



HELENE UPDATE

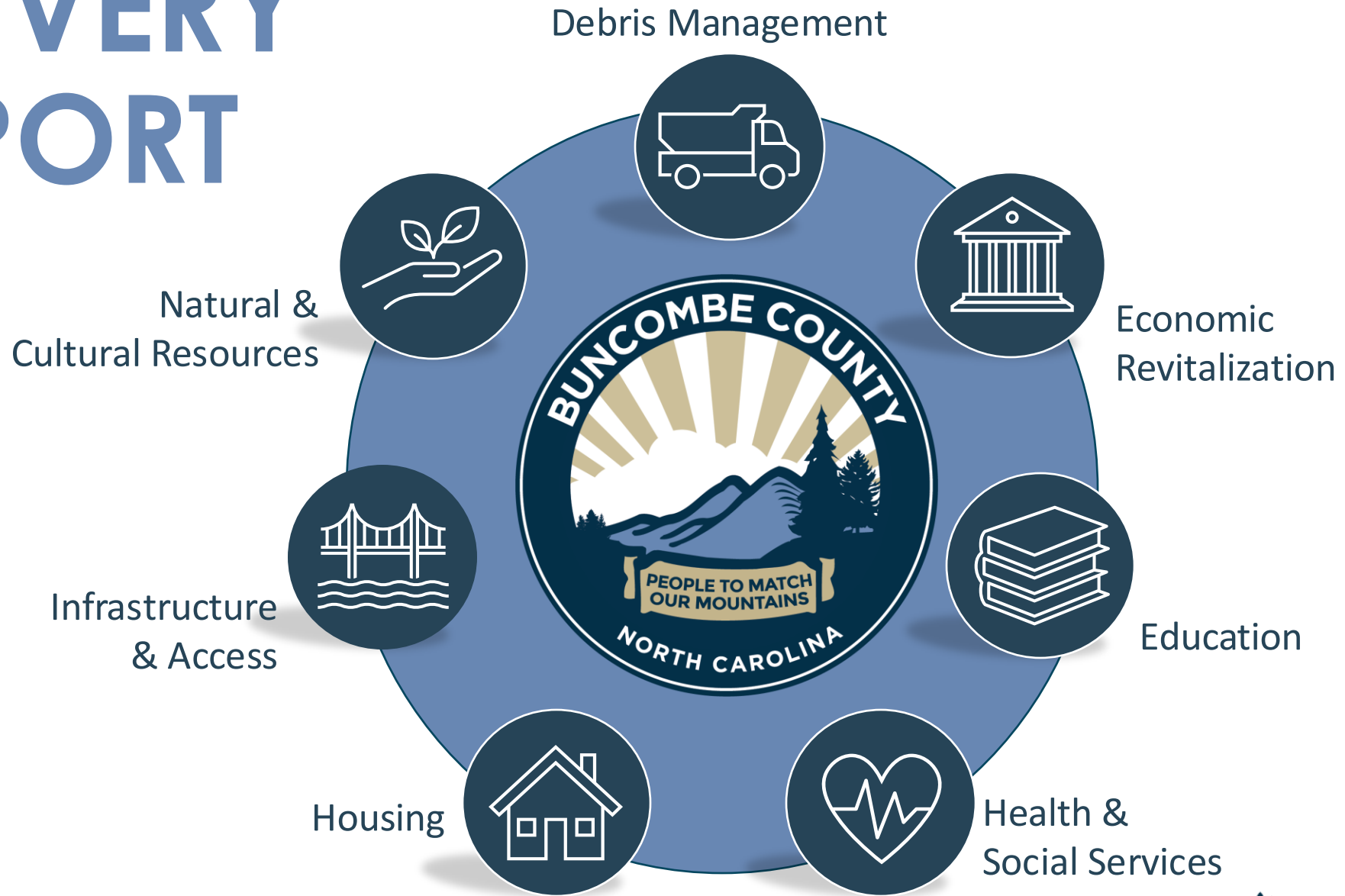
Board of Commissioners | December 17, 2024



BUNCOMBE COUNTY



RECOVERY SUPPORT



DEBRIS MANAGEMENT

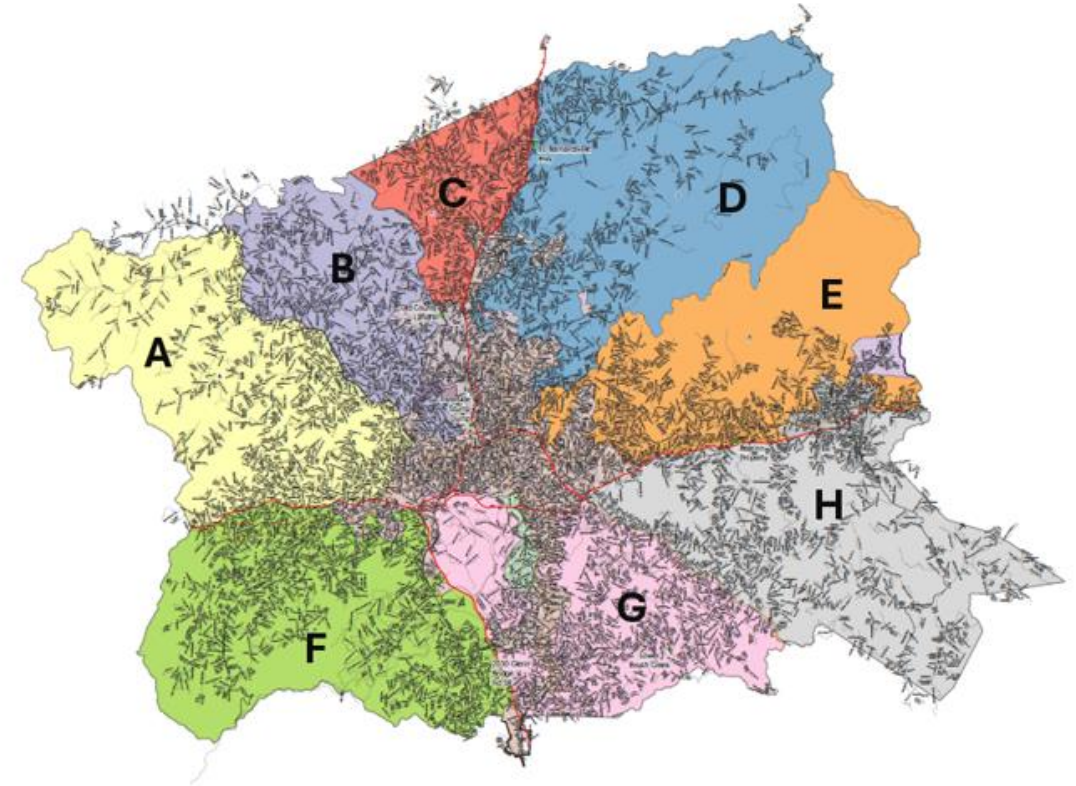


Focused on storm debris, including solutions for debris removal on public and private property and waterways, managing specialized debris types, evaluating hazardous materials considerations, coordinating disposal, and exploring sustainable re-use of debris.



DEBRIS COLLECTION

- Types of debris being collected:
 - Vegetative
 - Construction and demolition
 - Mud, silt and soil
 - Titled property: Upcoming – just release Request for Proposals to select contractor
- 521,113 cubic yards of debris and 9,740 tons of mud, silt and soil collected from public right of way

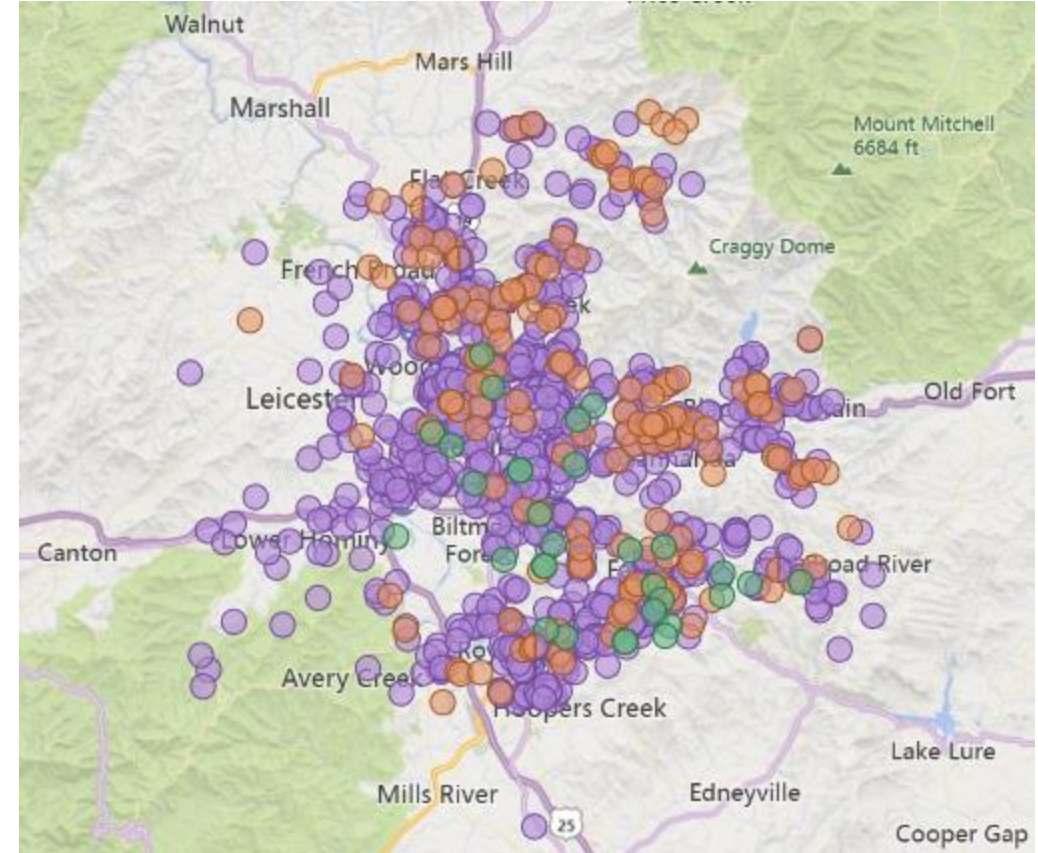


Debris Removal Zones



PRIVATE PROPERTY DEBRIS REMOVAL (PPDR)

- 1,352 PPDR applications received
 - 65% online / 35% in application centers
 - 91% debris only / 8% debris and demolition / 1% demolition only
- 165 PPDR inspections scheduled
- 99 PPDR inspections complete



ROE Status ● 01-Application Under Review ● 02-Inspection Scheduled ● 03-Inspection Completed



PPDR OUTREACH & ENGAGEMENT



Buncombe County debris removal program sees overwhelming response with 1,100 applicants

by Justin Berger | Sun, December 8th 2024 at 8:12 PM



Several weeks into a Buncombe County program to help owners remove Helene storm debris from private property, nearly 1,100 people have applied (Photo: WLOS Staff)

- One Buncombe phone line
- Radio/TV **interviews** on WWNC, WRES, and WLOS ABC 13
- Digital outdoor **billboards** (English and Spanish) in two locations
- **4** in-person application locations
- Call Center averages **60+ debris calls** per day, Spanish available
- Participation in **Stronger Together Resources Fair** and **Mexican Consulate** event



ECONOMIC REVITALIZATION



Focused on stimulating economic recovery, supporting local businesses, responding to workforce needs, and ensuring the long-term economic stability and prosperity of the area with a focus on revitalization of critical economic sectors



BUSINESS ASSISTANCE

- Asheville-Buncombe "Rebuilding Together" Business Grant
www.mountainbizworks.org/helene/fund/
 - 843 applications received totaling more than \$20M
 - Mt. BizWorks is currently reviewing and will make award decisions
- WNC Strong www.wncstrongtogether.org
- Coordination with local business partners:
 - 25 organizations participating in business response planning



HOUSEHOLD FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE



Open Applications:

- **Helene Recovery Housing Assistance Grant:** Up to three months' support for rent, mortgage, or utility bills. Apply at buncombecounty.org by 12/18 at 5 p.m.



EDUCATION



Focused on successful recovery and increased resiliency for students and educational institutions, including childcare/early childhood education as well as elementary and secondary education in varied educational settings



EDUCATION



- Current priorities:
 - Water safety and supply
 - Enrollment/attendance
 - Student Homelessness (McKinney-Vento)
 - Social-emotional support and trauma resources
- Coordinating with early childhood and K-12 stakeholders, including:
 - United for Youth
 - Public Schools
 - Charter Schools
 - Childcare organizations
 - NC State K-12 Collaborators



HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES



Focused on ensuring the health and well-being of residents with attention to the social determinants of health, including consideration of medical, behavioral, and environmental health concerns and social service recovery needs



ONGOING COMMUNITY RESPONSE



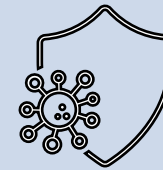
Four Community Care Station Sites with laundry, showers, bottled water in heavily impacted areas. Open from 7 am – 7 pm daily.

Total number of showers: 37,223

Total loads of laundry: 34,660



1,250 meals per day provided to survivors via Mass Care feeding efforts.



Almost 1,000 vaccines provided by the Public Health Mobile Team at the Community Care Stations.



Emergency Shelter Utilization:
Maximum: 585 people | Current state:
28 people



HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES

- Disaster Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (DSNAP) 16,950 applications received with a total amount of \$10,125,551 in awarded funds.
- Currently, 5,100 applications for individual household assistance through Buncombe County received as of 12/13/24.
- In progress: \$440,700 in Low-Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP) funds have been approved to date, supporting over 1,251 individual households.
- Crisis Intervention Program has approved 1,372 applications for a total of \$559,378



HOUSING



Focused on supporting people in moving toward housing permanence through home repair, removing barriers to temporary housing units, connecting survivors to short- and long-term rental, and coordinating rental and mortgage assistance for survivor households with economic impacts



HOUSING IMPACT



Issue

Residential unit damage data still in progress; scale of impact growing



331+

Residential units destroyed



609+

Residential units with
major damage

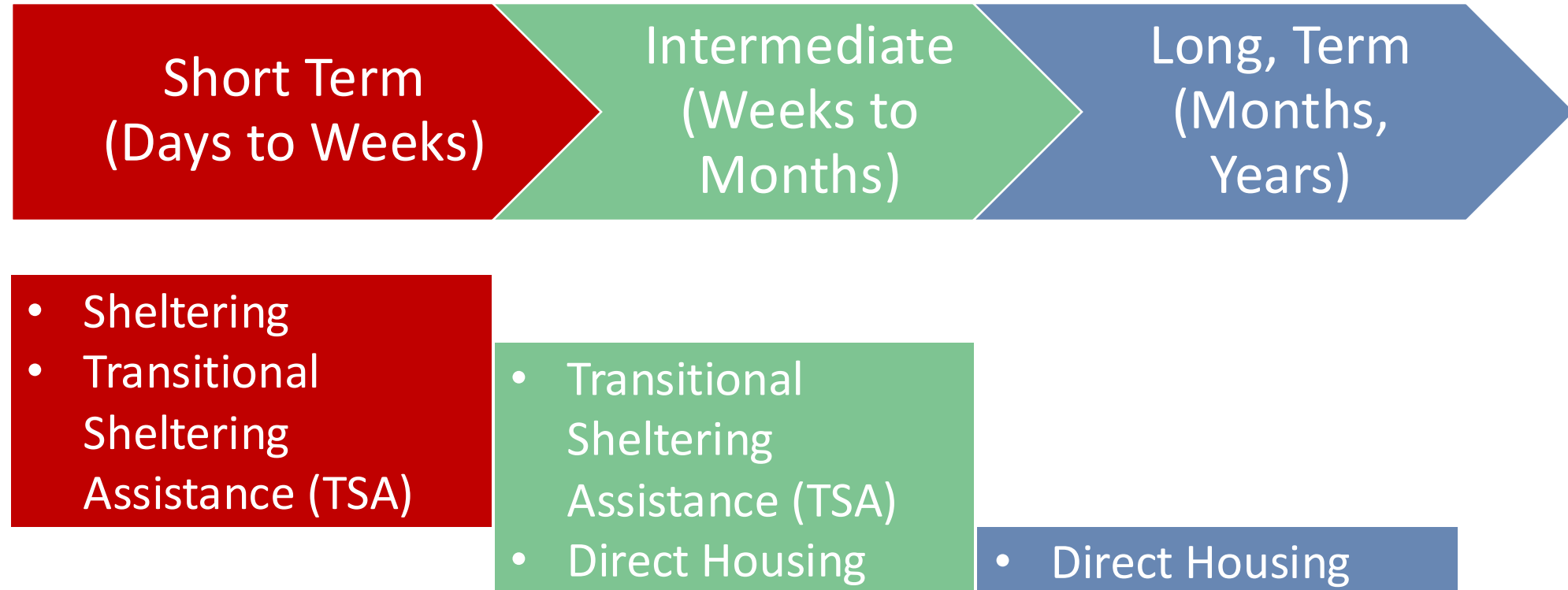


8,294+

Residential units with
Habitability repairs



FEMA HOUSING RECOVERY



FEMA HOUSING ASSISTANCE TO DATE

FEMA Transitional Sheltering Assistance (TSA) Hotels

- 1,403 Buncombe County households currently in TSA in 37 hotels
- Blanket extension of TSA eligibility through January 11, 2025
- Eligibility does not guarantee hotel room availability
- County providing outreach to assist residents in TSA to remain sheltered through new year
- County strategizing more permanent housing solutions in the long-term

FEMA Direct Housing

- 147 Households approved for Direct Housing
- Temporary Housing Units (private sites, commercial site pads, group sites) 16 installed / 37 in progress
- 171 Households approved for Rental Assistance
- Direct Leasing: Expedited contracting approved and executed to include WNC properties and where units are being inspected now and matched to household needs



REGULATION CHANGES

Local: Nov 18 Board of Commissioners approved Emergency Housing text amendments to facilitate temporary housing

- Identified eligible unit types, facilitated reduced setbacks, allowed longer term residence in travel trailers/recreational vehicles (>180 days), etc.

State: Dec 11 Office of the State Fire Marshal announces emergency rule 11 NCAC 08.0211 Temporary Housing Buildings During Hurricane Helene State of Emergency

- Rule exempts temporary housing structures from permit and inspection requirements if **property owner** completes an affidavit that affirming the temporary structure complies with the emergency rule (which prescribes maximum size, placement, fire separation distances, window/door requirements, heating requirements, minimum ceiling heights, etc.). Rule does not apply to FEMA units.



COMMUNITY NAVIGATORS



Tetra Tech Community Navigator Teams:

- Canvassing harder hit areas from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday to direct individuals to local, state, and federal assistance programs that best suit their needs.
- Visiting Community Care Stations, community events, and staff information centers.
- Assisting in efforts to support individuals and households currently in Transitional Sheltering Assistance lodging as they develop recovery plans



COMMUNITY CANVASSING

Key Findings:

- Most tents were either heated or not primary residences
- Heated tents were equipped with approved heating sources, cooking areas, and safety features such as fire and carbon monoxide detectors
- Some individuals were found living in tents or cars before the storm and declined assistance
- Assistance has been provided where necessary, with continued support available for those impacted by Hurricane Helene at **828-250-6100** (provide name & address where help is needed)



Heated Tents: Photo provided by American Red Cross



INFRASTRUCTURE & ACCESS



Focused on restoring and enhancing essential public infrastructure and accessibility to private property, including comprehensive damage assessments, coordination of repairs/restoration, and mitigation of future hazards such as floods and landslides



INFRASTRUCTURE & ACCESS

- Key data points:
 - 300+ residential properties potentially dealing with a damaged / destroyed bridge
 - 1,000+ Helene related permit apps filed across 900+ unique locations
 - Inspections conducted at 500+ unique locations
 - 2,400+ commercial and residential structures have been reappraised and assessed values adjusted for damage
 - 1,000+ land slide related locations
 - Floodplain damage assessments – recommendations forthcoming



HAZARD MITIGATION GRANT PROGRAM



- HMGP is a FEMA-funded program managed by NC Emergency Management designed to reduce or eliminate future damages and loss following a disaster.
- Eligible property owners can apply with the following available options:
 - Buy-out with deed transferred to County (or municipality) with property deed restricted and limited to green space
 - Elevation to reduce risk of future flooding



HAZARD MITIGATION GRANT PROGRAM

- State handles application intake, eligibility review, buyout management, construction management and all associated costs
- Applications will be open for a year; Next onsite applications will be week of January 6 & week of January 13 at the Asheville Mall Disaster Resource Center
- To date, there are over 200 applications for HMGP in Buncombe County, including 150+ buy-out requests
- Buncombe County has right of refusal on all properties
- First set of applications will be ready for consideration in the new year
- Staff are developing process in alignment with our Comprehensive Land Use Plan, Commissioner vision, and the Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan



NATURAL & CULTURAL RESOURCES



Focused on the restoration and sustainable management of natural and cultural resources, including capabilities to maintain, conserve, renew, and rehabilitate resources such as parks, farmland, watersheds and streambanks in alignment with environmental and historical preservation laws



NATURAL & CULTURAL RESOURCES



Activities and key areas of concern:

- Water quality and stream restoration
- Remediate and recover from silt, mud, hazard containment
- Support outdoor recreation
- Support community facilities, historic places and art community

Impact and progress data:

- 300 sites potentially eligible Emergency Watershed Protection Program
- 7 out of 15 County parks open to public
- 11 out of 13 County libraries open to the public
- 250 creator spaces/artist studios lost in the River Arts District



EMERGENCY WATERSHED PROTECTION (EWP)

- Buncombe County residents with damage or severe erosion from Helene causing a threat to infrastructure could be eligible for the USDA EWP Program
- EWP Assists with:
 - Debris-clogged waterways
 - Unstable streambanks
 - Severe erosion jeopardizing public infrastructure
 - Wind-borne debris removal
 - Steep slopes that have lost ground cover and are endangered of sliding



FEMA ASSISTANCE

- **FEMA Disaster Assistance:**
www.disasterassistance.gov
- **FEMA Fixed Disaster Recovery Center (DRC)**
 - Asheville Mall (Former Gap) – 3 South Tunnel Road
 - 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. weekdays, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturdays
- **FEMA Mobile Disaster Recovery Center (MDRC)**
 - Fairview Public Library
 - 8 a.m.-6 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 18 to Friday, Dec. 20
 - Weaverville Town Hall
 - 9 a.m.-2 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 21
 - 8 a.m. -6 p.m. Monday, Dec. 23
 - 8 a.m. -noon Tuesday, Dec. 24
- **The deadline for households to apply for FEMA assistance is January 7, 2025**



QUESTIONS?

