



**— VISIT —  
HAYWOOD**  
WESTERN NC MOUNTAINS

Fiscal Year 2026-2027

Grant Summary & Committee Recommendations

# FY26–27 Grant Process Summary

## **December 2025:**

- FY26–27 grant applications and updated guidelines released
- Required templates and Destination Master Plan criteria published

## **January to April 2026:**

- Introduced new 1:1 grant coaching sessions
- HCTDA Staff provided ongoing applicant support and technical assistance
- Initial applications for capital, tourism promotion and legacy events due 3/17/26
- Staff reviewed applications for eligibility, completeness, budgets, marketing plans and Master Plan alignment. Suggested improvements and corrections for most applications
- Applicants submitted revisions and corrections as needed by 4/9/26

# FY26–27 Grant Process Summary

## May 2026:

- ❑ All applications compiled and uploaded for review. [Full grant documents can be viewed here](#) (*click each hyperlink and scroll down to review complete applications*).
- ❑ Product Development Committee independently reviewed and scored applications based on:
  - Tourism impact, overnight visitation potential, destination master plan alignment & Community and economic impact
- ❑ Full-day committee review meeting held. [Meeting notes can be viewed here](#).
  - Meeting included in-person capital grant presentations.
  - Committee discussed applications, presentations, funding priorities based on preliminary budgets available, and conditional recommendations
- ❑ Funding recommendations agreed upon for EC and Board consideration
- ❑ Executive Committee reviewed and discussed all applications and PDC recommendations.

# Scoring

Scores between 18-20 will have a high priority for funding

Scores between 15.0-17.9 will be recommended for funding

Scores between 12.0-14.9 consider funding if resources allow

Scores below 12 points will not be recommended for funding.

# Capital Applications Summary

**Clyde Riverfront Park** – Construct an open pavilion venue and implement Clyde’s first segment of the Hellbender Trail at Riverfront Park, creating a critical connection between downtown Clyde and the Pigeon River.

**Stuart Auditorium Modernization** – Transform the historic 2,000 seat auditorium into Haywood County’s premier, year-round destination for large-scale events by investing in a climate-controlled breezeway, ADA public restrooms, new stage lighting, and renovated facilities green room and restrooms.

**Boyd Ave Greenway Connector** – Build the segment of the Richland Creek Greenway to connect Dutch Fisher Ballpark to Boyd Ave and improve the connection to Killian St to provide safe off-road walking, jogging, and biking.

**Kiwanis Playground 2.0 Enhancement** – Establish new upgraded play equipment where the crumbling 22+ year old play structure is currently located at the Waynesville Recreation Park to enhance year-round interactive play through increased sensory and accessibility features.

**Upper Falls Connector Trail** – Connect the Blue Ridge Parkway to the valley floor of Graveyard Fields and accommodate equipment needed to support broader restoration work and major trail system improvements while expanding recreation opportunities by adding trail mileage and creating a first link in a new loop around Upper Falls trail.

# Capital Funding Requests & Recommendations

Applicant Name	Grant Type	Project	Total Cost	Grant Request	Ave. Score	PDC Rec	EC Rec
Town of Clyde	Capital	Clyde Riverfront Park	\$473,946	\$72,720	18.8	Fully Fund. 1%- \$54,710 3%- \$18,010	Agree
Lake Junaluska Assembly	Capital	Stuart Auditorium Modernization	\$388,000	\$175,000	17.3	Fully Fund. 1%- \$126,730 3%- \$48,270	Agree
Town of Waynesville	Capital	Boyd Ave Greenway Connector	\$255,000	\$127,500	16.1	Fully Fund 1% - \$127,500	Agree
Kiwanis Club of Waynesville	Capital	Kiwanis Playground 2.0 Enhancement	\$537,300	\$90,000	13.7	Fund up to \$90,000 with contingencies*	Agree
The Pisgah Conservancy	Capital	Upper Falls Connector Trail	\$441,410.88	\$66,808.17	17.9	Fully fund 3% - \$66,808.17	Agree

# Canton Funding Requests & Recommendations

Applicant Name	Grant Type	Project	Total Cost	Grant Request	Average Score	PDC Rec	EC Rec
Town of Canton	Legacy	118 <sup>th</sup> Day Labor Day Festival	\$200,050	\$15,000	17.7	Fully fund. \$15,000 – 1%	Agree
Lake Logan	Promo	Cold Mountain Music Festival	\$82,400	\$17,700	15.4	Partial Fund \$10,000 – 1%	Agree
Canton Merchant Partnership	Promo	Haywood Grows Farm Fest	\$53,450	\$10,000	11.4	Partial Fund \$7,000 – 1% contingent*	Open for Board discussion
Canton Merchant Partnership	Promo	Mill Around Town	\$10,700	\$3,000	12.8	Fully Fund \$3,000 – 1% contingent*	Agree

**FY 26-27 Promotion Requests: \$45,700**

**FY 26-27 Promotion Funds Available\*: \$15,121 + \$28,000 FB (\$43,121)**

*\*Numbers are preliminary estimates*

# Lake Junaluska Funding Requests & Recommendations

Applicant Name	Grant Type	Project	Total Cost	Grant Request	Ave Score	PDC Rec	EC Rec
Lake Junaluska Assembly	Legacy	Independence Day Celebration	\$47,200	\$9,150	17.2	Fully Fund 1% - \$9,150	Agree
Lake Junaluska Assembly	Promo	Lake Junaluska Promotions	\$59,436	\$39,624	14.2	Partial Fund 1% - \$16,286 Contingent*	Agree
Steve Sutton Memorial Charitable Trust	Promo	Steve Sutton Festival	\$42,452	\$15,000	15.2	Partial Fund 1% - \$5,722	Agree

**FY 26-27 Promotion Requests: \$63,774**

**FY 26-27 Promotion Funds Available\*: \$26,158 + \$5,000 FB (\$31,158)**

*\*Numbers are preliminary estimates*

# Maggie Valley Funding Requests & Recommendations

Applicant Name	Grant Type	Project	Total Cost	Grant Request	Average Score	PDC Rec	EC Rec
Town of Maggie Valley	Legacy	Backyard 4 <sup>th</sup>	\$26,280	\$6,570	17.2	Fully Fund 1% - \$6,570	Agree
Maggie Valley Falls Days	Legacy	Fall Days	\$31,100	\$7,775	13.5	Fully Fund 1% - \$7,775	Agree
Haywood County Arts Council	Promo	Smoky Mountains Bluegrass Festival	\$50,019	\$10,000	14.3	Fully Fund 1% - \$10,000	Agree
Ben's Backdraft Barbecue	Promo	Barbecue Festival	\$25,000	\$12,500	12.8	Fully Fund 1% - \$12,500 Contingent*	Agree

*\*Numbers are preliminary estimates*

**FY 26-27 Promotion Requests: \$36,845**

**FY 26-27 Promotion Funds Available\*: \$47,733 + \$310,000 FB (\$357,733)**

# Waynesville Funding Requests & Recommendations

Applicant Name	Grant Type	Project	Total Cost	Grant Request	Average Score	PDC Rec	EC Rec
Lake Junaluska Assembly	Legacy	Independence Day Celebration	\$47,200	\$3,750	17.2	Fully Fund 1% - \$3,750	Agree
Haywood County Pride on Main	Promo	Pride on Main	\$13,800	\$8,000	12.9	Partial Fund 1% - \$4,700 Contingent*	Agree
DWC	Promo	Appalachian Heritage Weekend	\$61,290	\$39,425	14.9	Partial Fund 1% - \$30,000	Agree
Shelton House	Promo	Shelton House / Haywood Co Arts Trail	\$3,000	\$2,000	14.9	Fully Fund 1% - \$2,000	Agree

**FY 26-27 Promotion Requests: \$53,175**

**FY 26-27 Promotion Funds Available\*: \$41,850 + \$165,000 FB (\$206,850)**

*\*Numbers are preliminary estimates*

# Haywood County Funding Requests & Recommendations

Applicant Name	Grant Type	Project	Total Cost	Grant Request	Average Score	PDC Rec	EC Rec
Smoky Mountain Event Center	Legacy	Haywood County Fair	\$70,821.96	\$15,000	15.7	Partial Fund 3% - \$12,000 Contingent*	Agree
Haywood County Arts Council	Promo	Studio Tour	\$12,595	\$6,000	15.0	Fully Fund 3% - \$6,000	Agree

**FY 26-27 Promotion Requests: \$21,000 + RO \$9812.67 (\$30,812.67)**

**FY 26-27 Promotion Funds Available\*: \$28,000**

*\*Numbers are preliminary estimates*



# Thank you

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