



EMPOWERING MARION FOR SUCCESS II

Community Services

FY 25/26 – 2nd Quarter Accomplishments (January-March):

Planning & Future Growth

- Guide Future Growth & Housing
 - **(Inform the community):** Community Services hosted a State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP) Workshop in partnership with Florida Housing Coalition which provided interactive learning, networking, and skill-building opportunities.
 - **(Inform the community):** Community Services hosted its annual Lenders Consortium meeting to announce a number of improvements to the Homebuyers Down Payment Assistance Program which makes the process easier for all parties, further increasing homeownership opportunities for citizens in Marion County.

FY 25/26 – 3rd Quarter Goals (April-June):

Planning & Future Growth

- Guide Future Growth & Housing
 - **(Prepare for growth demands):** Community Services has partnered with the Florida Housing Coalition to conduct a comprehensive Needs and Gaps Analysis. This assessment will provide actionable recommendations to strengthen the effectiveness and efficiency of our local housing response system.
 - **(Prepare for growth demands):** Habitat for Humanity is on track to complete four single-family homes in partnership with Community Services which will help increase the affordable housing stock in Marion County.
 - **(Prepare for growth demands):** The SHIP Team anticipates approving and completing approximately 20 purchase assistance applications in the third quarter. This program allows individuals and families to achieve homeownership.
 - **(Inform the community):** The Ocala Marion Homeless Alliance will partner with Marion County Public Relations Department to host its Annual Meeting at the Mary Sue Rich Community Center, bringing together community leaders to review progress, highlight new housing, and share updates on shelter expansion.