



**Whatcom
Healthy
Children's
Fund**

Caring today, shaping tomorrow



Agenda

- Present Final Implementation Plan
- Looking into 2026
- Questions

Accomplishments-Early Learning and Care

Increased Childcare Slots:

414 new childcare slots created.

An additional 121 slots are currently under development through ongoing contracts from the latest Capital RFP.

Expanded Access to Childcare:

955 childcare drop-in slots added, compared to zero two years ago

Increasing Quality of Child Care

Approximately **839 children impacted** so far from quality enhancing programming and services

Accomplishments-Support for Vulnerable Children

Basic Needs Support:

\$1M invested in diapers, wipes, and formula. Approximately **581 families** served quarterly through intensive-support partners and up to **17,971 essential-item distribution touches** each quarter through the food bank.

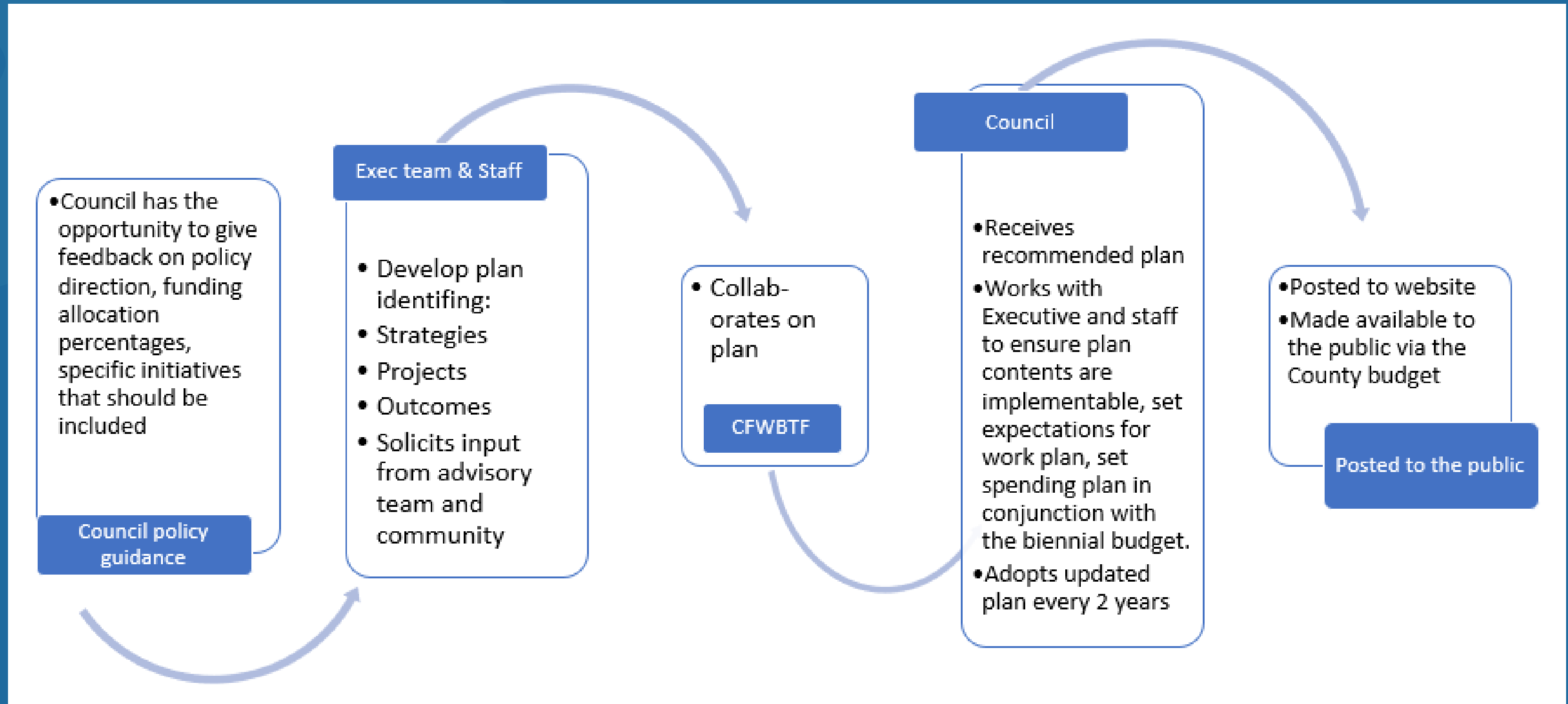
Mental Health Support:

Added **4 new behavioral health positions** and **6 concurrent internship positions**, served approximately **298 families** so far, and invested **2,421 hours** in developing a highly trained early childhood mental health workforce.

Infant Family Support:

201 Medicaid eligible families referred to doula services with **124 families** enrolled in doula services. So far the doulas have supported 80 births.

Implementation Plan process



Review of Ordinance Funding Allocations

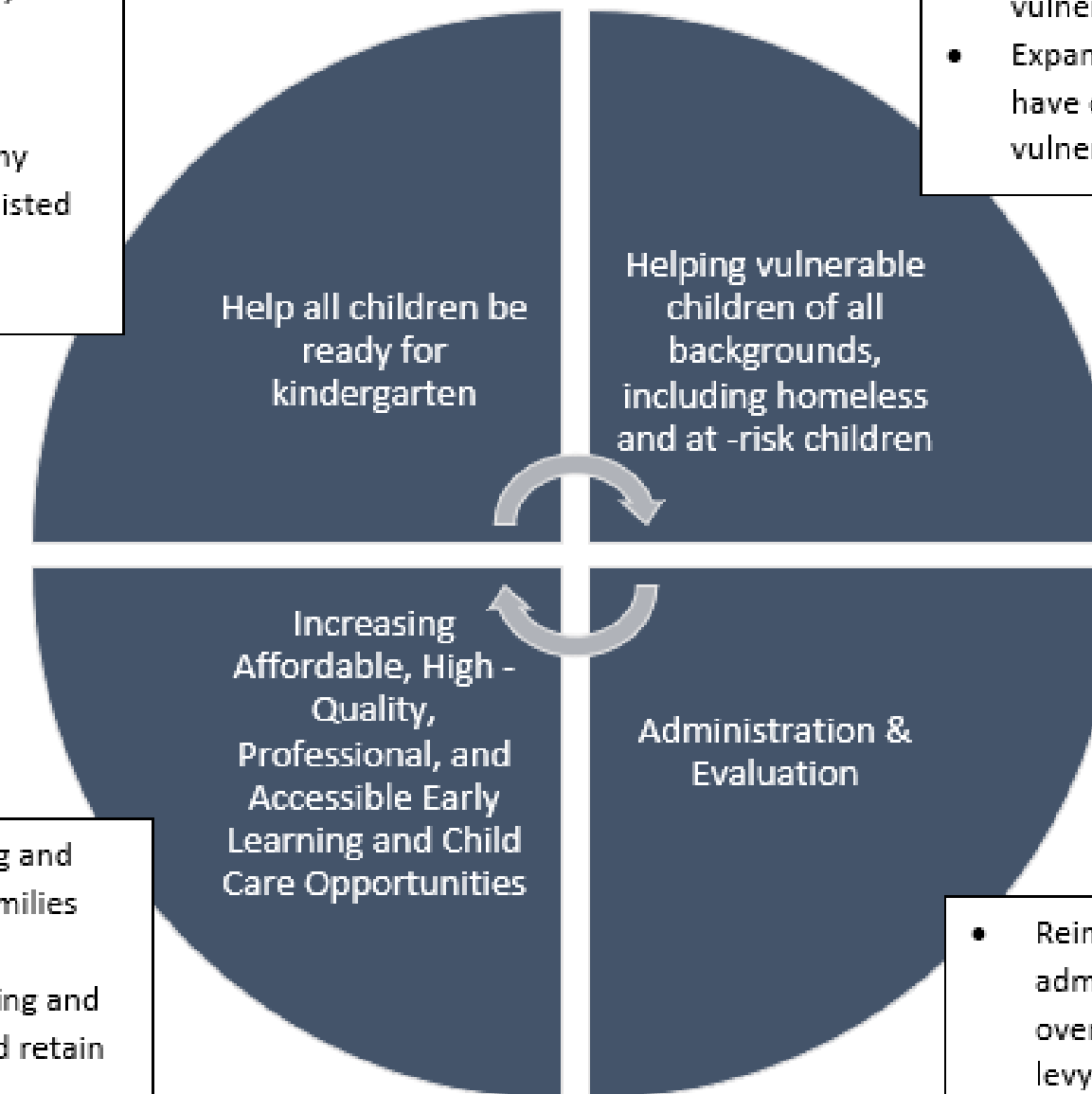
Ordinance does not specifically define actions to fulfill this goal, or specifically allocate funding.

OSPI/WaKIDS Whole-child Assessment measures: Social-emotional, Physical, Cognitive, Language, Literacy, Mathematics.

Whatcom County interpretation is any services that improve a child's skills listed above, within the early learning and childcare experience.

55-68% of funds

- Decrease the cost of early learning and child care experiences for both families and providers.
- Increase the quality of early learning and child care experiences. Attract and retain quality early childhood educators.
- Expand early learning and child care services that meet the varied needs of families and children. Geographic locations, ages of children, special needs, and a broad range of child care scheduling needs (including emergency child care opportunities) will all be considered in the development.



20-36% of funds

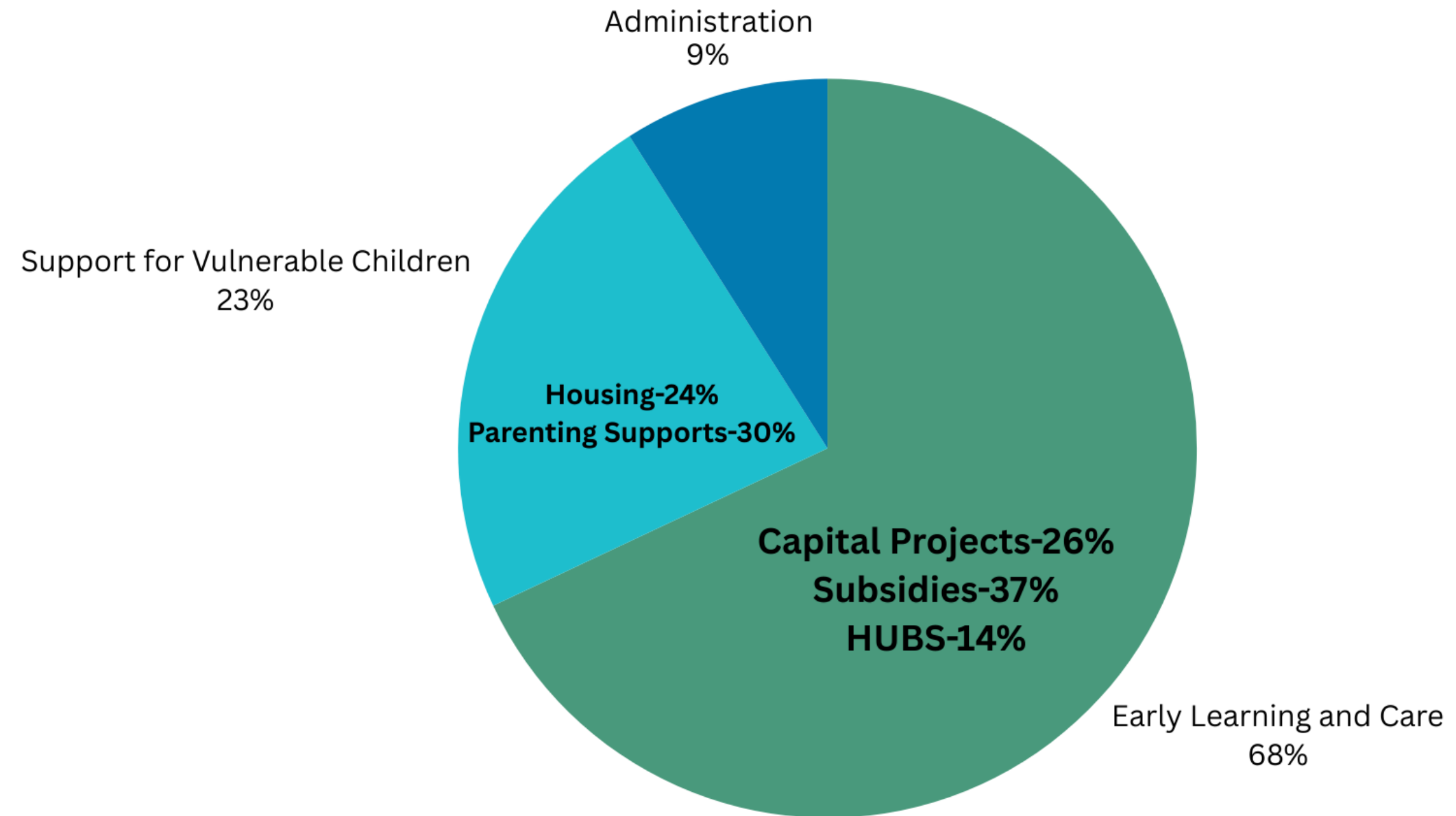
- Expand mental health services for vulnerable children and their families.
- Supporting interim housing services and trauma - focused system reform directed at vulnerable children and their families.
- Expand supports and services for families who have or are expecting children deemed to be vulnerable.

9% of funds, of which up to 3% for evaluation

- Reimbursements to the County for administrative costs, evaluation, and overhead shall be limited to nine percent of levy proceeds, with up to three percent used for auditing and evaluation.
- Every other year, a qualified independent auditor shall conduct a performance audit of the Healthy Children's Fund.

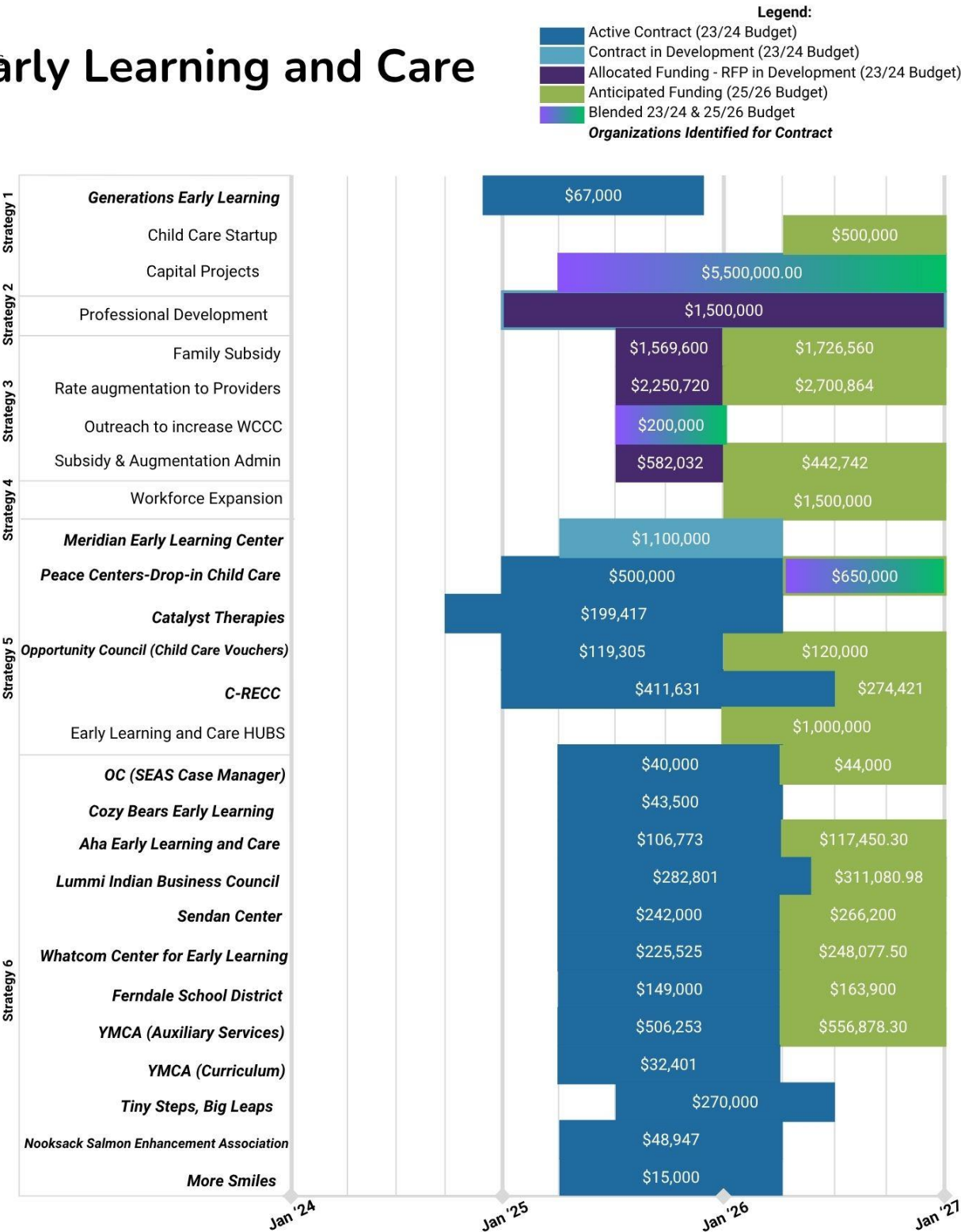
Draft 25/26 Implementation Plan

This pie chart depicts how funding allocations correspond to County Council's stated priorities in the Draft Implementation Plan.



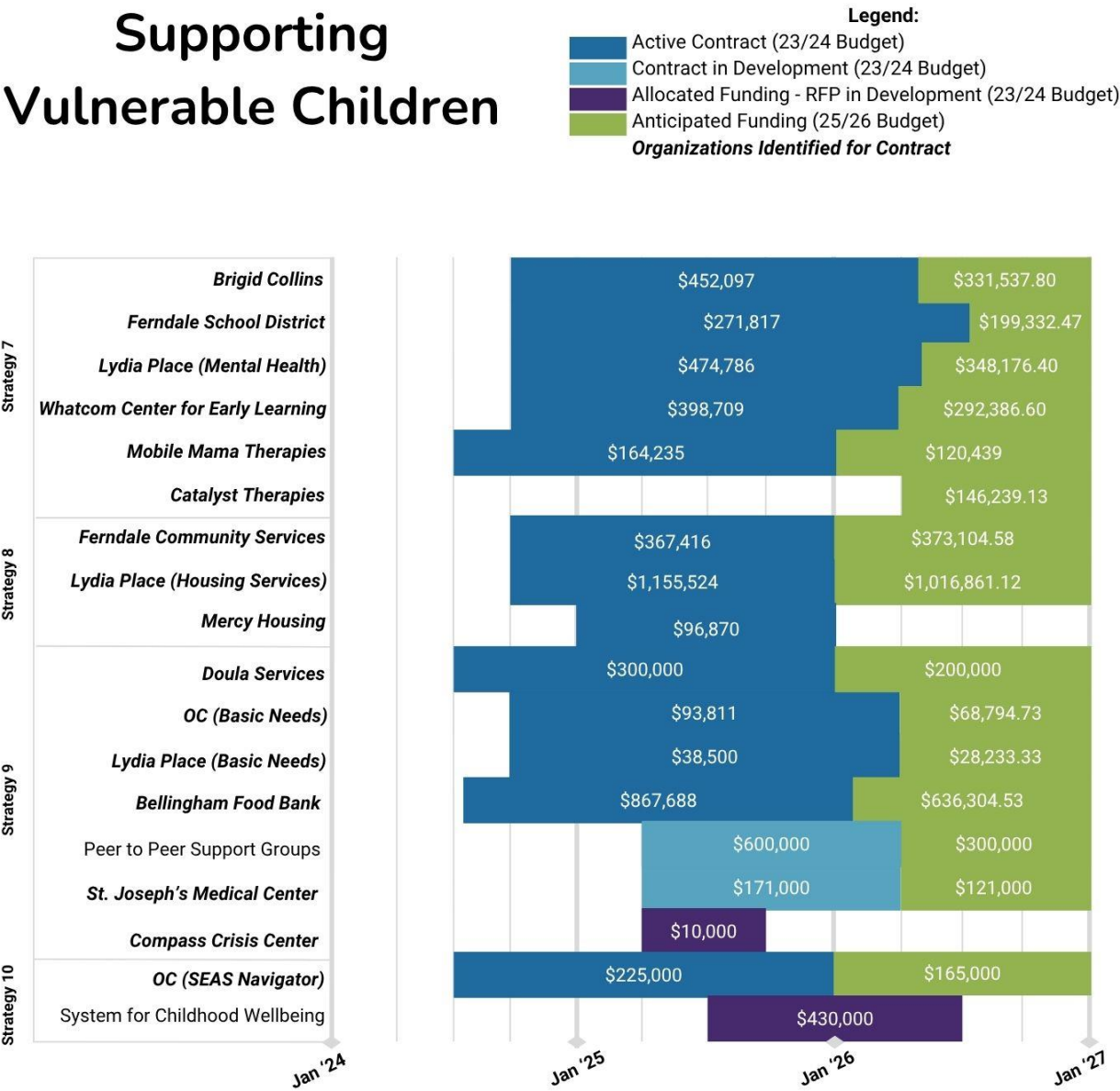
Draft 25/26 Implementation Plan

Early Learning and Care



Strategy 1 Fund small capitol projects to expand, renovate, or repurpose buildings to increase early learning & care slots.
Strategy 2 Coordinate and develop pathways to ensure a stable early learning & care workforce to deliver high-quality programs for children.
Strategy 3 Improve access to early learning & care through subsidies that reduce the cost of programs for cost burdened families.
Strategy 4 Ensure access to early learning & care by promoting the expansion and retention of early learning and care workforce.
Strategy 5 Create regional early learning & care hubs with shared administrative services, co-located early learning and other services for children and families and support for smaller providers in the County.
Strategy 6 Support innovative approaches to meet various Healthy Children's Fund goals related to early learning & care.

Supporting Vulnerable Children



Strategy 7 Recruit Mental and Behavioral Health Workforce to Whatcom County.
Strategy 8 Develop/expand resources and programs for families experiencing housing instability.
Strategy 9 Expand and enhance early parenting supports.
Strategy 10 Integrate and co-locate services via coordinated access to resources.

Looking Ahead

- **Councils Interest:**
 - Clearly defining “vulnerable children” in alignment with funding allocations
 - Refining and focusing strategies to drive measurable, system-level change
- **Plan for 2026:**
 - Begin co-design plan with Council and Subject Matter Experts
 - Adopt next Implementation Plan in time for 2027-2028 budget cycle
 - Involve Director Thomaskutty