

Helene Recovery Fund for PARTF 2025-2026

Non-Recurring Funding SL 2025-26, House Bill 1012

Environmental Sustainability: To assist the N.C. Department of Natural and Cultural Resources (DNCR) in being good stewards of the environment, please print your application documentation double-sided on 30% post-consumer recycled paper.

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Helene Recovery Fund for PARTF Grant Cycle Schedule

October 1, 2025	<p style="text-align: center;">Announcement</p> <p>The N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation (DPR) announces the availability of Helene Recovery Fund matching grants to local governments.</p>
January 30, 2026	<p style="text-align: center;">Application Deadline</p> <p>Applications are due, either via paper submission or online in SharePoint by 5pm. Paper submissions should be postmarked by January 30 to be eligible for consideration.</p>
March 27, 2026	<p style="text-align: center;">Selecting Grant Recipients</p> <p>The Parks and Recreation Authority meets to select grant recipients at Lake James State Park. A streaming option will be made available as well.</p>
May 1, 2026, to April 30, 2029	<p style="text-align: center;">Anticipated Project Period for Helene Recovery Fund projects.</p>

Helene Recovery Fund

Requirements and Resources

Overview

The Disaster Recovery Act of 2025 (SL 2025-26, House Bill 1012) was ratified on June 27, 2025, allocating \$4,158,875 to the Parks and Recreation Trust Fund for eligible uses in the affected area for local governments. Per statute, the North Carolina Parks and Recreation Authority shall not impose the maximum grant size set forth in NCAC Subchapter 13K .0100 with respect to funds provided by this subdivision. The Helene Recovery Fund has been allocated to the Parks & Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF), so the grant program will be administered through the PARTF administrative code. This application includes references to PARTF throughout as well.

Applications are due, either via paper submission or online in SharePoint by 5pm. Paper submissions should be postmarked by January 30 to be eligible for consideration.

Program Summary

Eligible Applicants: North Carolina counties and incorporated municipalities are eligible for Helene Recovery through PARTF grants. Two or more local governments may apply jointly with one serving as the primary sponsor.

Public authorities, as defined by GS 159-7, are also eligible if they are authorized by N.C. general statutes to acquire land and develop recreation facilities for public use.

Per SL 2025-26, House Bill 1012, eligible counties are listed below and include counties designated before, on, or after the effective date of this act under a major disaster declaration by the President of the United States under the Stafford Act (P.L. 93-288) as a result of Hurricane Helene.

Alexander, Alleghany, Ashe, Avery, Buncombe, Burke, Cabarrus, Caldwell, Catawba, Cherokee, Clay, Cleveland, Forsyth, Gaston, Graham, Haywood, Henderson, Iredell, Jackson, Lee, Lincoln, Macon, Madison, McDowell, Mecklenburg, Mitchell, Nash, Polk, Rowan, Rutherford, Stanly, Surry, Swain, Transylvania, Union, Watauga, Wilkes, Yadkin, and Yancey.

A map of the eligible counties is also available online: https://gis.fema.gov/maps/disaster/dec_4827.png

Eligible Projects: Eligible applicants can apply to acquire land for parks and build recreational facilities for use by the public in the affected area.

Maximum Request: There is no maximum request for this grant.

Dollar-for-Dollar Match: An applicant must match the grant at least dollar-for-dollar. The appraised value of land to be donated to the applicant can be used as matching funds. The value of in-kind services, such as the applicant's force account labor or volunteer work, cannot be used as part of the match. The grantee is required to provide all matching funds within the three-year grant period.

Prioritization. Projects damaged or affected by Helene are eligible to prioritization if from counties that (i) were designated, in whole or in part, by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) as the most impacted and distressed counties from Hurricane Helene and (ii) have a population of 300,000 or fewer based upon the 2023 Certified County Population Estimates from the State Demographer. To seek this prioritization, applicants must attest that (i) the application for funds is for repair, replacement, or construction of equipment, buildings, or natural features due to damage or effects from Hurricane Helene, including capacity-building, and (ii) the amount of funds requested is the amount of unmet need above the amount paid by insurance and available federal aid.

Site Control: For development projects, the applicant must have legal control of the park property where PARTF facilities will be located at the time of application.

Public Use: Parks and trails must be open and accessible to the public with no restrictions such as membership. Facilities built or renovated with a PARTF grant are to be used for public recreation for at least 25 years. Facilities still under a PARTF 25-year restriction are not eligible for assistance through the Helene Recovery Fund grant.

Incomplete and Ineligible Applications will not be considered for funding. Only information received or postmarked by January 30, 2026 will be accepted. Mailed applications must include a tracking number.

The **Application Checklist** (page 9) contains the list of documents needed for a complete application.

Evaluation of Applications: The PARTF staff evaluates each application. The evaluation includes the Helene Recovery Fund scoring system included in this application, an on-site inspection by RRS, and a review of the applicant's previous grant history.

Selecting Recipients: The Parks and Recreation Authority, a board appointed by the Governor and the General Assembly, selects grant recipients for funds allocated to PARTF. The factors that the Authority members consider include the following:

- the applicant's description and impact narrative for the project
- the application's ranking based on the scoring system
- the geographic distribution of grants across the eligible Hurricane Helene affected area
- the distribution of grants to local governments with small, medium, and large populations
- the applicant's administration of previous grants
- the amount of grant funds that the applicant is requesting
- the amount of grant funds available

Additional Information is available on the [N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation website](#).

Assistance for Completing the Application

Read the entire application and understand how each application is evaluated. Start early to assemble all items on the checklist for submitting a complete application.

The Division of Parks and Recreation provide technical assistance to local governments through the Recreation Resources Service (RRS) at N.C. State University. Contact your [regional consultants](#) to discuss your application or project.

To Help Plan Facilities for Public Recreation

Making Facilities Accessible: All facilities funded by PARTF must comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG). Applicants are encouraged to include the costs of access routes to the accessible facilities in the grant application. For design guidelines, go to:

- [ADA Standard - index](#)
- [About ADA Standards](#)
- [Guidelines for Recreation Facilities](#)

Playground Safety Guidelines: PARTF encourages all applicants to adhere to the guidelines established by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission's (CPSC) Handbook for [Public Playground Safety](#) (publication #325).

Place Utility Lines Underground: All utility lines funded with a grant from PARTF must be placed underground.

DOT, FERC & FEMA Permitting for Facilities

For any project requiring a DOT, FERC, or FEMA permit, PARTF strongly recommends that the local government obtain the approved permit before applying. Examples include bridges and dams.

To Help Complete Environmental Review

If assistance is needed in creating maps from online resources, contact these agencies as early as possible.

Wetlands: The Regulatory Division of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers can assist in identifying [wetlands](#).

Floodplains: <https://fris.nc.gov/fris/Home.aspx?ST=NC> has the most recent Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) floodplain data. The permitting process before construction of facilities will determine the applicable storm water requirements for the project.

Cultural Resources: North Carolina's [State Historic Preservation Office](#) can assist in identifying historical and archaeological resources.

Sites Funded by the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)

Reference these [lists of North Carolina's LWCF projects](#) to determine if your proposed project site has previously received LWCF funding.

If this is an LWCF site, list the LWCF grant number on the Basic Facts and Assurances grant template (page 29)

Proposed projects at LWCF-funded sites must comply with guidelines set forth by the National Park Service in the [LWCF Manual](#).

Projects on School Property

Eligible Facilities: Only recreational facilities not generally provided at schools are eligible.

Joint-Use Agreement: A local government and a school system must include an executed joint-use agreement with their application. The agreement describes how the school site will be used for public recreation. PARTF must approve the agreement before the application can be considered. Contact your RRS regional consultant to receive a sample agreement.

Submitting Your Application

There are two ways to submit your Helene Recovery application:

- 1) Contact your RRS consultant to request a SharePoint folder to place your digital files in by 5pm on January 30, 2026
- 2) Submit one complete paper copy of the application as well as a flash drive containing the digital files in PDF format. Use the "Checklist to Submit a Complete Application." (page 28)

For paper submissions, only application packets postmarked or received by January 30, 2026, will be accepted.

Applications may be:

Mailed to: NC Division of Parks and Recreation
Attention: PARTF Program
1615 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-1615

Delivered no later than 5 p.m. January 30 to: NC Division of Parks and Recreation
Nature Research Center, 3rd Floor
121 West Jones Street
Raleigh, NC 27601

If You Receive a Grant

When to Start: To receive PARTF grant funds, a grantee must sign a contract before beginning a PARTF project.

Two exceptions:

- Some planning costs can be incurred before applying.
- DPR can approve a waiver allowing an applicant to acquire land before a grant is approved.

Signing the Contract: A grantee signs a contract that describes the project and the conditions for receiving a PARTF grant. This is a legally binding agreement between the local government and the State of North Carolina.

Project Costs submitted in the application will be part of the contract and serve as the budget for the project (page 32).

Reimbursements: PARTF grants are paid as reimbursements of documented expenses. Grantees may submit invoices for reimbursement on a quarterly basis. The PARTF program will reimburse grantees for up to 50 percent of their expenditures for the project.

Audits and Inspections: PARTF staff will conduct periodic site inspections of each PARTF project to inspect the progress as well as the financial records. All PARTF grantees must maintain accounting records for the project that are supported by documentation such as invoices and contracts.

Completing a PARTF Project: A local government has three years to complete a PARTF project, as specified in the contract.

Checklist to Submit a Complete Application

All items listed are required documents. Complete and submit all items, including the checklist, using the application templates provided in Appendix III of this packet. Keep a copy of the application for your files.

- Electronic Submission - Applications are submitted through an electronic folder in Microsoft SharePoint. Applicants should contact their Recreation Resources Service regional consultant to request access to the SharePoint folder. Applicants are encouraged to request access early in the process to allow for technical support, as needed. Use the file names shown in the table below.
- Paper Submission – Must include Hard Copy and Digital Copy on flash drive
 - Hard Copy: Paper clip the pages and copies of each item on the checklist together. **Do not use staples.**
 - Digital copy: Submit a flash drive with individual files for the documents on the checklist. Use PDF format. Label the flash drive with the local government name. Use the file names shown in the table below.

<i>Required for All Applications – See Appendix III for Application Templates</i> Use the (file name) shown for each item.	
1.	Checklist for Submitting a Complete Application (Checklist)
2.	Applicant's Basic Facts and Assurances (Basic facts)
3.	Project Description (Description)
4.	Project Justification (Justification)
5.	Site Plan (Site plan)
6.	Site Vicinity Map (Site vicinity)
7.	Project Costs (Project costs)
8.	Source of Matching Funds (Matching funds)
9.	Attorney's Certification of Site Control (Site control)
10.	Environmental Review (ENV review)
11.	Prioritization (Prioritization) <i>OPTIONAL</i>
12.	Resiliency Planning (Resiliency) <i>OPTIONAL</i>
13.	Applicant Self-Scoring System (Self Scoring)

Project Description

Use the Project Description template to submit a short project description. This description will be published and/or used publicly.

You will describe your project in 3-5 sentences. Be concise and discerning, including recreation facilities being added, renovated or replaced, acres acquired, and whether the facility renovation is due to damage sustained during Hurricane Helene.

Project Justification

Use the Impact Narrative template to submit a project narrative. This narrative will be used in application evaluation and will be provided to the Authority to consider in their selection.

This narrative may not exceed one page, font size 10 points or larger.

This narrative should address why the project is needed and how the repair, replacement or addition of parks and trails projects will support long-term community resilience, environmental recovery, and equitable access to outdoor recreation following damage or effects from Hurricane Helene. It will be used in application evaluation and will be provided to the Authority to consider in their selection.

Site Plan

Submit 1 copy on a one-page color-coded site plan. Use the examples on the following pages as a guide. Include the items and color coding listed below. Use either 8½" x 11" or 11" x 17" paper using landscape orientation if possible. Do not use card stock or similar paper. Include 1 copy of a floor plan if your project includes a community center or similar large building to be used for recreation.

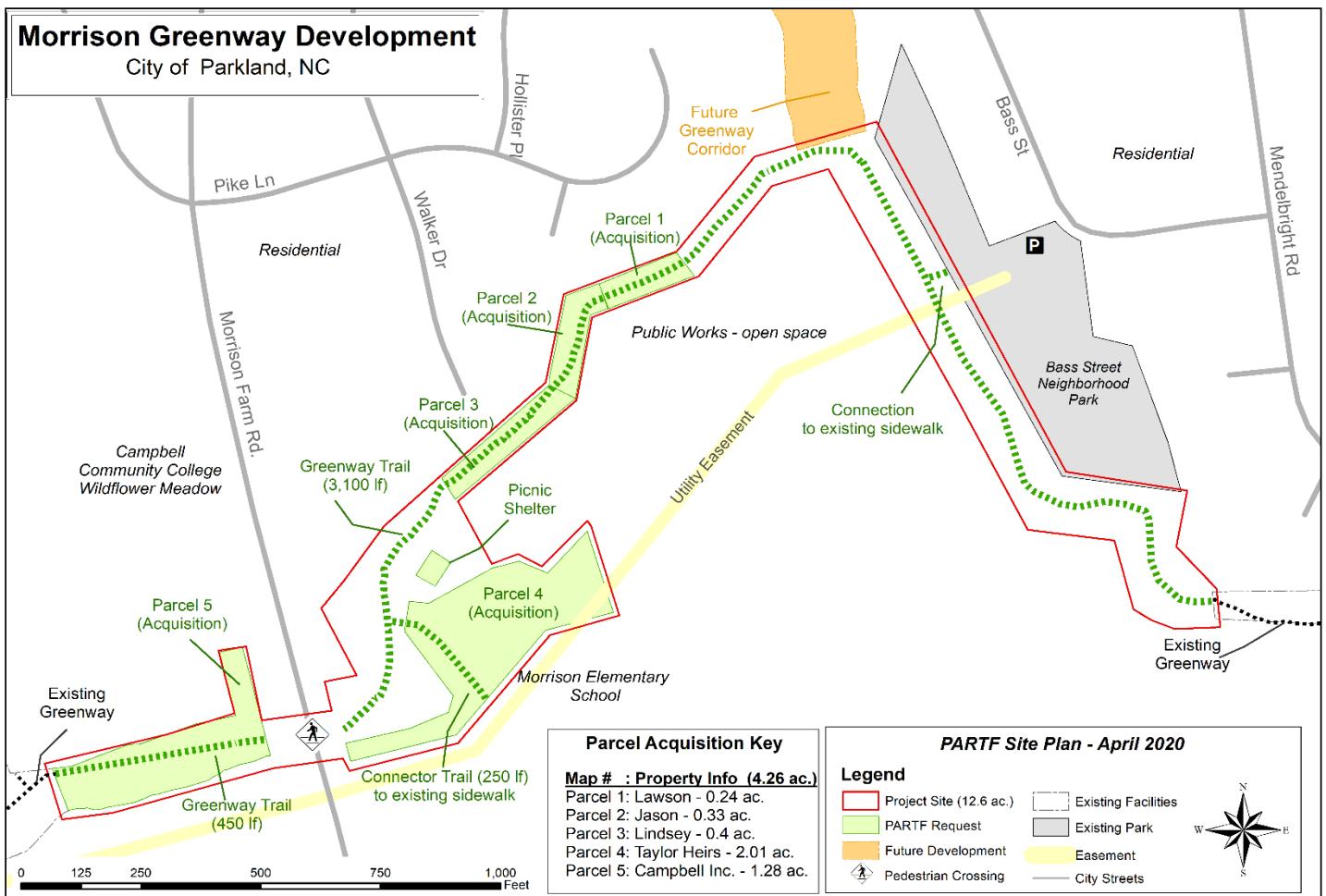
Include the following items and color-codes on the site plan for both non-linear and linear parks:

- Title: Name of project and applicant
- Acreage
- Elements of the proposed PARTF project: light green. Include land to be acquired, recreational and support facilities.
- Known streams, lakes, and wetlands
- Park boundaries: red for existing boundaries/ green for new land to be acquired
- Existing facilities: white
- Future facilities: orange
- Utility easements (power, sewer, and water lines): yellow
- Entrance and access roads to the site
- Names of adjacent roads
- Uses of adjacent property
- Legend showing color coding
- North arrow
- Date the map was prepared
- Scale

Example site plan of a non linear park



Example site plan of a linear park



Site Vicinity Map

Please provide 1 copy of an 8½" x 11" map showing the location of the proposed project. Include the following items on the map:

- Title of the project
- The name of the road a visitor uses to get to the park entrance
- The closest major highway/road
- Legible street names
- North arrow
- Physical address (such as a street address)
- Latitude/longitude coordinates of the central point in the site

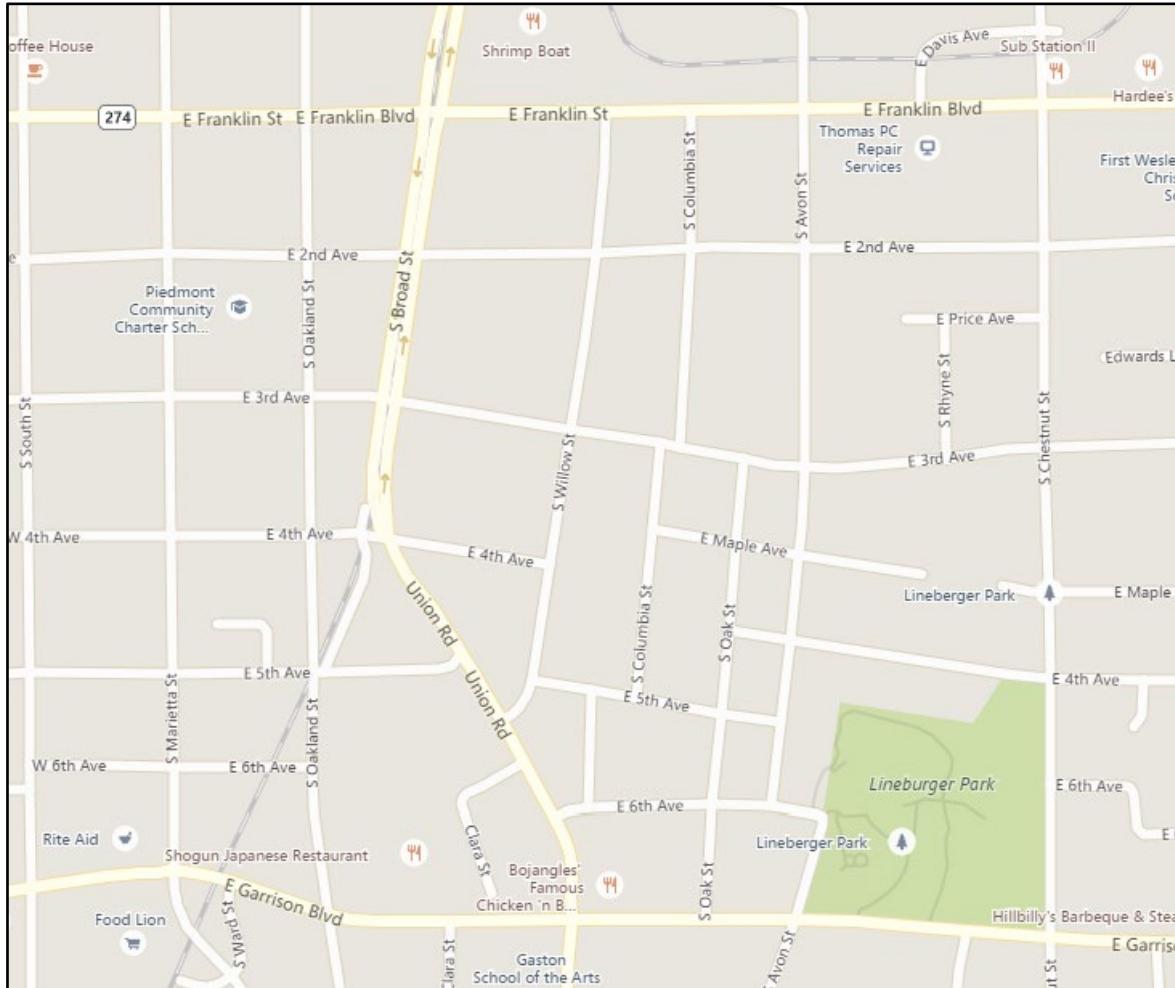
Sample: Site Vicinity Map

Lineburger Park

632 Garrison Blvd.

Gastonia, NC

Latitude / Longitude:35°15'16.8"N / 81°10'19.7"W



Project Costs

- **Project costs submitted in the application will become the grant's budget.** List all proposed project elements and the estimated cost of each element. All elements included in the project costs must be shown on the site plan, except for items such as grading, utilities, and planning. Round project costs to the dollar.
- **Accurate Cost Figures are Important:** If the actual costs are more than those listed in the application, the local government will need to cover the increased costs.

Costs to Build or Renovate Facilities

- **How to be More Accurate:** Get cost figures from contractors, landscape architects, or planners who develop parks and recreational facilities.
- **Consider the impact of inflation.** Construction may be delayed as permitting and planning are completed. Construction costs can increase in the interim
- **Be Specific:** Include specific units (sizes, numbers, lengths, etc.) for each element in the project costs. Include dimensions or square footage of all indoor or sheltered facilities. Also, include utilities and other infrastructure.
- **Contingency:** A contingency of five percent of the total cost to build or renovate a project (up to \$50,000, whichever is less) may be included.
- **ADA Accessible Routes:** Be sure to include accessible routes and ADA signs in your project costs.
- **Ineligible Items:** Sports equipment (balls, bats etc.), tools, maintenance equipment, office equipment and indoor furniture are not eligible. All items must be permanently secured. Exception: items that are typically portable, such as soccer goals, picnic tables and bleachers, must remain at the project site.

Planning and Incidental Costs

- **Planning Costs:** For projects to build or renovate facilities, the following costs are eligible: architectural and engineering fees, site plans, design and construction drawings, construction management, and preparing project costs. Park master plans and system-wide plans are not eligible for reimbursement.
 - These costs are eligible if they are incurred after January 30, 2024 (two years before the application deadline) and before the end date for the PARTF contract. Include these costs in the Project Costs for the project and keep copies of the invoices to submit for reimbursement.
- **Limit on Planning and Incidental Land Acquisition Costs:** The sum of planning costs, incidental land acquisition costs, and the cost of preparing an application cannot exceed 20 percent of the total cost of the project or \$200,000, whichever is less.

Sample - Project Costs

Applicant: Town of Parkland

Project Name: Green Park Redevelopment

Project Elements (Include specific units - sizes, numbers, lengths, etc. - for each item.)	Unit	Unit Cost	Total Item Cost
Building and/or Renovating Costs			
Picnic Shelter (2 grills, 4 tables, and 2 trash receptacles) and Rest Room Renovation - 20 x 30 feet	Lump Sum	\$147,000	\$147,000
Playground (play structure and accessible surfacing)	Lump Sum	\$80,200	\$80,200
Walking Trail - 6 feet wide, trail with 1 bench	1,500 linear ft.	\$32 / linear foot	\$48,000
Ballfield with irrigation, dugouts, fencing, and benches	Lump Sum	\$239,000	\$239,000
Accessible Routes (paved, 6 feet wide)	400 linear ft.	\$45 / linear foot	\$18,000
Parking Lot - paved for 45 cars	Lump Sum	\$72,800	\$72,800
Site Preparation (clearing, grading, and erosion control)	4 acres	\$23,750	\$95,000
Utilities	Lump Sum	\$40,000	\$40,000
Cost to Build or Renovate			\$740,000
Contingency for the Cost of Building / Renovating			
Contingency (not to exceed 5% or \$50,000 of the cost to build, whichever is less)	5%		\$37,000
Land Value – (Indicate Purchase or Donation)			
Land Acquisition <input type="checkbox"/> Purchase <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Donation	5 acres	\$14,600	\$73,000
Planning and Incidental Land Acquisition Costs			
Construction management, site planning, preliminary design, survey and appraisals, or the cost of preparing the application (not to exceed 20% or \$200,000 of the cost of the project, whichever is less)	8%	\$74,000	\$74,000
Total Project Cost			\$924,000
Total PARTF Grant Request			\$400,000
Total Local Match			\$524,000

Sources of the Applicant's Matching Funds

Use the format below to describe the sources of the applicant's matching funds. Indicate if these funds are currently available or are the funds yet to be approved. If funds are yet to be approved, list the date for approval. Matching funds must be available during the three-year grant period.

Sample

Sources of the Applicants Matching Funds

Applicant: Town of Parkland

Project Name: Green Park Redevelopment

Type of Matching Funds	Amount of Funds	Funding Source	Availability
Cash	\$ 16,000	Private Donation	In Hand
	\$ 402,570	Town's Budget or Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)	Town's Approved CIP
Fee Simple Land Donation	\$ 56,400	Value of Donated Property	Pending PARTF Grant Approval
State Grant*	\$ 100,000	NC Land and Water Fund	Pending DNCR Approval by September 2023
Total Matching Funds	\$574,970		

*PARTF allows other state and federal funding to be used as local match. PARTF cannot be used as a match for the Helene Recovery Fund.

Attorney's Certification of Site Control

The applicant's attorney should review the Site Plan for the project (as described on page 9). An attorney must certify that the local government has control of the entire site of a proposed development project for providing public recreation by January 30, 2026.

The project must be located on a single contiguous site.

Please contact your regional consultant about linear parks and greenways.

Important: The application can be declared ineligible without this certification.

Environmental Review

All applicants who are proposing any development (roads, buildings, ball fields, etc.) with a PARTF grant must provide the following information to help determine the proposed project's impact on the environment. Project design should minimize adverse impacts on the environmentally sensitive features of the site. Each item must be accurately and adequately addressed to allow the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources to determine if the proposed project will comply with the requirements of the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA).

Some projects will require an additional evaluation called an “environmental assessment” if they are selected for funding. For any project that meets *all three* of the following criteria, an environmental document must be prepared:

An expenditure of \$10 million in funds provided by the state of North Carolina for a single project or action or related group of projects or action

Or

land-disturbing activity of equal to or greater than 10 acres of public lands resulting in substantial, permanent changes in the natural cover or topography of those lands (or waters)

An action by a state agency, and

Has a potential detrimental environmental effect upon natural resources, public health and safety, natural beauty, or historical or cultural elements, of the state's common inheritance.

The PARTF program will notify the applicant if an environmental assessment is required. If needed, the grantee must complete the environmental assessment before signing the PARTF contract and beginning the project.

Resiliency Planning

Resilience is more than reducing the impact of hazards. The North Carolina Climate Risk Assessment and Resilience Plan (NC Resilience Plan, 2020) defines resilience as “the capacity of a community or business to prevent, withstand, respond to, and recover from a disruption.” It encompasses the characteristics that enable a community to survive and thrive when disasters happen. Resilience helps us build the future that we want – it helps us bounce forward after a disaster, not just bounce back. The NC Resilience Plan also tells us that “a resilient North Carolina is a state where our communities, economies, and ecosystems are better able to rebound, positively adapt to, and thrive amid changing conditions and challenges, including disasters and climate change; to maintain quality of life, healthy growth, and durable systems; and to conserve resources for present and future generations.” (Source: [NC Resilient Communities Planning Guide](#))

How is this project incorporating resiliency planning?

Damage assessment and Recovery

- What specific damage did your parks and trails sustain during Hurricane Helene?
- Have you completed a formal damage assessment? If so, please attach documentation (photos, engineering reports, etc.).
- What immediate recovery actions were taken to stabilize or secure the site?

Resiliency Planning and Design

- How has your community incorporated resilience into the design of the proposed project?
 - Examples: elevated structures, permeable surfaces, native vegetation, flood-tolerant materials.
- Does your project include nature-based solutions (e.g., bioswales, rain gardens, living shorelines) to mitigate future storm impacts?
- Have you updated your master plan or hazard mitigation plan to reflect lessons learned from Hurricane Helene?

Community and Interagency Coordination

- What role did your parks play in community response or recovery during/after the hurricane?
 - Shelter, distribution site, cooling center, etc.
- Have you coordinated with local emergency management or public health agencies in your recovery or planning efforts?

Long-Term Maintenance and Monitoring

- What strategies are in place to maintain and monitor the resilience features of your project?
- How will you ensure that future maintenance budgets account for climate-related wear and tear?

Supporting documentation

- Show resilient design features on the site plans.
- Hazard mitigation plans or climate adaptation strategies.
- Letters of support from emergency management or public health partners.

Resiliency Planning Resources:

[Overview of the Steps | U.S. Climate Resilience Toolkit](#)

[NC Resilient Communities Planning Guide](#)

[NC Resilience Exchange Actions Database](#)

[RISE Regional Resilience Portfolios](#)

[NC DOA Uniform Floodplain Management Policy For State Construction](#)

[FEMA National Resilience Guidance](#)

[DOI Nature-Based Solutions Roadmap](#)

[The Power of Parks to Address Climate Change: A Special Report](#)

Case Studies

- [Town of Black Mountain addresses streambank erosion with restoration efforts](#)
- [Hoke Community Forest institutes a prescribed burn program](#)
- [New Bern project grows natural stormwater resilience while improving native ecosystems](#)
- [Incorporating climate change into a new forest management plan](#)

Prioritization

Projects damaged or affected by Helene are eligible to prioritization if from counties that (i) were designated, in whole or in part, by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) as the most impacted and distressed counties from Hurricane Helene and (ii) have a population of 300,000 or fewer based upon the 2023 Certified County Population Estimates from the State Demographer.

To seek this prioritization, applicants must attest that (i) the application for funds is for repair, replacement, or construction of equipment, buildings, or natural features due to damage or effects from Hurricane Helene, including capacity-building, and (ii) the amount of funds requested is the amount of unmet need above the amount paid by insurance and available federal aid.

HUD Report: <https://www.commerce.nc.gov/2025-04-17hud-action-plandbg-drapproved/download?attachment>

State Demographer County Population Estimates:

https://demography.osbm.nc.gov/explore/assets/historical-certified-estimates-2010_2024/

Scoring System for Helene Recovery Fund Grants

A. Project Justification (up to 10 possible points)

This narrative should address why the project is needed and how the community will be impacted. If seeking prioritization, please include how the replacement of damaged or affected parks and trails will support long-term community resilience, environmental recovery, and equitable access to outdoor recreation following Hurricane Helene.

B. Resiliency Planning (up to 20 possible points)

1. Resiliency Planning (4 possible points)
2. Damage & Damage Assessment and Recovery (4 possible points)
3. Resiliency Planning and Design (4 possible points)
4. Community and Interagency Coordination (4 possible points)
5. Long-Term Maintenance and Monitoring (4 possible points)

C. Acquisition (up to 15 possible points)

Identify and provide justification for the acquisition type and impact to protect the unique natural resources. Select one of the following three options and explain why land acquisition will create a positive impact on the community. (Possible 10 points)

- The site is a significant, unique, and threatened natural resource that will be used for other development purposes if not acquired. The recommendation is to conserve/ protect the resource while providing low-impact passive recreation, education, and conservation opportunities. (10 points)
- The site is an excellent natural resource that will be protected in addition to providing active and passive outdoor recreational opportunities and supports education and conservation efforts. (7 points)
- The site is an average natural resource that will be used to provide predominantly active outdoor recreation opportunities and support the education and conservation efforts. (5 points)

Justification for selection:

Number of acres of land acquired - parcel acres or linear acquisition for greenway/ trails (Possible 5 points)

- 5 acres or less (3 points)
- Medium acquisition, 6-25 acres (4 points)
- Large acquisition, 26 or more acres (5 points)

Documentation Required: Site plan should include acreage and any highlighted resources.

D. Public Recreational Facilities (up to 45 possible points)

1. New, like, or renovated facilities to be provided: (30 points)

A maximum of 30 total points will be awarded for the sum of 1a, 1b and 1c.

a. The project will provide (check one):

- 3 or more types of new recreational facilities (20 points)
- 2 types of new recreational facilities (15 points)
- 1 type of new recreational facility (10 points)

List the new types of recreational facilities:

b. The project will add recreational facilities at the park that are like the facilities that exist at the park. The project will add (check one):

- 3 or more types of recreational facilities (12 points)
- 2 types of recreational facilities (8 points)
- 1 type of recreational facility (4 points)

List the types of recreational facilities:

c. The project will provide major renovation of (check one):

- 3 or more types of recreational facilities (8 points)
- 2 types of recreational facilities (6 points)
- 1 type of recreational facility (4 points)

List the recreational facilities to be renovated and why each renovation is needed:

2. The project will provide a trail or greenway (1/4 mile or longer) that links to existing recreation area(s), school(s), downtown businesses, and/or communities located outside of the park. (5 points)

- Yes
- No

Site plan must show trail linkage to receive points. Identify by name and location the existing trail and areas to be linked by the proposed trail:

E. Commitment to Operation & Maintenance (15 possible points)

1. The applicant has a full-time parks and recreation department that will manage the project site to provide programming and to ensure adequate operation and maintenance. (15 points)
2. The applicant has a full-time staff, such as a public works, who will manage the project site to ensure adequate operation and maintenance. (8 points)
3. The applicant will manage the project site with part-time staff or by contractual agreement to ensure adequate operation and maintenance. (4 points)
4. An organized volunteer group, such as a civic group or youth sports association will operate and maintain the site. (2 points)

Provide the name of the organization that will operate and maintain the site:

If the applicant is not going to operate the site with full-time staff, (see items #3 & #4), describe how and when the site will be open to the public.

F. Availability of Other Funds for the Project (up to 5 possible points)

- Limited Funds (5 points)**
- Average Funds (3 points)**
- Significant Funds (1 point)**

G. Additional Points (10 possible points +/-)

- Project is applicant's only park (Possible +3 points)
- The applicant provides maximum access to outdoor recreation opportunities (Possible +3 points)
- Project provides public access to public waters (such as river, ocean, sound, or lake). (Possible +2 points)
- Project provides a trail connection that links daily destinations i.e. bus stop, retail, existing recreation area(s), school(s), businesses, and/or communities located outside of the project site. (Possible +2 points)
- Poor application documentation (unclear maps or incomplete site plan, instructions not followed, missing documentation, unrealistic budget, inconsistencies, etc.) (Possible -4 points)

H. Prioritization (10 possible points)

County designated by HUD as most impacted and distressed:

County Population per 2023 State Demographer Report:

- Applicant attests that (i) the application for funds is for repair, replacement, or construction of equipment, buildings, or natural features due to damage or effects from Hurricane Helene, including capacity-building, and (ii) the amount of funds requested is the amount of unmet need above the amount paid by insurance and available federal aid (page 40).

Definitions

1. **Recreational Facility:** The following list provides examples of projects that will qualify as recreational facilities or areas.
 - A. **Examples of Recreational Facilities and Areas:**
 - Adult and youth sports facilities including tennis courts, soccer fields, ballfields, running tracks, volleyball courts and basketball courts.
 - Fishing and boating facilities including man-made lakes or ponds, docks, launching ramps, piers, overlooks/observation facilities, boardwalks, and marinas.
 - Swimming facilities including swimming pools, spray-grounds, wave-making pools, wading pools, and swim beaches.
 - Trails within a park with a minimum continuous length of 1/4 mile including nature trails, hiking trails, bicycling trails, and equestrian trails.
 - Greenways - linear open spaces connecting parks or other public areas that are 1/4 mile or longer and usually contain a multi-purpose trail.
 - Camping facilities including cabins, group camps, and tent and trailer campgrounds.
 - Picnic facilities including picnic shelters with tables and grills, or picnic areas with groups of tables, grills, and trash receptacles.
 - Indoor recreational facilities including recreation centers, fitness centers, multi-purpose rooms, arts and crafts centers, nature centers, weight rooms, aquatic centers, handball courts, gymnasiums, and community centers. One building may include more than one recreational facility. For example, a new recreation center could contain a gymnasium, a weight room, and a multi-purpose room.
 - Playgrounds / Tot Lots: one or more areas with multiple play structures for children that are sometimes differentiated by the age of the child.
 - Amphitheaters
 - Court and lawn games: One or more areas with equipment for informal games such as horseshoes, bocce, corn hole, and volleyball.
 - B. **Support facilities** are **not** recreational facilities: Support facilities include parking lots, roads, lighting, bleachers, restrooms, concession buildings, fencing, landscaping, site preparation, bridges, utilities, sidewalks, stairways, drinking fountains, and maintenance buildings. Recreational programs, such as sports activities, classes, or lessons, are not facilities.
2. **Renovation:** The extensive reconstruction of a facility to restore or improve its usefulness to its original purpose. A renovation project will not be awarded points under the scoring system if the facility's deterioration is due to inadequate maintenance during its reasonable lifetime. Renovating a recreational or non-recreational facility for a new recreation use would apply to new and/or like recreational facilities.

Appendix I: Eligible Counties List

On October 15, 2024, [FEMA](#) added twelve counties to the list of North Carolina counties adversely affected by Hurricane Helene. As of October 18, 2024, the following counties in North Carolina are Disaster Counties:

Alexander	Clay	Lincoln	Stanly
Alleghany	Cleveland	Macon	Surry
Ashe	Forsyth	Madison	Swain
Avery	Gaston	McDowell	Transylvania
Buncombe	Graham	Mecklenburg	Union
Burke	Haywood	Mitchell	Watauga
Cabarrus	Henderson	Nash	Wilkes
Caldwell	Iredell	Polk	Yadkin
Catawba	Jackson	Rowan	Yancey
Cherokee	Lee	Rutherford	

Those projects seeking Prioritization:

Projects damaged or affected by Helene are eligible to prioritization if from counties that (i) were designated, in whole or in part, by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) as the most impacted and distressed counties from Hurricane Helene and (ii) have a population of 300,000 or fewer based upon the 2023 Certified County Population Estimates from the State Demographer.

To seek this prioritization, applicants must attest that (i) the application for funds is for repair, replacement, or construction of equipment, buildings, or natural features due to damage or effects from Hurricane Helene, including capacity-building, and (ii) the amount of funds requested is the amount of unmet need above the amount paid by insurance and available federal aid.

HUD-Identified MID Areas:	Full Counties: Ashe; Avery; Buncombe; Burke; Haywood; Henderson; McDowell; Mitchell; Rutherford; Transylvania; Watauga; Yancey Full Counties Based on HUD-Identified zip code: Caldwell (zip code 28645); Cleveland (zip code 28150); Madison (zip code 28753); Polk (zip code 28782) Partial Counties Based on HUD-Identified zip code: Mecklenburg (zip code 28214)
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Appendix II: Recreation Resources Service (RRS)

RRS provides grant administration as part of its duties for the NC Division of Parks and Recreation. Your RRS Consultant is the first point of contact for questions or assistance related to the Parks & Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF), non-recurring grants administered by the Parks & Recreation Trust Fund, and the Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). For Grant assistance, contact the regional consultant assigned to your County.

West	Central North	Central South	Northeast	Southeast
Blake Covington bwcovinc@ncsu.edu (919) 513-5885	Trey Fouché jfouche2@ncsu.edu (919) 513-3644	Terri Stowers tlstower@ncsu.edu (919) 513-4083	Scott Payne rrspayne@ncsu.edu (919) 513-3937	Brittany Shipp bwshipp@ncsu.edu (919) 513-5951

go.ncsu.edu/rrs



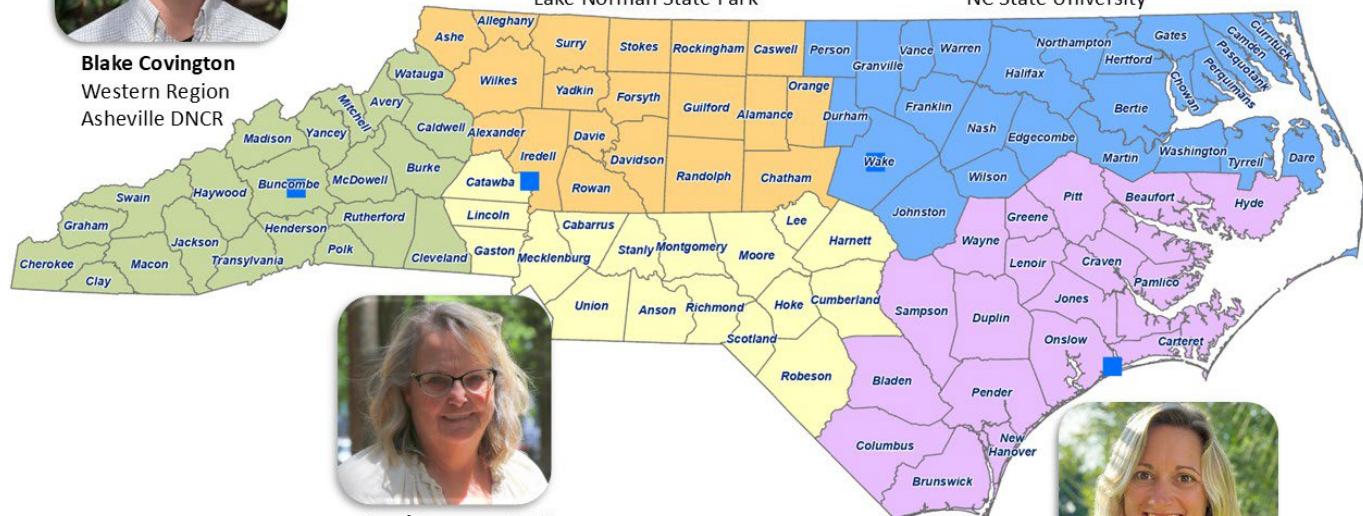
Blake Covington
Western Region
Asheville DNCR



Trey Fouché
Central North Region
Lake Norman State Park



Scott Payne
Northeast Region
NC State University



Terri Stowers, CPRP
Central South Region
Lake Norman State Park



Brittany Shipp, CPRP
Southeast Region
Hammocks Beach State Park

Meet The RRS Team

Appendix III: Grant Application Templates

Applicants should use the following templates when submitting their applications to ensure their application is eligible for consideration.

Checklist to Submit a Complete Application

All items listed are required documents. Complete and submit the checklist with your application. Keep a copy of the application for your files.

- Paper Submission – Must include Hard Copy and Digital Copy on flash drive
 - Hard Copy: Paper clip the pages and copies of each item on the checklist together. **Do not use staples.**
 - Digital copy: Submit a flash drive with individual files for the documents on the checklist. Use PDF format. Label the flash drive with the local government name. Use the file names shown in the table below.
- Electronic Submission - Applications are submitted through an electronic folder in Microsoft SharePoint. Applicants should contact their Recreation Resources Service regional consultant to request access to the SharePoint folder. Applicants are encouraged to request access early in the process to allow for technical support, as needed. Use the file names shown in the table below.

Applicant: _____ Project Name: _____

<i>Required for All Applications</i> Use the (file name) shown for each item.	Included ✓
Checklist for Submitting a Complete Application (Checklist)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Applicant's Basic Facts and Assurances (Basic facts)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Project Description (Description)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Project Justification (Justification)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Site Plan (Site plan)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Site Vicinity Map (Site vicinity)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Project Costs (Project costs)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Source of Matching Funds (Matching funds)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Attorney's Certification of Site Control (Site control)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Environmental Review (ENV review)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prioritization (Prioritization) <i>OPTIONAL</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Resiliency Planning (Resiliency) <i>OPTIONAL</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Applicant Self-Scoring System (Self Scoring)	<input type="checkbox"/>

Helene Recovery Fund 2025-2026 Basic Facts & Assurances

Local Government Name: <hr/> Federal Employer I.D. Number: 56-	County: <hr/>
Local Government Contact Person for the Grant: Name: <input type="checkbox"/> Mr. <input type="checkbox"/> Ms. Title: Organization: Mailing Address: City/State/Zip: Telephone: E-mail: (must be an employee of the sponsoring local government)	Local Government Manager: Name: <input type="checkbox"/> Mr. <input type="checkbox"/> Ms. Title: Mailing Address: City/State/Zip: Telephone: E-mail:
Chief Elected Official: Name: <input type="checkbox"/> Mr. <input type="checkbox"/> Ms. Title: Mailing Address: City/State/Zip:	
Site Control (check all that apply): <input type="checkbox"/> Owned by local government <input type="checkbox"/> Leased by applicant for 25 years or more <input type="checkbox"/> Easement <input type="checkbox"/> Owned by school board	Costs rounded to nearest dollar: <i>(Should match project budget)</i> Grant funds requested: \$ _____ .00 Local government's matching funds: \$ _____ .00 Total cost of project \$ _____ .00
Project Name: <hr/> Is this an LWCF-funded park on these lists of NC projects? <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If yes, list the grant number(s): <hr/>	
Certification and Approval by Local Governing Board I hereby certify the information contained in the attached application is true and correct and the required dollar-for-dollar matching funds will be available during the project period. This application has been approved by the local governing board.	
Chief Elected Official <hr/> (Print or Type Name and Title) (Signature)	
If two local governments are applying together, this form must be completed and signed by each local government. One applicant must be identified by adding "primary sponsor" in the "Local Government Name" section.	
This form must be complete in its entirety for your application to be considered	

Project Description

Applicant: _____ Project Name: _____

Describe your project in 3-5 sentences. Be concise and discerning, including recreation facilities being added, renovated or replaced, acres acquired, and whether the facility renovation is due to damage sustained during Hurricane Helene.

Project Justification

Applicant: _____ Project Name: _____

Explain why the project is needed and how the repair, replacement or addition of parks and trails projects will support long-term community resilience, environmental recovery, and equitable access to outdoor recreation following damage or effects from Hurricane Helene.

Project Costs

Applicant: _____

Project Name: _____

Date Prepared _____

Project Elements (Include specific units - sizes, numbers, lengths, etc. - for each item.)	Unit	Unit Cost	Total Item Cost
Building and/or Renovating Costs			
Cost to Build or Renovate			
Contingency for the Cost of Building / Renovating			
Contingency (not to exceed 5% of the cost to build or renovate or \$50,000 - whichever is less)			
Land Value – (Indicate Purchase or Donation)			
Land Acquisition - <input type="checkbox"/> Purchase <input type="checkbox"/> Donation			
Planning and Incidental Land Acquisition Costs			
Construction management, site planning, preliminary design, survey and appraisals, or the cost of preparing the application (not to exceed 20% of the cost of the project or \$200,000 - whichever is less)			
Total Project Cost			
Total Grant Request			
Total Local Match			

Sources of the Applicant's Matching Funds

Applicant: _____ Project Name: _____

Type of Matching Funds	Amount of Funds	Funding Source	Availability
Total Matching Funds			

Attorney's Certification of Site Control

Applicant: _____ Project Name: _____

Instructions: Review the Site Plan for the project. An attorney must certify that the local government has control of the entire site of a proposed development project for providing public recreation by January 30, 2026. The project must be located on a single contiguous site. Please contact your regional consultant about linear parks and greenways.

Important: The application can be declared ineligible without this certification.

1. TYPE OF SITE CONTROL: Indicate the type(s) of control the applicant has for the project site.	
TYPE OF CONTROL Check all that apply	
<input type="checkbox"/> Fee Simple Title	<input type="checkbox"/> Entire Site. <input type="checkbox"/> Portion of site
<input type="checkbox"/> Lease (25 years or longer)	<input type="checkbox"/> Entire Site. <input type="checkbox"/> Portion of site
<input type="checkbox"/> Easement	<input type="checkbox"/> Entire Site. <input type="checkbox"/> Portion of site
2. LIMITATIONS, CONDITIONS OR ENCUMBRANCES:	
<input type="checkbox"/> No limitations, conditions, or encumbrances <input type="checkbox"/> Limitations, conditions, or encumbrances Attach additional pages describing any conditions or limitations in current or proposed leases, easements or use agreements. Include restrictions on the local government's use of the site or the rights to be reserved by the landowner that may impact the local government's ability to complete the project in a timely manner and/ or provide for public recreational use for at least 25 years. Attach additional pages if needed.	
3. ATTORNEY'S CERTIFICATION	
I have reviewed the site of the proposed project identified on this page and certify that the information provided above is accurate to the best of my knowledge. The proposed project will be on one contiguous site.	
NAME (Printed/Typed) _____	
TITLE _____	
SIGNATURE _____ Date _____	

Environmental Review

Applicant: _____ Project Name: _____

- 1. Site Description:** Describe in detail the existing or proposed park property including the park acreage (for land and water), topography, streams, lakes, and any significant natural resources that are on or adjacent to the site. Attach a separate page if needed.
- 2. Past/Current Property Use:** What are the past and/or current uses of the property? Examples: Urban/developed, forest, agricultural, industrial site, landfill, water, or wetland. Attach a separate page if needed. **Important:** If the property has been contaminated (examples: brownfield sites), all cleanup actions must be completed before a PARTF contract is executed and the project can begin. Use this space to describe any cleanup actions that are in progress or proposed. The PARTF program recommends that local governments wait until cleanup is completed before applying.
- 3. Streams on Site:** Attach a copy of a map of the park property from this website:
<https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/7073e9122ab74588b8c48ded34c3df55?views=Stream-Details>
- 4. DWR Riparian Buffer:** Attach a copy of a map of the park property from this website:
<https://arcg.is/0Ojj8D>
- 5. Floodplains:** Attach a copy of a map of the park property from this website:
<https://fris.nc.gov/fris/Home.aspx?ST=NC>
- 6. Archaeological or historical sites:** Attach a copy of a map of the park property from this site: [NC HPOWEB 2.0v](#). Additional review will be required if ground disturbance occurs within study list or historic district (per HPOWEB), if federal funds will also be used, or if a 404 permit is needed.

Resiliency Planning

Applicant: _____ Project Name: _____

How is this project incorporating resiliency planning?

Damage assessment and Recovery

- What specific damage did your parks and trails sustain during Hurricane Helene?
- Have you completed a formal damage assessment? If so, please briefly describe here and attach documentation (photos, engineering reports, etc.)
- What immediate recovery actions were taken to stabilize or secure the site?

Resiliency Planning

Applicant: _____ Project Name: _____

Resiliency Planning and Design

- How has your community incorporated resilience into the design of the proposed project?
Examples: elevated structures, permeable surfaces, native vegetation, flood-tolerant materials.
- Does your project include nature-based solutions (e.g., bioswales, rain gardens, living shorelines) to mitigate future storm impacts?
- Have you updated your master plan or hazard mitigation plan to reflect lessons learned from Hurricane Helene?

Resiliency Planning

Applicant: _____ Project Name: _____

Community and Interagency Coordination

- What role did your parks play in community response or recovery during/after the hurricane?
Examples: shelter, distribution site, cooling center, etc.

- Have you coordinated with local emergency management or public health agencies in your recovery or planning efforts?

Resiliency Planning

Applicant: _____ Project Name: _____

Long-Term Maintenance and Monitoring

- What strategies are in place to maintain and monitor the resilience features of your project?

- How will you ensure that future maintenance budgets account for climate-related wear and tear?

Supporting documentation

- Show resilient design features on the site plans.
- Hazard mitigation plans or climate adaptation strategies.
- Letters of support from emergency management or public health partners.

Helene Recovery Fund for PARTF 2025-2026

Prioritization Attestation

Applicant: _____ Project Name: _____

To qualify for the Western NC Prioritization, applicants must be from counties that were designated, in whole or in part, by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development as the most impacted and distressed counties from Hurricane Helene

Applicant County: _____

To qualify for the Western NC Prioritization, applicants must have a population of 300,000 or fewer based upon the 2023 Certified County Population Estimates from the State Demographer.

County Population per the State Demographer 2023 Report: _____

Applicant attests that (i) the application for funds is for repair, replacement, or construction of equipment, buildings, or natural features due to damage or effects from Hurricane Helene, including capacity-building, and (ii) the amount of funds requested is the amount of unmet need above the amount paid by insurance and available federal aid.

Certification and Approval by Local Governing Board I hereby certify the information contained in the attached application is true and correct	
Print Name / Title	Signature

NOTICE:

Receipt of Allocations: A recipient of State funds under S.L. 2025-26 shall use best efforts and take all reasonable steps to obtain alternative funds that cover the losses or needs for which the State funds are provided, including funds from insurance policies in effect and available federal aid. State funds paid under S.L. 2025-26 are declared to be excess over funds received by a recipient from the settlement of a claim for loss or damage covered under the recipient's applicable insurance policy in effect or federal aid.

Remittance of Funds: If a recipient obtains alternative funds, the recipient shall remit the funds to the State agency from which the State funds were received. A recipient is not required to remit any amount in excess of the State funds provided to the recipient under this act.

Scoring System for Helene Recovery Fund Grants

Applicant: _____ Project Name: _____

Project Justification (up to 10 possible points)

This narrative should address why the project is needed and how the community will be impacted. If seeking prioritization, please include how the replacement of damaged or affected parks and trails will support long-term community resilience, environmental recovery, and equitable access to outdoor recreation following Hurricane Helene.

Applicant Self Score for Justification: _____

Resiliency Planning (up to 20 possible points)

1. Resiliency Planning (4 possible points)

Applicant Self Score: _____

2. Damage & Damage Assessment and Recovery (4 possible points)

Applicant Self Score: _____

3. Resiliency Planning and Design (4 possible points)

Applicant Self Score: _____

4. Community and Interagency Coordination (4 possible points)

Applicant Self Score: _____

5. Long-Term Maintenance and Monitoring (4 possible points)

Applicant Self Score: _____

Applicant Self Score for Resiliency Planning Total: _____

Applicant: _____ Project Name: _____

Acquisition (up to 15 possible points)

Identify and provide justification for the acquisition type and impact to protect the unique natural resources. Select one of the following three options and explain why land acquisition will create a positive impact on the community. (Possible 10 points)

- The site is a significant, unique, and threatened natural resource that will be used for other development purposes if not acquired. The recommendation is to conserve/ protect the resource while providing low-impact passive recreation, education, and conservation opportunities. (10 points)
- The site is an excellent natural resource that will be protected in addition to providing active and passive outdoor recreational opportunities and supports education and conservation efforts. (7 points)
- The site is an average natural resource that will be used to provide predominantly active outdoor recreation opportunities and support the education and conservation efforts. (5 points)

Justification for selection:

Number of acres of land acquired - parcel acres or linear acquisition for greenway/ trails (Possible 5 points)

- 5 acres or less (3 points)
- Medium acquisition, 6-25 acres (4 points)
- Large acquisition, 26 or more acres (5 points)

Applicant Self Score for Acquisition: _____

Applicant: _____ Project Name: _____

Public Recreational Facilities (up to 45 possible points)

3. New, like, or renovated facilities to be provided: (30 points)

A maximum of 30 total points will be awarded for the sum of 1a, 1b and 1c.

d. The project will provide (check one):

- 3 or more types of new recreational facilities (20 points)
- 2 types of new recreational facilities (15 points)
- 1 type of new recreational facility (10 points)

List the new types of recreational facilities:

e. The project will add recreational facilities at the park that are like the facilities that exist at the park. The project will add (check one):

- 3 or more types of recreational facilities (12 points)
- 2 types of recreational facilities (8 points)
- 1 type of recreational facility (4 points)

List the types of recreational facilities:

f. The project will provide major renovation of (check one):

- 3 or more types of recreational facilities (8 points)
- 2 types of recreational facilities (6 points)
- 1 type of recreational facility (4 points)

List the recreational facilities to be renovated and why each renovation is needed:

4. The project will provide a trail or greenway (1/4 mile or longer) that links to existing recreation area(s), school(s), downtown businesses, and/or communities located outside of the park. (5 points)

- Yes
- No

Site plan must show trail linkage to receive points. Identify by name and location the existing trail and areas to be linked by the proposed trail:

Applicant Self Score for Facilities: _____

Applicant: _____ Project Name: _____

Commitment to Operation & Maintenance (15 possible points)

1. The applicant has a full-time parks and recreation department that will manage the project site to provide programming and to ensure adequate operation and maintenance. (15 points)
2. The applicant has a full-time staff, such as a public works, who will manage the project site to ensure adequate operation and maintenance. (8 points)
3. The applicant will manage the project site with part-time staff or by contractual agreement to ensure adequate operation and maintenance. (4 points)
4. An organized volunteer group, such as a civic group or youth sports association will operate and maintain the site. (2 points)

Provide the name of the organization that will operate and maintain the site:

If the applicant is not going to operate the site with full-time staff, (see items #3 & #4), describe how and when the site will be open to the public.

Applicant Self Score for Operation & Maintenance: _____

Availability of Other Funds for the Project (up to 5 possible points)

- Limited Funds (5 points)
- Average Funds (3 points)
- Significant Funds (1 point)

Applicant Self Score for Availability of Funds: _____

Additional Points (10 possible points +/-)

- Project is applicant's only park (Possible +3 points)
- The applicant provides maximum access to outdoor recreation opportunities (Possible +3 points)
- Project provides public access to public waters (such as river, ocean, sound, or lake). (Possible +2 points)
- Project provides a trail connection that links daily destinations i.e. bus stop, retail, existing recreation area(s), school(s), businesses, and/or communities located outside of the project site. (Possible +2 points)
- Poor application documentation (unclear maps or incomplete site plan, instructions not followed, missing documentation, unrealistic budget, inconsistencies, etc.) (Possible -4 points)

Applicant Self Score for Additional Points: _____

Prioritization (10 possible points)

County designated by HUD as most impacted and distressed:

County Population per 2023 State Demographer Report:

Applicant attests that (i) the application for funds is for repair, replacement, or construction of equipment, buildings, or natural features due to damage or effects from Hurricane Helene, including capacity-building, and (ii) the amount of funds requested is the amount of unmet need above the amount paid by insurance and available federal aid.

Applicant Self Score for Prioritization: _____

Applicant Total Score: _____

Additional Comments: