

Ottawa County, Michigan
Recovery Plan Performance Report



**State and Local Fiscal Recovery
Funds**

2025 Report

County of Ottawa
2025 Recovery Plan

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GENERAL OVERVIEW

Executive Summary

The County of Ottawa received \$56,684,556 from the American Recovery Act State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF). On June 8, 2021, the Ottawa County Board of Commissioners appointed nineteen community members to help guide the distribution of the County's SLFRF allocation. These individuals, who comprise the County's COVID-19 American Rescue Plan Act Advisory Committee, represent a diverse cross-section of individuals from a range of industry-sectors, including but not limited to, local government, charitable foundations, economic development, non-profit, and human-services agencies.

Through the end of calendar year 2022 Ottawa County calculated \$67,239,617 in lost revenue using the formula provided by the Department of Treasury which exceeds our allocation. The Board of Commissioners approved \$49,184,556 of the funds to be used for the provision of governmental services. This amount was spent by the end of June 2023 and the funds were used to support payroll expenses for the departments that provide public safety services, court services, prosecuting attorney services, and county clerk services.

Additionally, the Board of Commissioners approved the allocation of \$7,500,000 of the SLFRF funds to assist Outdoor Discovery Center (ODC) Network in creating an additional 1,000 childcare spots in Ottawa County. To date, half of the funds dedicated to this project have been spent out.

Uses of Funds

To ensure continued delivery of a high level of government services, the County of Ottawa has utilized its SLFRF primarily for revenue replacement. The Department of the Treasury allows recipients to use the Local Fiscal Recovery Funds for government services to the extent of the reduction in revenue due to the COVID-19 public health emergency. This flexibility allows local governments to continue to provide valuable services while avoiding budget shortfalls. The Final Rule allows recipients to calculate the extent of their reduction in revenue as of four points in time: December 31 of 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023. Using the formula provided in the Department of the Treasury's Final Rule, the county calculated lost revenue due to the pandemic during January 1, 2020 – December 31, 2020, of \$19,030,058, which represents a 14.6% decline. For the period of January 2021 through December 2021, Ottawa County experienced a reduction in revenue that amounted to \$20,712,572. For the calendar year 2022, our lost revenue amounted to \$27,496,987.

The County Board of Commissioners approved 4 projects that fall under the category of revenue replacement:

1. Public Safety payroll, with the allocated budget of \$35,752,570.
2. Court Services, with the allocated budget of \$8,923,910.

3. Prosecuting Attorney Services, with the allocated budget of \$2,946,358.
4. Clerk Services, with the allocated budget of \$1,561,718.

All funds for these four projects—totaling \$49,184,556—were fully expended by the end of June 2023. The remaining \$7,500,000 in SLFRF funds, was allocated to support a childcare capacity-building initiative led by ODC network, which is currently underway. The project aims to create 1,000 additional spots across the County, reducing the gap in childcare supply by 10 percent over the next three years in Ottawa County.

The ODC Network is working to accomplish this through a coalition of partners including the Ottawa Area Intermediate School District (OAISD) and local businesses. The ODC will physically locate the new and expanded childcare centers across the County using local employer sites. With the commitments to date, the ODC would be able to open onsite care:

- In the City of Holland at Stow Co. in partnership with Hope College;
- Gentex Corp in Zeeland Township;
- In the City of Grand Haven at Shape Corp.;
- In the City of Hudsonville, at the Hudsonville Nature Center in partnership with NuWool Co.;
- In Holland Township at the Town Center (previously Shops at Westshore) site in partnership with the OAISD.

The current proposed center locations are geographically accessible for 9 of the 11 commission districts (before or after redistricting), representing over 80% of the population. In addition, the employers partnering in this endeavor draw employees from across the County including the areas where a center is not currently proposed. So, while childcare may not be near a family home, onsite care at a place of business makes it highly accessible for a majority of Ottawa County families.

The project also supports family home centers, specifically in areas where a large-scale center might not be economically feasible. The OAISD and the ODC are working to engage entrepreneurs interested in running licensed home-based childcare services across the county, but specifically in areas where a center-based solution isn't feasible. The coalition also helps former providers, who may have left the industry during the pandemic, return to business, leveraging existing expertise within the community. While this project meets the primary goal of increasing capacity, it also has a secondary benefit of increasing affordability and convenience for childcare in the region in general.

The anticipated mix of revenue, on average, following the grant is approximately one-third from users, one-third from local businesses benefiting from these services, and one-third from the public sector in the form of childcare subsidies, the Tri-Share program, and Great Start Readiness Preschool funding. This revenue mix is required to ensure that childcare costs are accessible to the widest segment of the community. For example, an average cost per day

might be \$60 (the prices change with age based on care ratios). In this model, the parent would contribute \$20, the Department of Health and Human Services pays another \$20, and the employer contributes the final \$20.”

In the long run, some employers plan on using the State of Michigan’s Tri-Share program. ODC plans to implement a variation of the Tri-Share program that will allow employers to invest in employees and attract employers. Because the State’s Tri-Share program has a limited scope of eligibility, ODC’s childcare program will allow more flexibility for expanded access across the County. Employers intend to subsidize the childcare program for their employees, with the biggest employer looking at subsidizing about 60 to 70 percent of costs so they can offer the service at a discounted rate. While employers would only provide subsidies for their own employees, these subsidies benefit the entire County as they are contributing to the increase in childcare capacity. By increasing childcare site availability across the region, parents will also save more money by reducing the distance traveled to get to and from childcare centers.

Promoting equitable outcomes

Ottawa County focuses on promoting equitable outcomes through the provision of all of its governmental services. The objective in the application of the SLFRF funds is to ensure the promotion of the county’s mission, which is our commitment to excellence and the delivery of cost effective public services. The Department of Treasury funds were also critical in supporting the following four goals:

1. To maintain and improve the strong financial position of the County.
2. To contribute to the long-term economic, social, and environmental health of the County.
3. To maintain and enhance communication with citizens, employees, and other stakeholders.
4. To continually improve the County’s organization and services.

Ottawa County has selected an additional project based on community needs and to address populations impacted by the pandemic. These populations include women of Ottawa County who were not able to rejoin the workforce due to childcare disruptions.

This project limits assistance to children and parents in Ottawa County. Several reports have demonstrated this need for more childcare options in Ottawa County serving the 0-5 age group, especially for low-income families. County Health Rankings & Roadmaps (CHR&R), a program of the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute, reports that there were 6 childcare centers per 1,000 children under age 5 in the County in 2021, which is below the State average.¹ Additionally, the Michigan League for Public Policy (MLPP) states in a March 2021

¹ County Health Rankings & Roadmaps. Ottawa, MI. Accessed December 16, 2022.
<https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/explore-health-rankings/michigan/ottawa?year=2022>

publication “Childcare continues to be a critical need in Michigan.” Ottawa County, the MLPP reports, has low capacity, which means there are 1.9 kids per spot and the county needs more programs serving the 0-5 age group. The MLPP also reports that 8% of families in Ottawa County live below the poverty level (less than \$26,500 annually for a family of four) and another 20% live between 100% and 200% of the poverty level (annual income between \$27,750-\$55,500 for a family of four). Together, this represents more than 1 in 4 families in the County. Complicating this issue, according to a recent report by Crain’s, “Between the start of 2020 and Sept. 2, 2022, the state lost 753 daycare centers, home-based centers and group home centers, a nearly 9 percent decrease.” Currently, Ottawa County has approximately 11,000 childcare ‘spots’ within the county, and 21,000 children birth to 5, leaving a gap of 10,000 childcare spots, while the population and employer needs continue to grow and expand. Furthermore, data shared by Lakeshore Advantage shows Ottawa County is among the worst in the state with childcare expenses making up almost 40% of household income for minimum wage workers. CHR&R also reports that the average household in Ottawa County spent 32 percent of its income on childcare for two children, which is higher than the national average.

The ODC Child Care project will address these issues by increasing childcare capacity, reducing the gap in childcare accessibility, and increasing affordability and convenience for childcare in Ottawa County.

Community Engagement

It was Ottawa County’s aim to maintain contact with County residents and leaders for the duration of the allocation period in order to remain up to date with the needs and wants of the community in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and its negative impacts.

In order to involve the community as much as possible in the decision-making process, Ottawa County formed an American Rescue Plan Act Committee. The role of the ARPA Committee was to identify needs within their area of expertise and assist with drafting funding options and priorities for the Board Finance & Administration Standing Committee and the Board of Commissioners. The committee consisted of leaders in the community who have an exceptional grasp on the needs of the people they serve. Each of the nineteen members were selected by the County Administrator and Board of Commissioners based on their area of knowledge and the organization they are a part of. Some organizations included those that focus on housing, economic development, nonprofit assistance, and governmental affairs.

In addition to the Committee’s contribution, the county welcomed public input through Board of Commissioners and Committee meetings, and also provided an online option for submitting public comments.

Though the majority of the SLFRF funds were dedicated to the provision of governmental services, the Board of Commissioners collaborated with the ARPA committee to identify a project aimed at reducing negative economic impacts in the community. This initiative—the

ODC Network Child Care project—was designed to support immediate recovery while laying the foundation for long-term economic resilience in Ottawa County.

Labor Practices

The capital expenditures underway for the ODC Network childcare program adhere to all labor practice requirements for a project of its size and scope. The subrecipient of these project funds has selected a local Ottawa County construction firm to complete the childcare facilities.

Use of Evidence

During the evaluation process, American Rescue Plan Act Committee considered data and evidence brought forward to them to assess positive impacts on the County residents. With funding appropriated and the ODC Network Child Care project now in progress, the County, in collaboration with Guidehouse (our monitoring and support partner), is actively conducting ongoing performance assessments to measure impact against expected outcomes and ensure that funds are being used efficiently and in alignment with the project's stated goals.

Performance Report

A portion of the SLFRF funds is being used to replace lost revenue which allowed the county to continue to provide a high level of government services. Outlined below is the project inventory showing how the funds are being utilized. The impact of SLFRF will be evaluated using the primary outcome measures set forth in the County's budget document which is published on the County website.

The ODC Network Child Care project falls under the reporting category of *2.11 Healthy Childhood Environments: Child Care*. This project serves households and populations that experienced a negative economic impact during the pandemic. The project performance for this category is provided in the project inventory section of this report.

PROJECT INVENTORY

Project X601: Public Safety Payroll

Funding amount: \$35,752,570

Project Expenditure Category: 6.1 Provision of Government Services

Project Overview

- *These funds supported the provision of equitable services to protect the safety of life, health, and property of residents and businesses across the County. The impact of SLFRF in supporting the County's committed efforts in providing public safety, justice, and security is measured by the budgeted funds available to the County Sheriff's Department for these explicit, reported public safety purposes. The project was fully expended by June 2023.*

Project X602: Court Services

Funding amount: \$8,923,910

Project Expenditure Category: 6.1 Provision of Government Services

Project Overview

- *These funds supported the provision of equitable court services to the people of Ottawa County. The impact of SLFRF is to support the County's committed efforts in administering justice and applying the law with fairness, equality, and integrity that promotes public accountability for improved quality of life in Ottawa County. The impact will be evaluated using the primary outcome measures set forth in the County's budget document which is published on the County website. The project was fully expended by June 2023.*

Project X603: Prosecuting Attorney Services

Funding amount: \$2,946,358

Project Expenditure Category: 6.1 Provision of Government Services

Project Overview

- *These funds supported the provision of equitable services aimed to preserve and improve the quality of life for Ottawa County residents by promoting lawful conduct and enhancing safety and security through diligent efforts to detect, investigate, and prosecute criminal offenses in Ottawa County. The impact of SLFRF in supporting these County committed efforts will be evaluated using the primary outcome measures set forth in the County's budget document which is published on the County website. The project was fully expended by June 2023.*

Project X604: Clerk Services

Funding amount: \$1,561,718

Project Expenditure Category: 6.1 Provision of Government Services

Project Overview

- *These funds supported the provision of equitable services aimed to preserve and maintain public vital records for the citizens of Ottawa County. Services also include providing access to these records to the general public. The Circuit Court Records division of the County Clerk's Office receives and maintains all files for the Circuit Court. The impact of SLFRF in supporting these County committed efforts will be evaluated using*

the primary outcome measures set forth in the County's budget document which is published on the County website. The project was fully expended by June 2023.

Project X201: Outdoor Discovery Center Network Child Care

Funding amount: \$7,500,000

Project Expenditure Category: 2.11 – Healthy Childhood Environments: Child Care

Project Overview

- *The ODC Network, a 501(c)(3) organization, will create 1,000 additional childcare spots in Ottawa County by using ARPA funding for capital expansion. This expansion in capacity will reduce the gap in childcare supply and demand by 10 percent over the next three years in Ottawa County.*

Use of Evidence

Project Goals:

The primary goal of the ODC Network Childcare Expansion Project is to address the acute shortage of accessible and affordable childcare in Ottawa County by creating 1,000 new childcare slots. This project directly responds to pandemic-related impacts on families—especially women—by enabling parents to return to the workforce through improved access to high-quality childcare services.

Use of Evidence-Based Interventions:

This project incorporates evidence-based interventions. Research and data clearly establish that accessible childcare increases workforce participation, especially for women, and contributes to economic recovery. The initiative aligns with national and state-level findings showing that women are disproportionately affected by the lack of childcare options.

Notably:

- *There are still **515,000 fewer women** in the U.S. labor force compared to pre-pandemic levels, largely due to caregiving burdens.*
- *In Michigan, **lack of affordable childcare** is a key factor limiting women's job opportunities, particularly among low-income and minority populations.*
- ***Nearly 70% of mothers** with young children report that onsite or subsidized childcare would influence their job decisions.*

By improving childcare availability and affordability, especially through partnerships with employers and subsidy programs, the project directly targets these known barriers.

Program Evaluation:

*A rigorous, multi-faceted program evaluation is being conducted. The evaluation approach is designed to track outcomes at the **capacity, family, and economic levels**, utilizing publicly available data for transparency and sustainability. Evaluation components include:*

- **New Child Care Capacity:** Licensing status, participation in Great Start to Quality, CDC subsidy, food program enrollment, and the number of new slots created.
- **Child and Family Outcomes:** Developmental screenings, curriculum assessments, literacy indicators, and family surveys/focus groups.
- **Economic Impact:** Job creation (direct/indirect), workforce participation, employee retention data, and cost-effectiveness analysis.

Evidence-Based Allocation:

As of March 2025, \$6,025,395 of the \$7,500,000 allocated to the project has been expended. While the entire project design is rooted in evidence-based practices, specific amounts aligned with direct interventions (e.g., developmental assessments, family support services) are being captured as part of ongoing performance tracking and reporting. The evaluation process itself is being used in lieu of a fixed dollar allocation specifically labeled for evidence-based interventions.

Evaluation Design Summary:

- **Design Type:** Non-randomized, longitudinal tracking with comparison benchmarks using publicly available county and state datasets.
- **Implementation Partners:** Outdoor Discovery Center Network, Ottawa Area Intermediate School District, Guidehouse (monitoring and evaluation support).
- **Outcome Metrics:** Childcare access, developmental outcomes, parent employment trends, and employer engagement in childcare support.

This integrated approach ensures accountability while contributing to a growing body of evidence on the long-term value of childcare investments as economic infrastructure.

Performance report

This project aims to reduce barriers to workforce participation, especially for women and low-income families, by expanding access to high-quality, affordable childcare throughout Ottawa County. To promote transparency, accessibility, and long-term sustainability, all data are sourced from publicly available datasets whenever possible. The evaluation strategy includes longitudinal tracking and geographic data mapping, using consistent public benchmarks and indicators to measure outcomes. This multi-faceted evaluation approach captures both the economic impact and the effects on children and families, providing third-party accountability while offering valuable insights to the broader community by integrating findings with other County datasets. The impact of newly established childcare sites is assessed using these public indicators, enabling the establishment of baselines and ongoing tracking as the initiative grows.

Mandatory Performance Indicators and Programmatic Data²

<u>Indicator</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Metric / Notes</u>
<u>Children Served by Preschool / Pre-K (ages 3–5)</u>	<u>In Progress</u>	<u>503 children</u>
<u>Families Served by Home Visiting Support</u>	<u>In Progress</u>	<u>29</u>

New Child Care Capacity Evaluation (Output Measures)²

<u>Indicator</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Metric / Notes</u>
<u>Child Care Licenses Issued</u>	<u>In Progress</u>	<u>2, includes Stow Co. and Town Center</u>
<u>Participation in Great Start to Quality</u>	<u>In Progress</u>	<u>Yes</u>
<u>Participation in CDC Child Care Subsidy</u>	<u>Completed</u>	<u>Yes</u>
<u>Braided Funding (GSRP with tuition)</u>	<u>Completed</u>	<u>Yes</u>
<u>Participation in Food Program</u>	<u>Completed</u>	<u>Yes</u>
<u>Child Care Slots Created</u>	<u>In Progress</u>	<u>415</u> <u>Goal: 1,000 slots</u>

Child and Family Impact Evaluation (Outcome Measures)²

<u>Indicator</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Metric / Notes</u>
<u>Developmental Screening</u>	<u>In Progress</u>	<u>Conducted at participating centers</u>
<u>Curriculum Assessments</u>	<u>In Progress</u>	<u>Educational assessments underway</u>
<u>Preschool Early Literacy Indicators</u>	<u>In Progress</u>	<u>Target age group: Children 3–5</u>
<u>Family Feedback Surveys & Focus Groups</u>	<u>In Progress</u>	<u>Feedback collection in all pilot sites</u>
<u>Children Participating (3-5 years)</u>	<u>In Progress</u>	<u>503 children as of June 2025</u>

² Data provided by Guidehouse.

Economic Impact Evaluation²

<u>Indicator</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Metric / Notes</u>
<u>Jobs Created</u>	<u>In Progress</u>	<u>56 Direct, 108 Indirect</u>
<u>Economic Impact of Jobs Created</u>	<u>In Progress</u>	<u>\$2,825,526 (Direct)</u>
<u>Number of Employees Participating</u>	<u>In Progress</u>	<u>Not yet reported by demographic subgroup</u>
<u>Employee Retention Comparison</u>	<u>In Progress</u>	<u>N/A (future evaluation planned)</u>
<u>Number of Open Jobs in Sector</u>	<u>In Progress</u>	<u>N/A</u>
<u>Number of New Employees Engaged</u>	<u>In Progress</u>	<u>N/A</u>
<u>Money (\$) Leveraged (Public/Private)</u>	<u>In Progress</u>	<u>N/A</u>

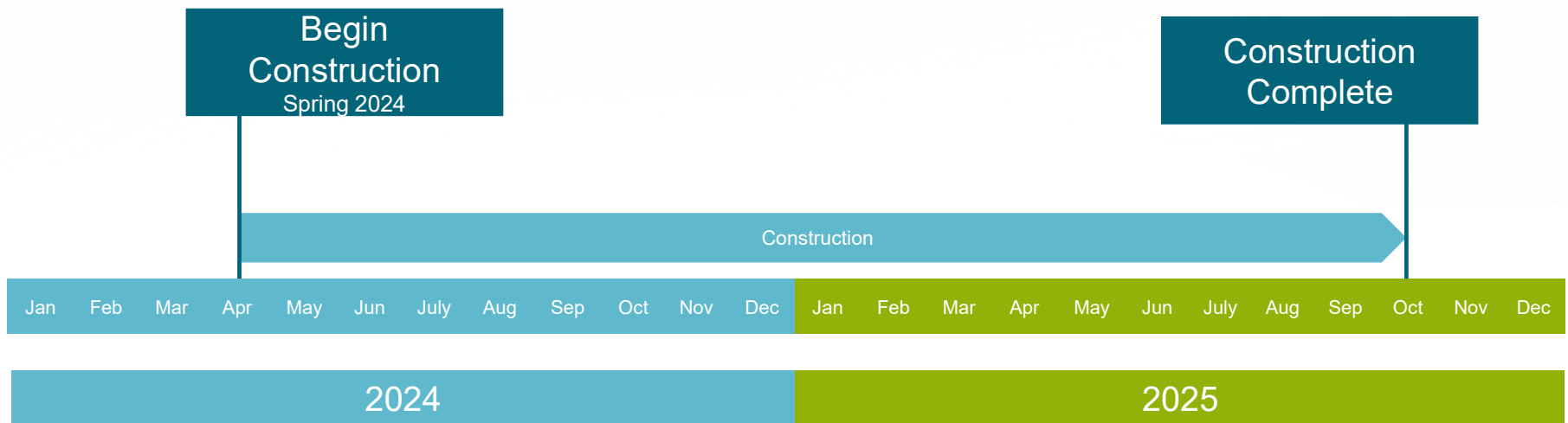
The progress for each childcare site is illustrated in Appendix A.

Appendix A

Gentex Corp.

Notes

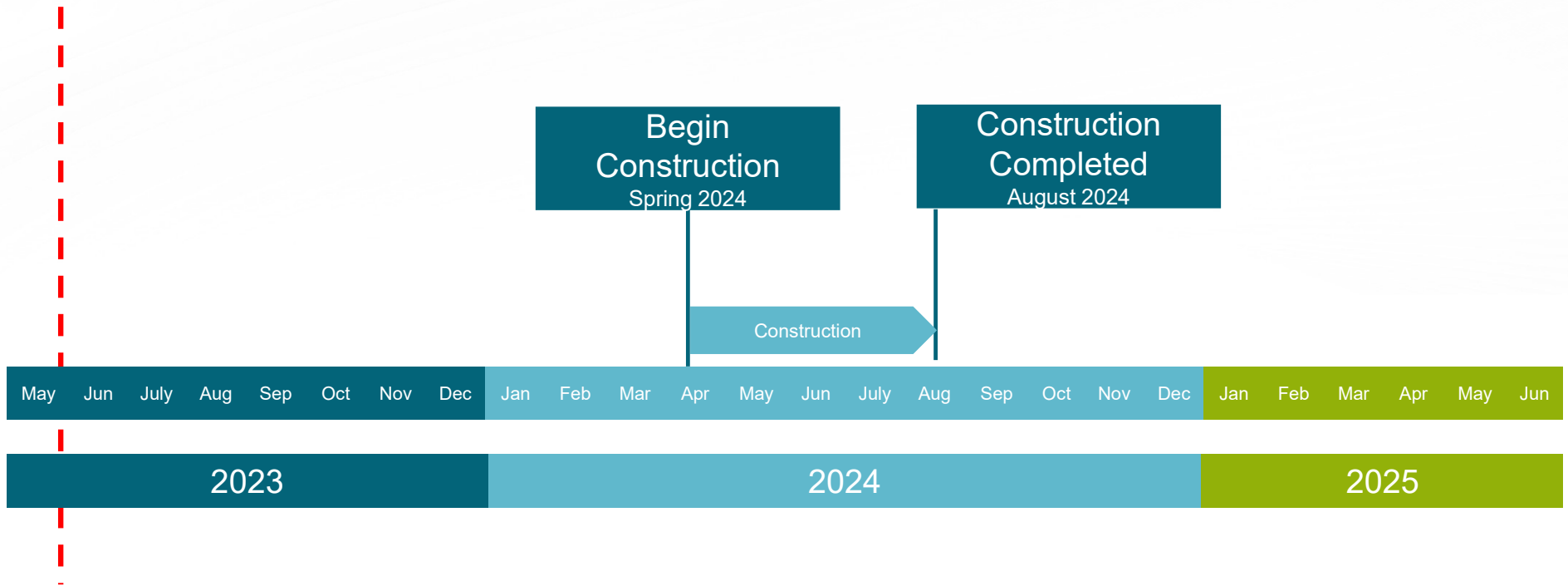
- Construction underway



Town Center

Notes

- Construction and playscape completed



Shape Corp.

Notes

- MDOT rejected the permit on Shape Corp site
- ODC is partnering with the local school district to open facility

Begin
Construction
July 2025

Construction

Jan Feb Mar Apr May Jun July Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec Jan Feb Mar Apr May Jun July Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec

2024

2025

Hudsonville

Notes

- Received preliminary planning commission approval in March

Begin
Construction
Summer 2025

Construction

Jan Feb Mar Apr May Jun July Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec Jan Feb Mar Apr May Jun July Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec

2024

2025

Stow

Notes

- The second classroom is completed and licensed.

Design Phase
Complete
End of May

Construction
Kickoff
June 2023

Construction
Completed

Construction

May Jun July Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec Jan Feb Mar Apr May Jun July Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec Jan Feb Mar Apr May Jun

2023

2024

2025