

FY2025 Buncombe County Strategic Partnership Grant Report

Organization Name:	RiverLink
Project Name:	A Package of Parks : Advancing Restoration and Climate Resilience in Three Public Green Spaces
Reporting Quarter: (Check one)	Quarter 1 (July 1, 2024 - September 30, 2024)
	Quarter 2 (October 1, 2024 - December 31, 2024)
	Quarter 3 (January 1, 2025 - March 31, 2025)
	Quarter 4 (April 1, 2025 - June 30, 2025)

Narrative summary of grant related activities

Please provide a brief summary (no more than 1500 characters). You may attach supplemental documents if needed.

Quarter 1	<p>HURRICANE HELENE UPDATE 10/7/24: Our parks are all in decent to good condition post Hurricane Helene. KC Park and Gateway Park are both covered in sediment and have a couple of trees down, but no major damage. We are very grateful our parks held up so well through the storm, but please note that some minor resources (only a few hundred dollars worth) invested into Gateway Park and KC Park (annual rye seed, temporary signage, and mulch) were damaged/swept away/covered in mud during the historic flood event.</p> <p>Gateway Park:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hired Hazy River Earthworks, LLC to remove invasive plants from the understory, freeing trees from pressures of invasive vines. We are very satisfied with the invasive removal. Now that we can see into the parcel we better understand its topography and Equinox Environmental can create a park design that reflects and compliments this. In the process of invasive removal, Hazy River Earthworks uncovered and removed various debris, including over 40 tires, shingles, and 113,140 pounds of concrete. We will continue to manage the site before and after construction of the park, including spreading annual rye grass as a cover crop on the now exposed soil and removing invasive species (particularly vines) as needed. <p>Pearson Park:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Installed natural stone steps which greatly increase the accessibility of the park. Park goers can now easily access the current picnic table and the future charcoal grill on the upper portion of the park. RiverLink staff and volunteers also have greater access for further invasive plant removal and management. Steps complete on August 10th, 2024. - Removed invasive species including privet, english ivy, porcelain berry, and more. - Established partnership with the Botanical Gardens to install additional native plants and educational name plates to identify the native plants on site. -- Please note this planting is delayed due to Hurricane Helene.
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Quarter 2	<p>Karen Cragnolin Park: We have completely repaired KCP following Hurricane Helene. We only lost a small section of fence due to a downed tree and gained some additional sediment to the site. We repaired a section of our fencing, spread mulch, and removed debris from the park.</p> <p>Gateway Park: Similar to KCP, Gateway Park only took on some sediment, a bit of debris, and had a few small down trees. Volunteers have consolidated debris to be picked up by FEMA, we have respread annual rye as a cover crop, and the down trees have been cut up.</p> <p>Pocket Park/Pearson Park: Since this park did not sustain any damage from Helene, we were able to plant native species that were donated to us with the Asheville Botanical Gardens in December. We have planted a substantial amount of native species in the park and will continue to steward the space. In addition, we will be meeting with DeWayne Barton from Hood Huggers Internation in the coming weeks to discuss additional amenities, working with their youth program, and more.</p>
Quarter 3	

Quarter 4

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Progress toward annual goals

Only include new, unduplicated data for each quarter

Measure	Annual Goal	Actual Results (Enter Data)				Progress toward Annual Goal
		Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	
Please only include new data for the specific quarter						
% reduction of invasive species cover	75%	50%	5%			55%
# of volunteer hours committed to parks	150	58	56			114
# of public amenities identified and installed at Florida Avenue Pocket Park	2	1	0			1
						0%

Comments:

Q1: RiverLink was severely impacted by Hurricane Helene, losing most of our equipment, being temporarily displaced from our office, and having both of our vehicles flooded. Please note that this will likely impact our volunteer numbers for the remainder of the grant period. But, fortunately our parks held up very well through the storm. As our staff regroups, we will keep you all updated to the best of our ability. Thank you again for your investment into our parks.

The amenity installed at the Pocket Park is the stone steps that greatly improve access to the upper level of the park where the picnic table is located.

Q2: Minimal invasive species management was conducted at our parks between October 1st to December 31st. We did complete an herbicide treatment of Japanese Knotweed at Gateway Park -- because of this, I have increased the percent reduction of invasive species cover by 5% as this treatment is a significant step in controlling the knotweed. Volunteer events during Q2 focused on cleanup and repair post-Helene. Because of the extensive work we completed in Q1, we are in a great position to manage any invasive plants that begin to grow in the spring with volunteers. We plan to host monthly volunteer events at both Karen Cragnolin Park and Gateway Park and work with the Burton Street Community to manage our Pocket Park (now know as Pearson Park).

For our Pocket Park, we will be meeting with DeWayne Barton in mid-January to discuss additional amenities for the park as well as other partnership opportunities between RiverLink, Hood Huggers International, and the Burton Street Community.

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Use of funds to date and any budget considerations

Any budget changes of more than 10% to any line item must be approved by County staff in writing in advance.

Spending Category	Starting Budget	Total Spending (Enter Data)				Amount Remaining
		Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	
Personnel	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 6,667.00	\$ 1,111.00			\$ 2,222.00
Gateway Park Contract	\$ 12,287.00	\$ 12,287.00				\$ -
Travel	\$ 250.00	\$ 106.64	\$ 48.00			\$ 95.36
Florida Pocket Park Contract	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00				
Hire AmeriCorps Stewardship Coordinator part-time in August between AmeriCorps	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00				\$ -
Supplies and Materials	\$ 2,463.00	\$ 710.55	\$ 97.33			\$ 1,655.12
						\$ -
						\$ -
Total	\$ 28,000.00	\$ 22,771.19	\$ 1,256.33	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 3,972.48

Comments:

Q1: Because we were able to complete a majority of the work in Q1 (which required a significant amount of staff time), we are requesting two-thirds of the total \$10,000 personnel cost.

Q2: Supplies and materials went towards minor repairs at our park properties (i.e. repairing the fence at KC Park).