

WAYNESVILLE TOWN COUNCIL
PROJECT UPDATE
Meeting Date: September 22, 2026

SUBJECT: Presentation by ES Engineering, P.C. and EnviroScience, Inc. on the Richland Creek and Vance Greenway Restoration Project.

AGENDA INFORMATION:

Agenda Location: New Business
Item Number:
Department: Development Services
Contact: Olga Grooman, Interim Development Services Director
Presenter(s): Emily Tarsa, Ph.D.; Haley Valdez, P.E.; Angelina Hotz, P.E.; Julie Bingham, CERP ES Engineering, P.C. and EnviroScience, Inc.

BRIEF SUMMARY:

ES Engineering, P.C. (ESNC) and EnviroScience, Inc. are working with Haywood Waterways Association to develop the restoration design for the Richland Creek and Vance Greenway Restoration project. The goals of the project include stabilization of eroding streambanks, restoration of portions of the streambanks to their pre-Helene condition, removal of existing streamside levees, increased long-term channel resiliency, greenway improvements, and interception of urban stormwater inputs prior to entering the stream. Greenway improvements will also support the Town of Waynesville's Comprehensive System-Wide Parks and Recreation Plan by helping address gaps in the existing greenway network and improving connectivity between existing greenway segments.

Additionally, the project will include enhancement of in-stream habitat that supports trout and other aquatic species, improving overall ecological function and recreational value. The introduction of native vegetation will further increase infiltration within the floodplain and improve aesthetic and recreational value along the greenway. Overall, the project will address damage to Richland Creek incurred during Tropical Storm Helene in September 2024, improve greenway access for the public, connect the existing greenway segments at Vance Street Park and behind Mountain Creek Plaza Apartments, and contribute to the Town of Waynesville's stormwater permit compliance by intercepting direct runoff from urban sources.

The project will be funded in part through a \$2 million NCDEQ Hurricane Helene recovery grant administered through Haywood Waterways Association to support streambank stabilization, riparian buffer enhancement, and related restoration efforts. Of the available grant funding, approximately \$78,000 is allocated for engineering, design, and permitting of the full project reach, while approximately \$267,000 is allocated toward construction of the upstream work areas (Work Areas 1–3). This is a unique, time-sensitive Hurricane Helene recovery funding source, with awarded funds required to be expended by March 2027.

The project will be implemented in phases, with design and permitting for the full project reach currently underway. Construction of Work Areas 1–3 is anticipated for late fall 2026 through early spring 2027 to meet the grant expenditure deadline. Construction of the downstream work areas (Work Areas 4–13) is anticipated to occur in phases between 2027 and 2030, contingent upon receipt of additional grant funding.

A draft version of the engineering plans for the project were submitted to Town of Waynesville staff on July 30, 2026, for review and feedback. After incorporating comments from all stakeholders, ES

Engineering will update the design and produce a final plan set that will be submitted to the Town. The purpose of this presentation is to provide the Town Council with an update on the project and obtain feedback. Prior to construction, all necessary grading and floodplain permits will be obtained, and the required construction easements from the Town will be secured.

ATTACHMENTS:

- PowerPoint Presentation by ES Engineering and EnviroScience
- Proposed Plans showing the scope of work

MANAGER'S COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS: