



HELENE UPDATE

Board of Commissioners | January 21, 2025



Topics for Today

- **Housing** – Matthew Cable
- **Debris** – Kristy Smith
- **Public Assistance** – Matt Evans
- **Communications & Public Engagement** – Stacey Wood
- **Disaster Recovery Contract** – Rachael Sawyer & Brenna Minor



Housing: Impact, Focus & Approach

- **Impact:** 10,054 damaged units including 647 with major damage & 342 destroyed
- **Focus:** Support residents moving toward housing permanence
- **Approach:** Connect survivors to:
 - Transitional Sheltering Assistance (TSA)
 - Home repair resources
 - Temporary housing solutions
 - Short-term and long-term rentals
 - Rental/mortgage assistance
 - Permanent housing solutions



Transitional Sheltering Assistance (TSA)

- Outreach to TSA guests by County Community Navigators:
 - Interactions since 12/14: **347**
 - Door hangers, under door flyers, and signs in hotels
 - Code Red messaging to provide targeted support to guests
 - Directing guests to NCEM Supported Disaster Case Management
- Buncombe County Households in FEMA TSA: **701**
- Households in TSA in Buncombe County: **556**
 - Households remaining eligible as of 1/17 with next review anticipated 1/31: **448**
 - Households noticed ineligible on 1/17 with check out by 2/8: **108**
 - County Community Navigators active in BC TSA hotels
- Households in TSA outside of Buncombe County: **145**
 - Households remaining eligible as of 1/17 with next review anticipated 1/31: **116**
 - Households noticed ineligible on 1/17 with check out 1/25: **29**



Temporary Direct Housing



- Households Approved for FEMA Temporary Direct Housing: **105**
 - Temporary Units Leased In: **27**
 - Direct Lease Leased In: **9**
 - Temporary Units In Progress: **39**
 - Solution Not Yet Determined: **30**
- County completed amendments to local zoning regulations to facilitate temporary housing solutions:
 - Temporary Use Permits Issued: **183**
(including **65** by FEMA)



Rental Assistance

- Households that have received FEMA Rental Assistance: **656**
 - County developing communication to promote platforms to potential recipients of rental assistance
- County provision of funds for rental assistance
- County support of non-profit platforms that connect survivors with rentals:
 - Housed: **34 + 2** additional in process



Additional Response Coordination

- Development of resource guides to connect survivors with: repair providers and rental, mortgage, and utility assistance
- Communication of housing resources to:
 - Community Navigators
 - Disaster Case Managers
 - Community Partners
 - Our residents/the public
- Support during shelter closures to facilitate exit strategies to housing
- County staff undertaking consideration of long-term solutions given the temporary nature of initial housing solution responses



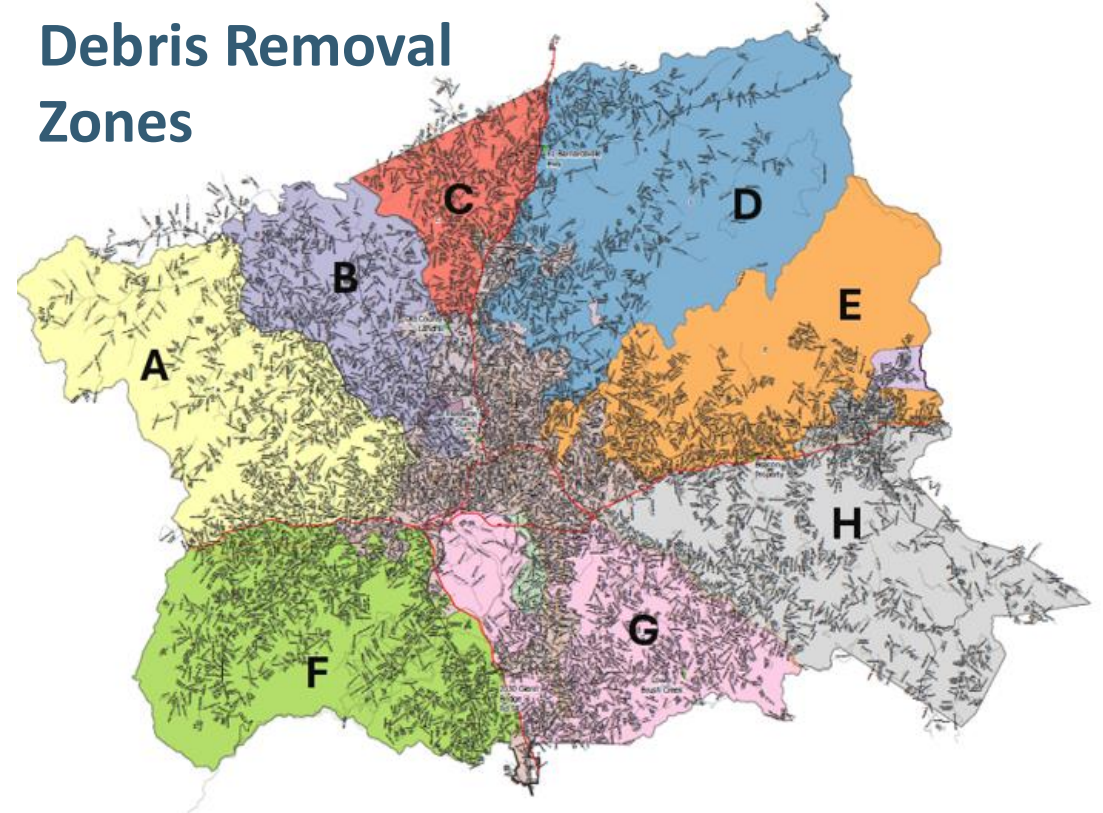
Questions?



Debris

- Right of Way Collection as of 1/16/2025
 - 752,697.9 cubic yards & 57,160.3 tons of soil
 - USACE contractor **nearing completion of first pass** in all eight collection zones.
 - 2nd pass will begin in zones A, B, C, F, G, and H
 - Zone E: 95% 1st pass completion
 - Zone D: 90% 1st pass completion

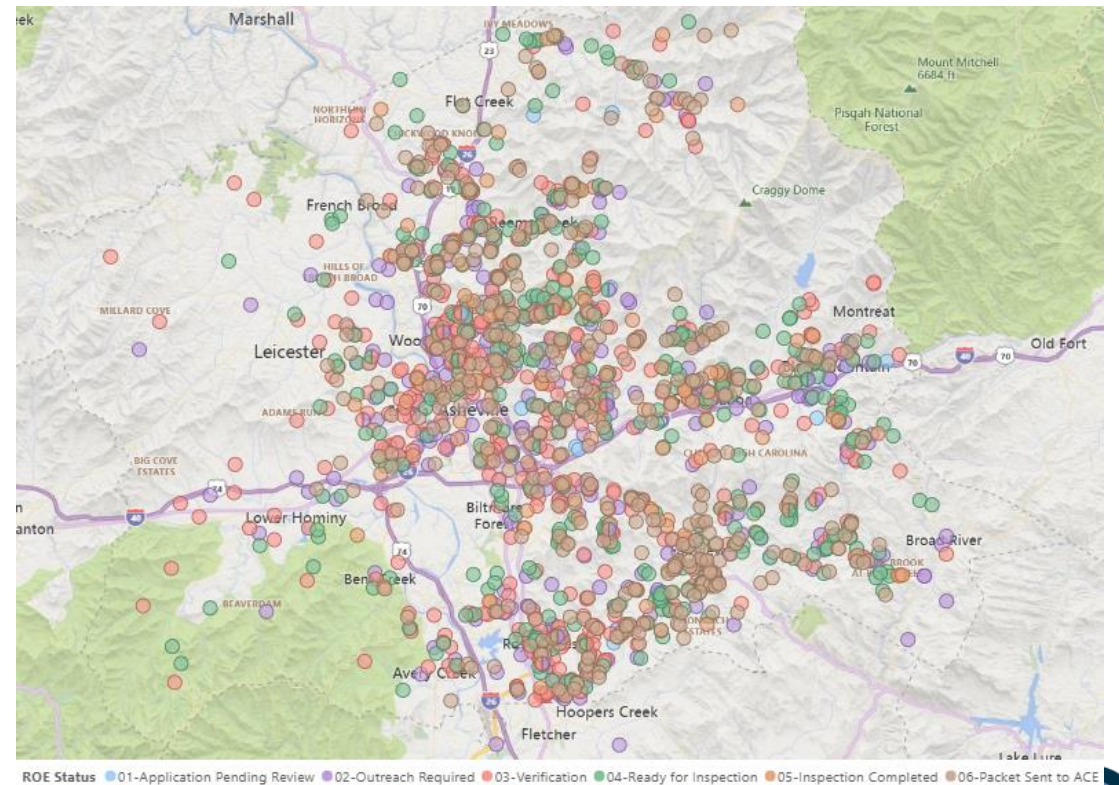
Debris Removal Zones



Private Property Debris Removal

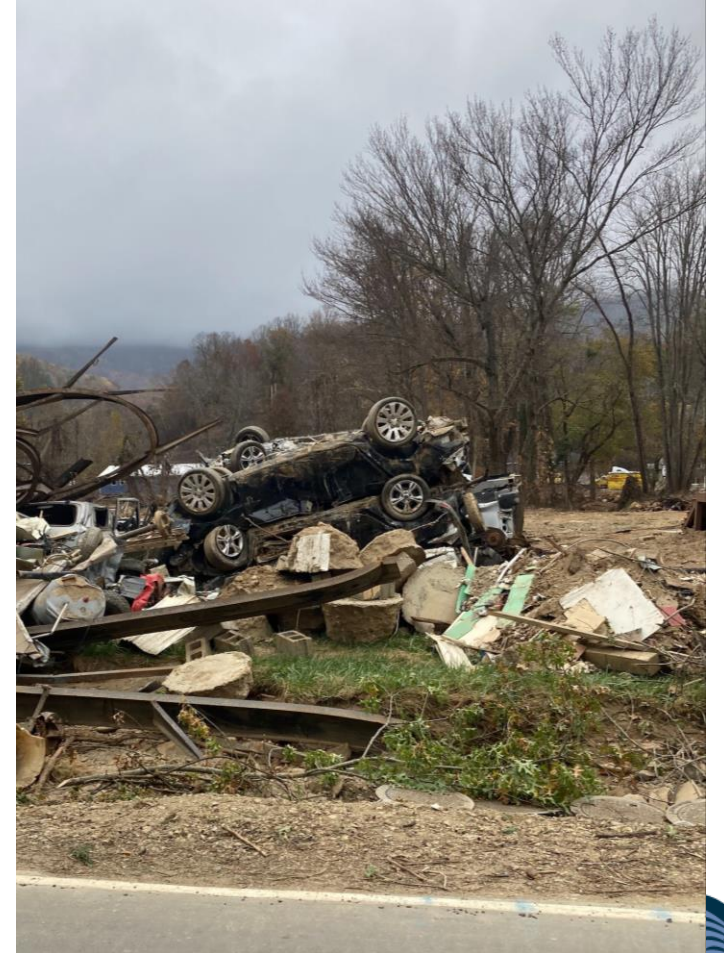
- **2,160 applications submitted** as of 1/17/2025
 - Unincorporated areas: 72.4%
 - City of Asheville: 20.2%
 - Town of Black Mountain: 3.3%
- **192 applications for demolition**, 23 are from commercial properties
- **84 commercial property applications** total
- **736 site inspections** have been completed
- **578 completed applications** have been provided to FEMA
- Expected timeline for clean up to begin: **February 2025**

Applications Submitted



Title Property & Waterway Debris

- **Title Property** expected to begin: **end of January 2025**
 - Contracting with local towing companies to remove storm damaged property such as vehicles & vessels
 - Current developing process aligned with state statute and local ordinances
- **Waterways** expected to begin: **February 2025**
 - USACE has released the RFP for removal of debris from waterways
 - Environmental and historic preservation (EHP) review will occur alongside the procurement



Questions?



FEMA Public Assistance

Purpose: To provide funding for emergency assistance to save lives and protect property, and assist with funding for permanently restoring community infrastructure affected by a federally declared incident

Emergency Work (6 Months*)

Debris Removal

Emergency Protective Measures

- Overtime and Benefits
- Equipment Usage
- Contracts/Invoices

Permanent Work (18 Months*)

Roads & Bridges

County Buildings and Equipment

Parks/Recreation Facilities



Public Assistance Projects

- Buncombe County is working with Tetra Tech to complete inventory of FEMA Public Assistance projects, including all anticipated emergency work and permanent work
 - Includes **40+ County locations with damage:**
 - 11 Roads & Bridges: Washed out; Debris; Culverts blocked
 - 15 Public Buildings with minor damages (0 destroyed or major damage)
 - 16 Parks/Recreation Facilities (2 destroyed; 6 major or significant damage; 8 limited damages)
 - We are adding in vehicles that were damaged during the storm
 - Final project list is due to FEMA **March 3, 2025** – Next big Public Assistance milestone



Owen Park

Pre-Helene:



Post-Helene:



Public Assistance Timeline

- ✓ Emergency Declaration Declared: September 28, 2024
- ✓ Formal Request For Public Assistance: October 5, 2024
- ✓ Expedited Funding Requested For Debris: October 17, 2024
- ✓ FEMA Exploratory Call: November 22, 2024
- ✓ FEMA Recovery Scoping Meeting: December 3, 2024
- Project List Due to FEMA: **March 3, 2025**
- Schedule Site Inspections For Permanent Work: Ongoing
- Submit Projects to FEMA: Ongoing



Helene Spending Dashboard



BUNCOMBE COUNTY
NORTH CAROLINA

HELENE SPEND TRACKING

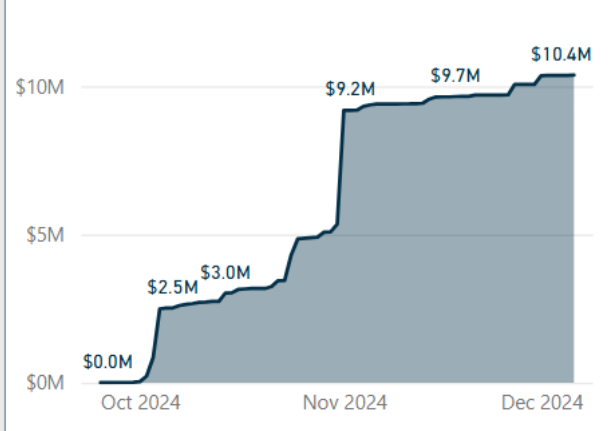
9/1/2024 to 12/6/2024

Reset

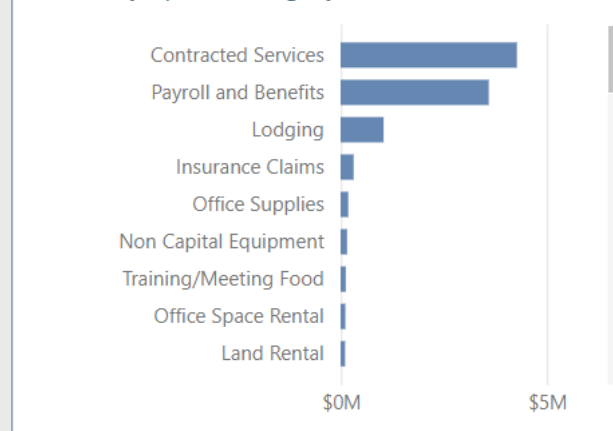
About Data

\$10,374,711
Funds Expended (Actuals)

Actuals over Time



Actuals by Spend Category



EXPLORE THE DATA

- Cost Center
- Program
- Spend Category
- Supplier

Date	Cost Center	Program	Ledger Account	Spend Category	Supplier	Amount
9/25/2024	911 Operations		6060:Office Expenses	Non Food Office Provisions	Wal-Mart Stores East, LP	\$66
9/25/2024	911 Operations		6060:Office Expenses	Office Food and Provisions	Wal-Mart Stores East, LP	\$251
9/26/2024	911 Operations		6060:Office Expenses	Office Food and Provisions	Ingles Markets, Inc.	\$30
9/26/2024	Division of Social Services	Adult Protective Services	6020:Travel and Training	Travel		\$15
9/26/2024	General Services		6010:Uniforms	Uniforms	Discount Shoes Inc	\$435

BuncombeCounty.org/Transparency



BUNCOMBE COUNTY

1/21/2025

Questions?



Communications & Public Engagement

- Briefings continue Wednesdays at 11 a.m.
- Continuing to distribute disaster relief information via our text and email platforms
- Social media following has grown
 - Facebook – 46,000
 - Instagram – 10,000
- News stories, Register of Deeds, GIS seeing highest web traffic with longest stays



Community Resource Roadshows

Barnardsville Fire Station, Barnardsville

100 Dillingham Rd. | Thurs., Feb 13, 5-7P

Owen High School, Black Mountain

99 State Rd. 2468 | Thurs., Feb 20, 5-7P

Reynolds High School, Asheville

1 Rocket Dr. | Tues., Feb 25, 5-7P

Leicester Community Center, Leicester


2979 New Leicester Hwy. | Thurs., Feb 27, 5-7P

"No wrong door" approach to connect to disaster recovery resources from private property debris removal, hazard mitigation, FEMA, and more along with various County services like libraries, parks, solid waste, and more




Recovery Engagement Site

Engage Buncombe County > Buncombe County Helene Recovery



BUNCOMBE COUNTY HELENE RECOVERY



[Translate](#)

[General](#) [Debris](#) [Economic Recovery](#) [Infrastructure](#) [Housing](#) [Natural and Cultural Resources](#) [Health and Social Services](#) [Recovery Presentations](#)

[Recovery Resources](#) [Community Engagement](#)

1.7.2025 BOC Commissioner Briefing Video and presentation.

Sign up to receive updates on Buncombe County Helene Recovery:



Questions?





Tetra Tech Task Orders

Status Update

Brenna Minor

Director, Recovery Programs

January 21, 2025



Scope Overview and Tasks

1

Community
Navigation

2

Disaster
Response EOC

3

Private Property
Debris &
Demolition

4

FEMA Public
Assistance

5

Floodplain
Management

6

Housing
Recovery

7

Unmet
Needs and
Long-term
Disaster Recovery
Funding

8

Overall
Program
Management

Accomplishments

Community Navigation Services

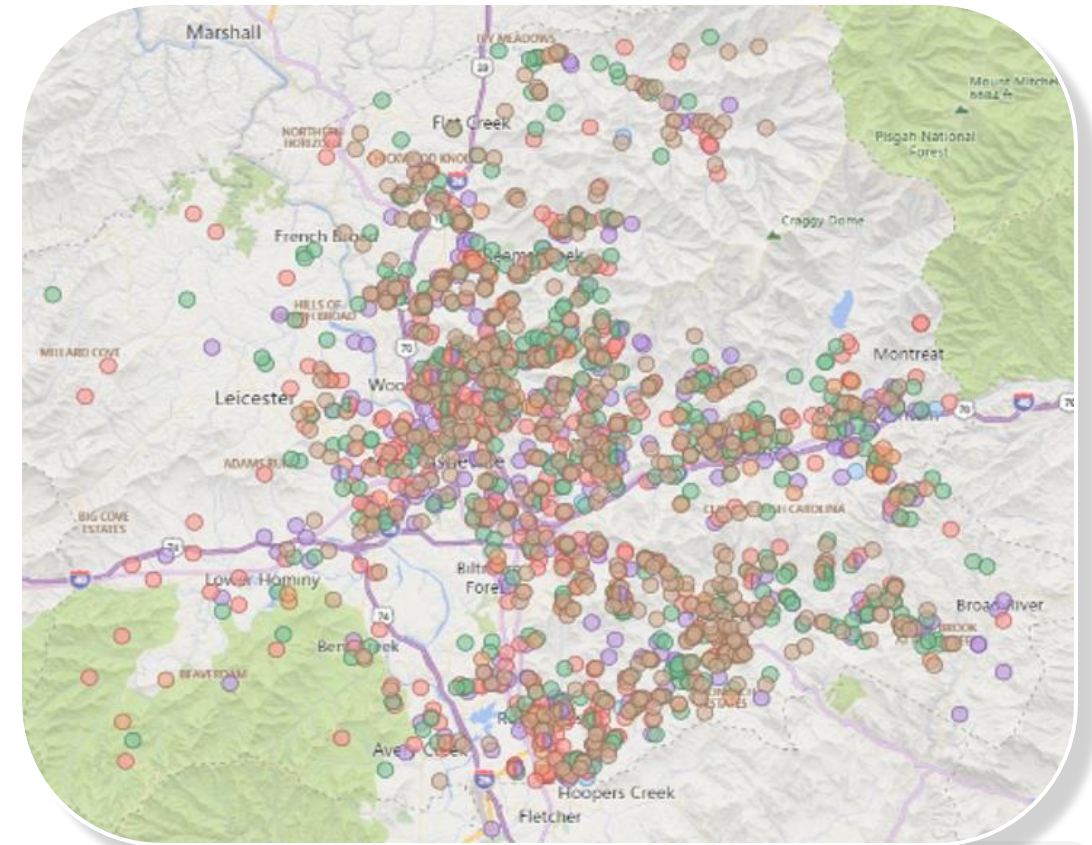
- 2,920 recorded interactions with survivors
- 851 interactions with TSA recipients to target at-risk households and mitigate unhoused disaster survivors
- Staff supported DRC operations for 31 days

Disaster Response EOC Augmentation

- EOC: Planning, documentation, financial, warehouse
- JIC: Public Information Office

PPDR Services

- 2,155 ROE applications received, 736 inspections completed, 578 applications sent to USACE
- Staffed 5 application centers, 5 days a week, and multiple in-community/mobile application teams
- 18k fliers distributed in multiple languages
- Co-located with site assessment teams to canvass neighborhoods and identify non-applicant parcels adjacent to applicant property lines
- Targeted small businesses in the hardest hit areas



● Application Review ● Inspection scheduled ● Inspection complete

Accomplishments



FEMA Public Assistance Operational Planning Support

- Damage assessments for impacted County facilities to estimate eligible FEMA PA costs
- FEMA exploratory call and recovery scoping meetings completed to initiate reimbursement process
- FEMA PA eligibility training on landslides and slope stabilization to guide County operations



Floodplain Management Services

- Inspected over 1,400 properties in the special flood hazard area for substantial damage.
- Contacted first batch of owners whose properties were substantially damaged (163)



Housing and Long-Term Recovery Support

- Provided technical assistance on the development and revision of Housing Task Force 90-Day Plan
- Provided technical assistance to Rental Assistance and Data working groups
- Developed white paper on data collection strategies for long-term recovery
- Developing dashboard for Housing Task Force to drive strategy and long-term recovery prioritization
- Held a workshop to develop CDBG-DR priorities

Goals for Closing Out First 90 Days

Continue to provide **program referrals and info** to the remaining TSA recipients and the community

Continue sending 125 applications to FEMA/USACE weekly

Co-locate PPDR/CPDR mobile app centers with site inspectors

Refine FEMA damage inventory to capture eligible damages by March 3

Combine datasets to identify and connect related data.

Begin a permanent housing workgroup in coordination with the Housing RSF

Next Steps, Next Phase, What to Expect



Transfer information collected by Community Navigators to continue addressing unmet needs



Bring in additional PPDR applications as debris removal begins



Provide support for FEMA site inspections following damage inventory submission



Continue to provide technical assistance related to housing programs

Next Task Order

- Will cover through June 30, 2025
- Some tasks from initial task order have ended or will sunset & some new tasks may be added to meet the needs our needs in this phase of recovery
- Prioritizing work with most likely sources of reimbursement
- Prioritizing work requiring specialized expertise
- Staff will bring a budget amendment in February



Questions?



End of Presentation

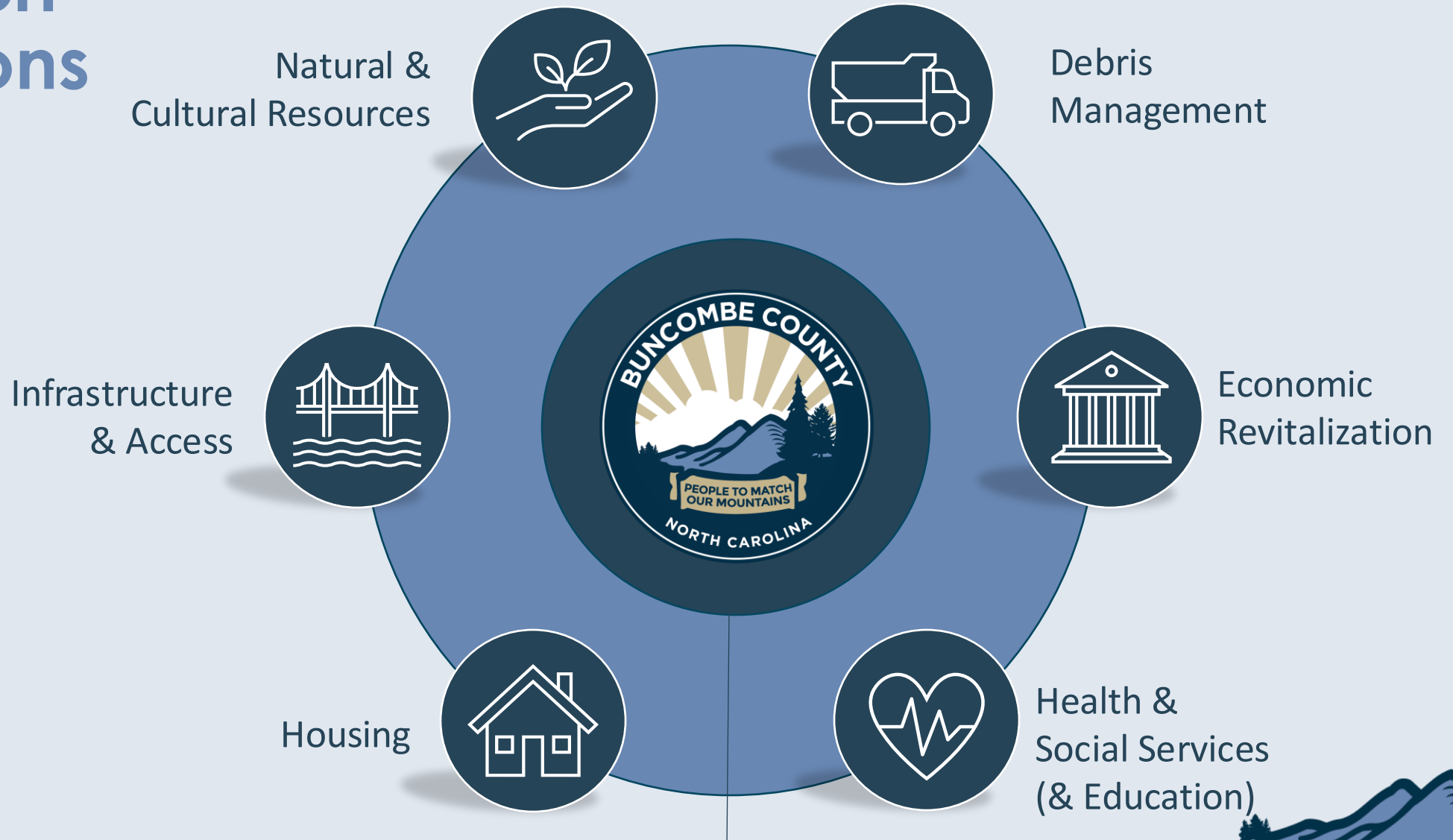


APPENDIX – DATA UPDATES

Reference Data by Recovery Support Function



Recovery Support Functions



Foundational



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 MANAGEMENT

- Cubic yards of debris collected: 752,698 (13%+ increase over last update)
- Tons of mud, silt and soil collected: 57,160 (28%+ increase over last update)
- PPDR applications received: 2,160 (11%+ increase over last update)
- PPDR applications ready for site inspection: 413 (55%+ increase over last update)
- PPDR applications delivered to FEMA: 578 (100%+ increase over last update)
- PPDR inspections complete: 736 (31%+ increase over last update)
- % of applications received on-line: 59%
- % of applications received in-person: 41%
- % of applications requesting debris removal only: 91%
- % of applications requesting debris and demolition: 8%
- % of applications requesting demolition only: 1%



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



ECONOMIC REVITALIZATION

- Asheville-Buncombe "Rebuilding Together" Business Grant www.mountainbizworks.org/helene/fund/
 - 843 applications received totaling more than \$18M (no change compared to prior update)
 - Buncombe County Only
 - 137 small businesses awarded grants, totaling \$1,567,480 (no change compared to prior update)



ECONOMIC REVITALIZATION

Unemployment Estimates: Revised October 2024 and November 2024

	Reported Oct 2024	Revised Oct 2024	Reported Nov 2024*
Buncombe County	8.8%	10.4%	7.2%
Asheville Metro**	7.4%	8.5%	6.1%

*Next Unemployment Update will be available Tuesday January 28th, 2025 and will include November 2024 Revised and December 2024

** Asheville Metro includes Buncombe, Haywood, Henderson, and Madison counties

Helene Impact on County Unemployment Rankings November 2024

County	Labor Force*	Unemployment **	Rate	Rank
Yancey	8,480	522	6.2	96
Avery	7,897	504	6.4	97
Madison	10,328	677	6.6	98
Buncombe	147,359	10,621	7.2	99
Mitchell	6,643	591	8.9	100

*Number of people working in Buncombe County

** Number of people unemployed



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, educational, and environmental health concerns and social service recovery needs



HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES

- Applications submitted for individual assistance thru Buncombe Co.: 5,827 (no change compared to last update)
- Applications approved for individual assistance: 147 (100%+ increase over prior update)
- Funds approved for individual assistance: \$556,000 (100%+ increase over prior update)
- Total loads of laundry at Community Care Sites: 43,822 (8%+ increase over prior update)
- Total number of showers at Community Care Sites: 42,048 (2%+ increase over prior update)
- Number of vaccines provided at Community Care Sites: 1,022 (vaccine administration ended 12/16)
- Mass care meals provided (avg. / day): 1,500 (25% decrease over prior update)
- Current individuals in emergency shelters: Shelter closed as of 13/31
- Low-income energy assistance program (LIEAP) approved households: 1,466 (no change compared to last update)
- LIEAP approved funds: \$440,700 (no change compared to last update)



EDUCATION

- The number of homeless (unhoused) students identified under the McKinney-Vento Act in **Asheville City Schools** is currently at 225; the number is 1298 for **Buncombe County School**
 - For **ACS**, **74** of these cases are due to Helene
 - For **BCS**, **883** cases are due to Helene
- *(As of January 8th)* All but 2 of **Buncombe County Schools** sites have resumed normal water usage after receiving lead test results
 - 2 sites still awaiting test results
- All **Asheville City Schools** continue to use bottled water and are awaiting lead testing results



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

- Residential units destroyed: 343 (1%+ increase over prior update)
- Residential units with major damage: 647 (2%+ increase over prior update)
- Residential units with habitability repairs: 9,065 (3%+ increase over prior update)
- Total residential units damaged: 10,054 (3%+ increase over prior update)
- Households currently in TSA: 699 (49%- decrease over prior update)
- Households approved for FEMA direct housing: 105 (18%- decrease from prior update)
- FEMA temporary housing units complete: 36 (38%+ increase over prior update)
- FEMA temporary housing units in-progress: 39 (13%- decrease over prior update)
- Households approved for rental assistance: 656 (151%+ increase over prior update)



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

- 130 Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) applications have been submitted to NCEM
 - 80 for acquisition & 50 for elevation
- Helene related building permit apps filed across 1,100+ unique locations (5% increase over last update)
- Helene related building inspections conducted at 800+ unique locations (11% increase over last update)
- 300+ private addresses assessed for bridge damage by Fire Marshall
- 1,000+ landslides occurred in the County with 400+ damaging roads and structures
- 1,400 assessments conducted of properties in flood plain with letters of significant damage being sent
 - County standing up free surveyor program for household appealing significant damage determination



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

- Emergency watershed protection potential applicants identified: 409 (14% increase over last update)
- 7 County parks open to the public (no change compared to prior update)
- 11 County libraries open to the public (no change compared to prior update)





FOUNDATIONAL

Focused on coordinating the resources needed for an effective recovery for and linking recovery with organizational operations –such as grants & funding, data sharing, county property damage, staffing considerations, communications, funding, facilities, fleet, human capital and technology



FOUNDATIONAL

- \$11.6M expended for Helene; \$11.35M committed
- 1 Category A project submitted in FEMA grants portal
 - Submitted: \$68,240,087.00
 - Received: \$34,120,044.00
- 28 active staff reassignments being managed by HR
- 112 internal county staffing vacancies (not including BCSO)
- Bi-directional Data sharing agreement NCEM secured the week of 1/13/25

