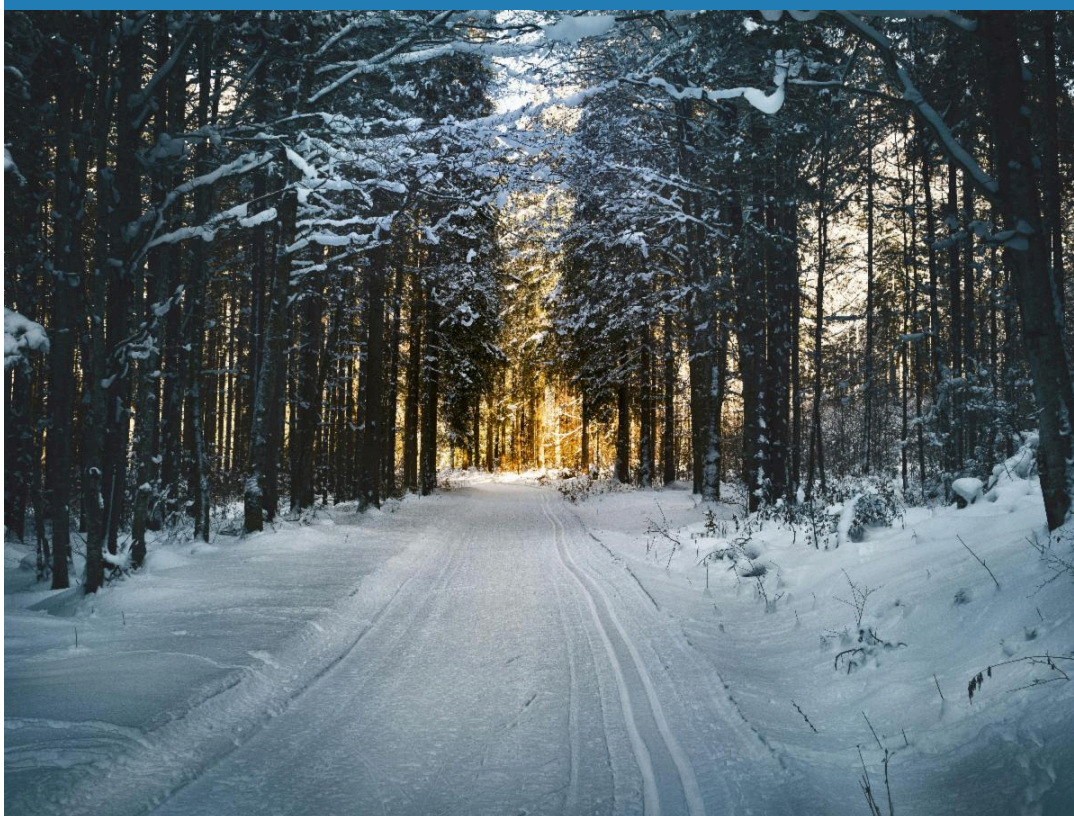Eastern Carolina Council

January 2026 Grant Resources Newsletter

Welcome to ECC's January 2026 Grant Resources Newsletter. This is a resource for local government employees, elected and appointed officials, and other community-focused individuals in the ECC region for receiving information about upcoming opportunities, relevant updates, and useful tools pertaining to grants.

Grants

Urban and Community Financial Assistance Program

NC Forest Service's Urban and Community Financial Assistance Program opened applications at the beginning of January. The purpose of this program is to encourage

urban and community forestry practices.

Municipalities and tribal governments are eligible to apply for the following types of assistance:

- **Climb to Tree City USA Package** – Helps communities achieve a Tree City USA designation.
- **Climb to Managing Community Package** – Helps communities achieve a Managing Community designation, the highest designation for urban and community forestry.
- **Tree Maintenance and Planting Package**
  - **Tree maintenance and planning project** - Helps communities with a Tree City USA designation with tree maintenance and inventorying.
  - **Bad tree bounty project** – Helps communities that have not achieved a Tree City USA designation with the removal of invasive and unsafe trees. (Limited to one applicant.)
- **Professional Staff Development Assistance** – Helps communities obtain professional credentials for staff.

501(c)(3) organizations are eligible to apply for the following type of assistance:

- **Climb to Tree City USA Services** – This two-year grant allows qualifying organizations to assist communities with certain services under the Climb to Tree City USA Package noted above. The local government serves as subrecipient, and the organization is grantee. See RFP for details.

<u>Deadline for submission is March 1 (deadline for Professional Staff Development Assistance is June 30, 2026).</u> See the link below for details.

The RFA for N.C. Arbor Day Celebration Assistance opens in June.

Link
- Click HERE for guidance and application links.

North Carolina Land & Water Fund (NCLWF)

The NCLWF, within the NC Department of Natural and Cultural Resources, prioritizes drinking water and protecting natural habitats. Eligible applicants for their grant programs include local governments and conservation nonprofits.

There are four regular cycle grant programs:

- Land acquisition of eligible properties through purchase or perpetual conservation agreements.
- Restoration of natural water resources, including streams, wetlands, floodplains, living shorelines, and related projects.
- Innovative projects for managing stormwater aimed at improving water quality.
- Planning to reduce surface water pollution.

Matches are recommended but not required.

<u>The grant cycle opens January 15, 2026, and the application deadline is March 1, 2026.</u>

The NCLWF also offers the Donation Mini-Grant (DMG) Program, which has three cycles per year. This award assists with the costs associated with property donation.

The award maximum is $50,000. Local governments and certain nonprofit organizations are eligible to apply. Please see the program manual for details.

The deadlines for DMG are January 15, April 15, and August 15.

Link
- Click HERE for more information about the NC Land & Water Fund.

Fiscal Year 2025 Disaster Supplemental Grant Program

The Economic Development Administration (EDA) has posted the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for the FY 2025 Disaster Supplemental Grant Program. The purpose of this program is to support long-term economic recovery in areas that received a major disaster declaration in the calendar year 2023 or 2024. For the ECC region, this only includes **Carteret and Onslow counties**.

Eligible applicants include local governments in the areas specified above. Total funding for this program is $1,447,000,000, and federal cost share is generally 80%. Award amount range depends on the selected project pathway.

Eligible projects fall under three pathways:

- The **Readiness Path** is for non-construction projects focused on planning and building capacity for future projects related to economic development and disaster recovery. The award range for this pathway is $250,000 to $500,000. Some project examples include strategic planning, additional staff, or preparation for future construction projects.
- The **Implementation Path** is for construction and non-construction projects that improve local economies and disaster resilience. The award range for non-construction projects is $100,000 to $5 million, and the award range for construction projects is $2 million to $20 million. Project examples include infrastructure improvements, workforce training programs, and revolving loan funds.
- The **Industry Transformation Path** is for a portfolio of three to five projects under a public-private partnership that improves or develops a specific industry sector. The award range for this pathway is $20 million to $50 million.

Applications under the **Industry Transformation Path** are due on March 3, 2026.

Applications under the **Readiness Path** and **Implementation Path** are accepted on a continuous basis until funds are gone or the NOFO is canceled.

Links
- Click HERE to access the NOFO.
- Click HERE to access the project's page on EDA.gov.

Fiscal Year 2025 Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance Programs

The Economic Development Administration (EDA) is continuing to accept applications for its Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance Programs. Local governments are eligible to apply. One application is submitted for both programs.

Awards must fund projects that reflect at least one of the following EDA Investment Priorities:

- Critical Infrastructure
- Workforce
- Innovation and Entrepreneurship
- Economic Recovery Resilience
- Manufacturing

Detailed descriptions of these Investment Priorities are located [HERE](#).

Furthermore, awarded projects must be consistent with the region's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). Please contact ECC staff if you have any questions about ECC's CEDS.

The Public Works program provides assistance with infrastructure design and construction with the goal of making communities more economically competitive. The range of eligible infrastructure projects is wide, including, but not limited to, water and sewer improvements, industrial parks, brownfield redevelopment, telecommunications infrastructure, aviation facilities, and port facilities.

The Economic Adjustment Assistance (EAA) program assists with construction and non-construction activities meant to counter adverse economic changes. As with Public Works, the scope of EAA activities is wide, including, but not limited to, workforce training programs, long-term disaster recovery and resiliency plans, revolving loan funds, market or industry research, and creation or expansion of foreign direct investment and trade. Special consideration is given to communities that have been affected by the closure of nuclear, biomass, or coal power facilities.

Please see the NOFO for details.

Link
- Click [HERE](#) for grant details. A link to download the NOFO can be found in the Related Documents tab.

The Grant Portal (TGP) - Aging Grants / Grants for Seniors

View a catalog of aging grants at https://north-carolina.thegrantportal.com/aging-seniors. TGP is online database of grant opportunities. Information about grant details requires a paid subscription.

ARPA

Office Hours

The UNC School of Government (SOG) hosts office hours via Zoom for discussions on local government finance including ARPA. Click [HERE](#) for the office hours page on UNC SOG's NC Finance Connect website. Consider bookmarking this page to stay up to date on future offerings.

Reminder: <u>December 31, 2026</u> is the deadline to expend ARPA SLRRF funds.

Reminder: If your entity accepted ARPA SLRRF funds, you must maintain an active registration on <u>SAM.gov</u>. If you've forgotten your entity's expiration date, please consider checking your registration status on SAM.gov soon!

Reminder: ECC staff are available to provide ARPA SLRRF technical assistance to local governments within our nine-county region. There is no cost for this service. Reach out to ECC staff if you have questions or concerns related to:

- SAM.gov registration
- Treasury notices / documentation requests
- ARPA compliance requirements
- Anything else related to ARPA SLRRF

Contact Carlton Gideon, Senior Community Planner, cgideon@eccog.org, 252-638-3185 ext. 3018.

Updates

ECC Services

Would you like to pursue a grant opportunity but are short-staffed? Consider grant writing and administration services offered by ECC. If interested, contact Carlton Gideon, Senior Community Planner, cgideon@eccog.org, 252-638-3185 ext. 3018.

Visit Our Website and Facebook Page (Click the Icons Below)

Eastern Carolina Council Mission - *to improve the region's quality of life by providing human, planning, and economic development services to local governments and area residents by leveraging resources and collaborating regionally.*