



May 2026 Grant Resources Newsletter



Welcome to ECC's May 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 and useful tools pertaining to grants.

Grants

319(h) Nonpoint Source Grant

The NC Department of Environmental Quality Division of Water Resources is accepting applications for 319(h) grants for FY 2026. The purpose of this program is to reduce nonpoint source pollution in watersheds that are impaired by nonpoint source pollution and have approved watershed restoration plans. See map [HERE](#) for eligible



NORTH CAROLINA
Environmental Quality

watersheds. Within the ECC region, multiple locations within the White Oak River Basin are eligible. Furthermore, at risk waters that are currently not designated as impaired may also be eligible (see RFP in the link below for details).

Local governments, nonprofits, and other organizations are eligible to apply. Around \$1.5 million is available for funding.

Some project examples include:

- *“Targeted nutrient and sediment reduction projects in a single HUC-12 watershed.”*
- *“Riparian restoration using bioengineering and/or green methods.”*
- *“Wetland and floodplain restoration.”*
- *“Storm water management projects.”*
- *“Stream restoration using natural channel design methodology and/or low head dam removal.”*

The application deadline is May 29, 2026.

Link

- Click [HERE](#) for program information.

Water Resources Development Grant Program



The NC Department of Environmental Quality Division of Water Resources has two grants available under its Water Resources Development Grant Program.

State & Local Projects (S&L) program allows for local government to pursue the following projects: water management, stream restoration, water-based recreation projects, and feasibility or engineering studies for the previously mentioned projects. The program provides up to 50% cost-share funding of non-federal costs and technical assistance for these projects (normally up to \$200,000). In-kind matches are allowable with documentation. This is a competitive grant, and nature-based design solutions are favored.

Natural Resources Conservation Service's Environmental Quality Incentives Program (NRCS-EQIP) provides local governments financial assistance with stream restoration projects. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) may be partners. Stream restoration projects must have the consent of all affected property owners.

The application deadline for S&L is June 30, 2026, and the application deadline for NRCS-EQIP is July 31, 2026.

Link

- Click [HERE](#) for information about the program.

Urban and Community Financial Assistance Program - Professional Staff Development Assistance



The NC Forest Service Urban and Community Financial Assistance Program encourages urban and community forestry practices. The Professional Staff Development Assistance package helps communities obtain professional credentials for

staff. Municipalities that do not have staff with professional urban forestry credentials are eligible to apply. The first RFA of 2026 opened in January.

The program assists with the following types of credentials from the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) and Society of American Foresters (SAF):

- **ISA Certified Urban Forest Professional (CUFP)** - Focuses on municipal arboriculture and related activities.
- **ISA Tree Risk Assessment Qualification (TRAQ)** - Focuses on best management practices for assessing tree risks (that is, determining the likelihood and severity of a tree causing injury or damage).
- **SAF Certified Urban and Community Forester (CUCF)** - Focuses on urban forestry planning and management.

Classes, fees, training materials, and travel costs are eligible expenses. Travel is restricted to North Carolina and surrounding states. This program is reimbursement-based and not competitive.

There are two RFAs per year. The deadline for **26-1** Professional Staff Development Assistance is June 30, 2026. **26-2** Professional Staff Development Assistance opens July 1, 2026.

Link

- Click [HERE](#) for more information.

Railroad Crossing Elimination (Crossing Safety) Program



The US Department of Transportation Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) is accepting applications its Railroad Crossing Elimination (Crossing Safety) Program. This program seeks to fund projects to improve or eliminate at-grade railroad crossings, with the dual goals of safety and improving mobility.

Eligible applicants include counties, municipalities, metropolitan planning organizations, port authorities, and other types of local governments. Federal cost share is up to 80%, and the minimum award size is \$1 million, with the exception of planning projects. There is \$1,146,528,000 available for awards, of which at least \$36 million is available for planning projects. \$9 million of the funding for planning projects is specifically for Rural Areas or Tribal Lands. The FRA defines any location outside a designated urban area (as determined by the latest 10-year Census) as a Rural Area.

The following activities are eligible projects:

- Grade separation or removal
- Track relocation
- Installation of certain protective devices
- Other specific safety improvements
- A combination of the above
- Planning, environmental review, and/or design of the above

Non-planning projects must conform to the FRA's Lifecycle Stages specified [HERE](#). Projects involving commuter rail will be administered by the Federal Transit Administration instead of the FRA.

The application deadline is June 8, 2026.

Link

- Click [HERE](#) for more information and link to NOFO.

EDA AI Upskill Accelerator Pilot Program



The Economic Development Administration (EDA) is accepting application for its AI Upskill Accelerator Pilot Program. \$25 million has been allocated to “support non-construction activities that will help start or augment industry-led workforce training programs that deliver trainings in AI skills and that lead to jobs for those trained.”

Around 5 to 8 awards will range between \$1 million to \$8 million. Eligible applicants will meet EDA’s Special Needs criteria.

See the addendum in the Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance Programs NOFO for details.

4:59 PM on July 10, 2026 is the deadline for applications.

Link

- Click [HERE](#) for more information.

Fiscal Year 2025 Disaster Supplemental Grant Program



The US Economic Development Administration has posted the 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 closed.

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 US 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: December 31, 2026 is the deadline to expend ARPA SLFRF funds.

Reminder: If your entity accepted ARPA SLFRF funds, you must maintain an active registration on [SAM.gov](https://sam.gov). If you've forgotten your entity's expiration date, please consider checking your registration status on SAM.gov soon!

Have you received closeout instructions from Treasury?

ECC staff are available to provide ARPA SLFRF 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 SLFRF

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.



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