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# **FY 26**

# **Heads up**

**Budget Retreat**  
**January 2026**

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# Today's Objectives

Describe the Heads-Up Process.

Identify and define common issues identified by CITs.

Evaluate the impacts of identified issues.

Present key takeaways from Heads-Up that may affect the FY25 budget.



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# FY25 Heads-Up Themes

**Access to  
Technology**

**Application  
Support &  
Infrastructure**

**Equity**

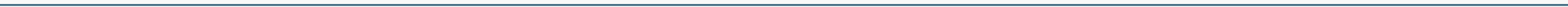
**Hurdle to  
Commissioner  
Goals**

**Internal Process  
Management**

**Legislative  
Impacts**

**Safety of the  
Public and/or  
Staff**

**Service  
Availability &  
Capacity**



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# The Heads-Up Process

The "Heads-Up" process is an opportunity for county departments to identify issues that may impact them in the upcoming budget year.

It is a way to gather information that will provide a more holistic context on the budget requests submitted later in January and February.

The budget team asks for this information in November since there should be 4 months (1/3 of the year) of performance and financial measures for departments to analyze and potential new measures to track.

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# What Departments Submit

Last year we revised the heads-up form to get more details on the issues affecting departments.

Questions on the form include identifying the root cause of the problem, its financial, safety, or compliance impacts, and how it affects operations and residents/customers.

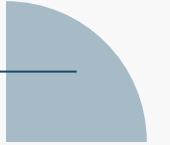
Heads-up issues are then analyzed by theme to see what issues are affecting CITs and county departments.

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# Budget Functional Area CITs

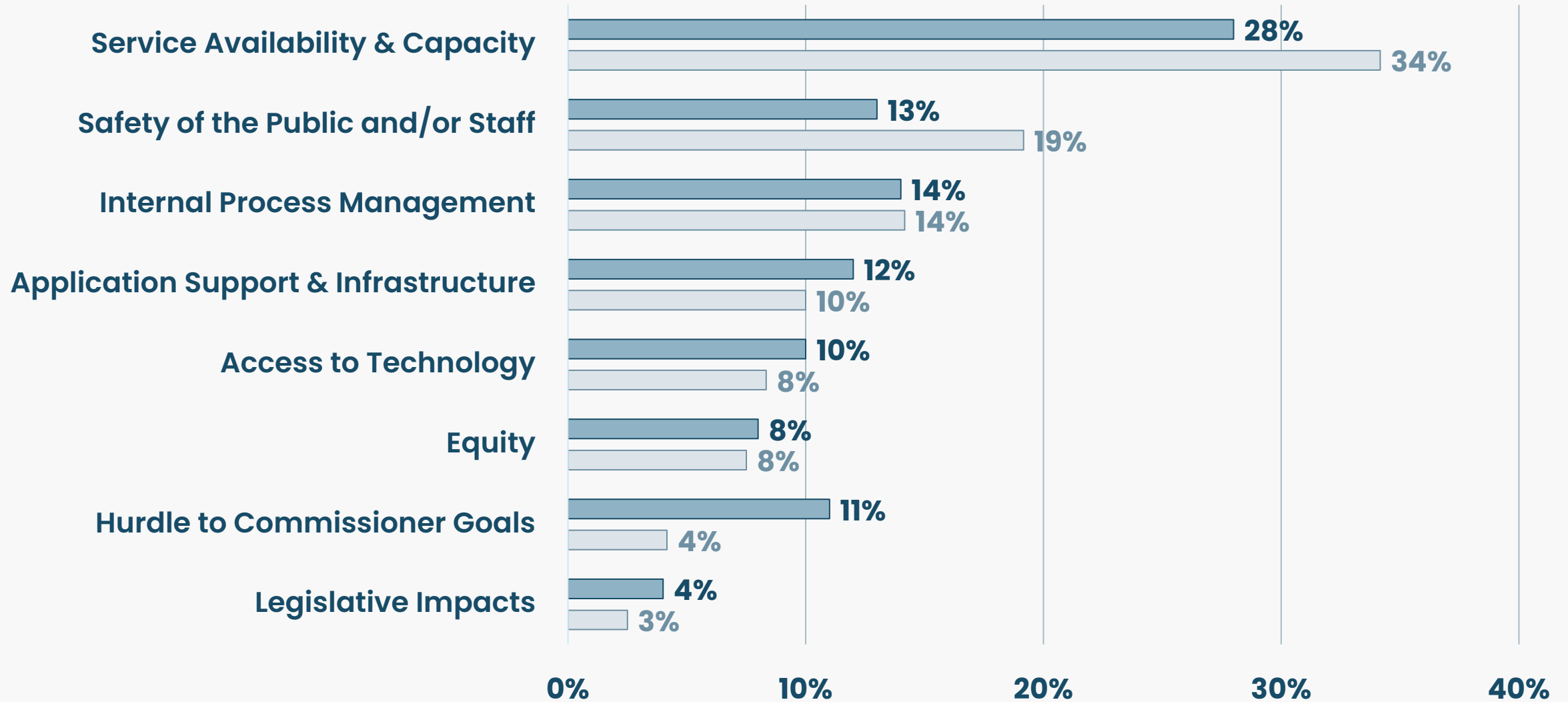
Administration	Culture, Education, & Recreation	General Government	Human Services	Natural Resource Management	Public Safety
CCACC County Attorney Court Facilities Facilities Finance Fleet Human Resources & Risk Management County Manager's Office IT	CCCC Chatham County Schools Cooperative Extension Library Parks, Recreation, & Cultural Resources	Elections Governing Board Register of Deeds Tax Administration	Aging Services Chatham Trades Chatham Transit Human Services – Non-Profits Public Health DSS Vaya – Mental Health	Central Permitting & Inspections CVB EDC Planning Soil & Water Sustainability Watershed Protection *Solid Waste & Recycling	Diversion & Advocacy Programs Emergency Communications Emergency Operations EMS Fire Inspections Sheriff's Office



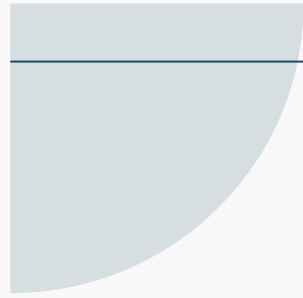
# Common Issues Across CITs

Theme	Admin	Culture, Education, & Rec.	General Government	Human Services	Natural Resource Mgmt.	Public Safety
Access to Technology	X				X	X
Application Support & Infrastructure	X				X	X
Equity		X	X	X	X	
Hurdle to Commissioner Goals		X	X	X	X	
Legislative Impacts					X	
Internal Process Management	X	X	X	X	X	X
Safety of the Public and/or Staff	X	X		X	X	X
Service Availability & Capacity	X	X	X	X	X	X

# FY 25 vs FY26 Heads Up Themes







# Access to Technology

Administration, Natural Resource Management, Public Safety

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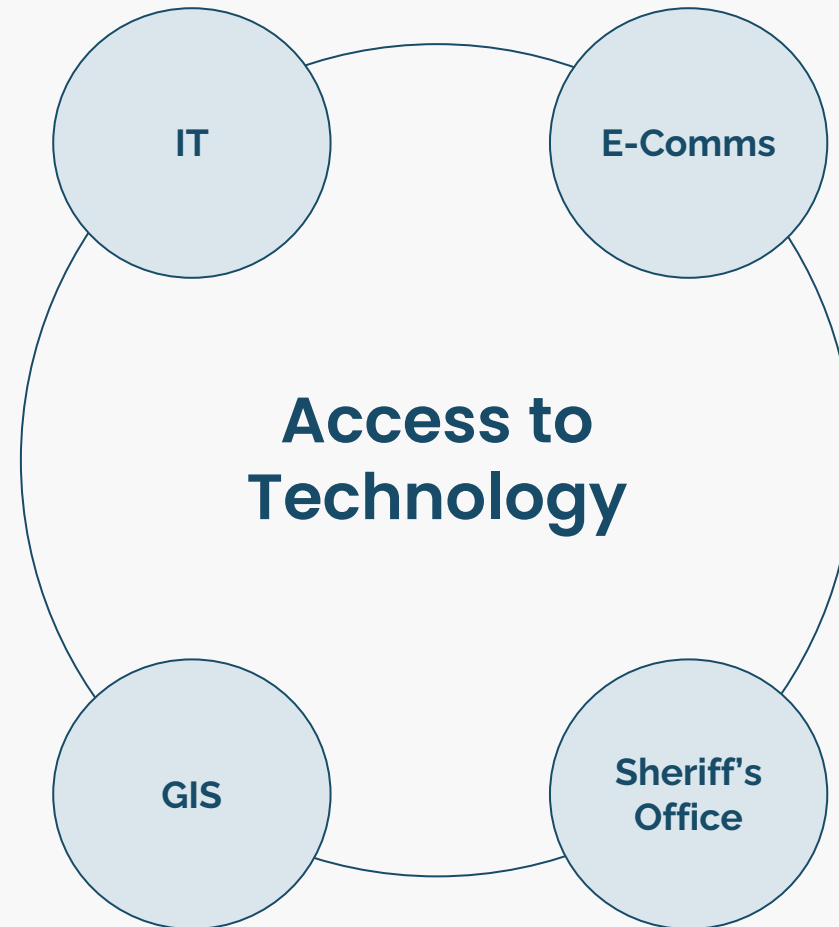
Growing demands for new technology to improve operations

## Admin

**IT:** A/V systems are requiring more maintenance and outside vendor repairs leave systems offline for long periods.

## Natural Resource Management

**GIS:** The development of more progressive GIS solutions, such as drones, is resulting in the need for increased storage capacity for geospatial data.



## Public Safety

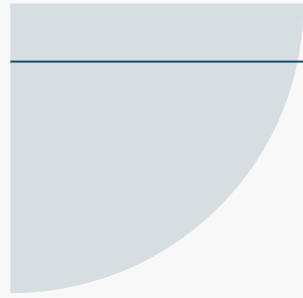
### Emergency Communications:

Maintenance needs for infrastructure and equipment of the radio system have increased over the past 2-3 years.

**Sheriff's Office:** Investigators do not have the technology required for downloading data from suspect(s) cellular devices and vehicle forensic information and must rely on outside agencies, costing both time and money.

Technology is needed to assist criminal investigations online. Available technology exists to analyze and visualize data from telecommunications, social media, and online activity.

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# Application Support & Infrastructure

Administration, Natural Resource Management, Public Safety

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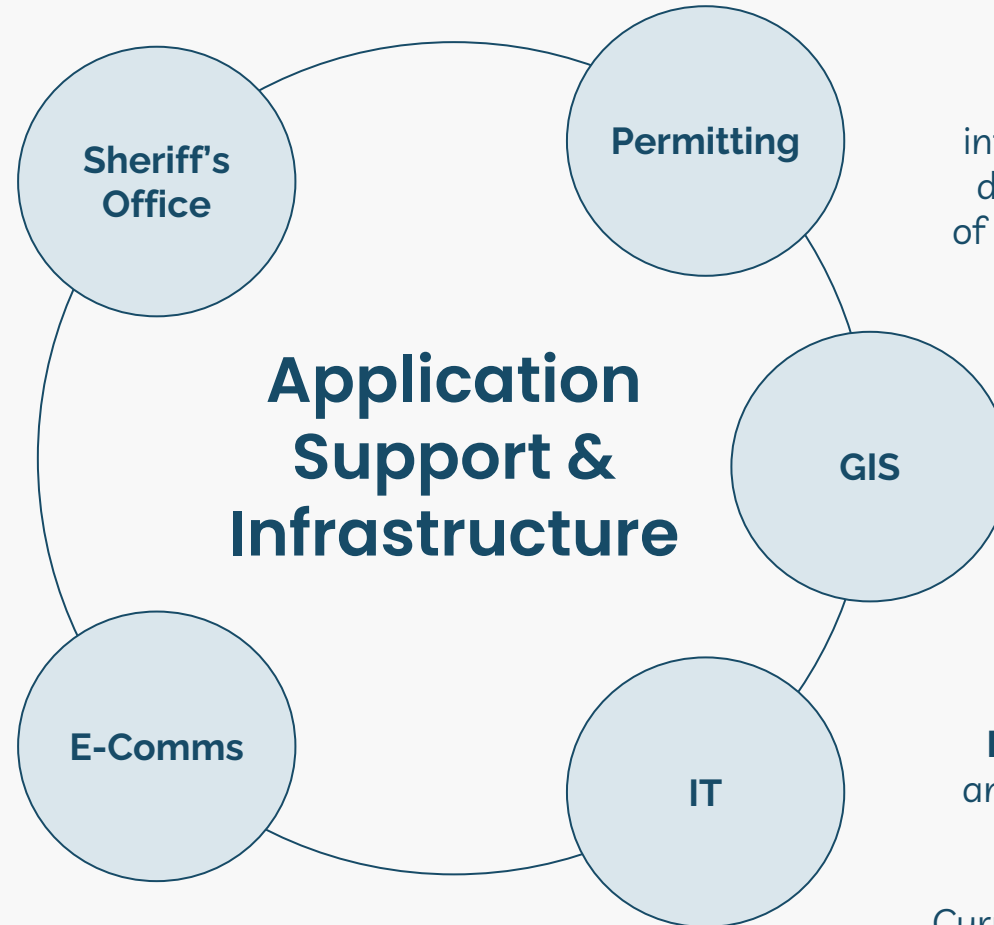
## Mitigating Support Issues for existing software and hardware

### Public Safety

**Sheriff's Office:** Aging camera inventory for investigators is producing low-quality photos for crime scene evidence.

New technology and software from body cameras to crime databases require increasing technical support.

**Emergency Communications:** Increasing volume of non-emergency calls impacting 911 operations. Non-emergency animal related calls have increased as well.



### Natural Resource Management

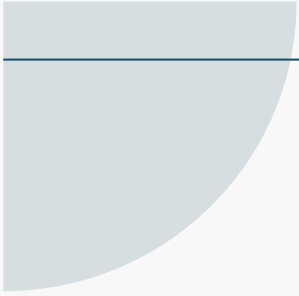
**Permitting:** With over 120 internal users and potential new development, the management of OpenGov software is requiring additional staff time.

**GIS:** Creating maps of building campuses and indoor spaces requires additional add-ons to ArcGIS Indoors software.

### Admin

**IT:** Cameras, DVR systems, and analog phone lines are outdated and require replacement.

Current phone systems will not be supported after December 2025.



# Equity

Human Services, Culture, Education & Recreation

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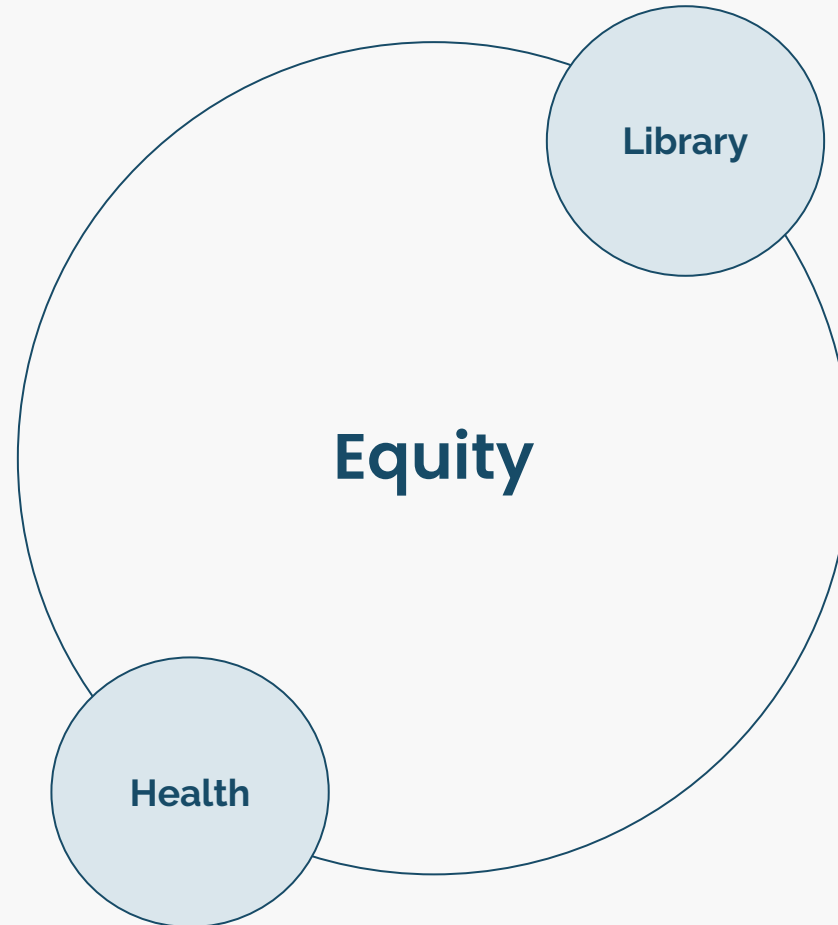
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Providing inclusive access and opportunities for programs

## Human Services

**Public Health:** Despite their importance to providing equitable, culturally appropriate services, there is not currently a mechanism to provide additional compensation for Spanish-speaking staff.

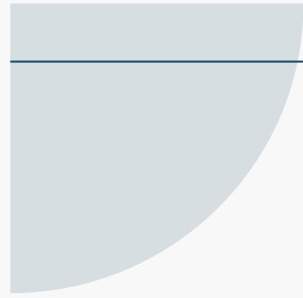
Service providers and community members are often not aware of or face challenges connecting with services that would benefit themselves and their clients.



## Culture, Education & Recreation

**Library:** Outreach Services, designed to serve residents unable to visit library branches, resumed part-time operations after being suspended during the pandemic. Additional programming and materials are needed for strengthening outreach efforts.





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# Hurdles to Commissioner Goals

General Government, Natural Resource Management

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Implementing and managing new projects

## Natural Resource Management

**Planning:** The Chatham County Transportation Advisory Committee has expressed the community's desire to bring fixed route transit, specifically to connect Chatham to neighboring counties.

UDO regulations require technical expertise to assess tree protection, planting, and surveying.

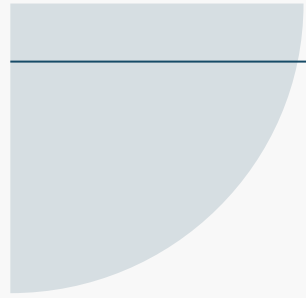


## General Government

**Tax:** Increased workload due to new responsibilities with the additions of the low-income tax rebate program, PUV rollback payments, and tracking tax payments under interlocal agreement with Sanford.







# Legislative Impacts

Natural Resource Management

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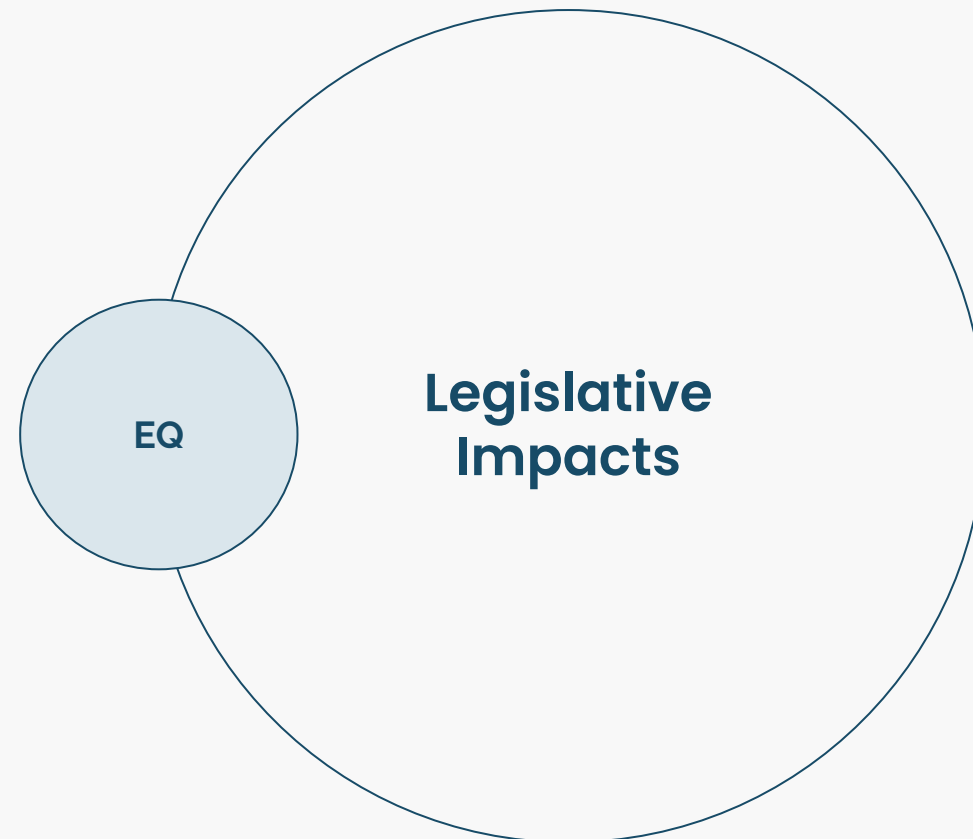
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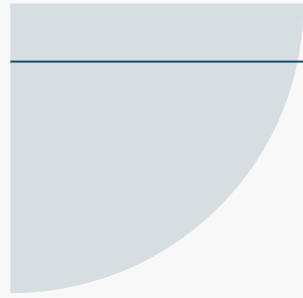
Adapting to regulations and taking advantage of opportunities

## Natural Resource Management

**Environmental Quality:** Chatham should receive over \$218,000 in Inflation Reduction Act rebates from the IRS based on projects completed in 2023.

The State requires all land clearing and inert debris (LCID) landfills to be permitted or closed by the end of 2025.





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# Internal Process Management

Human Services, General Government, Public Safety

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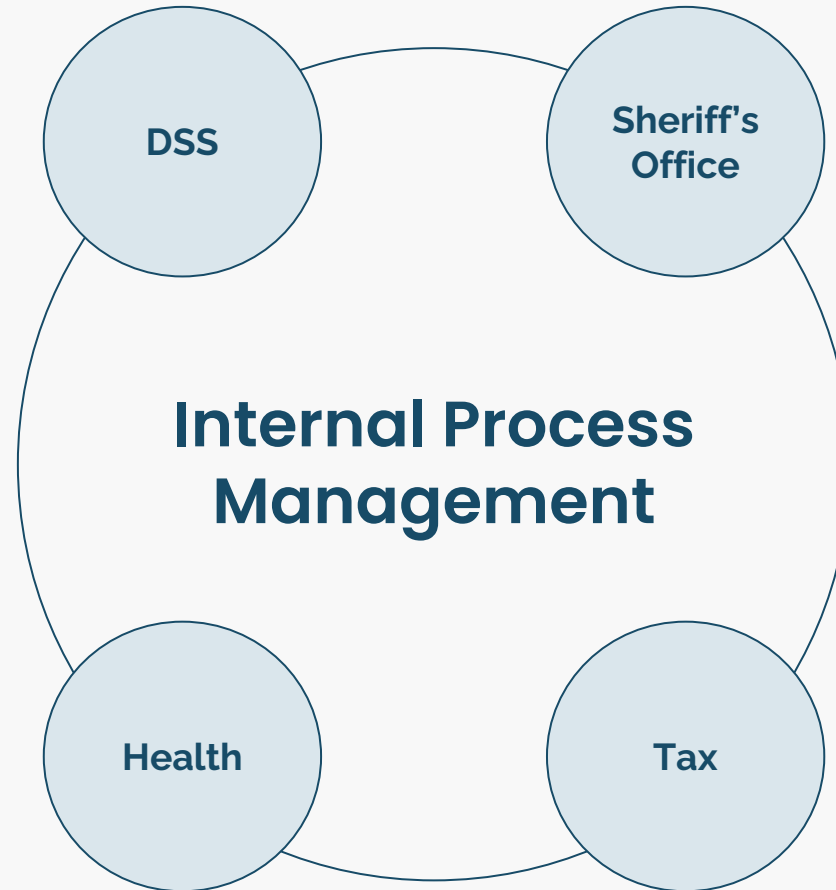
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## Managing internal resources for effective service delivery

### Human Services

**DSS:** Difficulty managing increased administrative and technology related responsibilities as services have grown over time.

**Public Health:** The current leadership structure has challenges with span of control, limiting the capacity to provide adequate support due to growth in positions and services.



### Public Safety

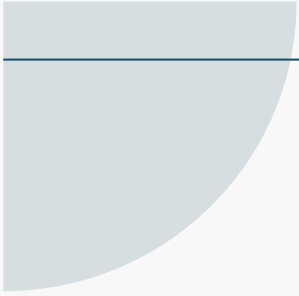
**Sheriff's Office:** Accreditation efforts require dedicated staff to align current practices with specific standards and criteria.

As cases and case complexity grows, there is a need for increasing the efficiency and oversight of evidence handling.

### General Government

**Tax Revaluation:** Transitioning to full in-house reappraisal for next revaluation.

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# Safety of the Public and/or Staff

Public Safety, Natural Resource Management

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Ensuring equipment and support are available for staff

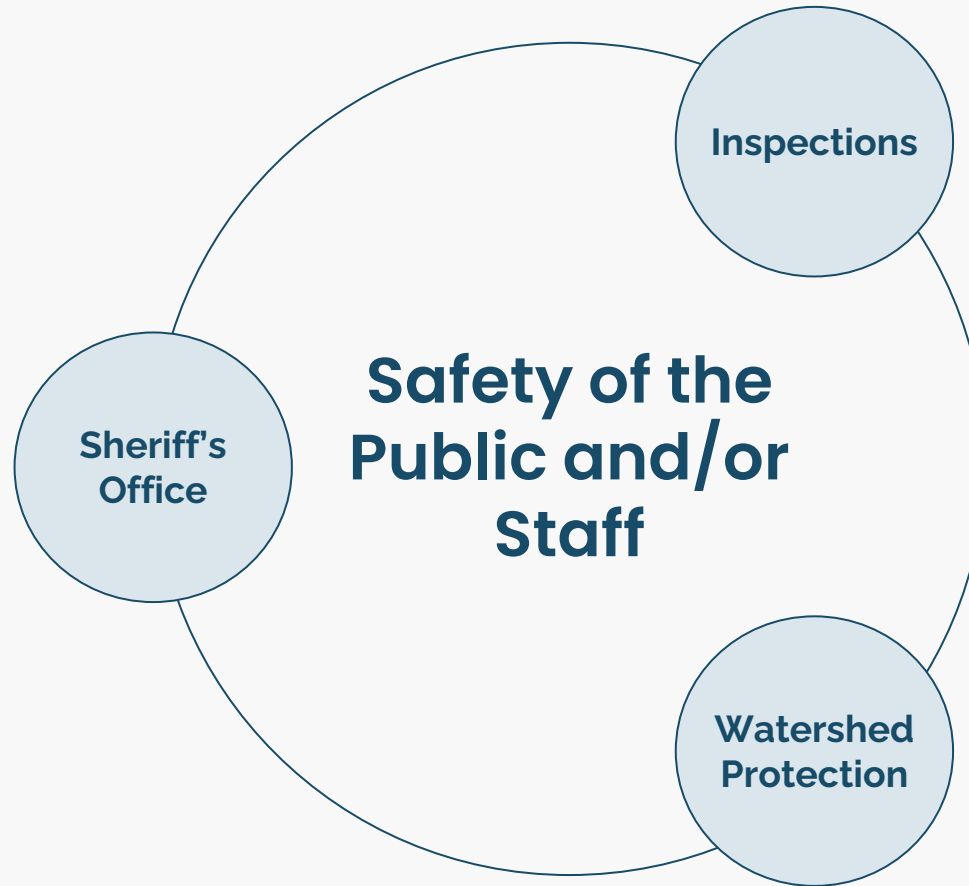
## Public Safety

**Sheriff's Office:** Traumatic events experienced by employees necessitate mental health services.

Investigators lack necessary equipment for the most effective surveillance in remote/rural areas.

There is a shortage of quality surveillance cameras for investigators.

Additional cameras on roadways could enable remote monitoring.

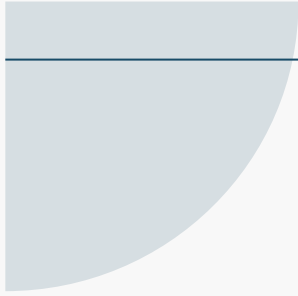


## Natural Resource Management

**Inspections:** Equipment for the fire marshal to conduct investigations at fire scenes requires replacement.

**Watershed Protection:** Lack of resources to ensure stormwater regulations followed beyond design and permitting stage.





# Service Availability & Capacity

Administration, Culture, Education, and Recreation, Human Services, Natural Resource Management, Public Safety

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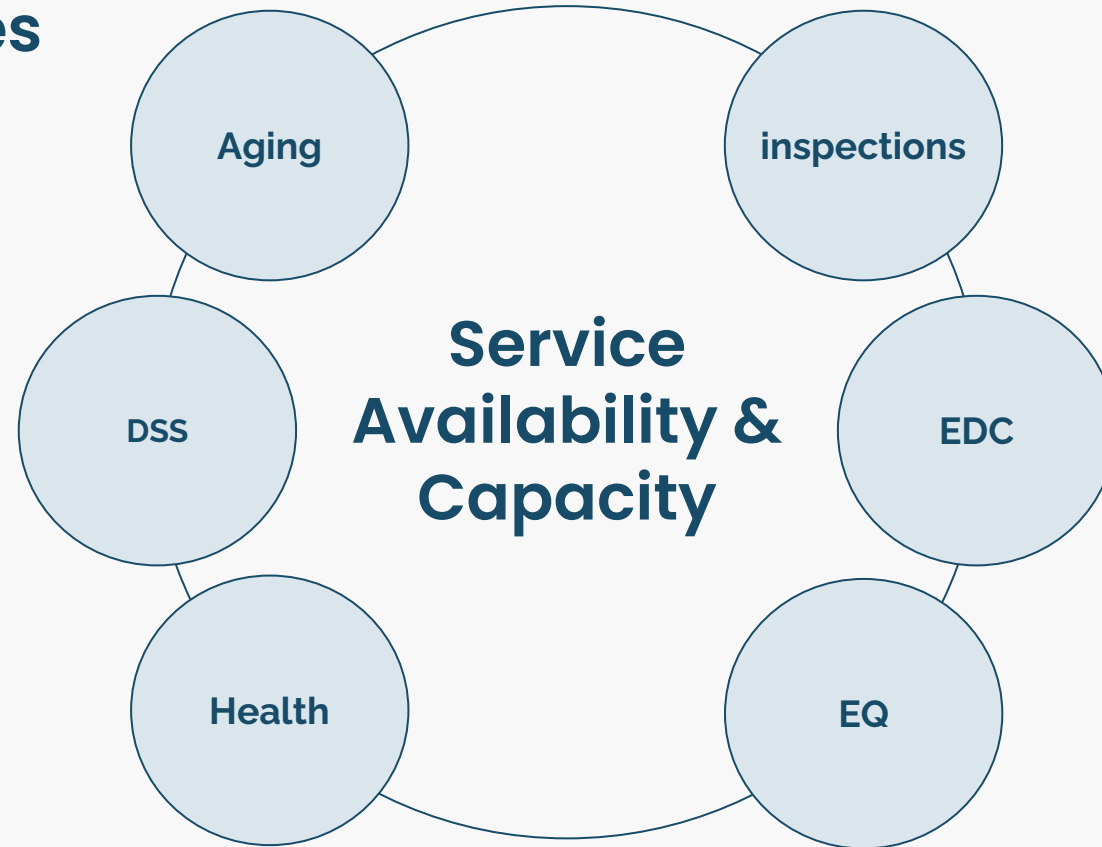
Providing increased levels of services with limited resources.

## Human Services

**Aging:** Meal participants are dissatisfied with the quality provided by current and past contracted providers.

**DSS:** The Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) Program has had steady growth and increasing workloads due to new service options.

**Health:** Chatham Trades operates an employment/training-based program in Siler City, leaving a service gap on the east side of the county.



## Natural Resource Management

**Inspections:** There is a lack of dedicated resources to assist customers navigating the multi-departmental approval process for developments.

**EDC:** Space currently utilized at the performance building does not meet operational needs.

**Environmental Quality:** Food waste has consistently been 25% of solid waste composition. Composting would reduce the tonnage sent to landfills.



## Admin

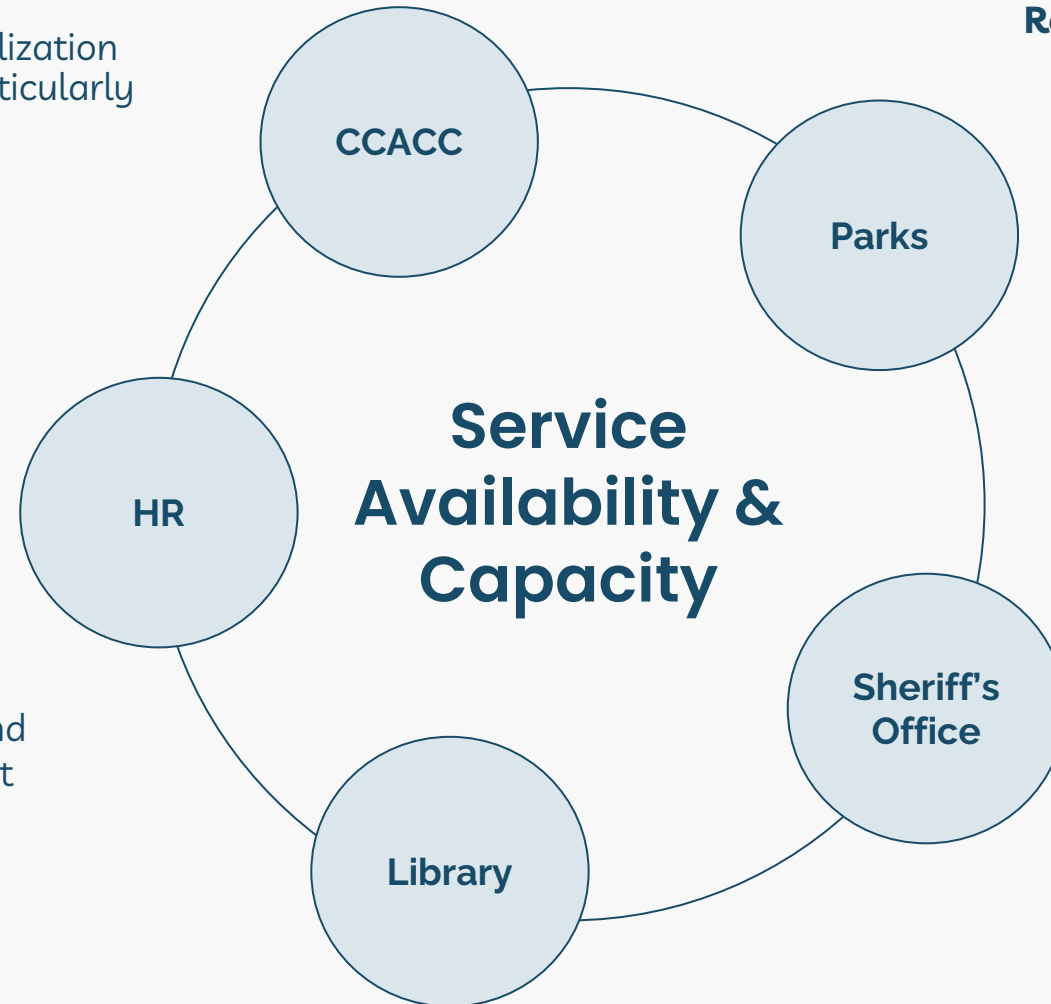
**CCACC:** Increased facility utilization creates staffing difficulty particularly during weekend hours.

**HR:** 3 HR staff serving 675 employees. New software, while assisting in the hiring process, also requires additional management.

## Culture, Education & Recreation

**Library:** Demand for print and AV materials is driving budget increases.

Participation in children and adult programs outpacing capacity.



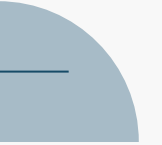
**Parks, Recreation, & Cultural Resources:** Park facilities are aging, and greater usage requires more maintenance.

## Public Safety

**Sheriff:** Field operation shifts that provide 24/7/365 coverage are facing a higher call volume and increased expectations from the community.

The number of individuals needing victim support services is increasing while staffing level has stayed the same.

ARC – Rising intake numbers are producing greater sanitation and laundry needs.



# Impacts of Issues on Staff

	Urgent	Not Urgent
Important	<p><b>I</b></p> <p><b>Activities:</b> Crises Pressing problems Deadline-driven problems</p>	<p><b>II</b></p> <p><b>Activities:</b> Prevention, PC activities Relationship building Recognizing new opportunities Planning, recreation</p>
Not Important	<p><b>III</b></p> <p><b>Activities:</b> Interruptions, some calls Some mail, some reports Some meetings Proximate, pressing matters Popular activities</p>	<p><b>IV</b></p> <p><b>Activities:</b> Trivia, busy work Some mail Some phone calls Time wasters Pleasant Activities</p>

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# Key Takeaways for FY26 Budget

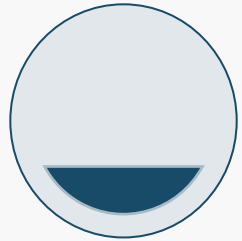
Chatham is a growing county with a population that expects more and higher quality services.

To provide the highest quality of service possible, Chatham County departments must continue to collaborate regularly and work on continuous process improvement.

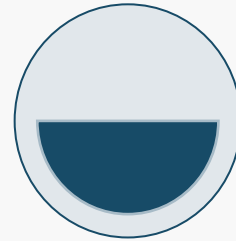
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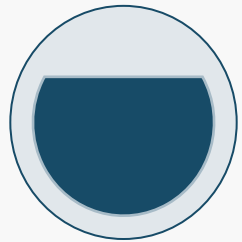
# Next Steps



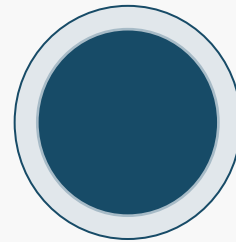
Departments will begin their budget requests, both continuation and expansion.



Staff will meet with departments and help identify solutions and alternatives.




The Budget team and CIT team will evaluate expansion requests.



The Recommended budget will be presented to the BOC in May 2025.

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# Thank You

Questions?

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