



HELENE UPDATE

Board of Commissioners | March 4, 2025



Topics for Today

PRESENTATIONS:

- **Recovery Resources** – Stacey Wood
- **Debris** – Kristy Smith
- **Housing & Case Management** – Jonathon Jones
- **Community Development Block Grant** – EB Odderstol

APPENDIX:

- **Data Updates by Recovery Support Function**



Buncombe Helene Recovery Information



- engage.buncombecounty.org/buncomberecovers
- Access to calendar of events
- Important feedback opportunities
- Updates on community investments / projects
- Timelines, presentations, and updates
- Translation toggle button



One Buncombe Resources for Recovery Series



- **Barnardsville Fire Department:**
Feb 13 – more than 100 attendees
- **Reynolds High School:**
Feb 25 – more than 150 attendees
- **Leicester Community Center:**
Feb 27 – 75 attendees
- **Owen High School:**
March 3 – 118 attendees



Website & Briefings



Please Report Damage
to your home or property caused by Hurricane Helene

BUNCOMBE ALERT: Burn Ban in Effect starting at 2 p.m. on Thursday, February 27



I WANT TO...

COUNTY SERVICES

TRANSPARENCY

COMP PLAN 2043

2022 BONDS



County Center

Events Calendar

CodeRED

Connect with us



BUNCOMBE COUNTY HELENE RECOVERY SITE

CONDADO DE BUNCOMBE
HELENE RECUPERA EL SITIO

engage.buncombecounty.org/buncomberecovers



SCAN HERE



Helene:
Debris
Removal



Helene:
Emergency
Info Updates



Helene:
Recovery
Assistance



Register of
Deeds



Let's
Talk



Tax
Department

News & Stories



BUNCOMBE COUNTY



3/4/2025

One Buncombe Call Center Stats: as of 2/25/25

- Private Property Debris Removal calls: 1.7K (46.22%)
- General debris questions: 1.81K (49.15%)
- Other / Not Directed to Tetra Tech



Questions?



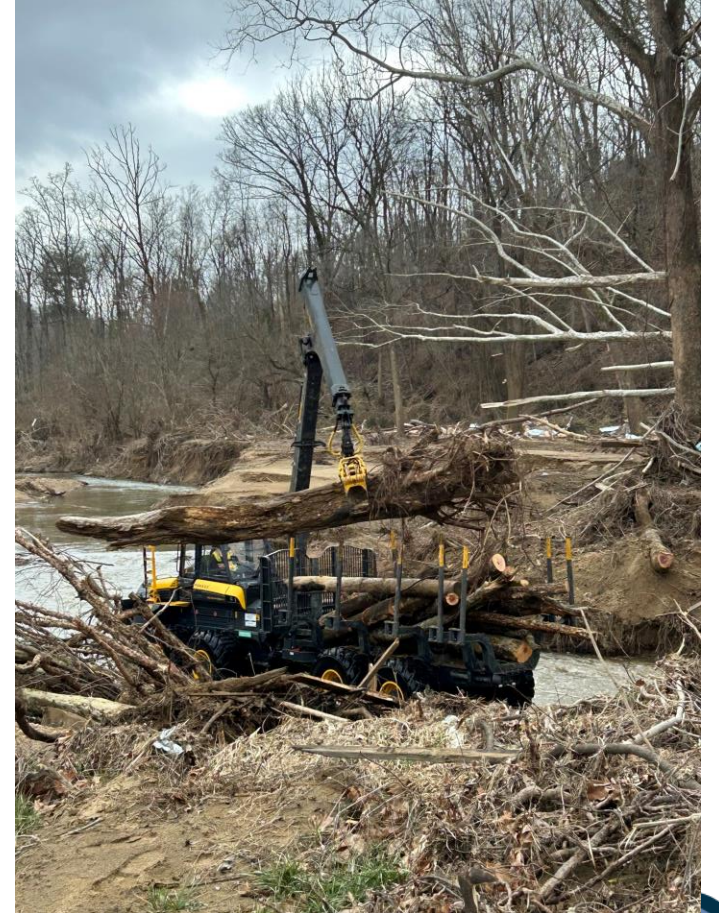
Debris Removal

Right of Way

- Over 1 million cubic yards have been collected from the right of way in City of Asheville, unincorporated Buncombe County, and Town of Black Mountain
- USACE contractor will end collection March 31
- **Residents have been asked to place debris at right of way by March 1** for pickup during March
- Residents can report right of way debris hot spots to the One Buncombe Call Center 828-250-6100 #2 for debris

Waterways

- Over 201,000 cubic yards of debris has been removed
- 25 crews working in Bee Tree Creek, Cane Creek, French Broad, North Fork Swannanoa & Swannanoa River daily
- 26 Temporary off-loading sites in use with 64 hauling units and crews, more getting added each day



Debris Removal

Private Property

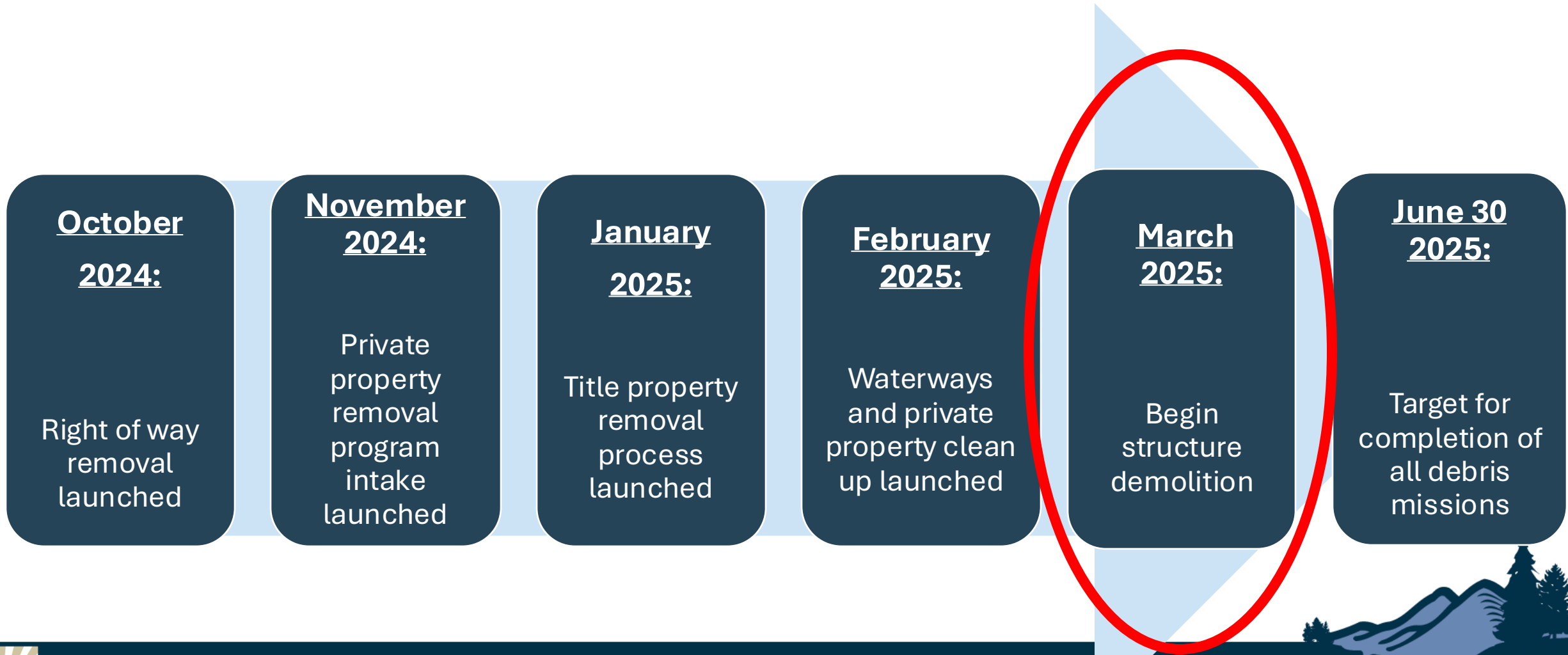
- Over 3,560 applications submitted to the program; 112 are commercial applications
- Clean up completed on 487 properties; 200 properties in progress
- Deadline to apply is April 15

Title Property

- Vehicles and other title property being removed from right of way, private property, and waterways in unincorporated areas of county; taken to storage for owners to have opportunity to claim



Debris Removal Timeline



Demolition

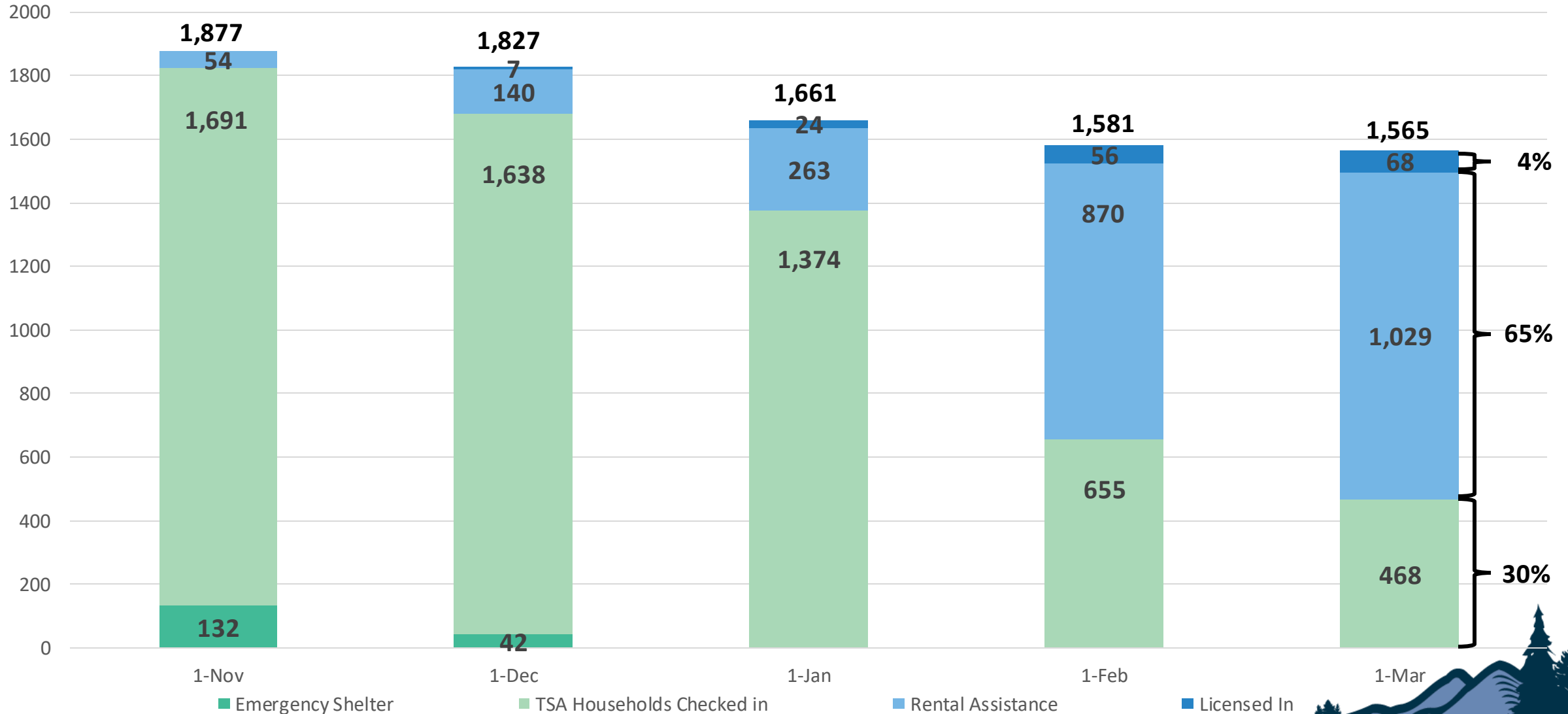
- 264 private property debris removal applications have self-reported demolition needs throughout the county, including City of Asheville and Black Mountain
- Buncombe County and each Municipality will follow their jurisdictional ordinances and procedures for demolition permitting
- Working on legal and documentation processes for properties in unincorporated Buncombe County in preparation for launch in March
- Identifying priority properties and actively working to ensure owners have applied if needed
- Application deadline to apply is April 15 2025



Questions?



Housing: Sheltering & Temporary Housing



Transitional Housing Assistance (TSA)

468 Resident Households in FEMA TSA (-45 since February 18)

373 Resident Households in TSA in Buncombe County

+ 95 Resident Households in TSA outside of Buncombe County

468

318 Resident Households eligible through the night of 3/6

+150 Resident Households eligible through the night of 3/20

468



Prior Outreach to FEMA TSA Guests

County Staff (12/14/24 – 2/24/25)

- Coordinated local outreach efforts as state/federal partners mobilized
- Conducted outreach to hotel managers to interact with TSA guests
- Issued CodeRed messaging on eligibility deadlines and resources

County Tetra Tech Community Navigators (12/14/24 – 2/24/25)

- Visited hotels and provided guests with guidance and resource information
- Interacted with 2,440 households across 23 hotels

Multi-Agency Shelter Transition Team (MASTT) (1/9/24 - 1/29/25)

- Assisted pre-disaster unhoused in locating housing

FEMA Disaster Survivor Assistance (DSA) (1/23/25 – 2/19/25)

- Canvassed hotels and met guests in-person at high occupancy hotels



Ongoing Outreach to FEMA TSA Guests

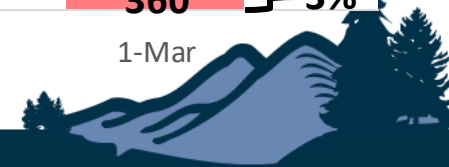
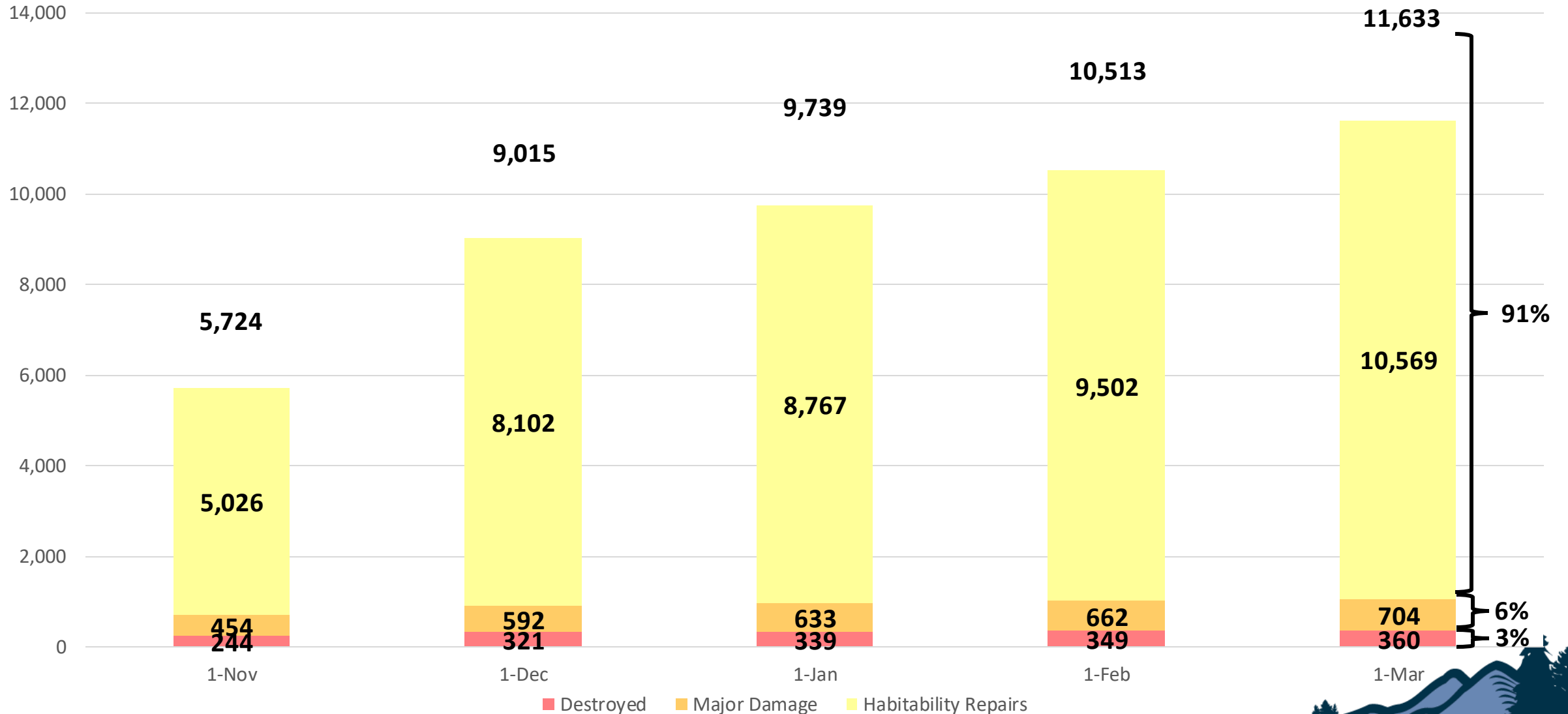
Disaster Case Management by NC

Emergency Management (12/23 – Present & Ongoing)

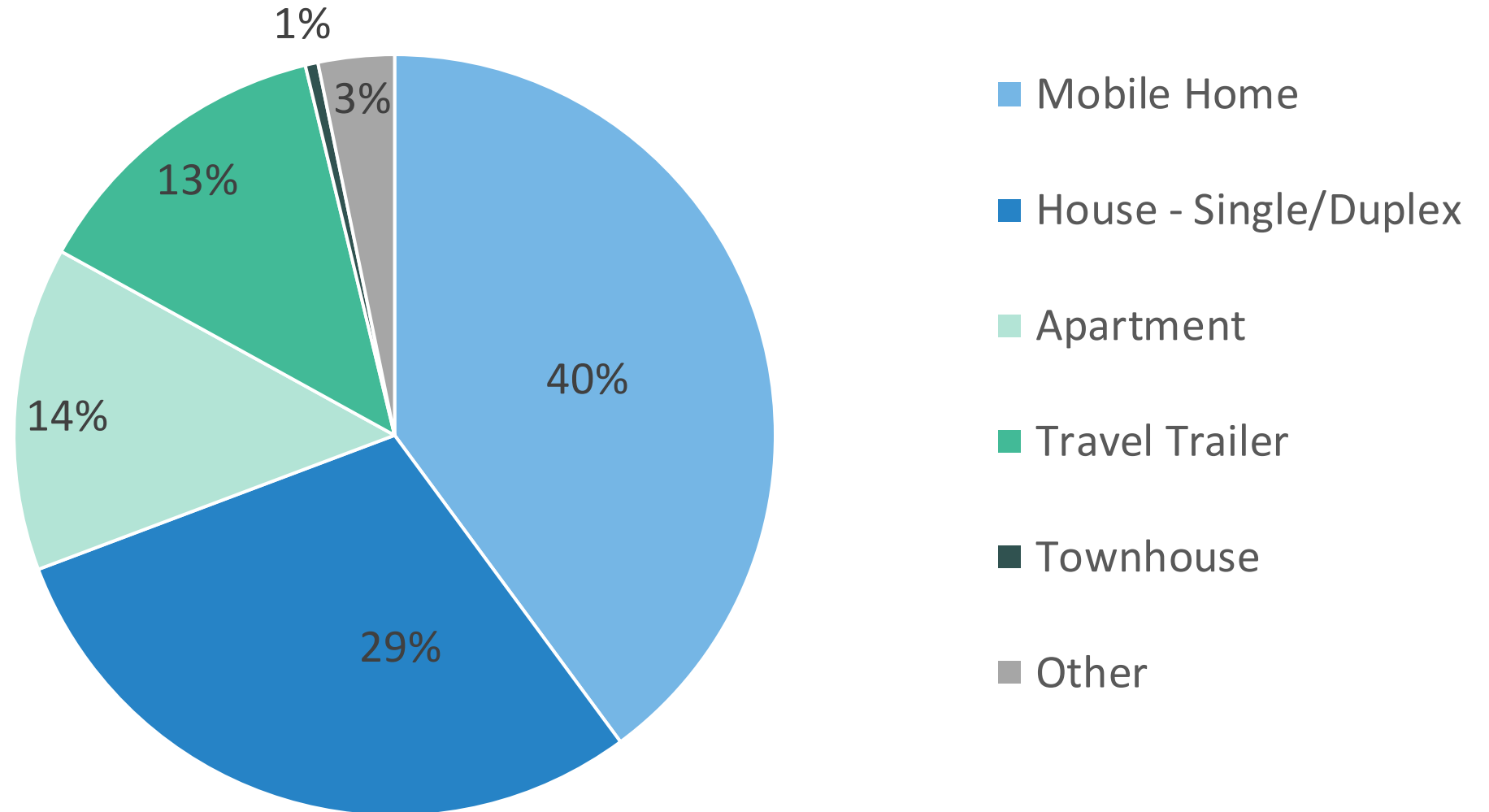
- FEMA-funded and State delivered
- Supports households with creating and following personalized recovery plans
- All persons who lived or worked in an impacted county qualify for DCM
- Buncombe serves as the host site for Case Managers
- Staffing as of February 26: 15 Case Managers working in Buncombe County
- Applications as of March 3: Buncombe County has 1,905 of the 2,682 across all impacted counties (71%)



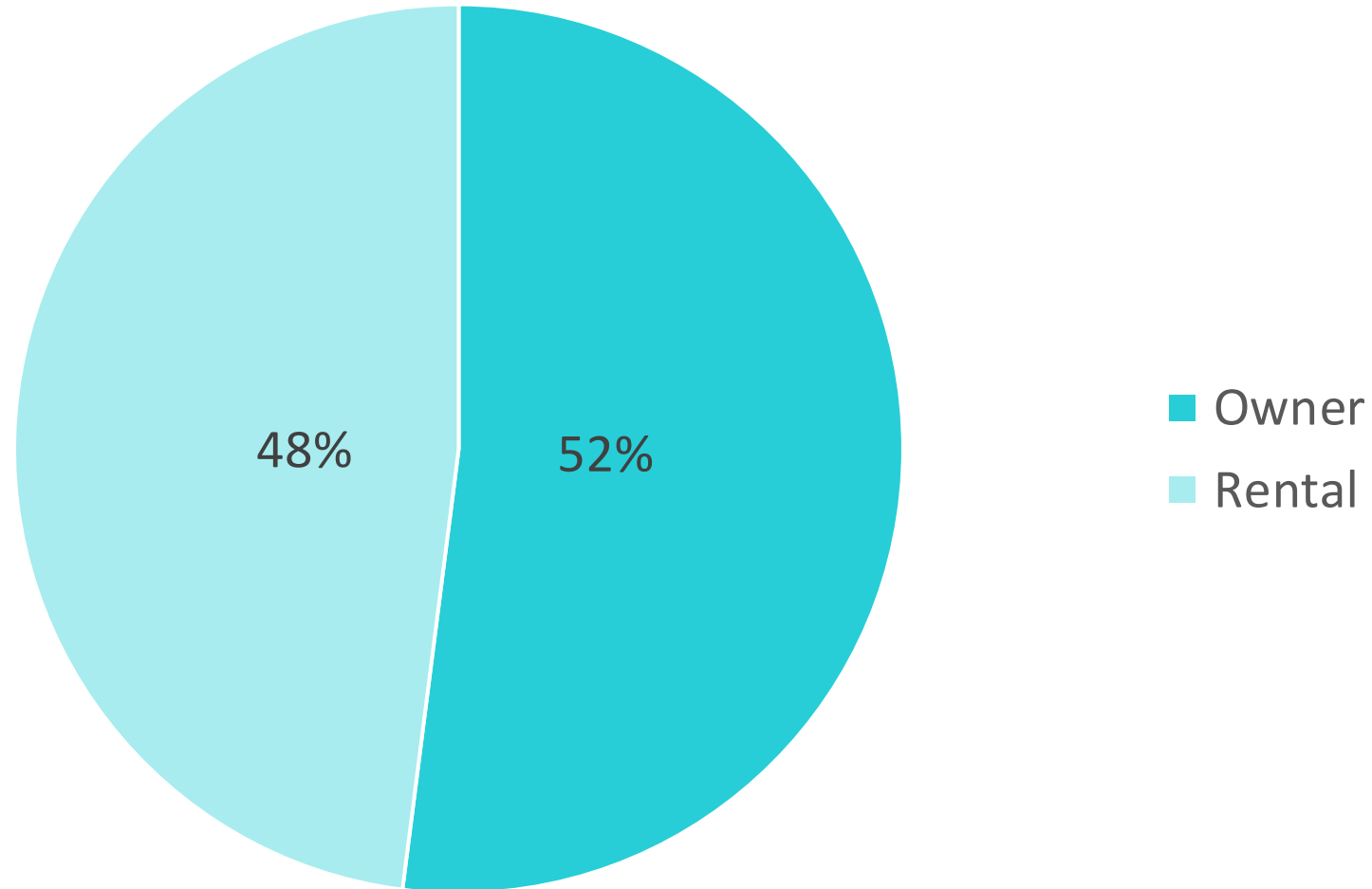
Housing: FEMA Reported Damaged Units



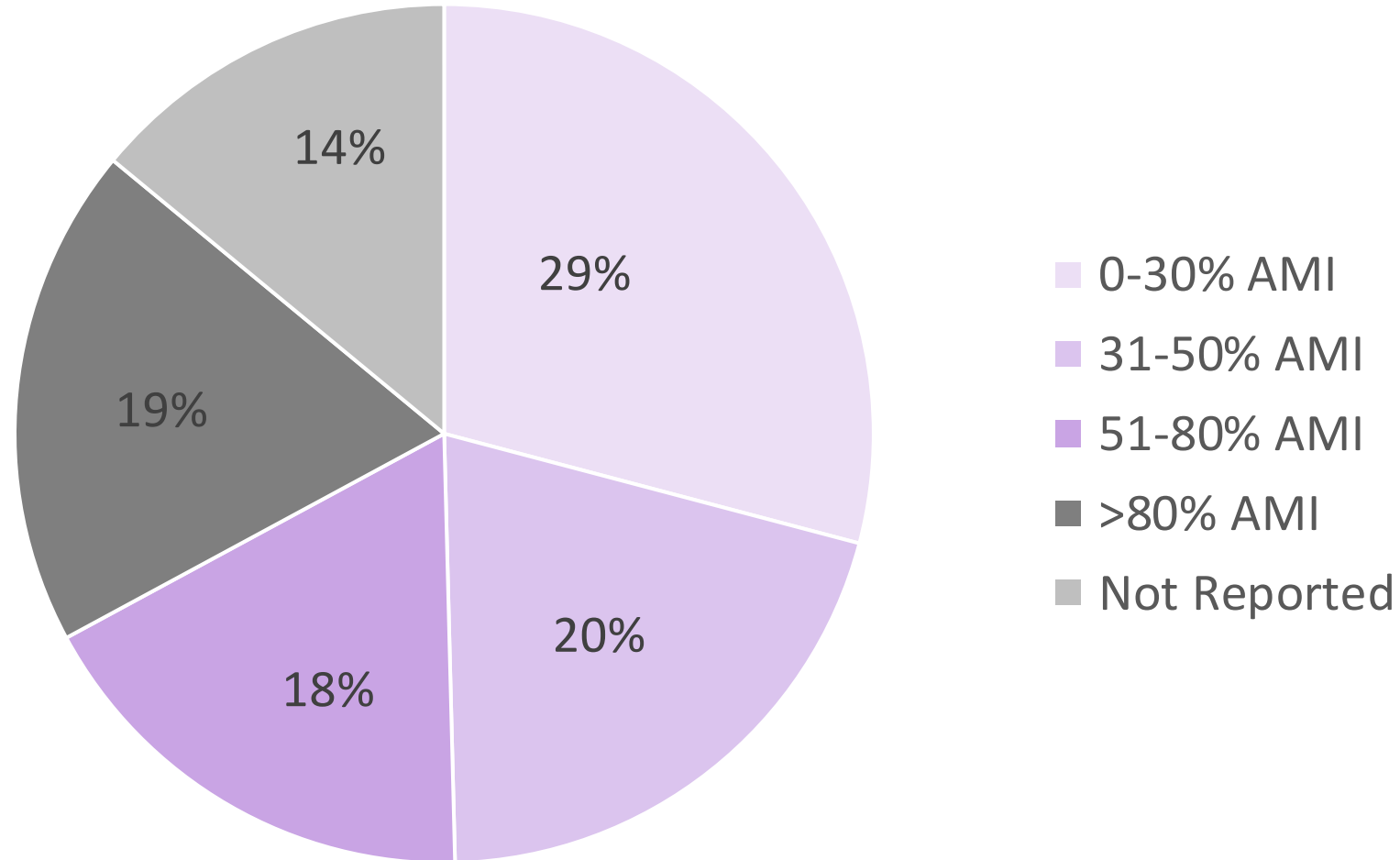
Housing Unit Type: Destroyed Units



Housing Ownership Status: Destroyed Units



Housing Self-Reported Income: Destroyed Units



Note: AMI (Area Median income) for a 4-person household is \$86,100.



Questions?



Community Development Block Grant – Disaster Recovery

- CDBG-DR: grant funds appropriated by Congress and allocated by the Department of Housing and Urban Development to rebuild disaster-impacted areas and provide crucial seed money to start the long-term recovery process
 - Not a standing fund
 - "Funding of last resort"
 - Unmet disaster-related needs
 - Low- to moderate-income areas or persons
- Eligible activities:
 - **Housing**
 - **Infrastructure**
 - **Economic Revitalization**



Buncombe County Planning for CDBG-DR Timeline

- **10/27/25**, Staff working with Tetra Tech since first task order to learn about CDBG-DR and advocate for funding in Buncombe County
- **1/15/25**, CDBG-DR Planning Session for RSF Leads
 - Alignment with existing County plans
- **1/16/25**, HUD Allocation Announcement Notice published
 - 90-Day window for Action Plan
- **1/30/25**, Permanent Housing/CDBG-DR Workgroup Kick-Off
- **2/3/25**, Long-Term Recovery Project Submission & Funding Process
- **2/18/25**, State Action Plan Published
 - RSF Leads hold several meetings to discuss plan and comment needs



CDBG-DR: State and City Action Plans

State Action Plan

- Award: \$1.4 billion
- Draft published February 18th, 2025
- 30 Day Public Comment Period
 - State will respond to every comment
- Public Hearings
 - Land of Sky hosted February 24th, 2025

Next Steps

- State and City Action Plans due to HUD April 15th, 2025

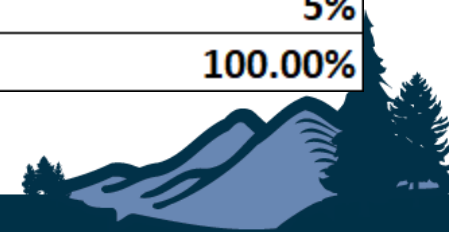
City of Asheville Action Plan

- Award: \$225 million
- Anticipated Draft to be released this week
- 30 Day Public Comment Period
 - City will respond to every comment
- Input Sessions
 - Housing, Infrastructure, and Economic Revitalization



North Carolina Draft CDBG-DR Action Plan

	Program	Program Type	Allocation	Perception of Total CDBG DR Allocation
Housing	Reconstrucion & Rehabilitation for Owner-Occupied Units	State-centric, direct service, supported by contractor	\$807,354,000	56.53%
	Workforce Housing for Ownership	Competitive application	\$53,380,000	3.74%
	Multifamily Construction Program	Competitive application	\$191,340,000	13.40%
	Total		\$1,052,074,000	73.67%
Infrastructure	Community Infrastructure Program: (1)"Stand-alone" projects and (2) Improvements to FEMA-assisted PA or HMGP funded projects	Competitive application	\$193,500,000	13.55%
	Total		\$193,500,000	13.55%
Economic Revitalization	Commercial District Revitalization	Competitive application	\$111,140,000	7.78%
	Total		\$111,140,000	7.78%
Admin (5% Cap)			\$71,406,000	5%
Total			\$1,428,120,000	100.00%



North Carolina Draft CDBG-DR Action Plan

Items of Note

- City of Asheville and State likely to coordinate on the reconstruction and rehabilitation program and the state draft action plan establishes it may expend funds in the City
- Committing 70% or more of funds to housing is common practice
- Buncombe County will be an eligible applicant for competitive grants

Action for County

- Staff are evaluating the State Plan and drafting suggestions for Buncombe County's public comment. Comments may include:
 - Identifying projects that are not included
 - Requesting clarification on competitive grant programs
- Staff will return on March 18th to the 5:00 pm meeting with a draft letter requesting board action for approval
- Comments due **March 20th**
- **Community can comment:**

<https://www.commerce.nc.gov/grants-incentives/disaster-recovery>



Questions?



End of Presentation

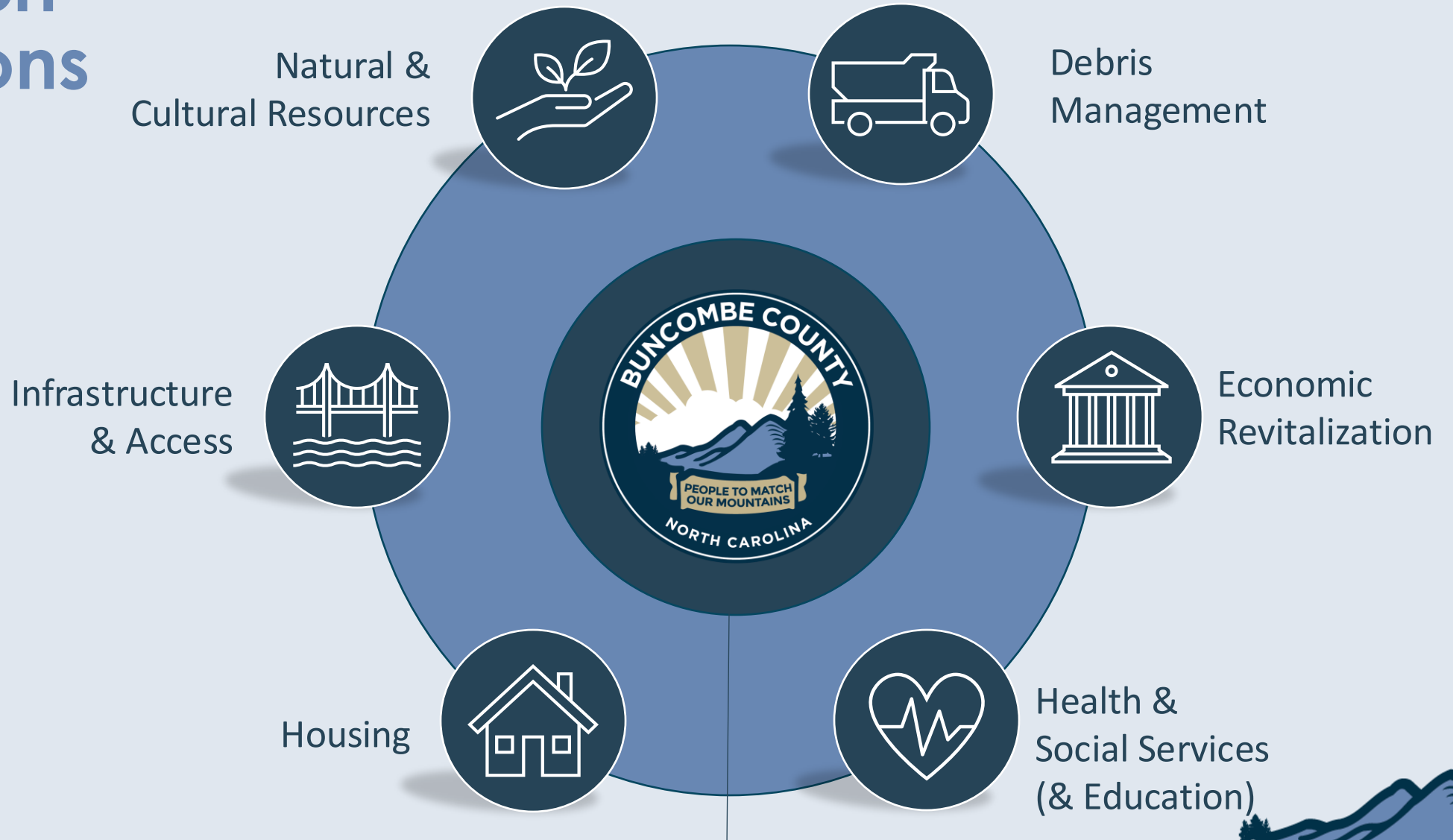


APPENDIX – DATA UPDATES

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: 1,133,928 (76% increase* over last update)
- Tons of mud, silt and soil collected: 23,039 (6% increase over last update)
- PPDR applications received: 3,547 (20% increase over last update)
- PPDR applications ready for site inspection: 774 (32% increase over last update)
- PPDR applications delivered to FEMA: 1,753 (46% increase over last update)
- PPDR inspections complete: 1,683 (18% increase over last update)
- % of applications received on-line: 55%
- % of applications received in-person: 45%
- % of applications requesting debris removal only: 98%
- % of applications requesting debris and demolition: 6%
- % of applications requesting demolition only: 1%

*3/3/25 update did not include City of Asheville data, current update does



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

Small Business Association Loans

	Home Loans	For Profit Business Loans	Nonprofit Business Loans	Total
Number of Applications	3371 (3% increase)	6,703 (3% increase)	230 (0% increase)	10,304 (3% increase)
Number of Loans Disbursed	568 (8% increase)	1808 (167% increase)	4 (100% increase)	2,380 (98% increase)
\$ Amount of Loans Disbursed	\$25,586,471.85 (12% increase)	\$117,519,775 (33% increase)	\$163,000 (159% increase)	\$143,269,247 (29% increase)



ECONOMIC REVITALIZATION

Unemployment Estimates: Revised November 2024 and December 2024 (no change compared to prior update)

	Reported Nov 2024	Revised Nov 2024	Reported Dec 2024*	Reported Feb 2025
Buncombe County	7.2%	7.4%	6.0%	Not yet reported
Asheville Metro**	6.1%	6.2%	5.1%	Not yet reported

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

Helene Impact on County Unemployment Rankings December 2024 (no change compared to prior update)

County	Labor Force*	Unemployment**	Rate	Rank
Warren	6,011	328	5.5	96
Scotland	11,021	631	5.7	97
Buncombe	145,100	8,636	6.0	98
Madison	10,251	614	6.0	99
Mitchell	6,424	467	7.3	100

*Number of people working and number of people unemployed combined

** 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.: 5,826 (no change compared to last update)
- Applications approved for individual assistance: 429 (19% increase over prior update)
- Funds approved for individual assistance: \$1,544,238 (17% increase over prior update)
- Total loads of laundry at Community Care Sites: 56,907 (6% increase over prior update)
- Total number of showers at Community Care Sites: 46,517 (2%+ increase over prior update)
- Mass care meals provided (avg. / day): 1,200 (no change since last update)
- Current individuals in emergency shelters: Shelter closed as of 13/31
- NC DHHS Disaster Energy Assistance: \$995,488 (out of \$1,509,509 total allocated)
- NC DHHS Disaster Adult Service Assistance: \$6,474 (out of \$157,618 total allocated)
- NC DHHS Disaster Child Welfare Assistance: \$61,325 (out of \$469,011 total allocated)
- NC DHHS Disaster Rental Assistance: \$0 (out of \$199,296 total allocated)



EDUCATION

- The number of homeless (unhoused) students identified under the McKinney-Vento Act:
 - Asheville City Schools – 254 (3% increase over previous update)
 - **76 of these cases are due to Helene** (3% increase over previous update)
 - Buncombe County School - 1340 (1% increase over previous update)
 - **944 of these cases are due to Helene** (0% increase over previous update)
- 100% of **Buncombe County Schools** sites have resumed normal water usage after receiving lead 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: 360 (2% increase over prior update)
- Residential units with major damage: 704 (3% increase over prior update)
- Residential units with habitability repairs: 10,569 (5% increase over prior update)
- Total residential units damaged: 11,633 (5% increase over prior update)
- Households currently in TSA: 468 (9% decrease from prior update)
- Households approved for FEMA direct housing: 89 (3% increase from prior update)
- FEMA temporary housing units complete: 68 (1% increase over prior update)
- FEMA temporary housing units in-progress: 18 (14% decrease from prior update)
- Households approved for rental assistance: 1,029 (4% 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

- 299 Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) applications have been submitted to NCEM (1% increase over last update)
 - 210 for acquisition & 69 for elevation/reconstruction & 14 for slope stabilization
- Helene related building permit apps filed across 1,345 unique locations (4% increase over last update)
- Helene related building inspections conducted at 1,031 unique locations (7% increase over last update)
- 300+ private addresses assessed for bridge damage by Fire Marshall with National Guard conducting additional assessments
- 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
- 332 Floodplain Management Substantial Damage letters sent
- 142 (of 143) Floodplain Management emergency permit holders have been contacted
- 5 (of 5) Floodplain Management new non-emergency permit applicants have been contacted
- 18 (of 143) Floodplain Management applications completed for emergency permit holders
- 6 (of 23) Floodplain Management surveys completed



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: 367 (no update compared to last update)
- 7 County parks open to the public (no update compared to prior update)
- 12 County libraries open to the public (no update 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

- \$ 14.7 M expended for Helene; \$12.7 M committed
- Category A* project submitted in FEMA grants portal
 - Submitted: \$68,240,087.00 (no change compared to prior update)
 - Received: \$34,120,044.00 (no change compared to prior update)
 - **expedited funding*
- Category C,E, & G projects submitted in FEMA grants portal
 - Submitted: \$13,887,100
 - Received: \$0
- 27 active staff reassignments being managed by HR
 - 73 total staff members working in T.S. Helene State of Emergency-related functions
- 110 internal county staffing vacancies (not including BCSO) – 5% increase over prior update
- Insurance claim for County-owned assets:
 - Claims submitted: \$1.07 M (no new information compared to prior update)
 - Claim received: \$128,643 (no new information compared to prior update)
- Recovery-related grant funding:
 - Requested: \$5.6 M (no change compared to prior update)
 - Awarded: \$2.8 M (no change compared to prior update)

