The Eviction Mapping Project

Orange County, North Carolina

2023

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INTRODUCTION

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The Eviction Mapping Project began in June of 2023 as part of a summer internship effort to capture where evictions occur within Orange County and which communities are most affected by this form of displacement.

The Orange County Eviction Mapping Project focused on highlighting evictions, one of the most common forms of displacement in Orange County, North Carolina. Currently, the Eviction Diversion Program (EDP) tracks eviction data for every session of Small Claims Court. This data includes tenant and landlord names, file numbers, and outcome of each case (i.e. judgment, dismissal, or continuance) among other relevant information for EDP. However, this data does not convey where most evictions happen throughout the county, thus failing to capture which communities are most affected by eviction displacement. Nor does the current data capture where in the county EDP is most successful in obtaining dismissals, therefore preventing evictions and displacement. Thus, the Eviction Mapping Project sought out to map all of the evictions and EDP-obtained dismissals that occurred between November 2021 (end of the Eviction Moratorium) through July 2023.

This report includes the key findings from the data collected, as well as individual maps developed by the Orange County Planning Department. In the future, the Housing Department could use this data to proactively engage at-risk tenants, guide investigations into property inhabitability and discrimination, and identify displacement patterns.

Additionally, the Eviction Mapping Project will serve as a foundation for future research on source of income discrimination (i.e. HCVs), losses of Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing (NOAH), and racial disparities in housing displacement. It is a tool that should be used for county-wide strategic planning to ensure that all Orange County residents are able to maintain their housing.
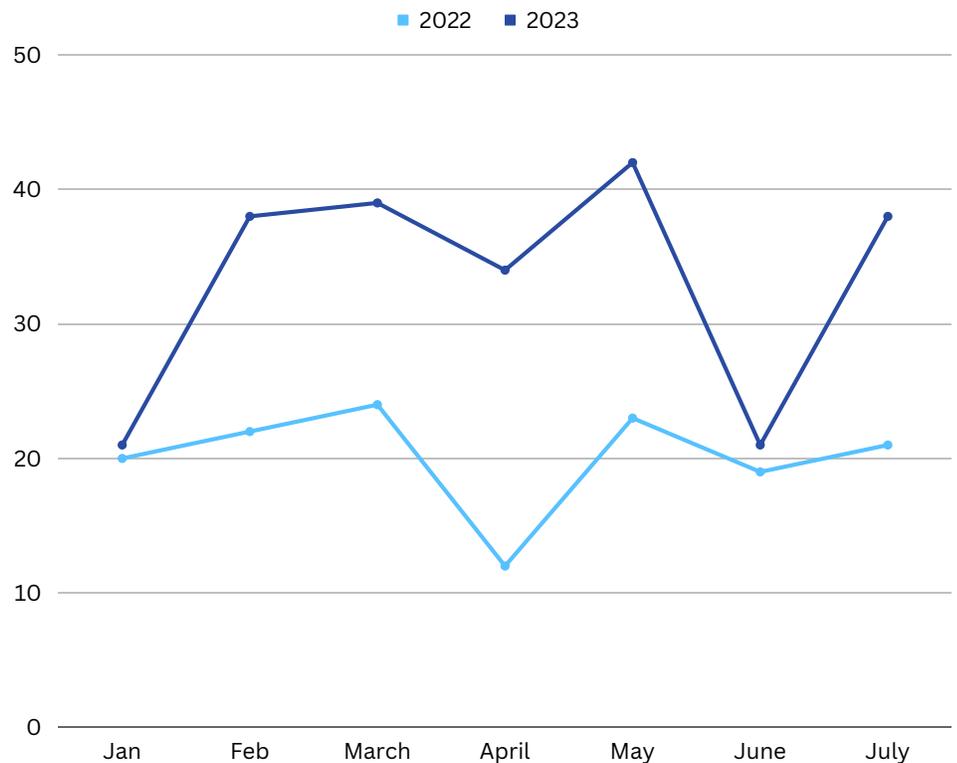
DATA SNAPSHOT

490 Households

Total Evictions
Since November 2021

2021 Nov. - Dec.	10
2022	246
2023 Jan. - July	233

Since the Eviction Moratorium ended in November 2021, the Eviction Diversion Program has recorded **490 Summery Ejectment Judgments**, also known as evictions. If trends continue, it is likely that **Orange County will surpass the 2022 eviction total by August 2023.**
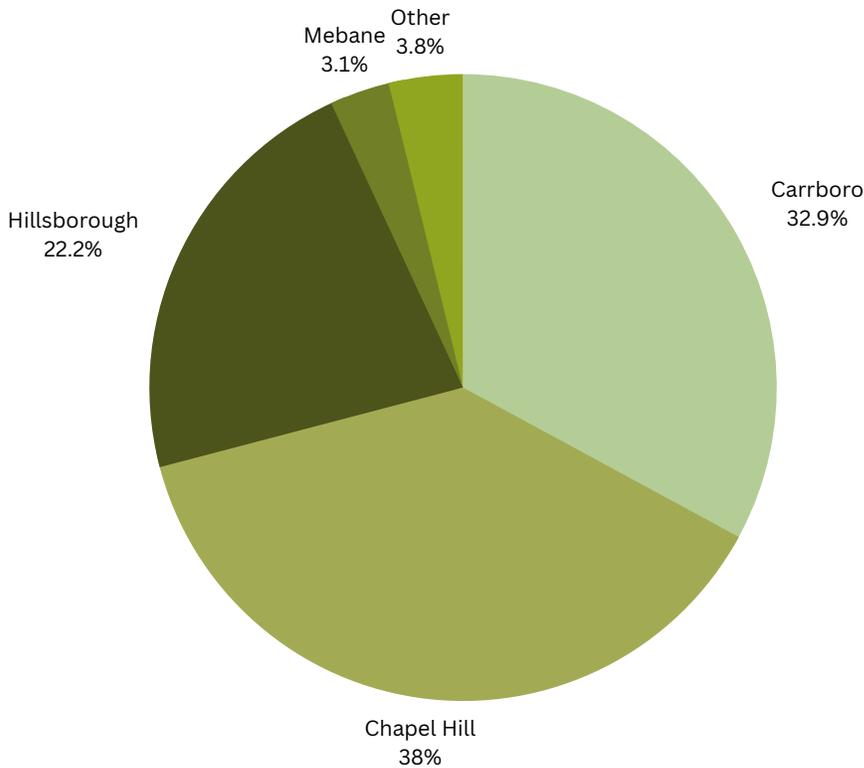
In every month of 2023, the number of evictions has surpassed the 2022 monthly total. In April 2023, the number of evictions was nearly triple April 2022. Additionally, February 2023 and May 2023 were nearly double their 2022 counterparts. More research should be done to better understand how COVID-19 impacted eviction numbers. It is possible that eviction filings were still at a low in 2022, which inflates the year-to-date comparison.

Year-to-Date Comparison

■ 2022 ■ 2023

DATA SNAPSHOT CONT.

PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL EVICTIONS

Other
3.8%

Mebane
3.1%

Hillsborough
22.2%

Carrboro
32.9%

Chapel Hill
38%

PERCENTAGE OF COUNTY POPULATION

Carrboro
14.2%

Other
36%
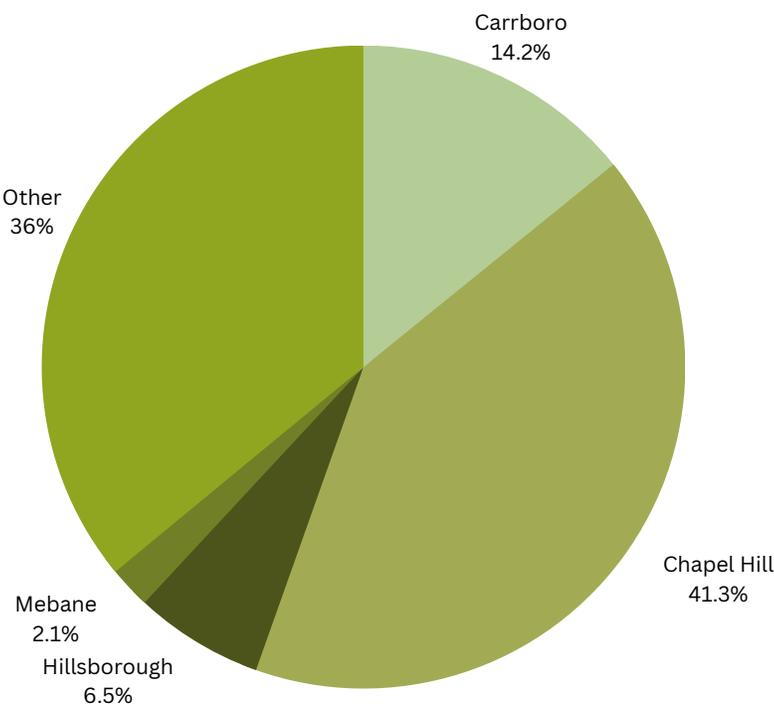
Chapel Hill
41.3%

Mebane
2.1%

Hillsborough
6.5%

Evictions Per Town

Of the 490 evictions since November 2021, the vast majority occurred within the towns of Carrboro, Chapel Hill, Hillsborough, and Mebane. There were **181 evictions in Carrboro, 209 in Chapel Hill, 122 in Hillsborough, and 17 in Mebane**.

The 2021 Census estimates that the population of Orange County was 150,477 in July 2022. As a proportion of that population, Carrboro is 14.2%, Chapel Hill is 41.3%, Hillsborough is 6.5%, and Mebane is 2.1% as the majority of Mebane is located in Alamance County. The remaining 36%, or Other, is made up of smaller towns such as Efland, Cedar Grove, and part of the city of Durham. **Evictions in Carrboro and Hillsborough are vastly overrepresented compared to their population, while Chapel Hill and Other smaller towns are underrepresented.**

MAPPING PRIORITIES

The Eviction Mapping Project focused on 4 major priority areas: Density, EDP-Dismissals, Income, and Race. For each priority area, individual maps were created to convey relevant data. Analysis will follow alongside the priority areas.

01 **Density**

To provide the county with a clear picture of county-wide evictions. These maps reveal concentrated pockets of evictions, particularly in Carrboro and Chapel Hill.

02 **Dismissals**

To demonstrate the efficacy of the Eviction Diversion Program since February 28, 2023 when the team began tracking their involvement in dismissed cases.

03 **Income**

To provide a better understanding of how evictions are correlated with the median income in particular neighborhoods throughout the four major towns.

04 **Race**

To provide a better understanding of how evictions are correlated with Black and Hispanic/Latino populations throughout the four major towns.

DENSITY
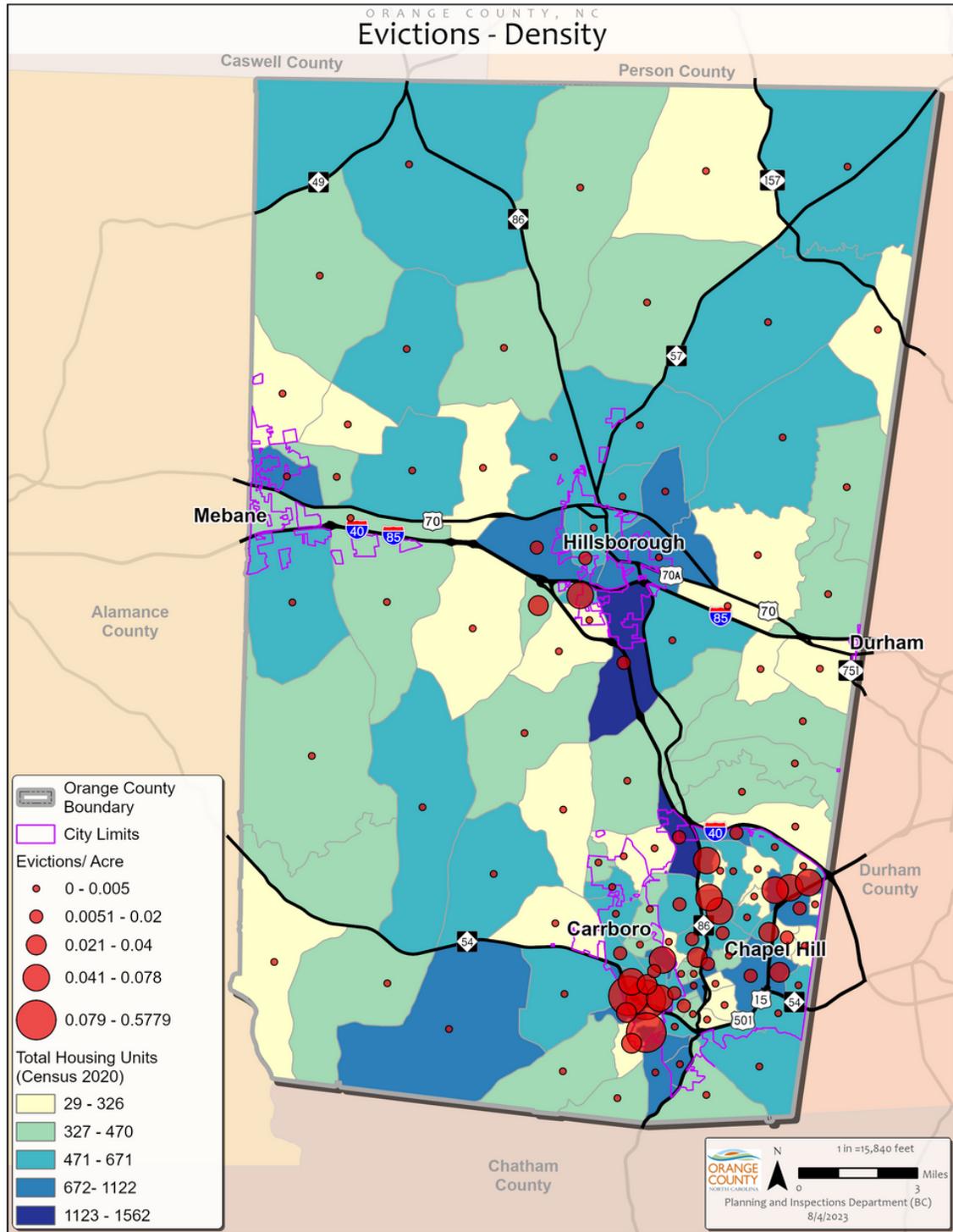
In Orange County, the majority of evictions are concentrated within the towns of Carrboro, Chapel Hill, Hillsborough, and Mebane with the largest number of evictions per acre found in Carrboro.
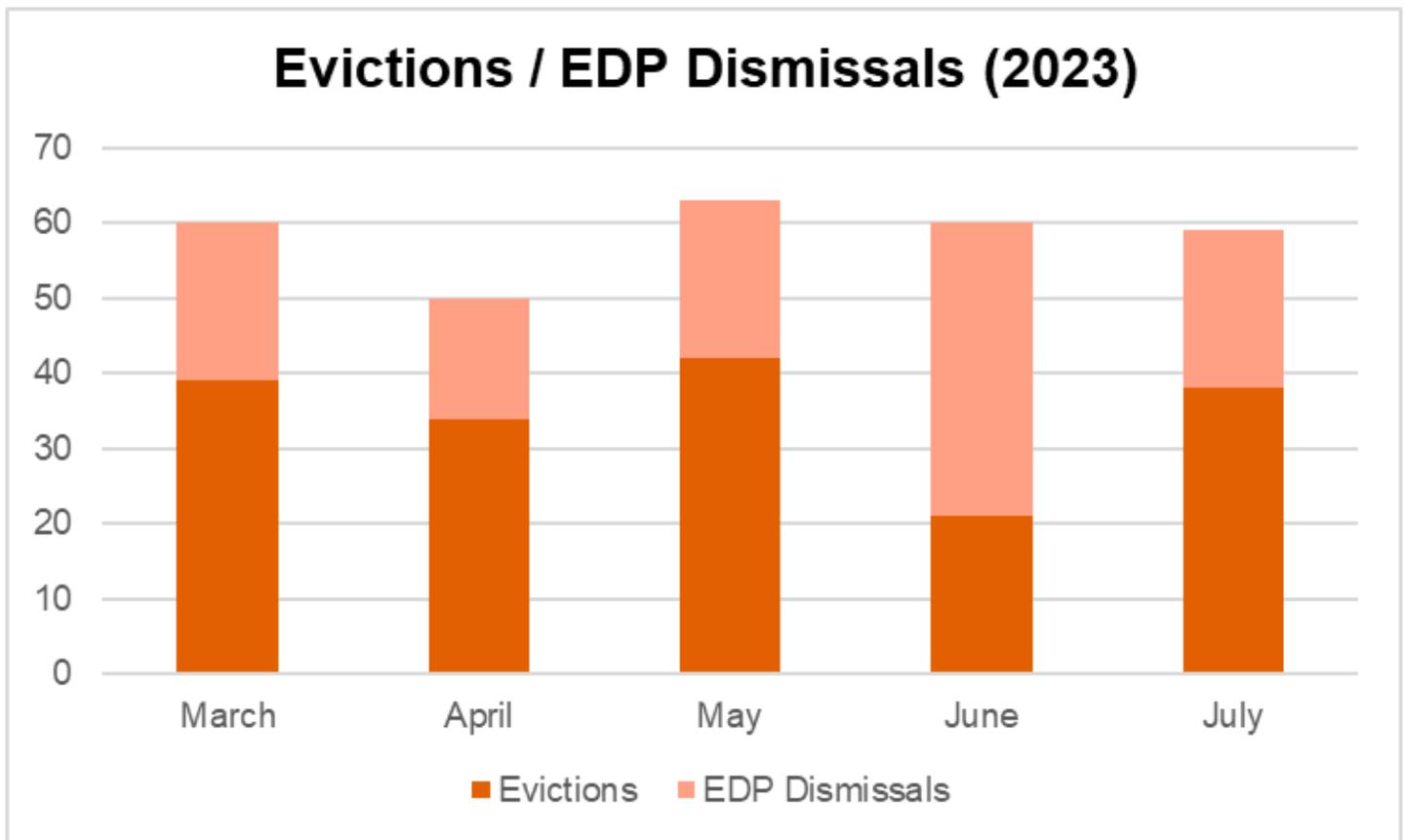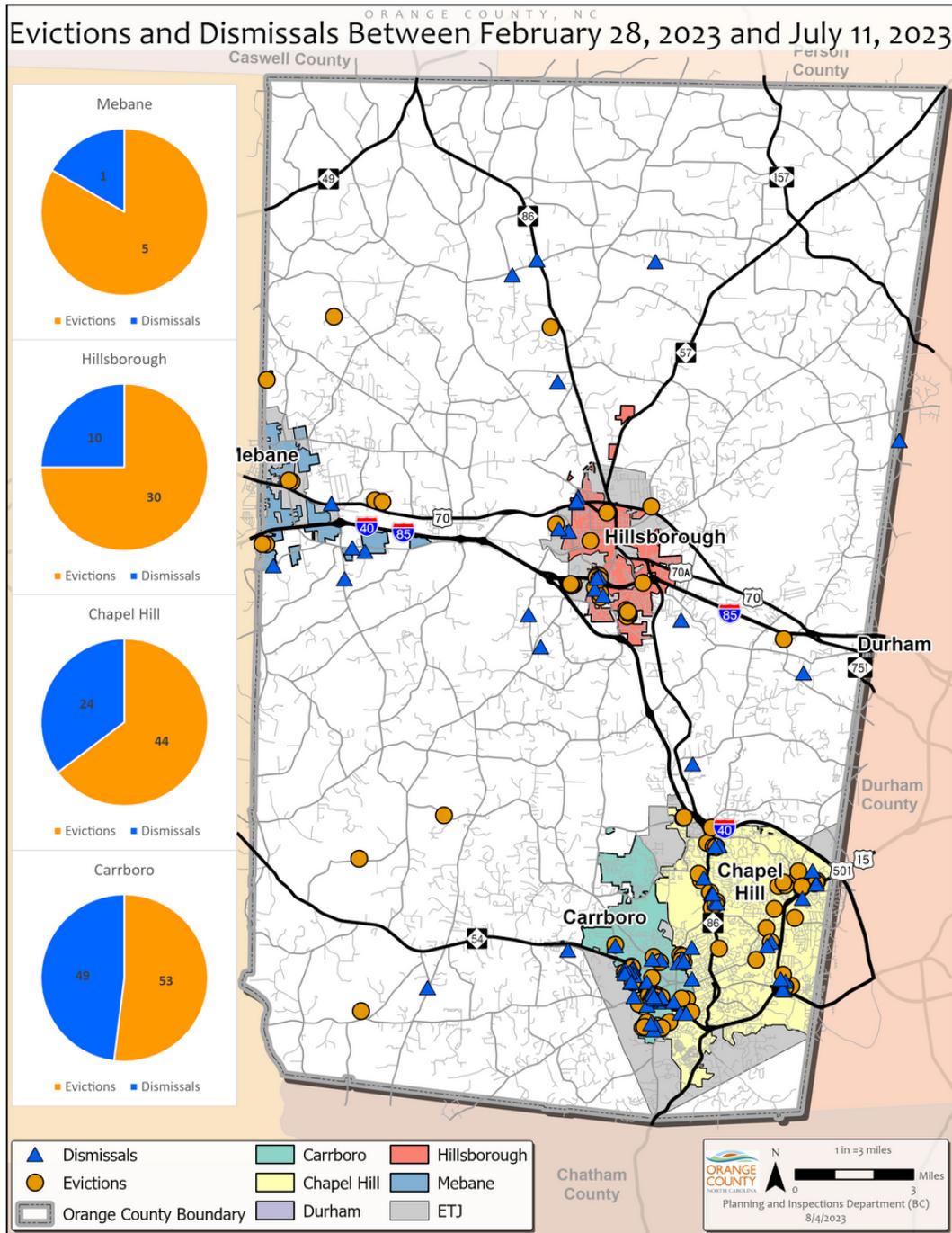
DENSITY CONT.
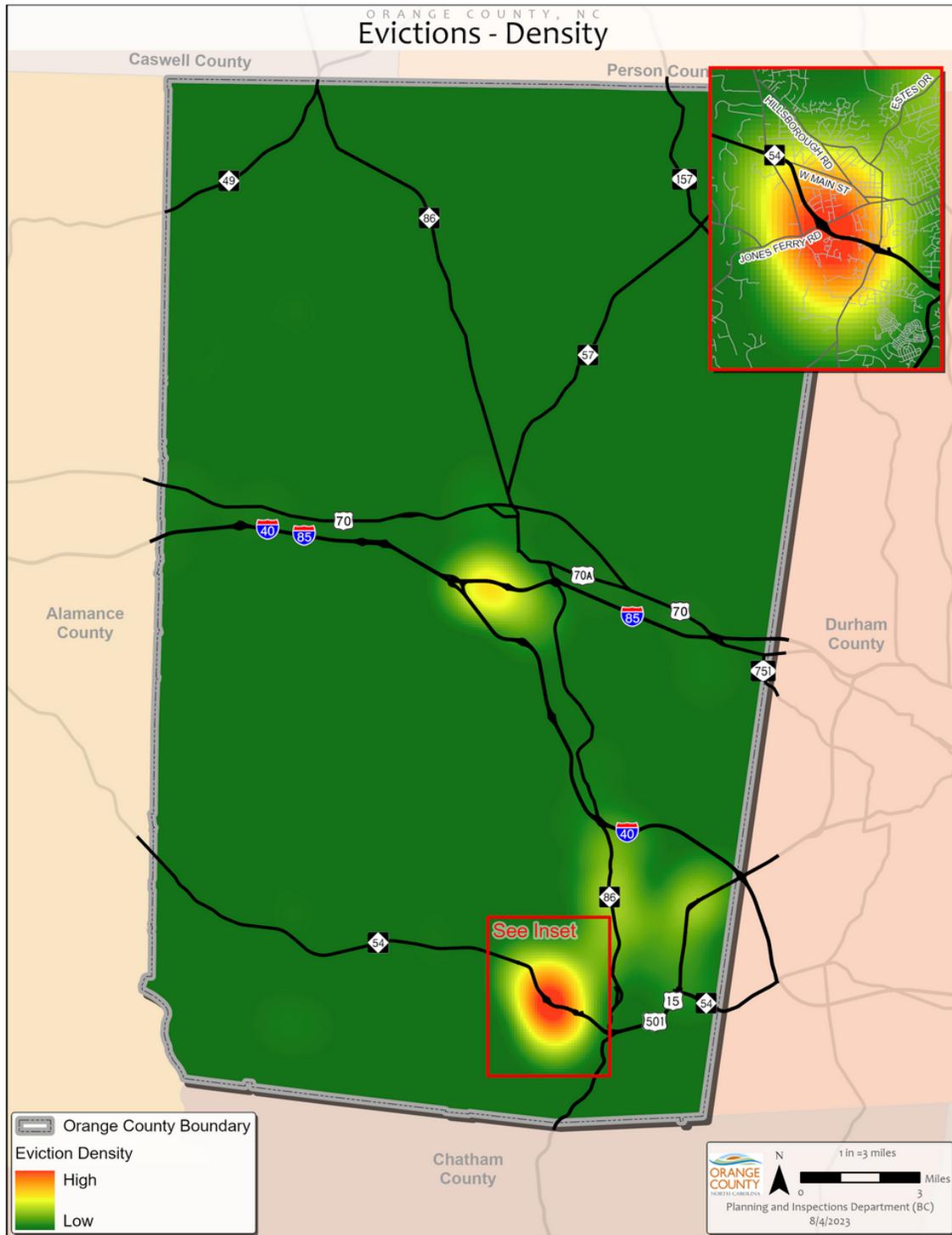
This heat map also demonstrates that eviction density is highest in Carrboro, especially surrounding the part of Highway 54 closest to Highway 86.

DISMISSALS

The Eviction Diversion Program has been instrumental in lowering the number of Orange County evictions. From March-July 2023 alone, EDP has **prevented 119 evictions.** Using a combination of legal expertise, Emergency Housing Assistance (rental and utility financial assistance), and landlord / tenant negotiation tactics, EDP prevented monthly evictions from rising above 40 households in March, April, June, and July.

Evictions / EDP Dismissals (2023)

Legend: ■ Evictions ■ EDP Dismissals

DISMISSALS CONT.

Evictions and Dismissals Between February 28, 2023 and July 11, 2023

In many of the same areas, neighborhoods, and apartment complexes where the majority of evictions occur in Orange County, the Eviction Diversion Program has also been successful in obtaining dismissals. These dismissals allow households to remain in their homes for longer and, in many cases, prevent displacement, housing instability, and homelessness.
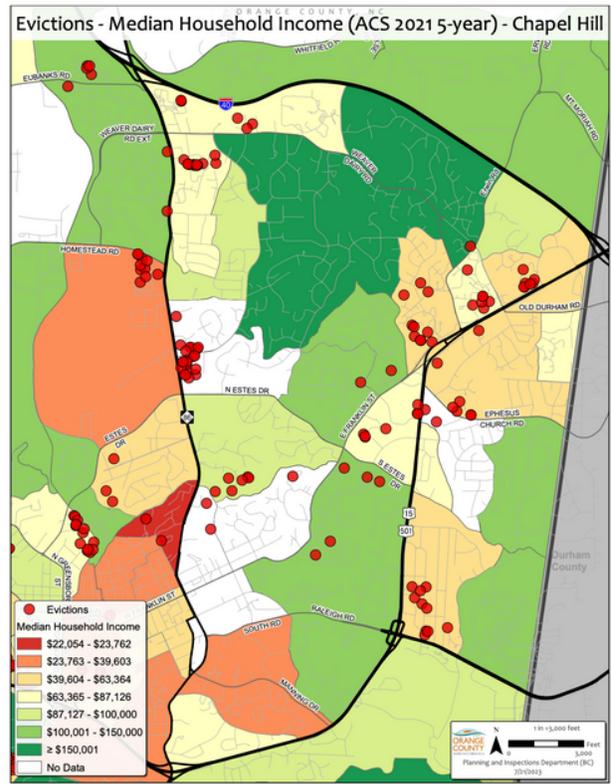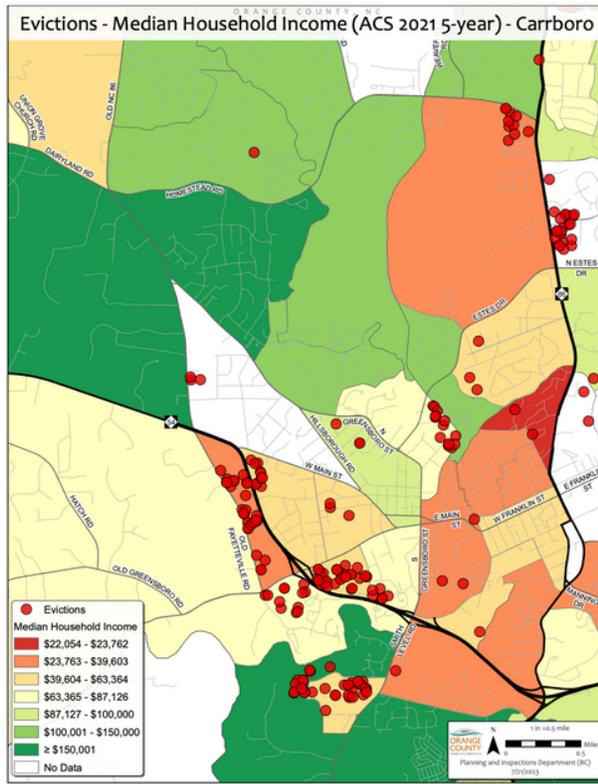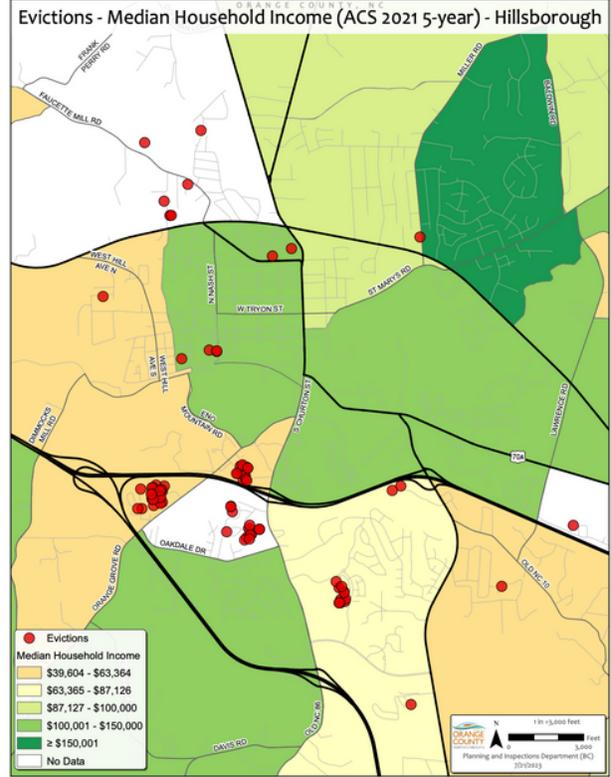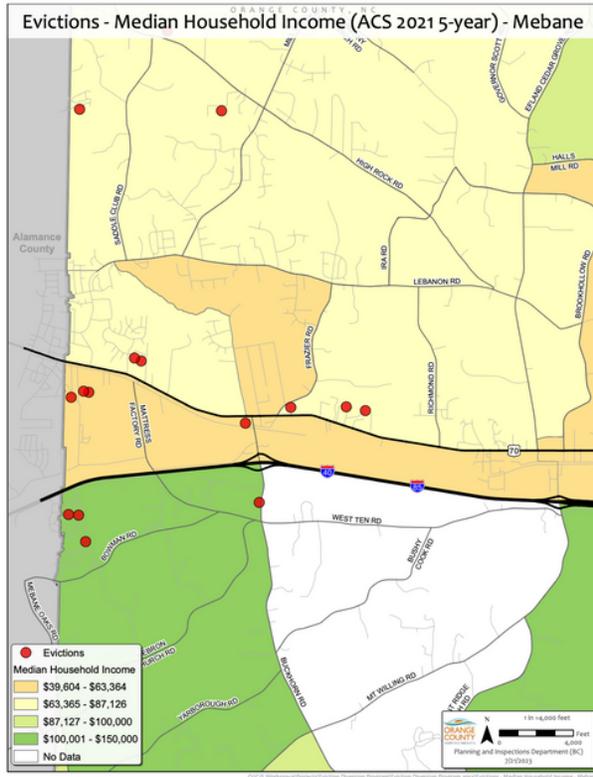
INCOME

In Orange County, North Carolina, the 2021 Census states the Median Household Income (MHI) was $79,205. In the areas where MHI exceeds the county median income, the following maps will demonstrate very low eviction numbers. Instead, the majority of evictions occurred in areas where the MHI is $39,604-$63,364 or below.
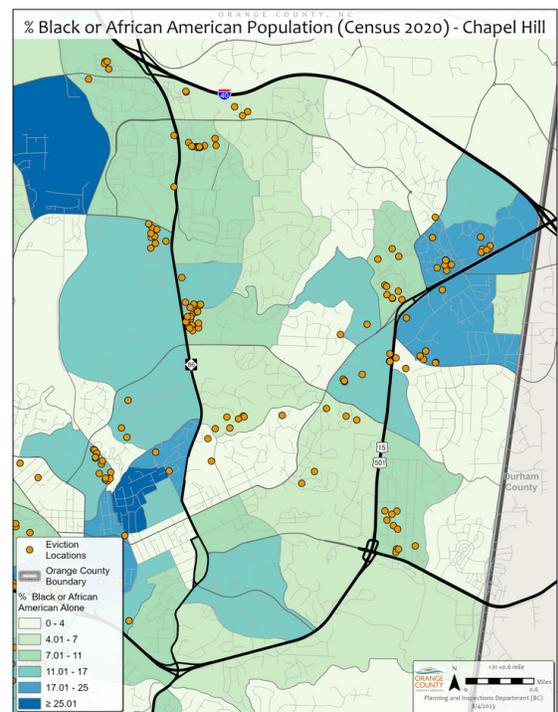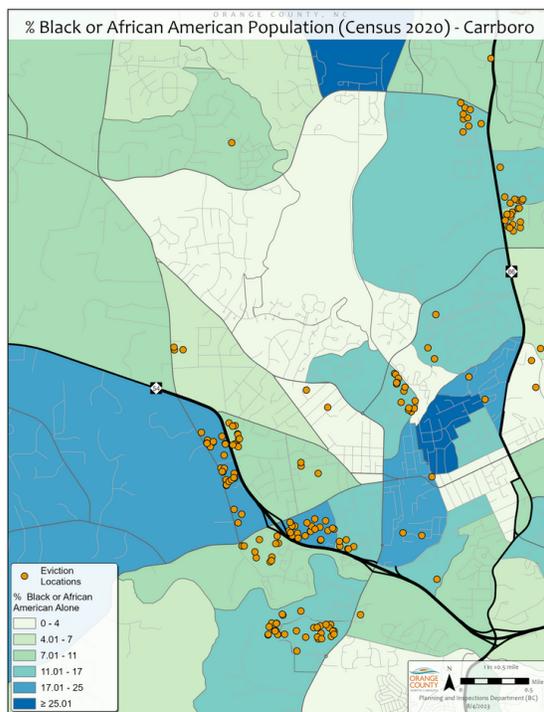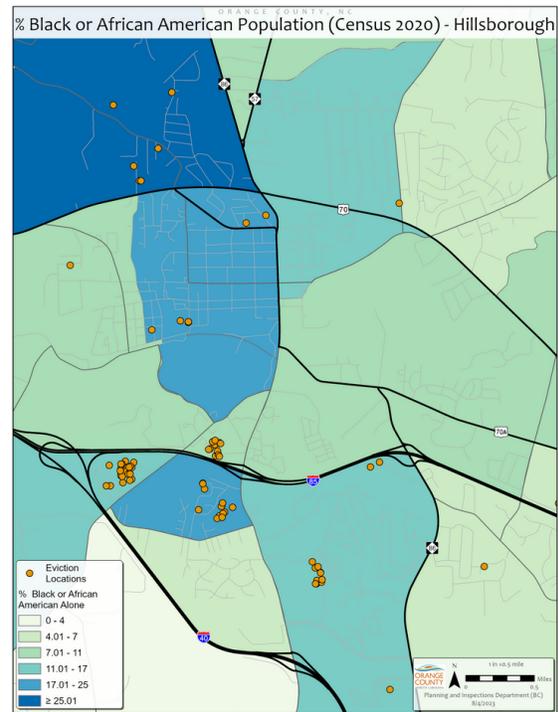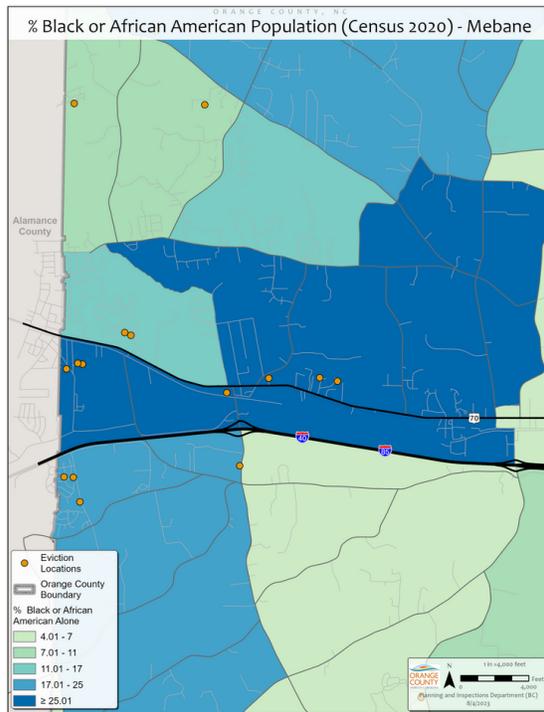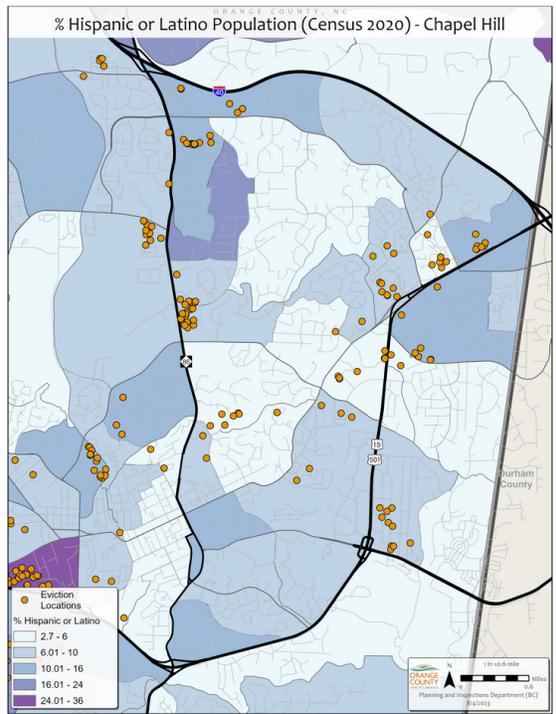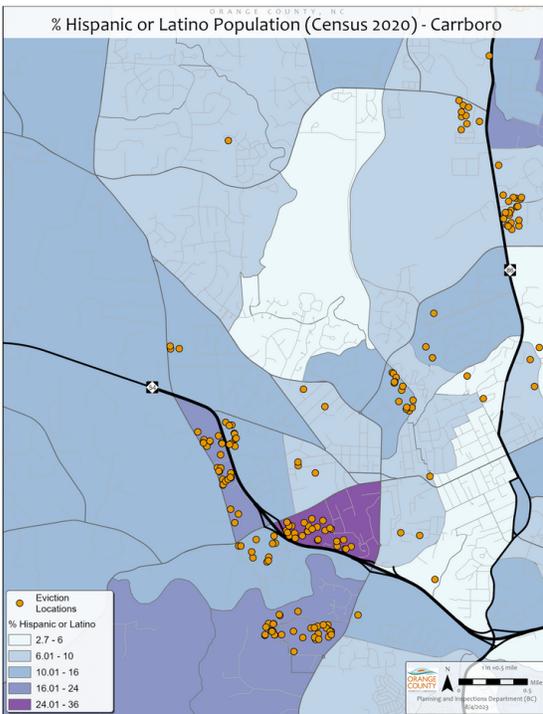
INCOME CONT.

RACE
BLACK / AFRICAN AMERICAN

In each town, the majority of evictions occur in areas with at least a 4% Black/African American population. In particular, evictions in Carrboro are concentrated to areas where greater than 11% of the population is Black/African American.

RACE
HISPANIC / LATINO
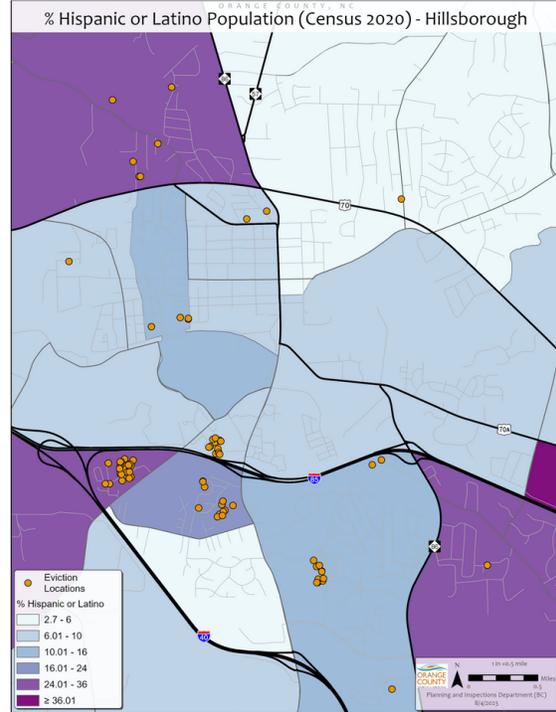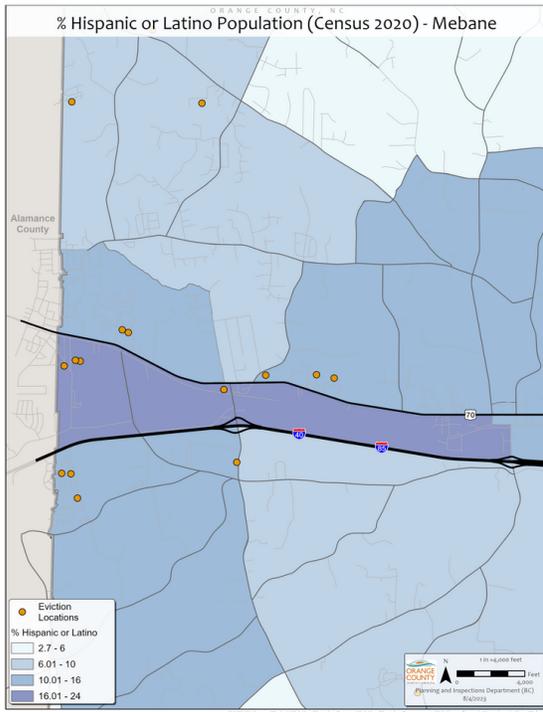
In each town, the majority of evictions occurred in areas with at least a 6% Hispanic/Latino population. In Hillsborough and Carrboro, evictions are concentrated to areas where greater than 10% of the population is Hispanic/Latino.

RACE
WHITE

% White Population (Census 2020) - Mebane

% White Population (Census 2020) - Hillsborough

% White Population (Census 2020) - Carrboro

% White Population (Census 2020) - Chapel Hill
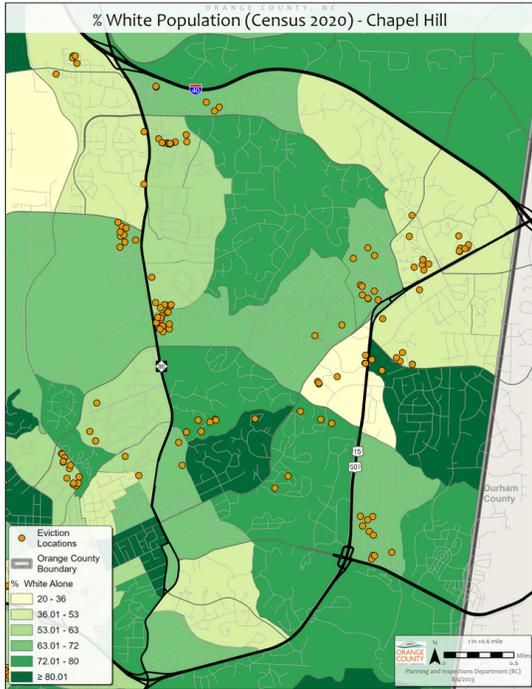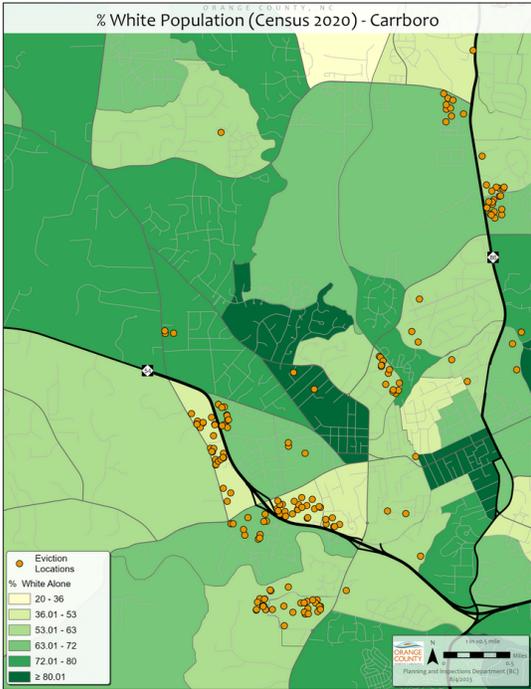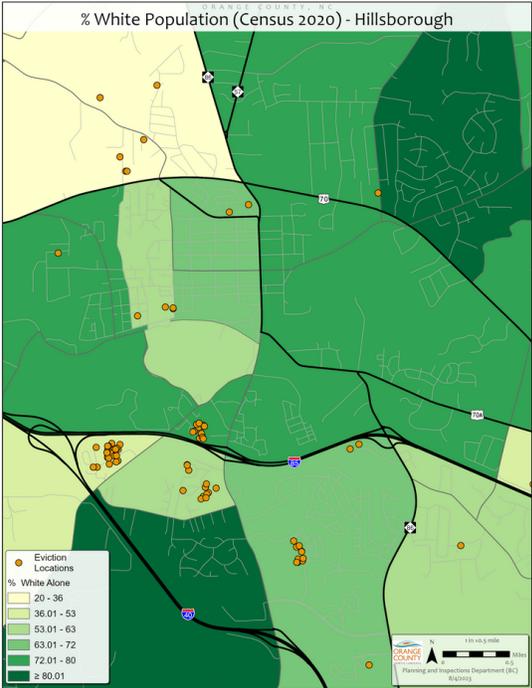
Across the four towns, very few evictions occurred in the areas where greater than 80% of the population is White.

RACE
CONCLUSIONS

Within Carrboro, Chapel Hill, Hillsborough, and Mebane, evictions are concentrated in areas with larger Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino populations. With the exception of a few outliers, the maps also demonstrate that the majority of evictions do not occur in areas where the White population is above 80%.
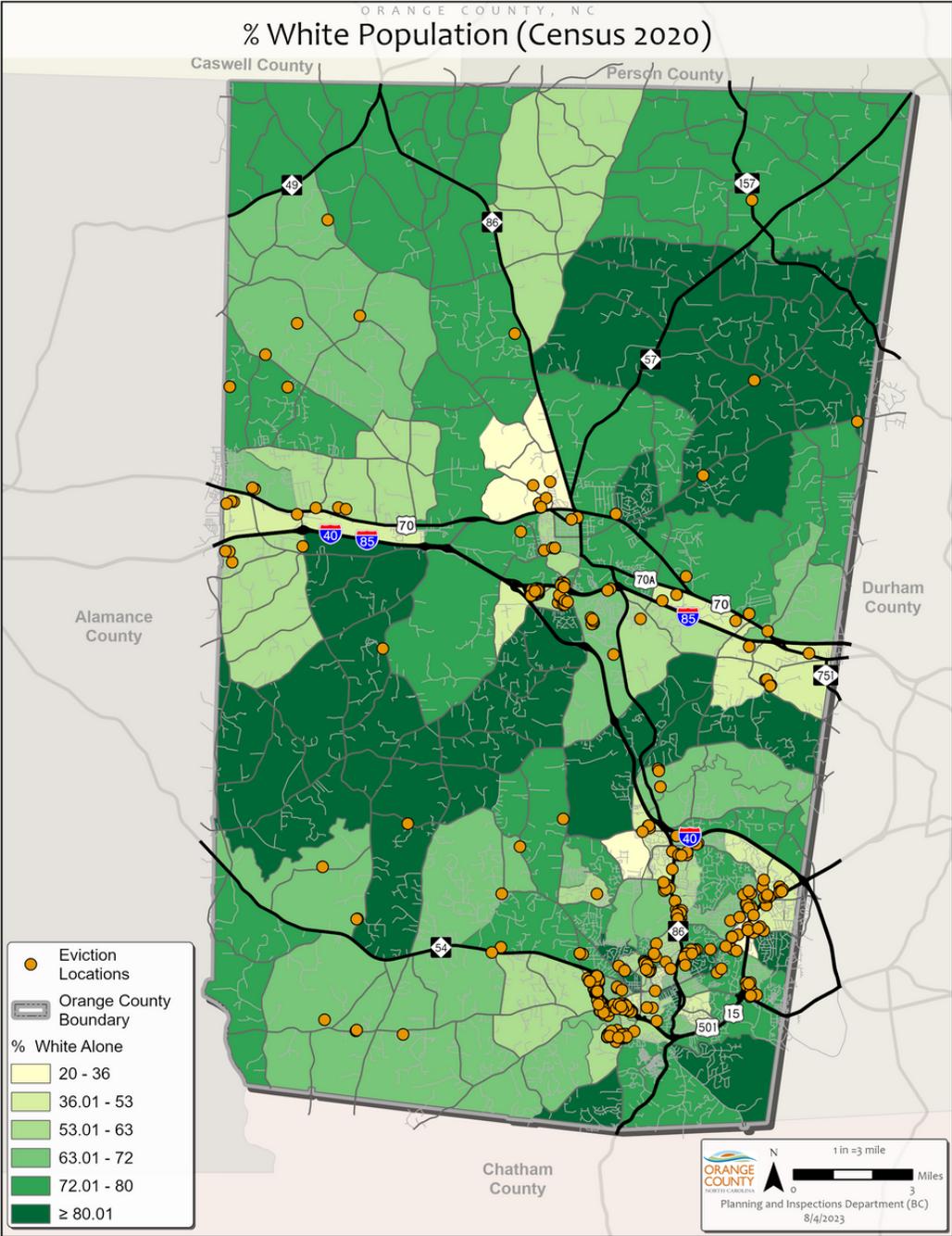
PROGRAMMATIC RECOMMENDATIONS

Where could the Eviction Diversion Program go from here?

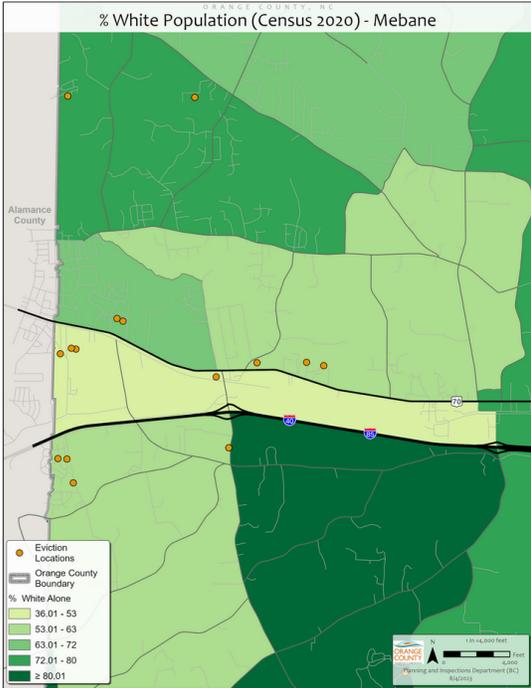While there are a number of programmatic efforts the Orange County Housing Department could take to bolster EDP, below are a few recommendations informed by the summer '23 internship experience.

01

Proactive Tenant Outreach

Using a list of the most major evictors in Orange County, conduct outreach (mail & in-person) to inform tenants of county resources including, but not limited to EDP and Emergency Housing Assistance.

02

Post-Eviction Stabilization

Assist clients in post-eviction housing and financial stabilization. Utilize a case manager, or multiple, to assist in the housing search, application, move-in, and budgeting process.

03

Investigating Habitability & Discrimination

Work with the Community Development division and Legal Aid of North Carolina's Fair Housing Project to follow up on client reports of habitability and discrimination issues.

04

Supporting Tenant Appeals

Bolster the EDP legal team with an additional lawyer to manage the eviction appeals process, as well as assist in the Small Claims workload.

CONCLUSION

The number of evictions in Orange County is growing. More people are being displaced from their homes and forced into precarious housing situations. The Eviction Diversion Program is an essential part of reducing the overall number of evictions.

Increase in Evictions

- In July of 2023, evictions have nearly surpassed the total number of 2022 evictions
- Every 2023 month has outnumbered its 2022 counterpart
- The majority of Orange County evictions are concentrated in the Towns of Carrboro, Chapel Hill, Hillsborough, and Mebane

Density, Income, Race
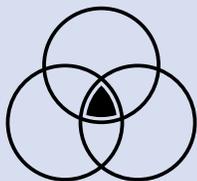
- Evictions in Carrboro and Hillsborough are particularly high for their population
- Evictions are concentrated in areas with MHI under $63,364 and rarely occur in areas with MHI over $87,127
- Evictions more often occurred in areas with Black/African American and/or Hispanic/Latino populations and avoided areas with a >80% White population

Recommendations

- EDP should engage in proactive tenant outreach, particularly to those housed at the largest evictors
- Case Management support for those recently evicted
- Investigations into habiltability and discrimination at the county's largest evictors
- Increase legal staff to support tenant appeal process

"It is hard to argue that housing is not a fundamental human need. Decent, affordable housing should be a basic right for everybody in this country. The reason is simple: without stable shelter, everything else falls apart."

— Matthew Desmond, *Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Ryan Evans, Eviction Diversion Program Legal Counsel

Tamara Miles, Eviction Diversion Expeditor

Libbie Hough, Community Stability Manager

Corey Root, Director of OC Housing Department

Brian Carson, Planning & Inspections GIS Technician III

Ehren Dohler, UNC School of Social Work PhD Candidate

Thank you for your continued support and mentorship. This project would not have come to life without you.

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