Governor's Advisory Committee on Western North Carolina Recovery

July 17, 2026
10:00 am – 11:30 am

Today's Agenda

Call to Order, Introductory Remarks | *Senator Kevin Corbin, Co-Chair*

Welcome | *Dr. Mark Poarch, President, Caldwell Community College & Technical Institute*

Long-Term Economic Recovery Plan for WNC / *Sharon Decker, Tapestry Collaborative*

State Budget Appropriations for Helene Recovery | *Forrest Gilliam, GROW NC*

Recovery Updates / *Matt Calabria & Emily Gangi, GROW NC*

Remarks / *Governor Josh Stein*

Wrap Up & Next Steps / *Matt Calabria, GROW NC*

Adjourn

Welcome

Dr. Mark Poarch, President, Caldwell Community College & Technical Institute

Long-Term Economic Recovery Plan for WNC

Sharon Decker, Tapestry Collaborative

GOVERNOR'S RECOVERY OFFICE FOR WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA · CONCEPT AT A GLANCE

WNC Economic Recovery Plan

The Renewal Engine — a community-up engine: local priorities flow left → right into a renewed economy, and the cycle re-fires.

THE FLOW

Community → Efforts → Resources → Catalysts → Outcomes → **End State**

COMMUNITY
The foundation

- 27 FEMA-declared/ 28 WNC + EBCI
- Councils of Government
- Chambers & EDOs
- Existing local plans — honored, not overwritten

LINES OF EFFORT
8 parallel workstreams

- Infrastructure
- Natural Resources
- Economic Dev. & Entrepreneurship
- Education & Workforce Dev.
- Healthcare
- Arts & Culture, Tourism
- Housing
- Agriculture

LEVERS & RESOURCES
Blended capital

FEDERAL
EDA · CDBG-DR · ARC · FEMA · OZ 2.0

STATE
Commerce · EDPNC · ApprenticeshipNC · Good Jobs WNC

LOCAL & PRIVATE
Dogwood · chambers · Golden LEAF · private capital · WNC Strong · community fdns.

CATALYSTS
What changes the trajectory

- Life Sciences Initiative
- "Futures Factory" adv. mfg
- R-1 university designation
- Disaster Opportunity Zones (17 HUD)
- Passenger rail; regional air
- Craft-economy amplification
- Small biz bridge financing

OUTCOMES
Measurable results

- Jobs retained & created
- Businesses reopened
- Housing delivered
- Visitor spending ↑
- Private $ leveraged
- Credentials & talent retained
- Infrastructure restored

END STATE
The defined goal

- Diversified, self-sustaining economy
- Stronger, flexible & upgradeable
- Year-5 & Year-10 conditions met
- Broad prosperity — every county benefits

FEEDBACK LOOP Outcomes feed the CEDS evaluation framework, which re-informs community priorities — so the plan continuously re-aligns, learns, and upgrades.

RENEWAL SPINE

LTRGs → COADs. Long-Term Recovery Groups mature into standing Community Organizations Active in Disaster — a permanent readiness capability that re-activates when the next shock strikes.

PHASING — A DEFINED ARC TO SELF-SUSTAINING GROWTH

STABILIZE | **RESTORE** | **GROW & RENEWAL**

Apr 2025 CDBG-DR plan · **Jun 2025** Chimney Rock reopens · **Aug 2026** Corridor K · **Jan 2027** OZ 2.0 designations

EBCI Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians · COG Council of Governments · CEDS Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy · OZ 2.0 Opportunity Zone 2.0 (30% rural step-up)

Source: NC OSBM, NC Commerce, U.S. EDA, MADE X MTNS

State Budget Appropriations for Helene Recovery

Forrest Gilliam, GROW NC

Additional $700M in state funds for Helene recovery

$452 MILLION Unlocking Federal Funds

- $450M for state matching funds to unlock federal disaster recovery resources
- $2M to strengthen emergency management systems and disaster response capabilities

$65.6 MILLION Protecting Against Future Disasters

- $30 million to repair and replace private roads and bridges
- $20 million for dam safety grants
- $7 million for wildfire mitigation and preparedness
- $3.5 million for funding gap for property owners caught between HMGP and FHWA requirements
- $2.6 million for Long-Term Recovery Groups (LTRGs)
- $1.5 million for flood gauges
- $1 million for landslide hazard mapping

WNC Recovery
POWERED BY GROWNC

Additional $700M in state funds for Helene recovery

$80 MILLION Rebuilding Housing

- $40M for temporary housing for eligible Renew NC families while their home is under construction
- $35M for nonprofit grants for home repair and reconstruction
- $5M for ABCCM Veterans Restoration Quarters

$87 MILLION Strengthening the Economy

- $65M for Hurricane Helene Local Government Capital Grant Program for local governments and volunteer fire departments
- $20M for additional Local Government Cashflow Loans through the Office of the State Treasurer
- $2M for tourism promotion

WNC Recovery
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Recovery Updates

Matt Calabria & Emily Gangi, GROW NC

Focus Areas for $75.8M in Disaster Funding to Support Child Care Infrastructure Recovery

The NC Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS) received $75.8 million in disaster supplemental funding from the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) to support child care infrastructure recovery in areas affected by Hurricane Helene and TS Debby. Of the $75.8M, $47.4 is for Helene-impacted counties, $2.5M is for Debby-impacted counties, and $25.9 is for statewide programs.

Funding supports a range of activities related to storm impacts. Planned uses of the funding:

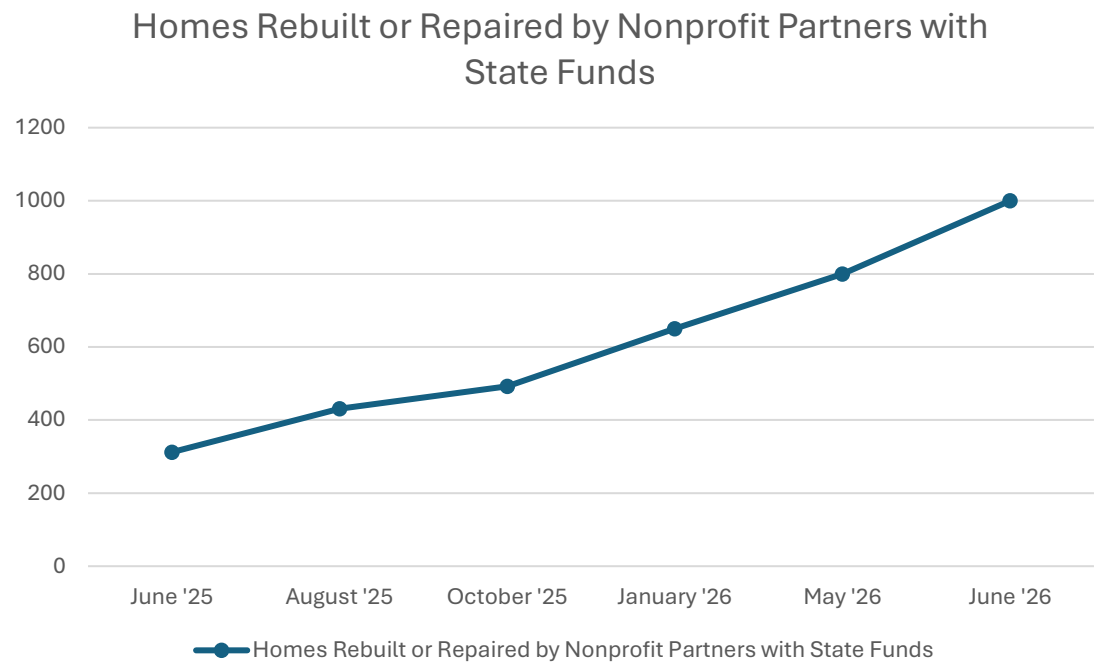
- Disaster Recovery Funding for Eligible Child Care Providers (Open for reimbursements)
- Emergency Preparedness and Response Events
- Child Care WAGE$ Expansion and Workforce Stabilization
- Child Care Supply and Construction Planning

NCDHHS will share more info and implementation details in the coming weeks.

For information about state recovery funds allocated by the NC General Assembly to the NC Partnership for Children that are available to child care providers, email: helenerecovery@smartstart.org

Over 1,000 Homes Rebuilt or Repaired by Volunteer Organizations using State Funds

- Over 1,000 homes have been repaired, rebuilt, or weatherized by volunteer organizations with support from state funds.
- Examples of these organizations include, but are not limited to, Baptists on Mission, Habitat for Humanity, All Hands & Hearts, Housing Assistance Corporation, Long-Term Recovery Groups (LTRGs), and many other community-based partners.
- The progress made by these partnerships demonstrates the critical role that nonprofit, volunteer, and faith-based organizations play in supporting recovery efforts and housing resilience across the region.



Renew NC Single-Family Housing Dashboard

7/16/2026 5:22:25 PM
Latest Data Refresh

Applications in Progress But Not Submitted	Total Applications Submitted	Total Active Applications	Inactive or Ineligible Applications
2,189	7,924	2,545	5,379

Application Submission Deadline

January 31, 2026

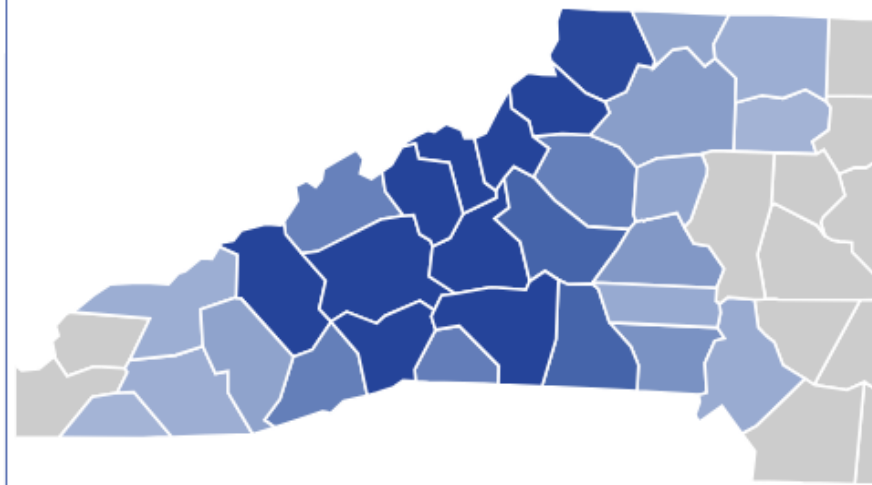
Verified Eligible Phase and Priority

Phase	Priority 1	Priority 2	Priority 3	Priority 4	Total
Phase 1	1,297	205	100	15	1,617
Phase 2	190	65	11	7	273
Phase 3	153	5	N/A	N/A	158
Phase 4	424	15	N/A	N/A	439

Hover over the information bubble for Phase and Priority definitions.

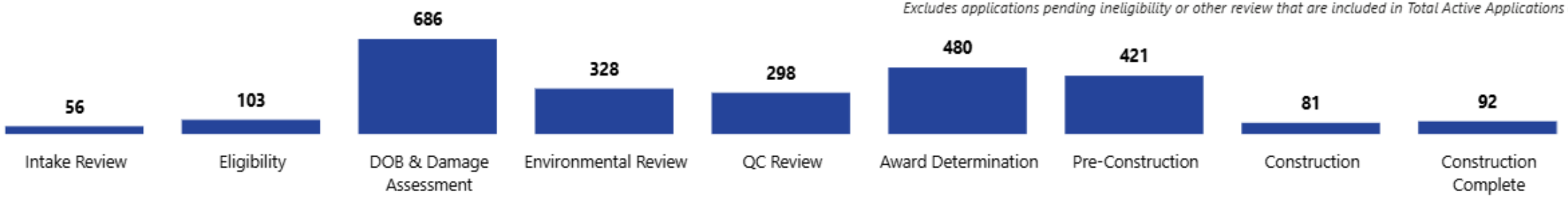
Applications will be processed beginning with Phase 1, followed by Phase 2, etc.

Applications by County



Active Applications by Workflow Status

Excludes applications pending ineligibility or other review that are included in Total Active Applications count..



Etsy Announces $10M Craft Economy Investment; Names Asheville/WNC a Craft Hub

Earlier this week, Governor Stein and the First Lady joined the Center for Craft and e-commerce platform Etsy to celebrate the launch of the Craft Catalyst Initiative, a new partnership that will invest $10M over the next three years in creative economies across the US.

As part of the initiative, Etsy named Asheville as one of five Craft Hubs. This designation will provide support to local artists, small businesses, makers, and more to continue growing the vibrant culture and economy of WNC.

In its first year, the initiative will make unrestricted grants of $100,000 to 20 nonprofit organizations across the five Craft Hubs. Four WNC organizations received a grant:

- Haywood Community College Professional Crafts Program
- North Carolina Glass Center
- Qualla Arts and Crafts Mutual
- Toe River Arts

Photo: Toe River Arts

Photo: North Carolina Glass Center

Applications Open:
Multi-Family Construction and Repair Program

- Who the Program Serves: Multi-family rental properties with five or more units
- Eligible Applicants: For-profit, non-profit developers, public housing authorities, local governments, and joint ventures between these entities. Must be located in HUD- or State-MID areas.
- Eligible Uses of Funds: New construction and substantial rehab of multi-family units.
- Award range: $500,000 to $15M per project.
  Approximately $70M available.

Prescreening is still available and strongly encouraged for interested applicants.

Deadline: November 2, 2026

For more info: bit.ly/RenewNC-Multi-Family-Housing

First EDA Disaster Supplemental Grant to NC Announced

In the first grant coming to North Carolina from the US Economic Development Administration's disaster supplemental grant program, Cleveland Community College will receive $1.7M to support the construction of a healthcare workforce training facility.

Three WNC Food Processors Receive Dept. of Ag Grants

The NC Agriculture Manufacturing and Processing Initiative included over $800,000 in grants to three WNC food processors to support value-added manufacturers and farmers across NC.

- Apple Wedge Packers (Rutherford)
- Blue Ridge Processing (McDowell)
- Windy River Meats (Wilkes)

Application Open:
Renew NC Community Infrastructure Grants

- Eligible uses of funds include acquisition, demolition, site prep, or renovation of properties; flood control and stormwater management systems; restoration of infrastructure (e.g., water/sewer, roads, bridges) or public spaces such as parks and community centers; physical upgrades and rehabilitation for public utility services.
- Eligible applicants: Local governments
- Award range: $500,000 to $15M per project.
- $55M of the total $193M allocation is available in Round 1.
- Prescreening is still available and strongly encouraged for interested applicants.
- Deadline: September 8, 2026

RenewNC
INFRASTRUCTURE

For more information: bit.ly/RenewNC-Community-Infrastructure-Program

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Division of Water Infrastructure Funding Application Trainings in WNC

The NC Department of Environmental Quality's Division of Water Infrastructure will offer two in-person Fall 2026 Funding Application Trainings in WNC:

Tuesday, Aug. 4, 2026, in Hickory, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.
Western Piedmont Council of Governments
1880 2nd Avenue, NW, Hickory, NC 28601

Wednesday, Aug. 5, 2026, in Asheville, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.
Land of Sky Regional Council
339 New Leicester Hwy., Suite 140, Asheville, NC 28806

There will be a virtual training on August 10. Application materials will be available on the DWI website before training begins.

For more info and to register: https://bit.ly/DWI-trainings

Redevelopment Planning Available to Impacted Communities Cost-Free

Local governments in Helene-impacted communities can apply for a Hazardous Waste and Solid Waste Management Financial Assistance Grant to support recovery and redevelopment. Grant funds are targeted for individual project redevelopment. Eligible properties must have been in productive use at the time of the storm and now be idled or impaired as a result.

Funding can be used for environmental assessments to determine potential levels of contamination on a project site and feasibility studies to evaluate the site's redevelopment potential. The UNC School of Government's Development Finance Initiative will conduct feasibility analysis for redevelopment of qualified properties.

For information on how to submit a potential project, contact Jordan Thompson jordan.thompson@deq.nc.gov or Eric Thomas at ethomas@sog.unc.edu.

NC's Disaster Case Management Program for Helene Extended

The NC Department of Public Safety recently announced extension of the Helene Disaster Case Management (DCM) Program through January 22, 2027.

To allow case managers to prioritize ongoing case work and prepare for a responsible transition, the program will close enrollment for full case management on August 31, 2026.

DCM will continue to provide general information, resources, and referrals to Helene-related resources through the DCM Contact Center after August 31.

Call (844) 746-2326 to reach the DCM Contact Center.

For more information about the Helene DCM Program: www.ncdps.gov/helene/dcm

American Red Cross Expanded Recovery Assistance Program Ends August 31

The American Red Cross Expanded Recovery Assistance (ERA) program in North Carolina will end on August 31.

In anticipation, referrals will be accepted up to July 31, to ensure service can be provided to everyone in the queue before the program ends.

The Red Cross is grateful to donors who made this program possible and recognizes the needs of communities do not end with the ERA program.

For questions about the ERA program, contact Amy Upham, amy.upham@redcross.org.

Remarks

Governor Josh Stein

Wrap Up and Next Steps

Matt Calabria, GROW NC

Next meeting: **Friday, August 21**, 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. (virtual)

Stay Connected

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