



NC DEPARTMENT
of COMMERCE
RURAL ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT



Appalachian
Regional
Commission



MS&RP
NC MAIN STREET & RURAL PLANNING CENTER
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Western North Carolina Economic Recovery and Rebuilding Services

Resource Team Opportunity for Hurricane Helene-Impacted Communities

June 4, 2025

The NC Department of Commerce's Rural Economic Development Division (REDD) works to "engage, enhance, and help transform rural communities." Through its staff of community and economic development specialists, Team REDD helps rural communities plan for and make strategic investments to spur business development and economic growth.

In the wake of Hurricane Helene, economic recovery is about more than just rebuilding; it is about strengthening communities' economic development capacity, vision, and resilience for the future. The REDD NC Main Street & Rural Planning (MS&RP) Center and NC Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) program will offer an opportunity for Helene-impacted communities to receive on-site economic recovery assistance through one to two-day Resource Team visits that are tailored to meet communities' unique needs. REDD will provide ongoing assistance and direct support to help communities implement strategies identified during visits.

Interdisciplinary Resource Teams will bring expertise, creativity, and collaboration directly to communities. They will partner with local leaders, organizations, businesses, and residents and listen to local needs, concerns, opportunities, and visions in an effort to co-design actionable strategies and projects that support both short-term and long-term economic recovery and revitalization. Resource Teams will offer flexible, community-specific economic recovery assistance, delivered by REDD and partners that are committed to helping communities not only recover but also rebuild stronger, adaptable, local economies.

Participating communities will receive presentations of preliminary findings at the end of Resource Team visits, followed by written reports that identify actionable strategies and key projects, as well as potential resources for implementation. Designated REDD staff will provide communities with ongoing technical assistance and support to help guide the implementation of economic recovery and revitalization strategies and projects.

Resource Teams will assist communities in one or more of three key areas:

I. Community Engagement

- Host listening sessions to understand local economic needs and impacts.
- Identify long-term economic recovery priorities and needs with communities.

II. Economic Recovery & Rebuilding Planning

- Facilitate planning sessions focused on rebuilding asset-based local economies.
- Analyze and update economic development plans to provide a strategic roadmap for economic recovery.
- Guide communities in implementing plans and developing funding solutions.

III. Resources & Support

- Fortify local leadership and planning capacity to support economic recovery with dedicated REDD staff.
- Provide technical assistance on tools, funding, and programs for economic recovery project development and implementation
- Guide communities in crafting and sharing stories highlighting local economic assets and attracting investments.

Contacts:

Elizabeth (Liz) H. Parham, CMSM
Director, NC Main Street & Rural Planning Center
North Carolina Department of Commerce
919 805 2067 mobile
lparham@commerce.nc.gov

Olivia A. Collier
Director, Regional Development Commissions
North Carolina Department of Commerce
919 218 3623 mobile
ocollier@commerce.nc.gov