



Race and Equity Pocket Questions

Title: Approval of the FY26-27 Orange County HOME Annual Action Plan

Purpose: To approve the FY26-27 Orange County HOME Annual Action Plan. The Plan requires support from the County's jurisdictions, and the Plan itself is required by HUD.

Department: Housing and Community Services (HCS)

1. What are the root causes of inequity in Carrboro and/or overall as it pertains to this subject area?

Orange County seeks to address historical inequities in housing access and outcomes by funding HOME Program Initiatives that promote equity. For FY26-27, the County has recommended allocating its HOME funding for Tenant-Based Rental Assistance and Critical Repair of Owner-Occupied units. We would expect both projects to have racial and equity impacts in our community, increasing housing access, stability, and affordability for historically marginalized groups.

American political, social, and financial systems have worked to actively marginalize people of color, specifically Black Americans for hundreds of years. Intentional actions have been taken to deny humanity, wealth and equitable education and employment for BIPOC, resulting in vast racial disparities in social outcomes. Those disparities have been created and widened through government sponsored racism and marginalization in the form of enslavement, forced displacement and loss of homeland of indigenous peoples, Jim Crow era policy, redlining, restrictive zoning ordinances, predatory and barrier-ridden lending practices, the American Credit System, over-policing of communities of color, the illegality of rent control in NC, and white power structures' lack of willingness to address, and explicit desire to maintain, racial disparities. Inequity also continues as the culture of these racist legal codes persists long after the abolition of the formal written code. For our department's work specifically, this history and modern context have set the stage for our current reality: a county where over 60% of those experiencing homelessness are Black, despite Black residents making up only 12% of the population.¹

The discriminatory policies enumerated above have had tangible impacts on the livelihoods of BIPOC Americans. Black male workers make, on average, \$54,900/yr, Black women \$51,657, Hispanic men \$51,744, and Hispanic women \$46,376. This is compared to white male workers' average annual earnings

¹ [Agenda 06-17-2025; 7-a - Orange County Partnership to End Homelessness \(OCPEH\) Point-In-Time Count and Monthly Homelessness Report - Laserfiche WebLink](#)



of \$80,004, and white women's \$61,498.² The average net worth of a Black household is \$44,900 versus \$285,000 for white households.³ These disparities result in less buying power when it comes to rent and homeownership. BIPOC residents, as well as older and/or disabled residents who are often on fixed incomes, end up spending a greater portion of their gross income on housing costs, resulting in greater rates of housing cost burden, eviction, and housing insecurity.

We also see a disproportionate amount of BIPOC, senior, and low-income residents struggling to keep up with the costs of owning their homes. This is evident in the demographic makeup of applicants to the Orange County Home Preservation Coalition, the Carrboro Weatherization Program with Preserving Home, and the beneficiaries of AHSRF funded repair projects. There is additional explanation/data on this below.

Who is experiencing community burden now? Who will experience community burden if this action is passed? Will others experience community burden if this action is NOT passed?

BURDEN NOW:

Critical Home Repairs:

- Owning a home is expensive, especially in Orange County; routine maintenance, insurance, and taxes add up quickly. When one housing expense increases dramatically, people who already struggle to maintain their homeownership are thrown further into instability. In Orange County, property tax rates have steeply increased over the past few years, causing huge spikes in the amounts due for homeowners. Someone who is struggling to pay their taxes, or maintain their mortgage, are less likely to pursue critical repairs to their home. However, these critical repairs can end up reducing housing costs in the end by lowering utility bills. Repairs can also dramatically increase the comfort of residents in their own homes.
 - In this regard, low- to- moderate-income households who cannot afford critical home repairs are currently burdened.
- In Orange County, 19% of homeowners are housing cost burdened, spending more than 30% of their gross monthly income on housing and related expenses.⁴ We know that increased housing costs, like property taxes, have had disproportionate impacts on longtime homeowners of color, especially in the Northside and Tin Top neighborhoods. We have reached out to Orange County to see if they can provide information on the demographic makeup of households requesting and receiving tax assistance.
 - But we also see this reflected in the makeup of applicants to the Orange County Home Preservation Coalition and the Carrboro Weatherization Program in partnership with Preserving Home, as well as the beneficiaries of AHSRF funded projects. For example, in

² [Earnings and earnings ratios by sex, race, and occupation group | U.S. Department of Labor](#)

³ [Racial Wealth Gap - CNN](#)

⁴ [NCH-CountyProfile-Orange.pdf](#)



FY25, all AHSRF projects completed were critical repairs. Twelve out of the 15 beneficiaries were Black, seven were seniors, and three had a disability.

OCPEH Tenant-Based Rental Assistance:

- Residents currently experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity experience a current burden.
 - Specifically, the 15-20 low- to- no- income households that will be identified and served through this initiative are currently experiencing homelessness or housing instability, which carries immense burden due to the lack of shelter and stability.
- In Orange County, over 70% of those experiencing homelessness are BIPOC or senior residents (63% are Black specifically).⁵ Sustained planning and funding are needed to address the issue of homelessness in our community, and to help residents stabilize and maintain affordable housing. Even for those who are housed, affordability is a huge struggle – nearly 60% of renters in Orange County are housing cost burdened, spending more than 30% of their gross monthly income on housing and related expenses.⁶ By addressing the affordability needs of those experiencing homelessness, we can work towards an housing ecosystem with greater affordable stock and more resources to support residents in maintaining affordable housing. With a specific focus on race and equity, the Town will support better outcomes for BIPOC, senior, and disabled residents.

BURDEN IF APPROVED:

Critical Repairs:

- Homeowners receiving repairs will need to coordinate having service providers in and around their homes, which also requires some level of trust.

OCPEH Tenant-Based Rental Assistance:

- 15 Orange County households currently experiencing homelessness will have to begin coordinating across multiple supportive services, which could be difficult and confusing, especially as they attempt to navigate the experience of homelessness.
- OCPEH, who may have trouble convincing landlords to work with the program and accept their payments.

3. **Who is experiencing community benefit now? Who will experience community benefit if this action is passed? Will others experience community benefit if this action is NOT passed?**

BENEFIT NOW:

Critical Home Repairs:

- Neighbors potentially benefit from the lack of construction and pollution created by repair work.

OCPEH Tenant-Based Rental Assistance:

⁵ [Agenda 06-17-2025: 7-a - Orange County Partnership to End Homelessness \(OCPEH\) Point-In-Time Count and Monthly Homelessness Report - Laserfiche WebLink](#)

⁶ [NCH-CountyProfile-Orange.pdf](#)



- People who currently benefit from tenant-based rental assistance are people who can tap into the Emergency Housing Assistance program (EHA) through Orange County. This program stipulates that applicants must have an eviction notice, meaning that they are already housed. There is currently little programming to support rental subsidies for people experiencing active homelessness, outside of Permanent Supportive Housing and Rapid Rehousing. Additionally, these are the only services that provide sustained rental support. OCPEH Tenant-Based Rental Assistance would fill that gap, increasing the number of homeless residents benefitting from rental assistance.

BENEFIT IF APPROVED:

Critical Home Repairs:

- 12-15 low- to- moderate-income households who are struggling to afford critical repairs to their homes will receive these repairs at no cost to them. This makes their homes more comfortable, has the potential to reduce utility costs, and allows them to allocate their income to other areas in their life.
- Based on the demographic makeup of applicants to the Orange County Home Preservation Coalition, as well as the Carrboro Weatherization Program with Preserving Home and the AHSRF (more data/info provided above), approving the plan to conduct repairs for these households will have a positive impact on communities of color, senior, and disabled residents.
- This benefits the entire community, as neighborhoods are beautified. This could also have a positive impact on residents' abilities to contribute to their community, because they may have more mental space now that they are not worried about home repairs.

Tenant-Based Rental Assistance:

- 15-20 households currently experiencing homelessness will receive necessary rental assistance to secure and maintain housing. Given the data provided above, we would expect this to have a large impact on Black residents, as the program's demographic makeup should look like the makeup of those experiencing homelessness in Orange County (roughly 60% Black).
- Orange County as a whole, which will benefit from the increase in households who are permanently housed, thus decreasing literal homelessness in our county. This would contribute to the creation of a community where everyone has the resources and support they need to live a happy and healthy life and ultimately reduce some financial strain on the county's tax base.

4. What might be the unintended consequences of this action or strategy?

Critical Home Repair:

- Possible negative -
 - Some traffic, noise, and construction pollution could be created during the repair process.
 - Homeowners could become aware of other repairs needed, outside of those they originally applied for. Depending on the type of repairs, Orange County funding may not cover them, and homeowners would have to find a new service or come up with the money themselves. This could cause additional stress for the homeowner.



- Possible positive -
 - Other repairs that are covered under Orange County repair funding stipulations may be discovered and conducted. If the newly discovered repairs are not covered under Orange County, the county can potentially refer them to another organization, like Preserving Home or Hope Renovations, to have the repairs covered.

OCPEH Tenant-Based Rental Assistance:

- Possibly negative -
 - Successful applicants will most likely have to divulge traumatic personal information, especially when they begin working with other supportive services through the program. This can be overwhelming with the other stressors those experiencing homelessness face daily. This will have a disproportionate impact on communities of color, specifically Black residents, as the population of people experiencing homelessness in our community is over 60% Black.
 - There will inevitably be many eligible applicants who are denied because of capacity and funding constraints. Applying will take time and resources out of their days that could be spent focusing on survival or pursuing other opportunities. This could also further contribute to the feeling that their housing needs are not heard or prioritized. Additionally, this will have a disproportionate impact on communities of color, specifically Black residents, as the population of people experiencing homelessness in our community is over 60% Black.
 - Intensive case management is required, which could result in capacity and bandwidth being taken from other OCPEH initiatives.
- Possibly positive -
 - Tenants will be connected to an array of supportive services for future social service needs.

5. **What steps has your department taken to mitigate any burdens, inequities, and unintended consequences? What strategies might your department take to address these in the future?**

NOTE: This does not reflect a formal commitment by the Town of Carrboro.

The department continues to engage with jurisdictional peers and community partners to advance affordable housing in the community and to address racial inequities in housing under the guidance of the One Orange Countywide Racial Equity Framework and the Town's Office of Race and Equity. Since this department was formed our work has been increasingly focused on racial disparities in housing, preservation of Black neighborhoods, and increasing housing options for extremely low-income households, who are disproportionately BIPOC. This lens is vitally important in all aspects of the Town's work, and especially in housing where there are blatant disparities along racial lines.



Climate Action Pocket Questions

Title: Approval of the FY26-27 HOME Annual Action Plan

Purpose: To consider approving the FY26-27 Home Annual Action Plan

Department: Housing and Community Services

1. How will this action impact municipal or community greenhouse gas emissions?

This action **will reduce** greenhouse gas emissions.

2. Please explain.

- The HOME action plan will reduce greenhouse gas emissions by allocating funding towards critical home repairs. Repairing and renovating a home can significantly reduce both embodied carbon and carbon emissions by helping to reduce a home's energy expenditure and increase its energy efficiency.⁷
- Building preservation is a key strategy to reduce carbon emissions in the long term by reducing the need to construct new homes.⁸ While there are some carbon emissions associated with repairs and renovations, these costs are offset and exceeded by the subsequent increase in energy efficiency and the reduction of lifestyle emissions. Additionally, the carbon costs of new construction projects are far greater than those of repairs.
- Furthermore, both critical home repairs and direct tenant rental assistance (proposed by the HOME action plan) will improve climate justice and climate resilience outcomes by ensuring that the most marginalized and lowest-income members of our community do not bear a disproportionate share of the burden of the effects of climate change. Critical home repairs will directly support this outcome by making homes more resilient to extreme weather events, which are on the rise due to climate change. These repairs will help ensure that low-income residents can stay in their homes and avoid exorbitant financial burden due to extreme weather events. Direct tenant rental assistance to low-income residents will indirectly support climate justice and resilience by helping to offset the increased costs of utilities like energy and water due to climate change.

⁷ [Why we must tackle embodied carbon to meet our climate goals | World Economic Forum](#)

⁸ [Housing Preservation Practices That Benefit People and the Environment - National League of Cities](#)



3. How will this action impact the Town's environment?

This action will potentially improve solid and hazardous waste disposal, reduce pollution, and improve biodiversity by mitigating the environmental effects of homelessness.

4. Please Explain

- This action will impact the Town's environment positively by expanding services, shelter, and re-housing opportunities to the unhoused population of Carrboro. Reducing homelessness and providing services and shelter can reduce solid and hazardous waste, improve disposal, reduce pollution, and positively impact biodiversity.⁹
- Additionally, serving the unhoused population contributes to climate justice and resilience outcomes by ensuring that unhoused community members do not bear a disproportionate share of the burden of increased extreme weather and other negative impacts of climate change.

5. How is your department planning to mitigate any climate or environmental impacts? *NOTE: This does not reflect a formal commitment by the Town of Carrboro.*

The Housing and Community Services department continues to center environmental and climate impacts throughout our work. In this case, there are no impacts in need of mitigation.

⁹ [How Does Homelessness Affect the Environment? – The Institute for Environmental Research and Education](#)