

Rebuilding After Helene: Funded Redevelopment Planning for Impacted Communities

UNC School of Government's Development Finance Initiative (DFI) Partnership with NC DEQ

About the DEQ Grant

NC DEQ's Division of Waste Management received EPA funding over 5 years (starting October 2025) through the **Hurricane Helene Supplemental Appropriation for Hazardous Waste and Solid Waste Management Financial Assistance Grant** to support recovery and redevelopment in Helene-impacted communities.

These grant funds are targeted for individual project redevelopment. Eligible properties for these funds must have been in productive use at the time of the storm and are now idled or impaired as a result.

Funding from this grant can be used for:

- Environmental assessments to determine potential levels of contamination on a project site
- Feasibility studies to evaluate the redevelopment potential of the project site

DFI's Role Under the Grant

The **UNC-Chapel Hill School of Government's Development Finance Initiative (DFI)** will conduct feasibility analysis for redevelopment of qualified properties.

Since 2011, DFI has assisted communities with 250+ projects resulting in over \$1 billion in private investment in NC across a wide range of project types, including, historic preservation, affordable housing, mixed-use development, downtown revitalization, brownfields redevelopment, neighborhood redevelopment and disaster recovery.

How DFI Can Support Helene-Impacted Communities

DFI provides a structured, market-driven approach to evaluating the redevelopment potential of Hurricane Helene impacted project sites. Services provided as part of a redevelopment feasibility assessment, include:

- Conducting a demographic and socioeconomic assessment of the project community
- Conducting stakeholder engagement to establish a set of development priorities for the project
- Conducting market research of multiple product types to assess the demand for private development
- Performing high level site analysis to understand the opportunities and constraints associated with redevelopment and develop high level site plans and test fits of potential development programs
- Developing financial models to evaluate the project performance, including, assessing development finance tools such as federal and state tax credits and district designations
- Developing a set of recommendations/strategies associated with the redevelopment potential of the project

How to Get Started

Communities, nonprofits, or property owners can complete the [Brownfields Hurricane Helene Recovery & Resiliency Grant Intake Form](#). Submitting the form does not commit your organization to a project and is not a competitive application — it helps DEQ understand site conditions and appropriate next steps.

For more information on how to submit a potential project, contact Jordan Thompson or Eric Thomas, info below:

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