

Orange County Strategic Plan FY2025-2029

FY2024-2025 Progress Report



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Board of Commissioners



Phyllis Portie-Ascott
District 2

Amy Fowler
At Large

Marilyn Carter
District 1

Sally Greene
At Large

Earl McKee
District 2

Jamezetta Bedford
Chair District 1

Jean Hamilton
Vice Chair District 1

Manager's Message

Orange County is a visionary leader in providing governmental services valued by our community. We envision a future in which we work together to enhance the quality of life for all residents. The Countywide Strategic Plan highlights the priority goals that will move us toward this vision for the future, and outlines objectives to achieve our goals. By tracking our performance in these six priority areas, we can communicate our progress and strategize together to address challenges when they arise. This first year of the five year strategic plan has seen some exciting initial progress toward our goals for a Healthy Community, Multi-modal Transportation, Environmental Protection and Climate Action, and Housing for All, alongside important foundational work to begin tracking results of programming and investments in education and economic development.

We have achieved notable successes in our first year in promoting environmental sustainability, preserving natural resources and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. We are ahead of schedule in implementing strategies in the climate action plan and have recently completed the solar installation at the Efland EMS Station.

In our goal of achieving a healthy community through access to care and social safety net programming, staff have achieved early success in the implementation of new innovative approaches to care, and in the face of federal policy changes, have continued achieving our targets of providing social safety net services.

While we have made progress on many of the goals focused on promoting accessible housing and addressing housing disparities, the number of residents experiencing homelessness in the county increased since last year and rental costs continue to increase, decreasing the impact of the housing choice voucher subsidy.

Our goal of expanding, connecting and providing accessible public transportation options is off to a strong start in the first year. Ridership on county transportation services is up and timeliness has improved. Transportation Services added three network connections in FY24-25.

Progress toward the Public Education and Learning Community goal this first year has been focused on establishing tracking in a few areas. County funds have been allocated for the Long Range School Optimization Plan, and school capital spending on high priority needs and other capital uses is tracked quarterly. A notable piece of progress this year was the opening and strong visitor numbers at the Southern Branch Library.

The Diverse and Vibrant Economy goal is to foster an environment that attracts and retains sustainable and diverse businesses and visitors, employment opportunities, and diversifies our tax base. In FY24-25 we established baselines for tracking results of tourism resources invested in community partners producing cultural events, as well as the results of the county's small business and agricultural economic development grant programs. We began tracking results of employment programs provided by the Department of Social Services and Durham Tech Community College.

Strategic Plan Development Process

The Countywide Strategic Plan is intended to prioritize, focus, and align County programs and services. The plan development process included stakeholder interviews and focus groups, an online engagement portal, Countywide community surveys, and visioning sessions.

Plan Timeline

- **January 2023**
Project Kickoff and Stakeholder Identification
- **February 2023**
Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) Strategic Planning Orientation
- **March 2023**
Stakeholder Interviews and Focus Groups Commence
- **June 2023**
Community Visioning and Start of Countywide Community Survey
- **September 2023**
Draft Plan Development
- **December 2023**
Community Review of Draft Plan
- **February 2024**
BOCC Adopt Plan and Create Subcommittee to Review and Revise Performance Measures
- **April 2025**
BOCC Approve Revised Performance Measures
- **July 2025**
Departments Report Performance Measure Progress

Tracking Progress

Progress is tracked regularly. Staff teams evaluate and discuss progress toward achieving the Board's Strategic Goals quarterly and report progress to the County Manager's Office.

Monthly

County staff evaluate and discuss progress on Strategic Plan goals.

Quarterly

County leadership provides the County Manager's Office with progress updates for each Strategic Plan goal.

Twice a Year

The County Manager's Office prepares an update to the Board for each Strategic Plan goal, including significant wins and challenges.

Annually

The County Manager's Office prepares a year-end update detailing progress on each goal. Report presented to the Board and shared on orangecountync.gov for public access.

Mission Statement

Orange County is a visionary leader in providing governmental services valued by our community, beyond those required by law, in an equitable, sustainable, innovative, and efficient way.

Vision Statement

We are a diverse, inclusive, and healthy county working together to strengthen our community and enhance the quality of life for all residents.

Guiding Principles

Communication and Awareness

We provide information and opportunities for engagement in a transparent manner so that all in our community have knowledge, understanding, and a voice.

Inclusivity and Engagement

We foster an environment in which all are welcomed, represented, and empowered to participate in and feel connected to their community.

Dedication and Respect

We commit to our roles in public service and organizational excellence by fostering the skills, talents, and innovation of our residents, employees, volunteers, and boards needed to carry out this work.

Stewardship and Advocacy

We make proactive data-supported decisions and advocate to local, state and Federal governments in response to our community's needs in a way that best utilizes our resources.

Partnership and Collaboration

We build meaningful relationships and connections that allow us to create holistic and integrated systems of support for all.

Social Justice

We reject oppression and inequity by ensuring fair and equitable treatment of all people.

Climate Action and Sustainability

We recognize that our environment is critical to our existence and are deliberate in protecting, preserving, and sustaining our natural resources for the continued good of all.

Strategic Priorities

Priority 1 Environmental Protection and Climate Action

Promote sustainability and resiliency across the County and collaborate with our partners to activate our community, protect and preserve our natural resources, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Priority 2 Healthy Community

Increase equitable access to care and social safety net programming to promote the physical, social, and mental well-being of our community.

Priority 3 Housing for All

Promote equitable and accessible housing and address housing disparities through policies, partnerships, and collaboration to create a thriving community.

Priority 4 Multi-modal Transportation

Collaborate with our regional partners to expand, integrate/connect, and provide accessible public transportation options.

Priority 5 Public Education/Learning Community

Enhance and maintain quality school operations and infrastructure and cultivate lifelong learning.

Priority 6 Diverse and Vibrant Economy

Foster an environment that attracts and retains sustainable and diverse businesses and visitors, employment opportunities, and diversifies our tax base.

Priority 1 Environmental Protection and Climate Action

Promote sustainability and resiliency across the County and collaborate with our partners to activate our community, protect and preserve our natural resources, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

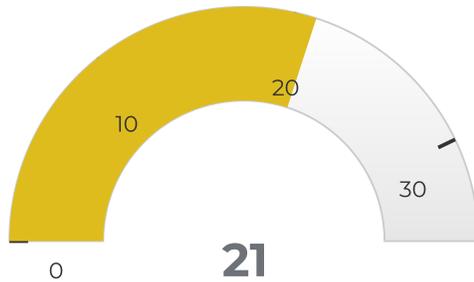
Objectives

1. Identify the priorities and resources necessary to implement the Climate Action Plan.
2. Invest in our infrastructure to reduce the environmental impact of the County fleet/facilities and improve safety.
3. Improve educational opportunities for County staff and community members on climate action and available resources to advance climate action projects.
4. Incentivize and promote sustainable agriculture and local food systems development through supportive policy, funding, farmland protection and educational outreach.
5. Review land use policies to promote and connect Town, County, and private trails and open spaces.
6. Protect water supply/watersheds.
7. Conserve and protect high-priority open space, including Natural Heritage sites, nature preserves, watershed riparian buffers, and prime/threatened farmland.
8. Include environmental stewardship objectives in the Comprehensive Land Use Plan.



1.1 Climate Action Plan Strategies

Climate Action Plan Strategies Implemented



1.1 Implement 50% (35) of Climate Action Plan Strategies by June 30, 2029, and document strategy status in Climate Action Tracker.

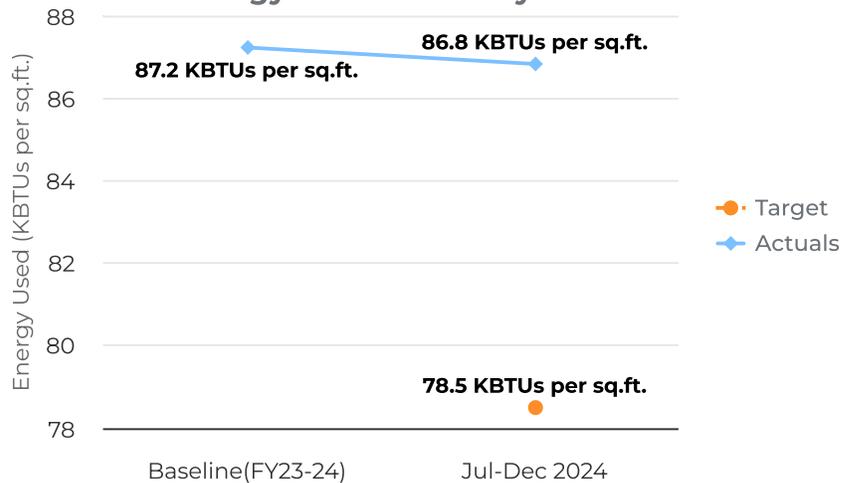
The measure is currently on track to achieve the 2029 target, having implemented 21 Climate Action Plan Strategies as of June 30, 2025.

1.2 Energy Use

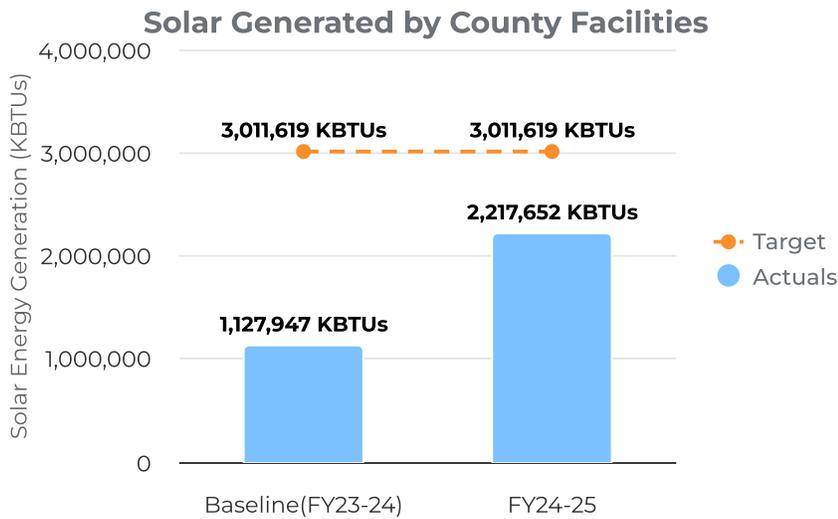
1.2 Reduce the energy intensity (energy used in KBTU, or one-thousand British thermal units, per building square foot) of county facilities by 10% to 78.5 KBTUs per square foot by June 30, 2029.

January to June 2025 data will be available later in September.

Energy Used in County Facilities



1.3 Solar Energy Generation



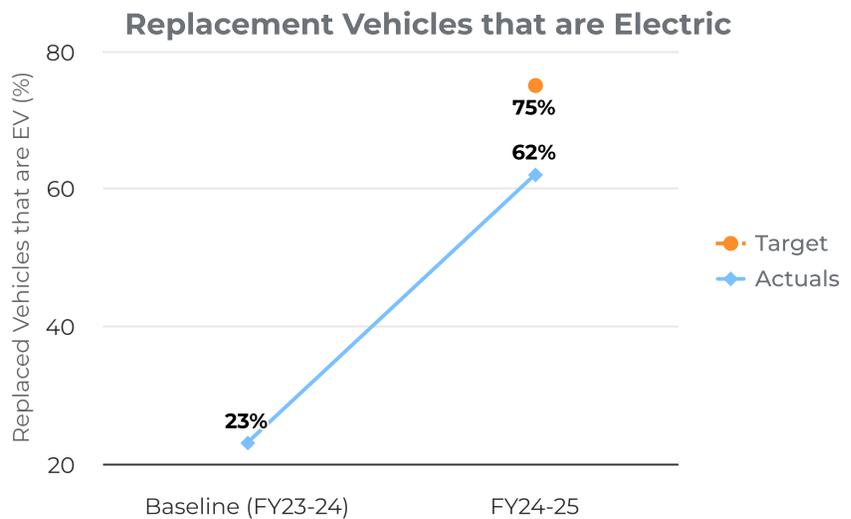
1.3 Increase the annual solar energy generated at County facilities by 167% by June 30, 2029.

The measure is currently on track to meet its target by June 30, 2029. The County expects solar generation to increase due to recent and planned projects. The Efland EMS Station recently completed its solar installation, and we have secured grant funding to install solar at the Cedar Grove Community Center. We plan to add solar to the Southern Human Services Center and the Drakeford Library Complex, and are conducting a solar feasibility study to help prioritize future projects.

1.4 Vehicle Replacement

1.4 Replace 75% of County non-first responder vehicles (7-8 vehicles) each year with electric or other alternative fuel vehicles (biodiesel, ethanol, hydrogen, etc.).

Out of 29 vehicles replaced in FY24-25, 18 are electric vehicles. 36 of the 208 vehicles in the County fleet are electric vehicles.



1.5 Environmental Protection and Sustainable Practices

1.5 Increase the rating in the bi-annual community survey on the following two questions by one percentage point every 2 years:

How would you rate the County:

- *As a community committed to green & sustainable practices*
- *As a place that prioritizes environmental protection*

The 2023 Community Survey indicated a **66%** positive response to the County's commitment to green and sustainable practices. The positive response was slightly lower, **60%**, to the County's prioritization of environmental protection. The 2025 Community survey will be administered in the fall.

1.6 Sustainable Farming Practices

1.6 Establish a baseline and increase the number of sustainable farming practices farmers implement after participating in sustainable farming programs, outreach, or education each year.

In FY2024-25:

- 19 sustainable farming practices were funded through the agricultural economic development grant program,
- 442 landowners conducted soil health management, and
- 64 acres were managed through prescribed burning.

1.7 Land Protection

Acres of Land Protected by Easement



1.7 Permanently protect 300 additional acres of farmland, priority natural areas, riparian buffer lands, floodplains, and wildlife habitat over the next 5 years.

The measure is on track to meet its five-year target. During the first year of tracking the measure, the County protected an additional 67.242 acres, or 22.4% of the goal.

Priority 2 Healthy Community

Increase equitable access to care and social safety net programming to promote the physical, social, and mental well-being of our community.



Objectives

1. Improve harm reduction, prevention, and therapeutic interventions for adults and children experiencing behavioral health issues, substance use disorder, and intellectual or developmental disability.
2. Expand access to quality, affordable healthcare services. (e.g., Crisis Diversion facility, Medicaid expansion, crisis response, behavioral health).
3. Provide protective services for our most vulnerable community members with practices and resources that support reducing risk factors, ensuring safety, and achieving permanency.
4. Support the basic needs and financial security of low-income families through a robust safety net of economic supports that help build long-term financial security.
Provide deflection, diversion, therapeutic interventions, and re-entry support, including housing for justice-involved children and adults.
5. Invest in, support, train, and retain our community safety, health, and emergency services employees and direct care workforce.
6. Provide sustainable, equitable, and high-quality community safety and emergency services to meet the community's evolving needs.
7. Invest in services and programs that improve the health and quality of life of the community (e.g., recreation and public open spaces, arts, etc.)

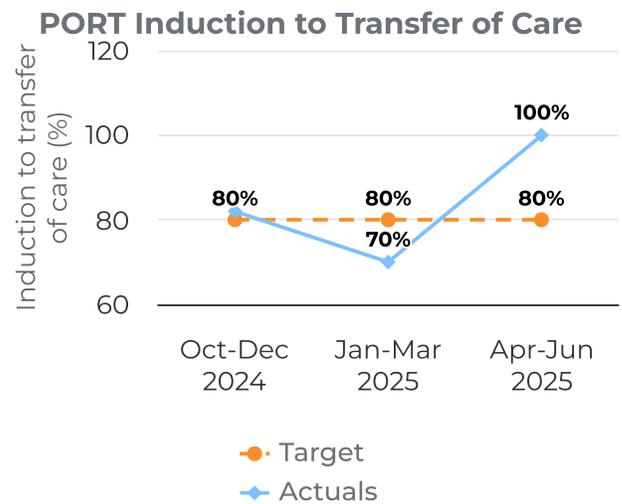
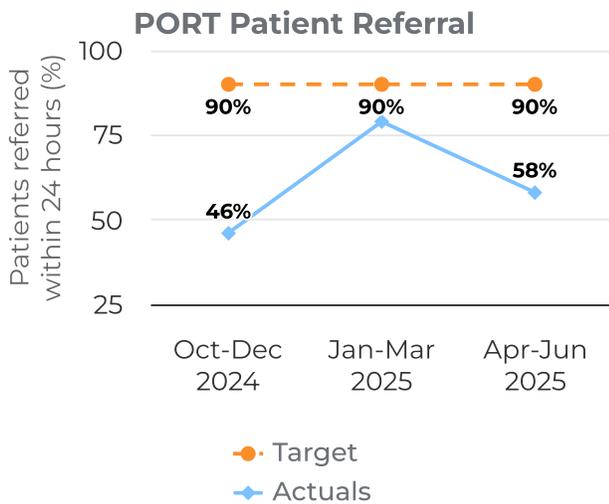
2.1 Post Overdose Response Team (PORT) Implementation

2.1 Implement Post Overdose Response Team (PORT):

- PORT contacts 90% of patients referred within 24 hours.
- PORT establishes and maintains an 80% induction to transfer of care and completion of medication-assisted treatment for opioid-use disorders.

In its first three quarters of operation, PORT has not yet met the ambitious target of a 90 percent contact rate within 24 hours. The team attempts to contact patients for referral, but successful contacts are often challenging when the team does not have a patient's phone number or address.

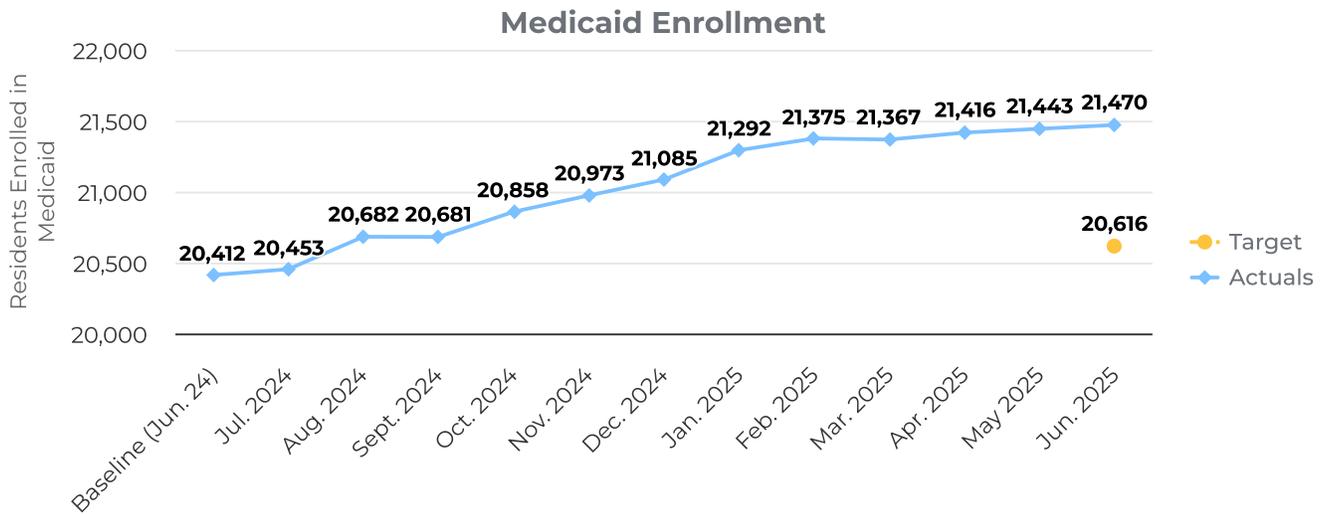
The rate of induction to transfer of care is currently meeting and exceeding the target of 80 percent. Because the absolute number of PORT inductions is small, a minor amount of variation can dramatically impact the percentage from one quarter to the next.



2.2 Medicaid Enrollment

2.2 Increase enrollment of Medicaid-eligible residents by 1% (200 individuals) annually through Fiscal Year 2028-29.

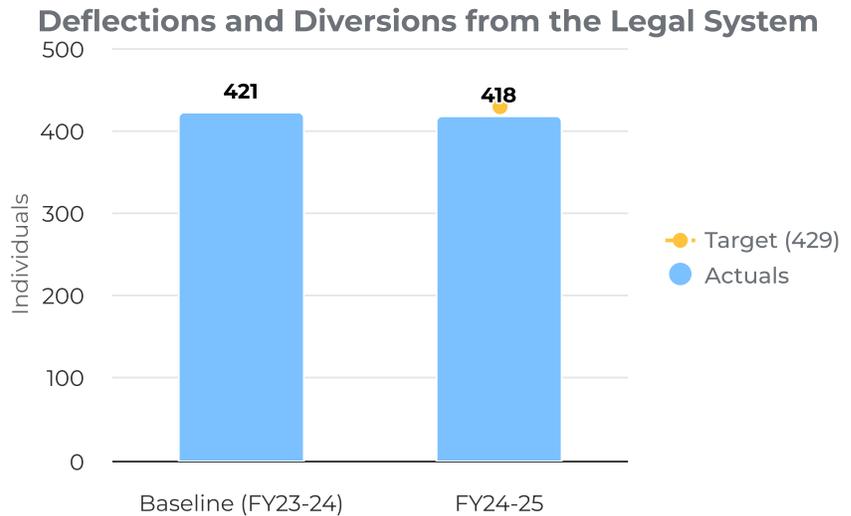
The measure is currently meeting and exceeding its target, having increased the enrollment of Medicaid-eligible residents by 5 percent since June 2024.



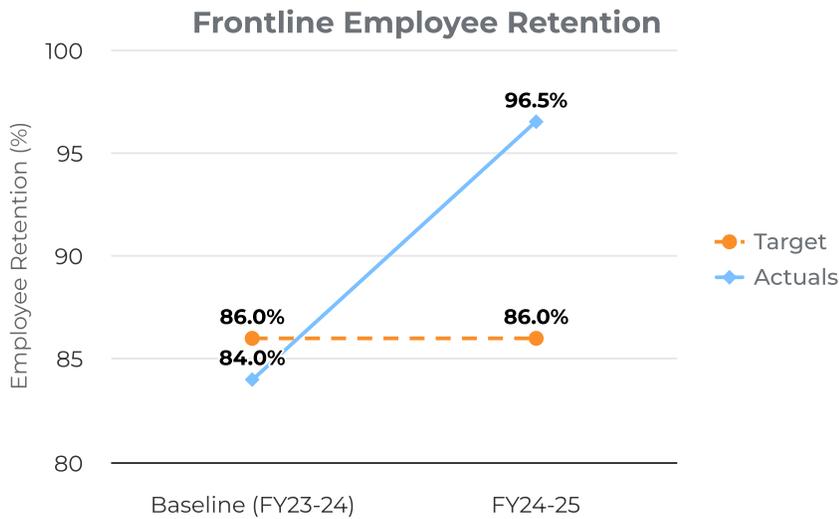
2.3 Deflection and Diversions from the Legal System

2.3 Increase by 2% annually the number of individuals deflected or diverted from criminal legal system involvement, by referring individuals to the Criminal Justice Resource Department deflection and diversion programs.

The Criminal Justice Resource Department reported three fewer deflections and diversions from the legal system in FY24-25 than in FY23-24.



2.4 Employee Retention



2.4 Through Fiscal Year 2028-29, maintain an annual retention rate of 86% or more among:

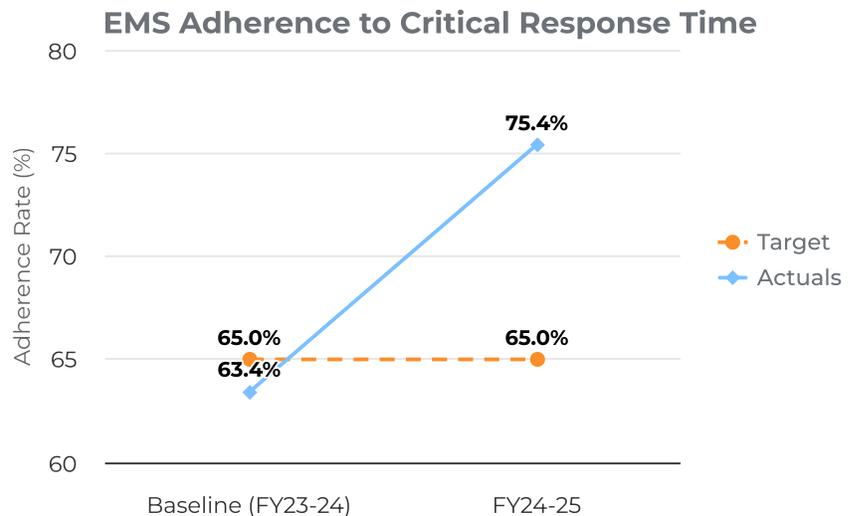
- Deputy Sheriffs,
- EMTs and Paramedics,
- 911 Call Takers and Telecommunicators, and
- Protective Services Social Workers

The measure is currently meeting and exceeding the target. The first year saw an overall frontline employee retention increase of 12.5 percentage points, 10.5 percentage points more than the proposed target.

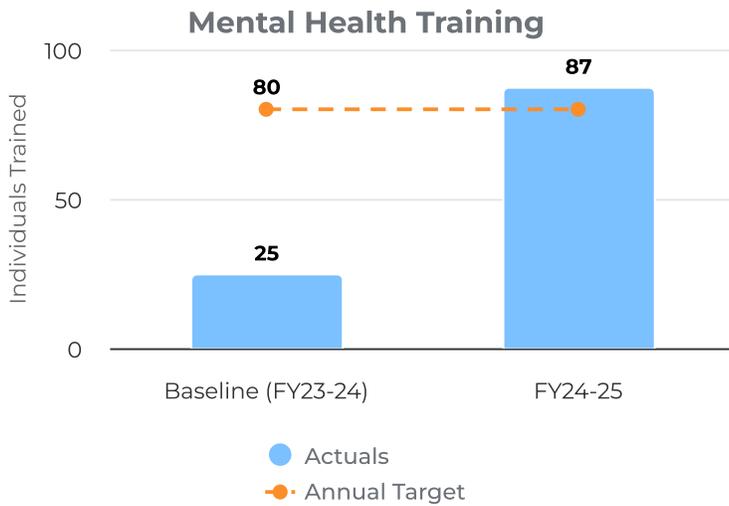
2.5 EMS Response Time

2.5 Achieve by April 1, 2025, and maintain a 65% adherence rate to a 15 minute or less emergent total response time for events requiring critical intervention by Emergency Medical Services.

In the first year, EMS adherence to the critical response time increased by 12 percentage points, surpassing the target rate by over 10 percentage points.



2.6 Mental Health Training



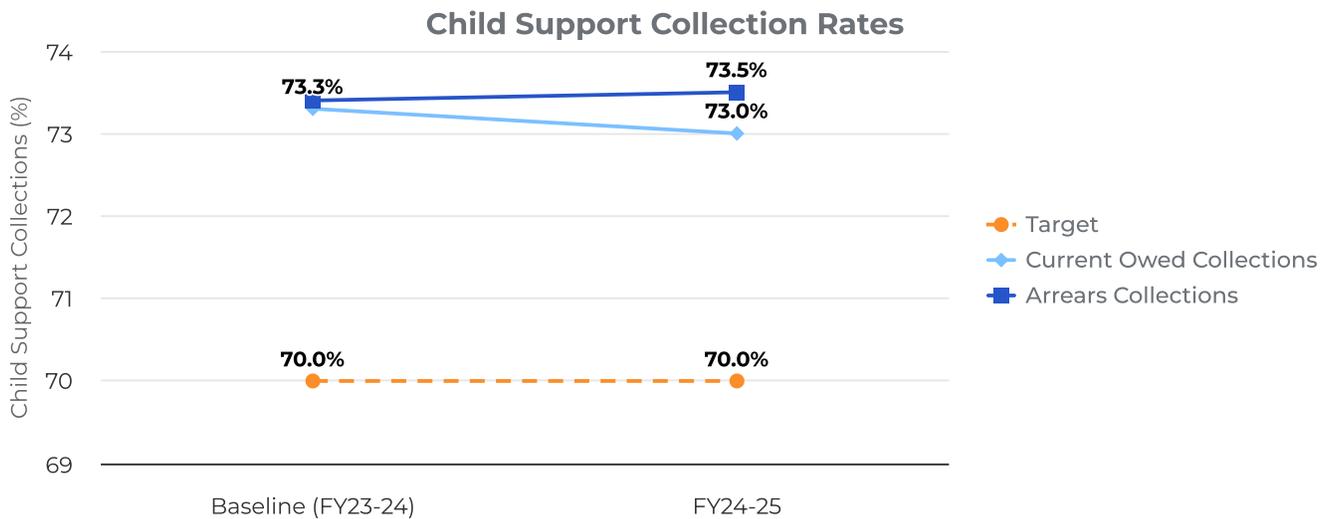
2.6 Train 80 individuals annually on mental health topics, including Mental Health First Aid and Applied Suicide Intervention Skills.

The Health Department and Criminal Justice Resource Department trained a combined 87 individuals on mental health topics in FY24-25, exceeding the annual target.

2.7 Child Support Collection

2.7 Work with families to collect at least 70% of all current child support owed and collect arrears for at least 70% of the families served by the Child Support Services Program annually.

The collection rates are currently meeting and exceeding the target by at least 3 percentage points.

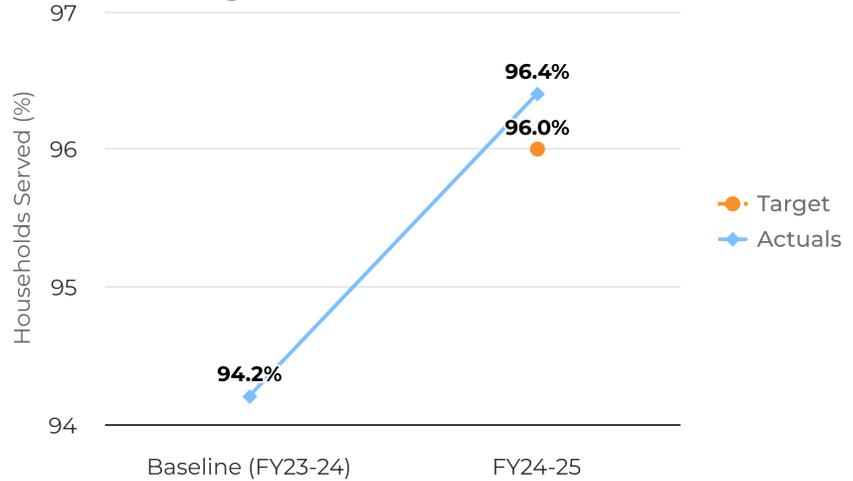


2.8 Food-Insecure Households Served

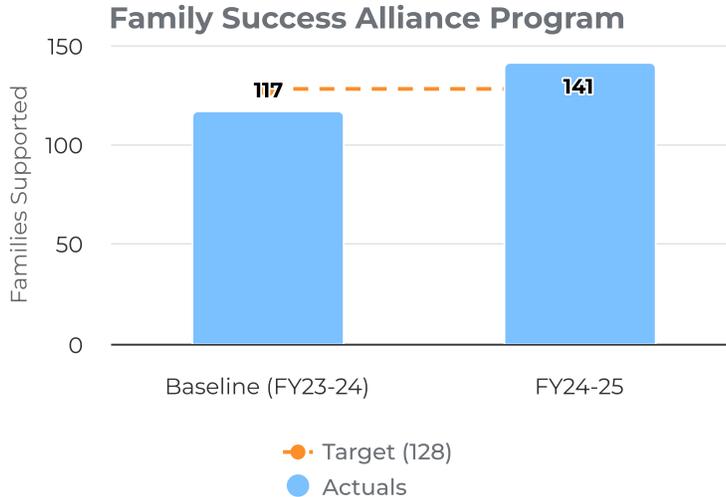
2.8 Serve 96% of the estimated eligible food-insecure Orange County households with food and nutrition services annually.

The measure is currently meeting the target. In the past year, the percent of estimated eligible food-insecure households served increased from the baseline of 94.2% to 96.4%. The County served a monthly average of 9,440 participants.

Estimated Eligible Food-Insecure Households Served



2.9 Family Success Alliance Program



2.9 Provide 128 families annually with case-management through the Family Success Alliance program to connect them to medical/mental health care, housing, or food with support, information, and referral services.

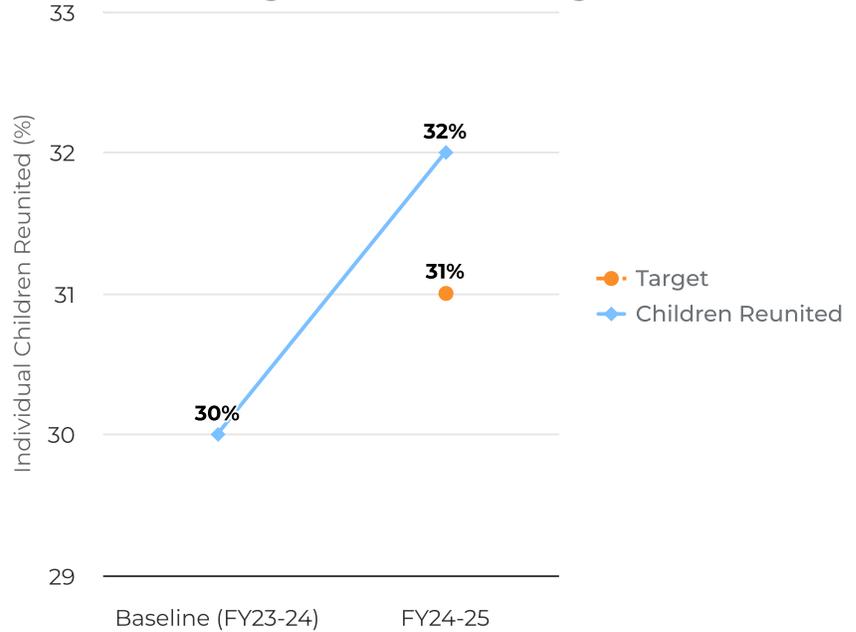
In the past year, the number of families served through the Family Success Alliance increased by 24 families from the baseline of 117 to 141, exceeding the target for this measure.

2.10 Child Reunification

2.10 Increase the percentage of children achieving permanency through reunification when exiting foster care by 1 percentage point per year.

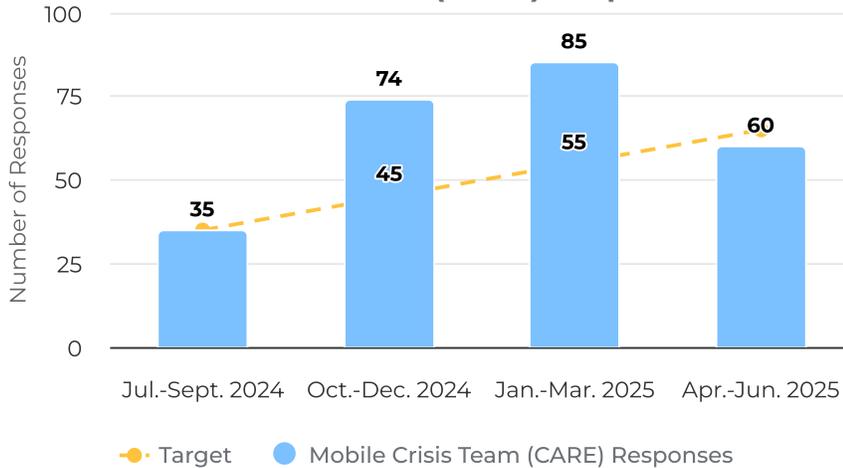
In the past year, the percentage of children achieving permanency through reunification when exiting foster care increased by 2 percentage points, exceeding the target set.

Children Exiting Foster Care Through Reunification



2.11 Mobile Crisis Team Responses

Mobile Crisis Team (CARE) Responses



2.11 Increase by 10 quarterly the number of 911 responses made by the Mobile Crisis Team (CARE).

Team responses grew beyond the target in the second and third quarters, with a dip in the fourth quarter when the Call Center Counselor position was vacant.

In FY24-25, the team served 349 unique individuals and 93% of responses were diverted from a criminal charge.

2.12 Cultural Competence Training

2.12 All first-responder county employees complete annual training to ensure cultural competence.

Staff are developing a training curriculum which will be piloted in FY25-26.

2.13 Community Survey Response to Amenities and Activities

2.13 Increase positive responses to the statement: "County provides adequate amenities, access to leisure activities, and cultural activities" by 1 percentage point in the 2027 and 2029 community surveys.

The 2023 Community Survey indicated a 53.8% positive response to the statement. The 2025 Community survey will be administered in the fall.

Priority 3 Housing for All

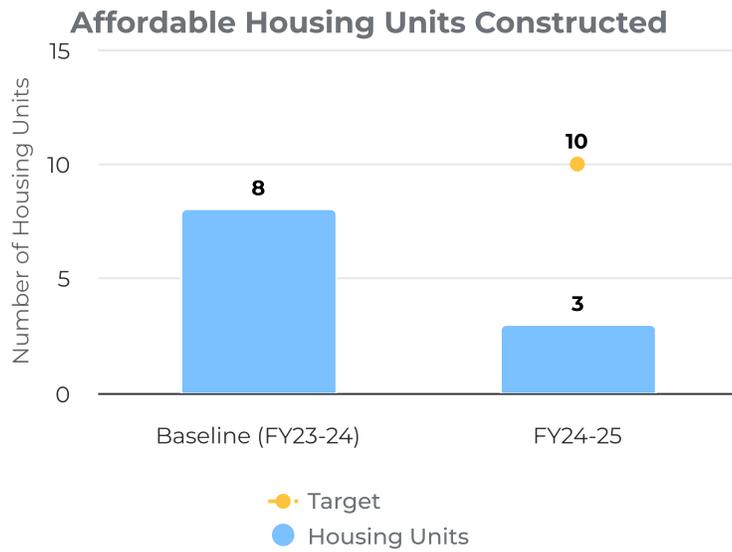
Promote equitable and accessible housing and address housing disparities through policies, partnerships, and collaboration to create a thriving community.



Objectives

1. Use regular federal and local funds to build and/or acquire new affordable housing.
2. Address need and any policy barriers to increase access to emergency shelter beds and other low-barrier housing, including eviction diversion.
3. Invest in permanent supportive housing and help residents achieve housing stability.
4. Prioritize and select County-owned land and/or facilities, including the Greene Tract, as part of an overall plan of facilities to create crisis, bridge, low barrier, affordable, and permanent housing.
5. Review County ordinances, policies, agreements, and the regulatory processes to streamline practices, and increase opportunities and reduce barriers to construct housing.
6. Increase opportunities for public employees to buy and rent homes where they work.
7. Expand resources and invest in housing designed for our aging and disabled residents.
8. Rehabilitate and repair existing housing to preserve naturally occurring affordable housing and avoid displacement.
9. Increase representation of people with lived experience on housing related matters.
10. Support unhoused residents in obtaining temporary and permanent housing.
11. Ensure timely and thorough investigations and dispositions to all civil rights and fair housing complaints.

3.1 Affordable Housing Units



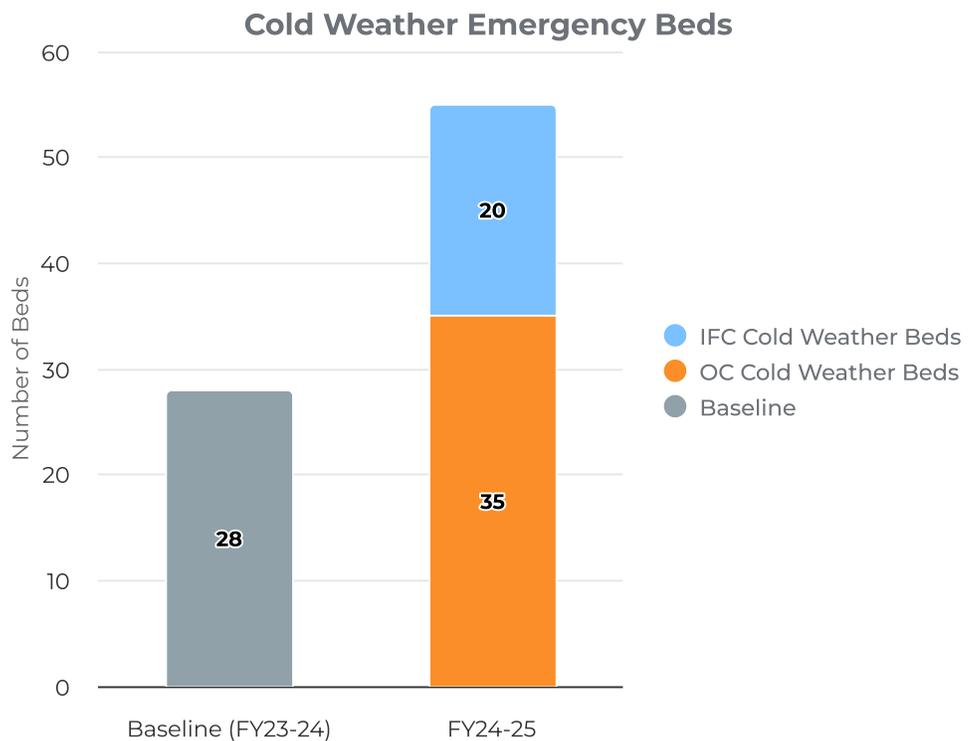
3.1 Increase the number of affordable (80% AMI or below) housing units funded by Orange County by an average of 10 annually over 5 years, prioritizing 60% AMI or below.

In FY24-25, 9 units were funded and 3 were constructed. Due to construction schedules, there will naturally be some variation from year to year.

3.2 Cold Weather Emergency Beds Available

3.2 Increase the number of immediately accessible cold weather emergency beds available in the community by 25% by 2026.

The measure is currently meeting and exceeding the target. In the last year, the number of cold weather emergency beds increased from the baseline of 28 beds to a total of 55 available between Orange County and the Inter-Faith Council for Social Service.



3.3 Transition to Permanent Housing

3.3 Establish a baseline and increase by 5 per year the number of individuals moved from Bridge Housing programs to stable permanent housing.

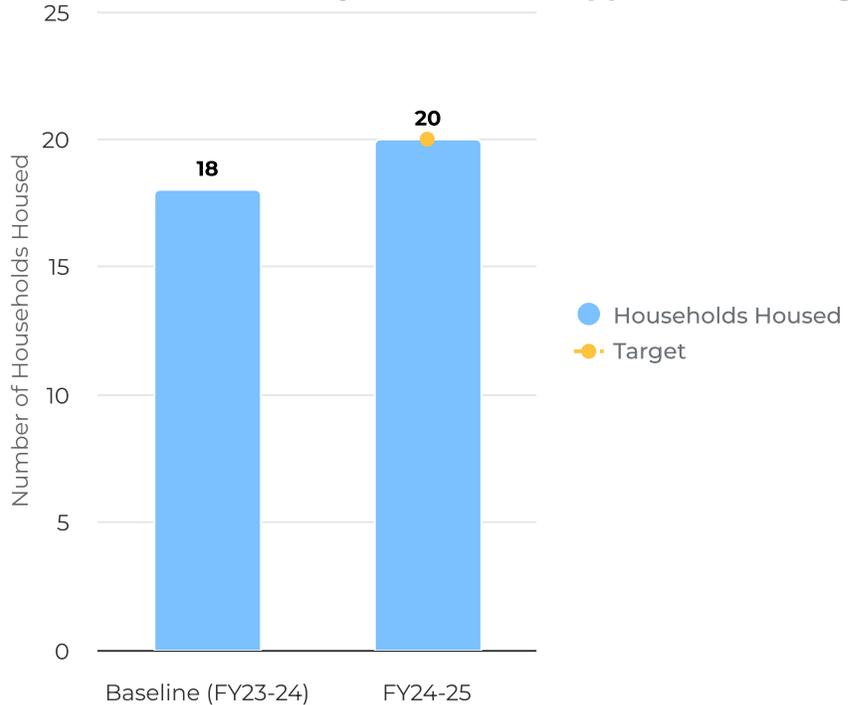
FY24-25 is the baseline year for this measure. 6 individuals were moved from Bridge Housing programs to stable permanent housing.

3.4 Permanent Supportive Housing

3.4 Increase the number of households housed in permanent supportive housing by 10% annually.

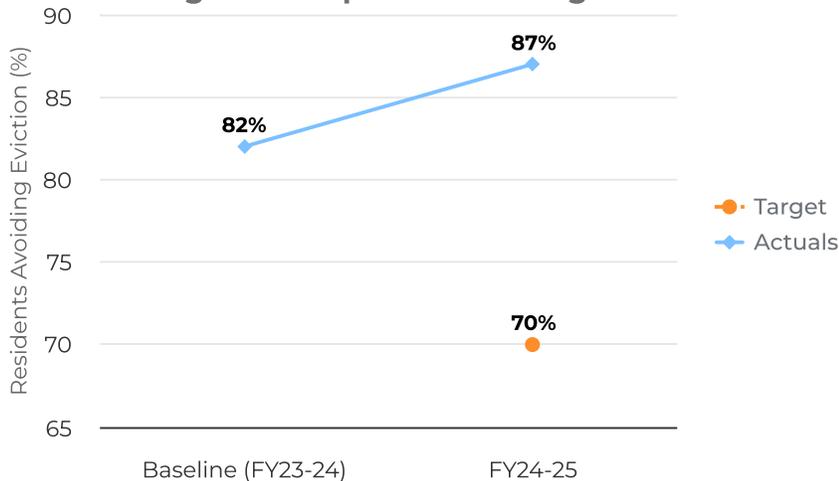
The number of households housed in permanent supportive housing increased from the baseline of 18 households to 20 households, meeting the annual target.

Households Housed by Permanent Supportive Housing



3.5 Eviction Diversion Programs

Program Recipients Avoiding Eviction



3.5 70% of residents served by eviction diversion programs avoid eviction in the next 12 months.

In the past year, program recipients who avoided eviction increased by 5 percentage points from 82% to 87%, exceeding the target success rate.

3.6 Development Permit Approval

3.6 Establish baseline and decrease by 5% the median amount of time it takes from first development permit application to certificate of occupancy issuance for housing developments by June 30, 2029.

The baseline median development processing time is expected in October 2025. In FY25-26, staff are pursuing strategies to improve software and staff workflow.

3.7 Employee Assistance Programs

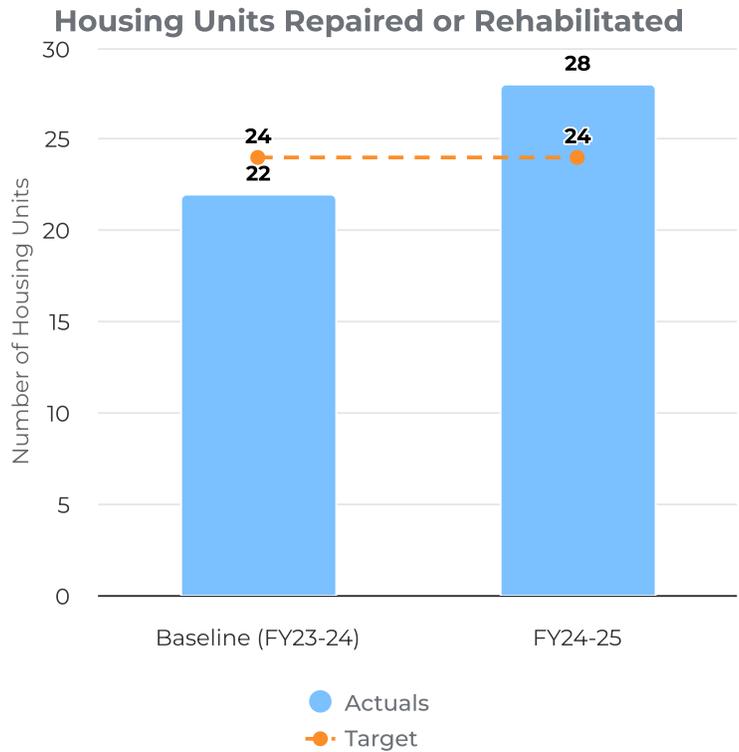
3.7 Establish a baseline and increase by 5% the awareness of available housing and rental assistance programs among county employees by June 30, 2029.

In FY25-26, staff will establish a baseline level of awareness through survey, and then pursue strategies to increase awareness among staff of programs available.

3.8 Repair and Rehabilitation of Housing Units

3.8 Increase by an average of 10% annually over 5 years the number of housing units repaired or rehabilitated.

The measure is currently meeting and exceeding the target. In FY24-25, 22 housing units were repaired and 5 were rehabilitated by the Housing Department.



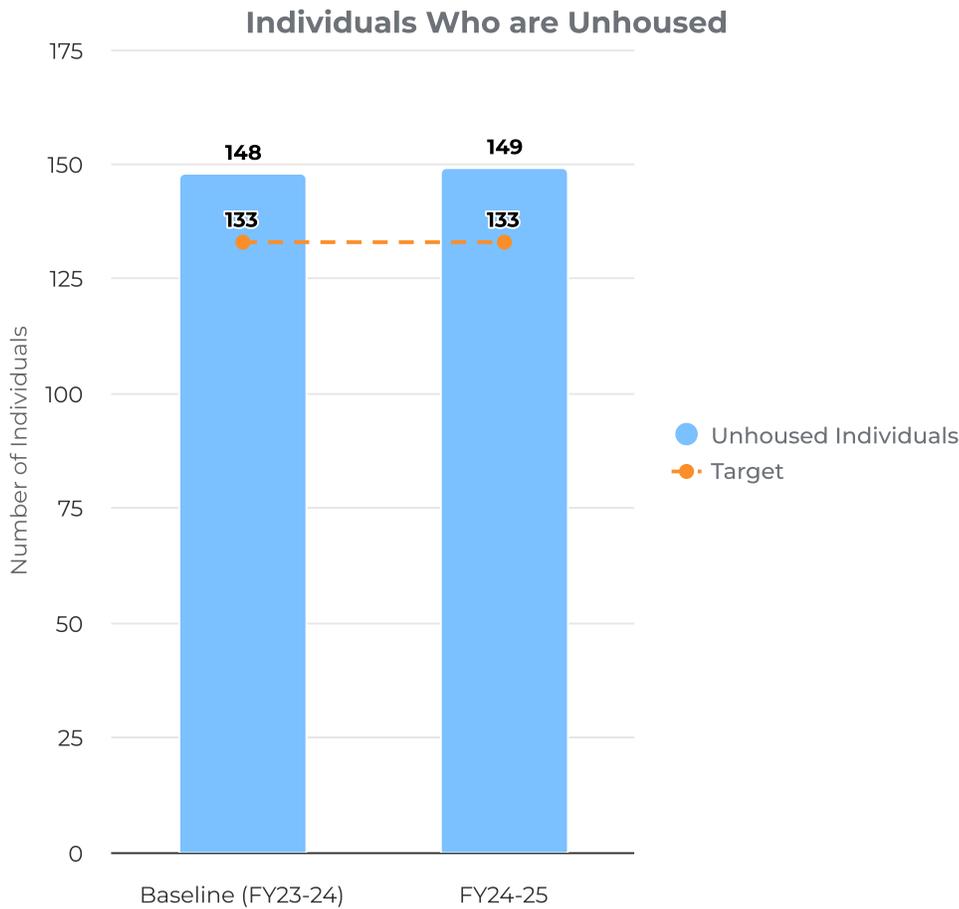
3.9 Lived Experience of Board Members

3.9 At least 25% of Orange County Partnership to End Homelessness, Housing Choice Voucher, and Affordable Housing Advisory Board Members are individuals who have experienced homelessness or housing insecurity themselves by June 2029.

The measure is on track to meet the target by June 2029. In FY24-25, an average of 16% of board members were individuals with lived experience:

- 29% of individuals on the Housing Choice Voucher Advisory Board,
- 6.7% of individuals on the Affordable Housing Advisory Board, and
- 20% of individuals on the Partnership to End Homelessness Advisory Board.

3.10 Unhoused Individuals



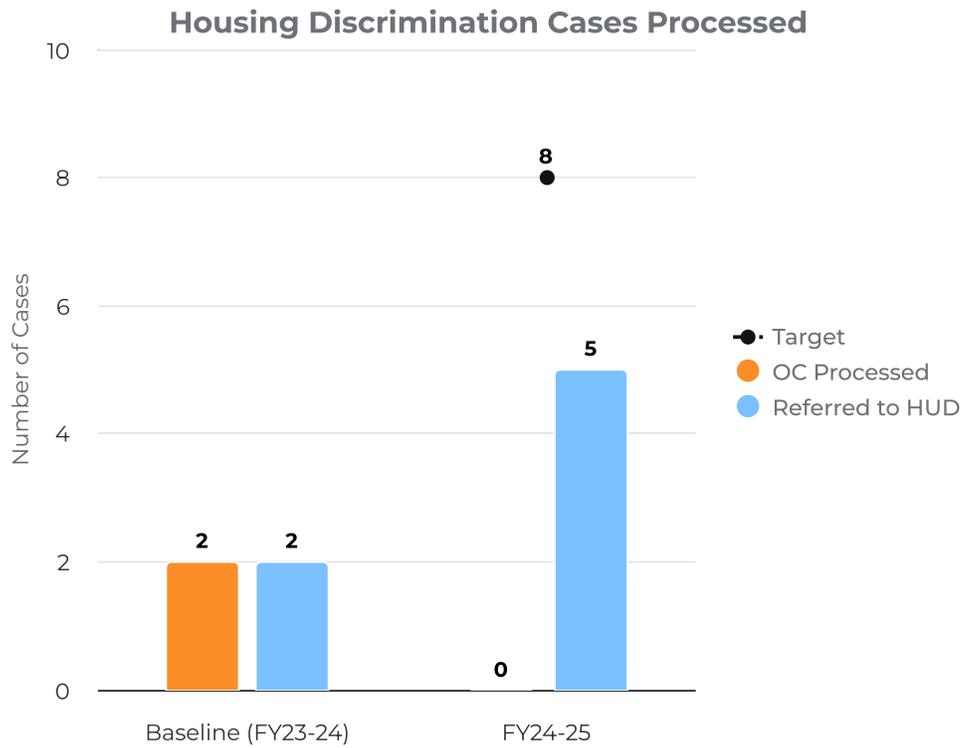
3.10 Reduce the number of individuals who are unhoused by 10% per year, prioritizing protection from displacement.

In the past year, the number of individuals who are unhoused increased from 148 individuals to 149 individuals.

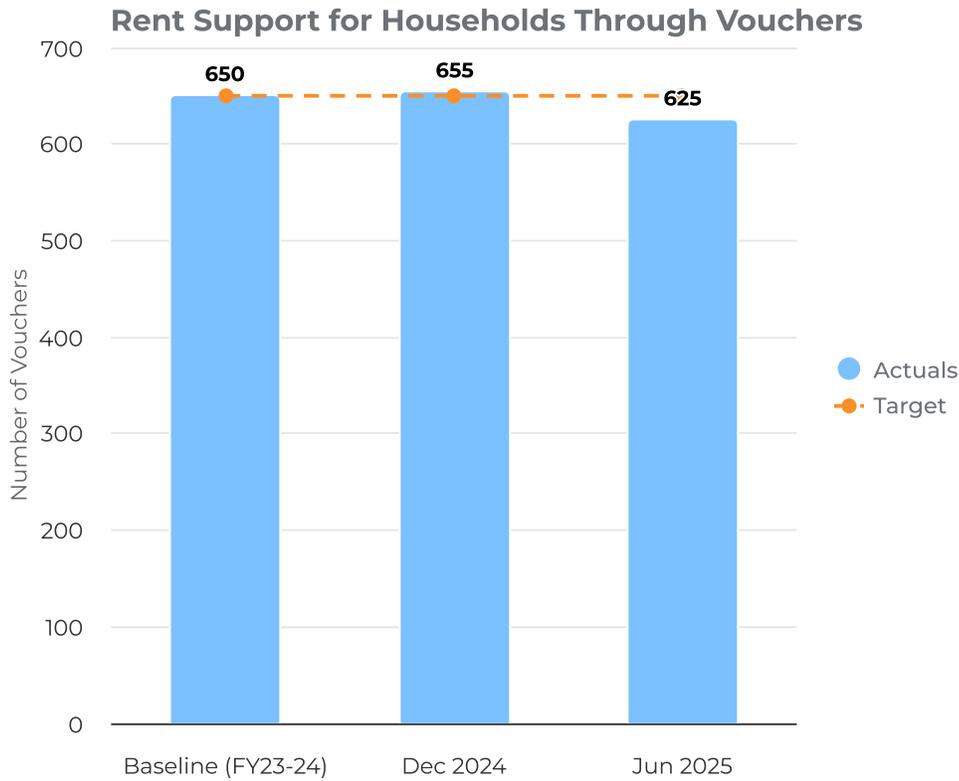
3.11 Housing Discrimination Cases Processed

3.11 Process 8 housing discrimination cases per year.

The measure is currently delayed from meeting the target. The Housing Discrimination Investigator position was vacant in FY23-24, preventing the County from processing housing discrimination cases. However, staff are referring cases to the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for processing. This position is expected to begin processing cases in FY25-26.



3.12 Rent Cost Support Vouchers



3.12 Continue providing rent cost support through federal housing choice vouchers for 650 households annually.

The measure is currently not meeting the target. Federal cuts to Section 8 will provide less subsidy over time. Therefore, through natural attrition, the county will decrease the voucher roll until funding increases again, while maintaining 100% subsidy utilization.

Priority 4 Multi-modal Transportation

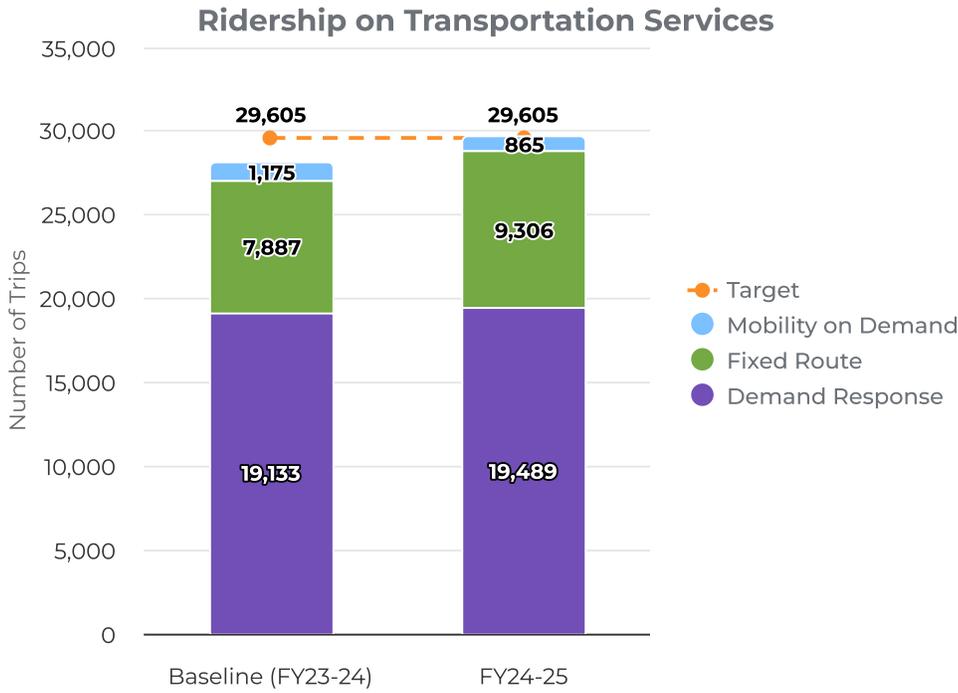
Collaborate with our regional partners to expand, integrate/connect, and provide accessible public transportation options.

Objectives

1. Identify priorities and resources necessary to implement the Orange County Transit Plan.
2. Increase community awareness of all modes of transportation, including transit, bike and pedestrian, vehicle, and all other modes.
3. Support road projects that address congestion and reduce commute time using the County's Complete Streets policy.
4. Coordinate transit investments with municipal and county land use planning to reduce vehicle miles traveled and to provide more equitable access to shopping, employment, medical centers, college campuses, etc.
5. Invest in implementing the County's Safe Routes to Schools plan.
6. Update transportation-related plans to provide more multimodal options, including rural Orange County.



4.1 Transportation Ridership



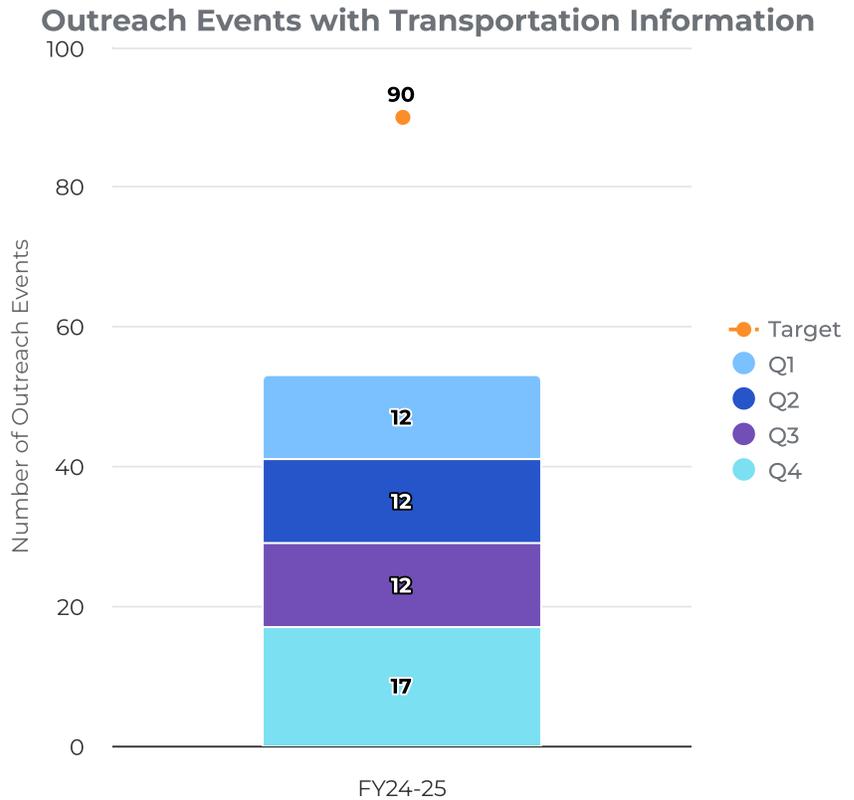
4.1 Increase ridership by 5% each year on fixed route, demand response, and mobility on-demand transportation services.

In FY24-25, the combined ridership of 29,660 trips surpassed the target of 29,605 trips.

4.2 Outreach Events

4.2 County transportation information is included in 90 outreach events each year.

Information was included in 53 outreach events in FY24-25, by the Transportation Department and the Department on Aging. The Transportation Department began prioritizing this objective in late FY24-25, and anticipates continued progress toward the target in the future.



4.3 Community Survey Transportation Satisfaction

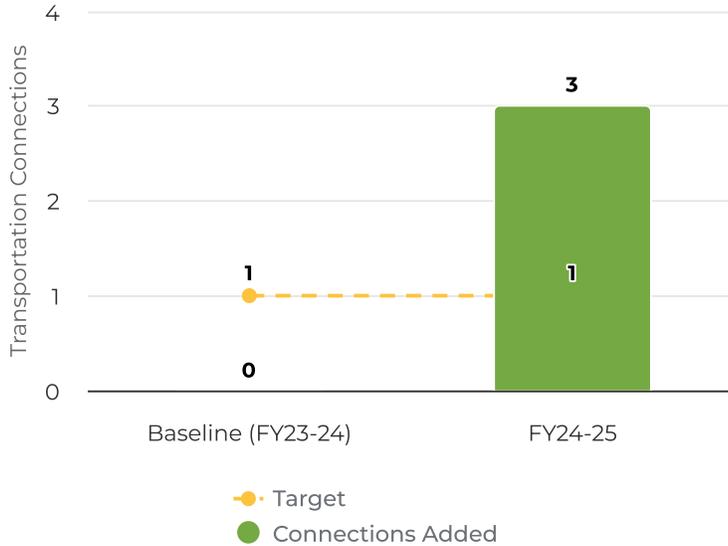
4.3 Increase by 1 percentage point every two years the percentage of residents who are satisfied with biking, walking, and bus travel, as reported in the community survey.

The 2023 Community Survey indicated a 33.9% satisfaction rate for walking, 21.7% for biking, and 16.2% for bus. The 2025 Community survey will be administered in the fall.

4.4 Transportation Network Connections

4.4 Add at least one transportation network connection (sidewalks, trails, transit stops, etc.) each year through implementation of the Transportation Multi-Modal Plan.

Additional Transportation Network Connections



Transportation Services added three network connections in FY24-25.

- A bus stop at Whitted Human Services Building
- A transfer stop at the Orange County Library in Hillsborough
- The Hillsborough Circulator was split into two routes, the Orange Loop and Blue Loop, reducing headways and increasing operational efficiency.

The Department aims to add the Mebane Circulator in FY25-26.

4.5 Transportation Service Timeliness

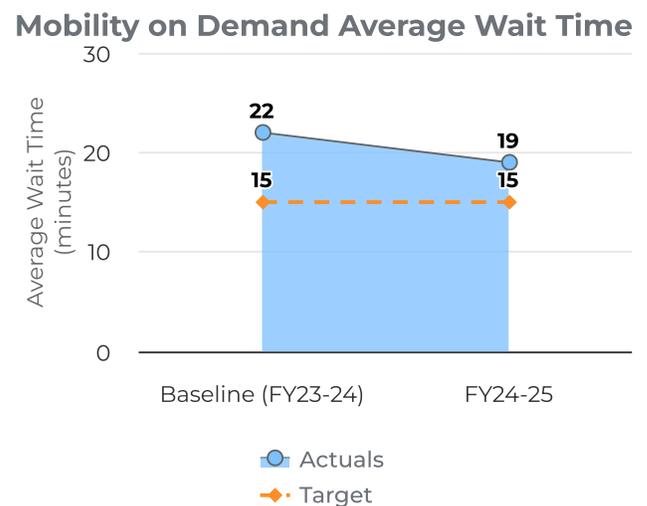
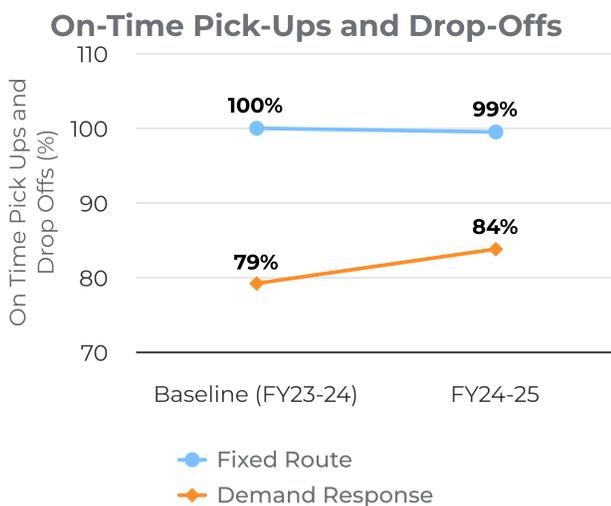
4.5 Increase by 1 percentage point each year the percentage of on-time pick-ups and drop-offs on fixed route, demand response, and mobility on-demand transportation services.

On-time rates are close to 100% for both Fixed Route and Demand Response services. The Transportation Department continues to explore additional ways to improve service.

For Fixed Routes, "on-time" pick-ups and drop-offs have a range of +/- 5 minutes. Fixed Route service continued steady service delivery with a 99.9% on-time service in FY24 and a 99.4% in FY24-25.

Demand Response service has a window of 15 minutes before a scheduled time and 10 minutes after a scheduled time to be considered on-time. The Transportation Department increased its on-time Demand Response service by 5% in FY24-25.

The County considers a 15-minute average wait time for the Mobility on Demand service to be on-time. Average wait times fell from 22 minutes in FY23-24 to 19 minutes in FY24-25.



Priority 5 Public Education/Learning Community

Enhance and maintain quality school operations and infrastructure and cultivate lifelong learning.



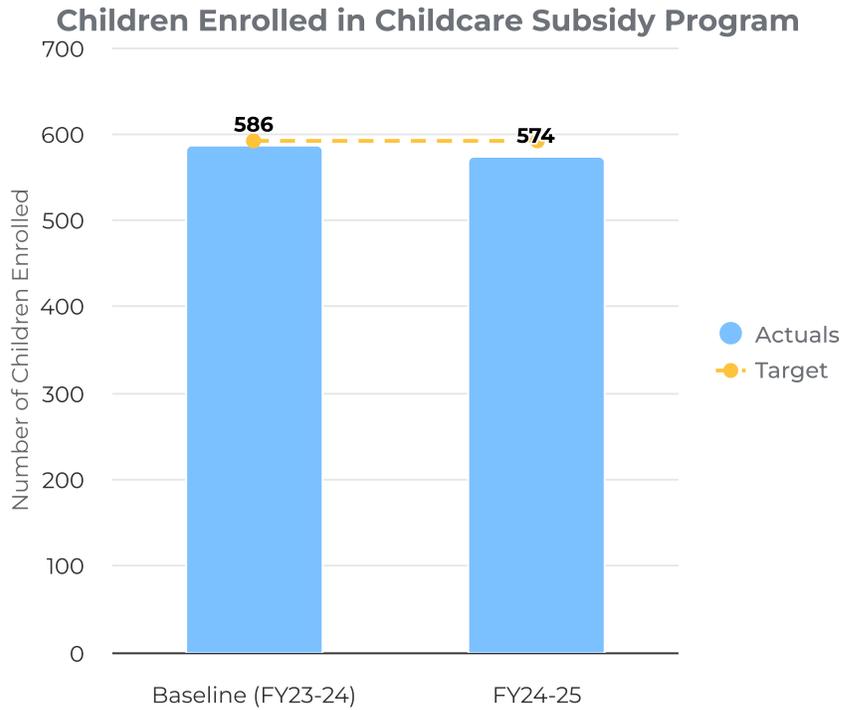
Objectives

1. Foster collaborative relationships with formal and informal educational organizations and agencies to provide opportunities for community members to meet, connect, and learn together.
2. Improve school readiness and educational outcomes by providing access, training, tools, technology, and other resources needed to thrive.
3. Provide support for Durham Tech continuing education, college and career readiness programming.
4. Improve learning environments by investing in facilities that address repair, renovation, and educational adequacy needs.
5. Invest in and implement a plan that supports schools operational and facility funding needs.
6. Implement the recommendations of the Schools Safety Task Force.

5.1 Childcare Subsidy Program Enrollment

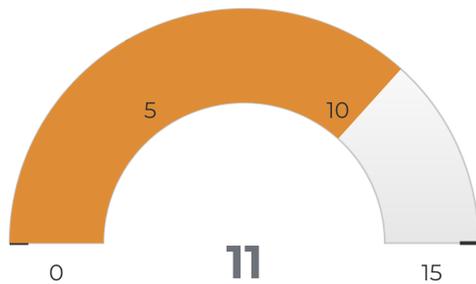
5.1 Increase by 1% each year the number of children from low-income households enrolled annually in the childcare subsidy program.

The number of children from low-income households enrolled in the childcare subsidy program decreased from the baseline of 586 children to 574 children, a decrease of 2%. In Sept. 2024, there was a reduction in state and federal funds which caused a delay in services and a waiting list was implemented. The Orange County Board of County Commissioners approved county funds to help supplement reductions and enrollment of children is beginning to increase month by month.



5.2 Digital Literacy Workshops

Zip Codes Reached in Digital Literacy Workshops



5.2 Reach residents in all 15 zip codes of the county with digital literacy workshops offered annually.

The Department on Aging offered 69 classes in FY24-25, reaching 11 zip codes in the county. The library offered 64 one-on-one digital instruction sessions and anticipates implementing a digital literacy grant to expand programming in FY25-26. The Cooperative Extension hosted youth programming including digital learning topics.

5.3 Long Range School Optimization Plan

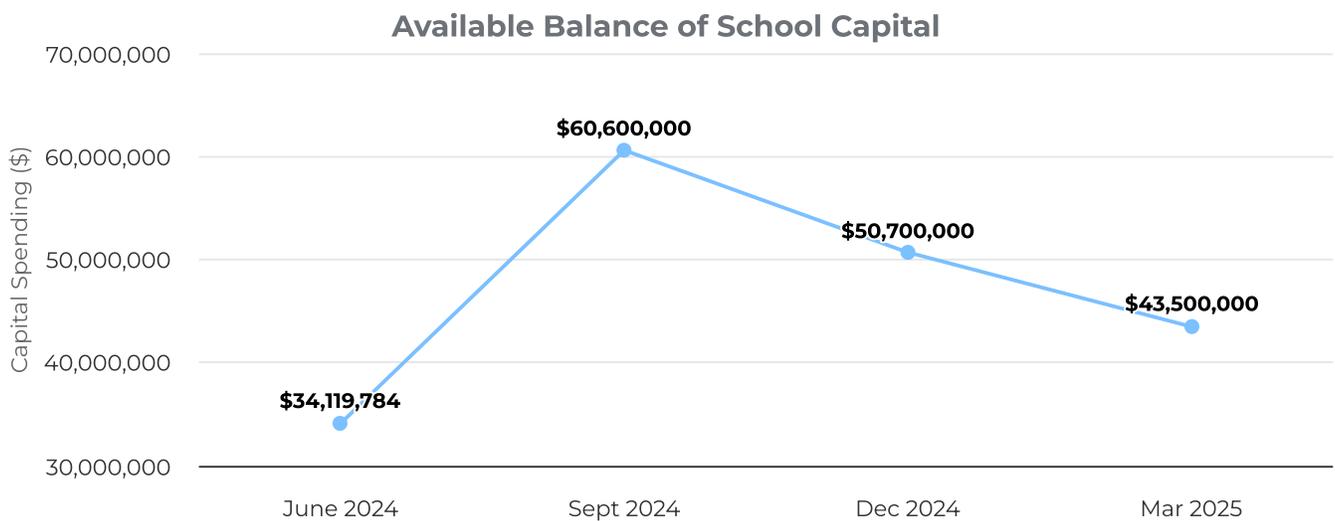
5.3 Implement the Long Range School Optimization Plan, funding planning for first construction in FY25-26, followed by construction on the first project in FY26-27. Utilize the remaining funds by the end of the 10-year plan period.

The measure is on track to meet the target. Funds have been allocated for planning.

5.4 School Capital Spending

5.4 Track and report quarterly on school capital spending on high priority needs and other capital uses.

Orange County provides funding in a lump sum at the beginning of the fiscal year. The FY24-25 end of fiscal year balance will be available in the fall.



5.5 School Safety Task Force

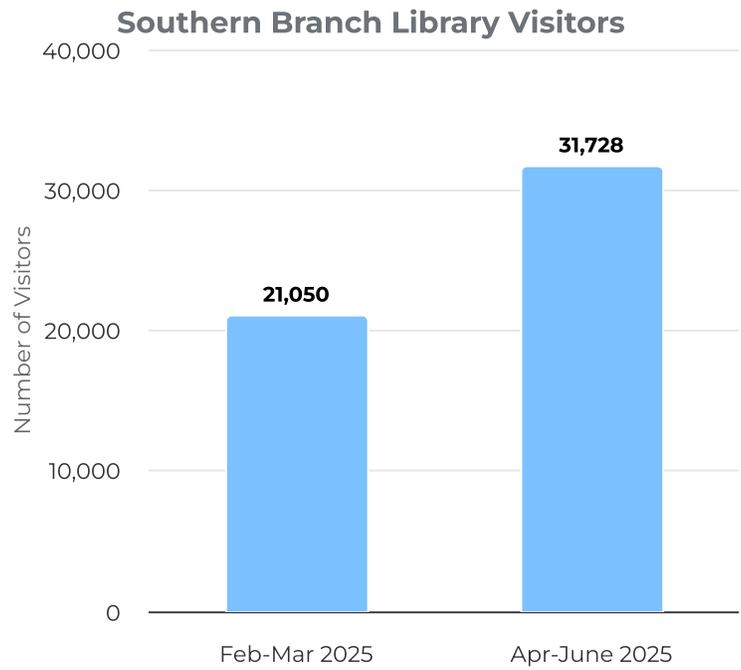
5.5 Annual meeting of the School Safety Task Force or other group convened by the Board of County Commissioners to review policies that address safety in the school districts and provide education on laws addressing school disruptions. Implement recommendation #3 in the School Safety Task Force Final Report by FY2025-26 and recommendation #8 by FY2026-27.

No meeting was held in FY24-25. This policy review conversation is planned for the September 2025 Board of County Commissioners Joint Meeting with the School Boards.

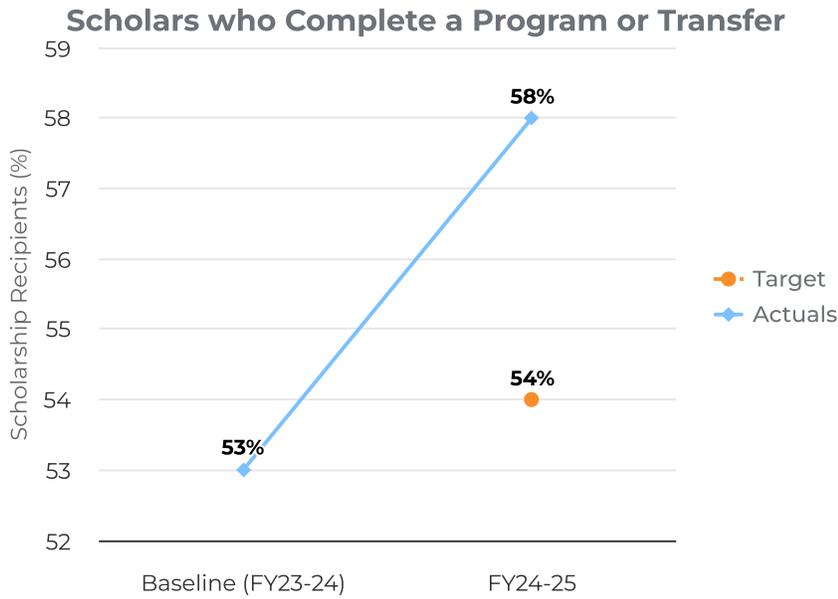
5.6 Library Visitors

5.6 Establish a baseline and increase visitors to the Southern Branch Library by 5% annually.

The Southern Branch Library soft opening was February 3, 2025.



5.7 Scholarship Recipients



5.7 Increase by 1 percentage point annually the percentage of Durham Tech Promise scholarship recipients who complete a program or transfer to a four-year college or university.

The percentage of scholars who complete a program or transfer increased by 5 percentage points from 53% to 58%.

Students typically take 3 years to graduate or transfer, so baseline calculations are FY20-21 recipients who graduated or transferred by Fall 2024. FY24-25 data are FY21-22 recipients outcomes.

Priority 6 Diverse and Vibrant Economy

Foster an environment that attracts and retains sustainable and diverse businesses and visitors, employment opportunities, and diversifies our tax base.

Objectives

1. Provide family-oriented and inclusive programming or other cultural events for residents and visitors.
2. Review and revise County policies and regulations to support business investment in Orange County.
3. Streamline and digitize business processes to facilitate efficient interactions between employers and County departments.
4. Provide resources to new and expanding, small, creative, and agri-businesses that add character and quality of life to our community to attract employers, employees, and visitors.
5. Increase access to and awareness of resources and assistance available to residents and businesses.
6. Provide workforce and business development resources to enhance the skills of residents of the County.
7. Expand the non-residential tax base.

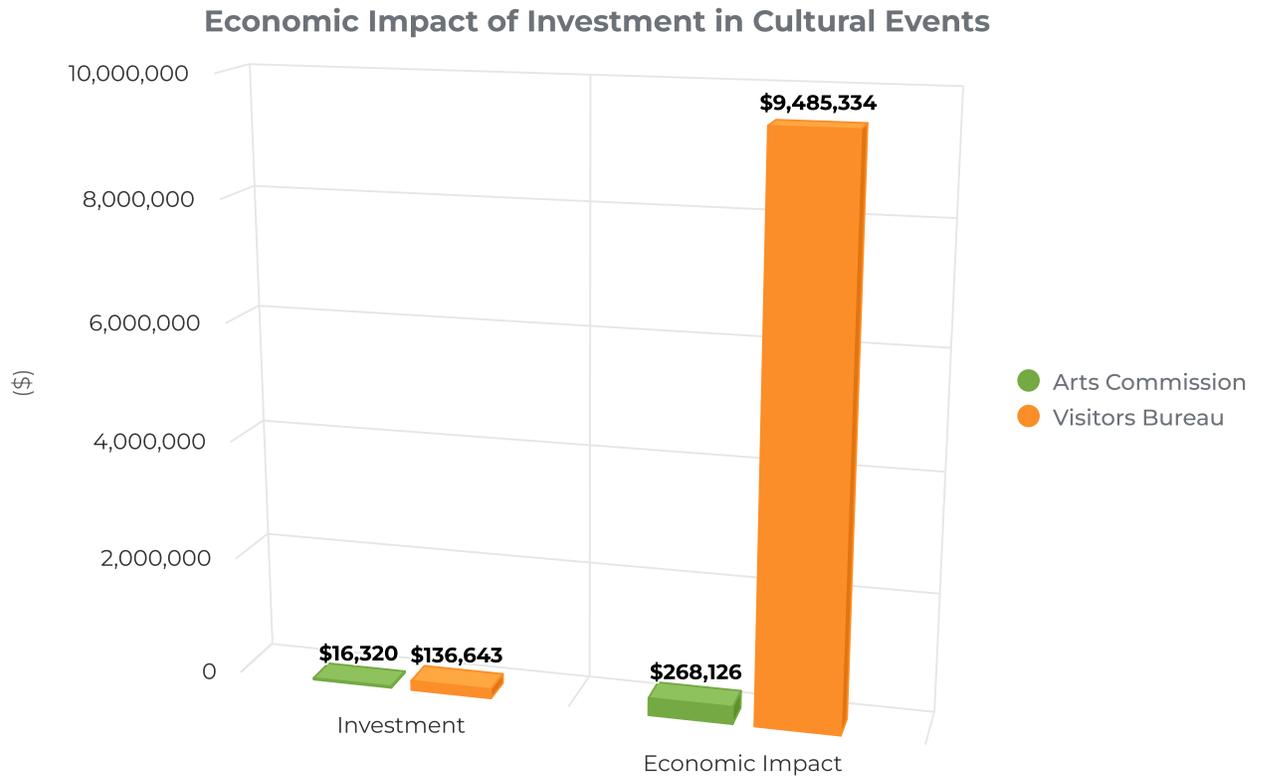


6.1 Economic Impact of Tourism Investments

6.1 Establish a baseline of tourism resources invested in community partners producing cultural events by June 30, 2025, and evaluate the economic impact annually.

The Arts Commission totals are preliminary estimates. Final totals are delayed due to impacts from Tropical Storm Chantal.

The Visitors Bureau's impact total includes events for which they were one of many sponsors.



6.2 Small Business Investment Grant & 6.3 Agricultural Economic Development Grant

6.2 Establish a baseline and increase by 1 percentage point each year the percentage of Small Business Investment Grant recipients that are still in business one year after receiving a grant.

The first results report will be available in December for fall 2024 awardees. There are 13 recipients in the cohort.

6.3 Establish a baseline and increase by 1 percentage point each year the percentage of Agricultural Economic Development Grant Program recipients farms that are still in operation one year after receiving the grant.

The first results report will be available in December for fall 2024 awardees. There are 11 recipients in the cohort.

6.4 Employment Services Enrollment

6.4 Establish a baseline and increase by 3 percentage points annually the percentage of residents enrolled in Employment Services who complete an employment or training-related program and/or gain employment.

The County is determining the parameters for what is determined a program completion. Baseline data will be available in FY25-26.

6.5 Durham Tech Work Program

6.5 Establish a baseline and increase by 1 percentage point annually the percentage of residents enrolled in Durham Tech apprenticeship and workforce development programs who complete an employment or training-related program and/or gain employment.

85% of residents enrolled in FY23-24 completed an employment or training-related program by the end of FY24-25.

98 Back to Work Grants were awarded in FY23-24, and 127 in FY24-25.

Acknowledgements

This strategic plan is the result of the combined efforts of our County's residents, elected officials, employees, and community stakeholders. Orange County would like to thank everyone who provided their knowledge and insights throughout the process and who dedicated their time to making this Strategic Plan come to life.

