First come, first served – EDA encourages applicants to work with their local Economic Development representatives to submit competitive projects ASAP

80% EDA funded / 20% cost share from applicant

Eligible Entities include units of government, economic development districts, institutions of higher education, and nonprofits working with local government

GROW NC seeking to increase the # of proposals from NC

- Working directly with communities to develop projects and encourage timely applications
- Additional \$6M in State Helene aid for local government capacity to assist with EDA and other applications

Questions can be directed to: Hillary Sherman
EDA NC Economic Development Representative
828-707-2748 | hsherman@eda.gov

eda.gov/strategic-initiatives/disaster-recovery/supplemental/2025

Three Funding Pathways

- **READINESS PATH** – Capacity building and strategic planning projects that set the stage for future investment
 - Max award: \$500,000
 - No application deadline
- **IMPLEMENTATION PATH** – Standalone construction and non-construction projects that help communities recover from natural disasters and advance recovery and growth
 - Max award: \$20m
 - No application deadline
- **INDUSTRY TRANSFORMATION PATH** – Coalition-led, multi-project portfolios that transform regional economies through targeted industry development
 - Max award: \$50m
 - Application deadline: March 3, 2026

GROW NC & State Resources to Support EDA Applicants

Technical Assistance

- In partnership with the regional Councils of Governments, NC Association of County Commissioners, and NC League of Municipalities

Return on Investment (ROI) & Impact Analyses

- Partnership with NCGrowth to provide ROI and Impact Analyses for eligible applicants
- Interested applicants can submit requests through an online form
- Jan 31: next deadline to request help with these analyses

Additional EDA Information

We continue to encourage applicants to get applications in as soon as possible.

- No deadline for Pathways 1 & 2 but funds are first come, first served
- An EDA representative is meeting with local communities to offer assistance
- GROW NC is ready to help where we can – please let us know where we can be helpful

EDA Point of Contact:

Hillary Sherman, EDA NC Economic Development
Representative

828-707-2748 | hsherman@eda.gov

GROW NC Point of Contact:

Desiree Kennedy, Program Officer
919-819-7523 | desiree.kennedy@nc.gov

Support WNC Small Businesses for the Holidays

Please support small businesses in western North Carolina as you do your holiday shopping this month.

The holidays offer special opportunities to buy from [Christmas tree farms](#), artisans, [hospitality businesses](#), and all the unique small businesses vital to the regional economy.





Wrap Up and Next Steps

Matt Calabria, GROW NC

Next meeting: Friday, January 9, 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. at
Isothermal Community College - Spindale



Stay Connected

GROW NC is sharing recovery news, resources, progress metrics, and more.



STAY CONNECTED



wncrecovery.nc.gov



wncrecovery@nc.gov



bit.ly/GROW-NC-news



[@wncrecovery](https://twitter.com/wncrecovery)