2025 Digital Counties Survey Honors U.S. Leaders in Government Tech Innovation
Counties recognized for driving service modernization, cybersecurity resilience, and real-world AI use

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — The Center for Digital Government (CDG) and Government Technology magazine, in partnership with the National Association of Counties ([NACo](#)), today announced [the winners of the 2025 Digital Counties Survey](#). Now in its 23rd year, the survey recognizes counties that are leading the way in using technology to improve public services, strengthen cybersecurity, modernize operations, and deliver more responsive, transparent government. Each year, counties are evaluated on their ability to align IT innovation with strategic priorities and real-world impact.

"This year's Digital Counties Survey winners exemplify a strong commitment to innovation, excellence in digital government, and public service," said John Matelski, Executive Director of the Center for Digital Government. "Their achievements set a national benchmark and serve as an inspiration to counties across the country working to modernize and improve the delivery of government services."

"The National Association of Counties (NACo) is honored to support and highlight the outstanding efforts of counties across the nation in advancing digital government and enhancing constituent engagement," said Rita Reynolds, CIO and Managing Director of Technology Programs, National Association of Counties. "By showcasing this innovative work, counties can learn from one another, adopt leading practices, and explore the transformative potential of emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence and generative AI."

Leading the pack in each population category, these counties exemplify the survey's highest standards for innovation, impact, and resident-focused digital services.

The 2025 first-place winners by population category are:
- **County of Alameda, Calif. (Population of 1,000,000 or more)**
  Alameda County is setting a benchmark in government innovation through AI-driven efficiency and transparency. Notable efforts include enhanced election security analytics and a Conversational AI Assistant for the Board of Supervisors that improved search results by 35%. Their revamped budget system also halved formulation and processing time while boosting productivity by 25%.
- **Westchester County, N.Y. (Population 500,000 - 999,999)**
  By leading regional technology partnerships, Westchester County delivered major cost savings—$150,000 through discounted broadband for neighboring localities and over 5% savings across shared vendor contracts through strategic negotiations.
- **Chesterfield County, Va. (Population 250,000 - 499,999)**
  Chesterfield launched the *INNOVATE Community of Practice* to promote cross-departmental collaboration in emerging tech, starting with AI. The county also implemented an automated penetration testing tool, significantly reducing dependence on costly third-party services.
- **Cabarrus County, N.C. (Population 150,000 - 249,999)**

Cabarrus is aligning IT strategy with civic engagement through tools like its Early Voting Wait Times app, offering real-time polling details to voters. The creation of an internal API Center has also streamlined secure development workflows and accelerated project delivery.

- **County of York, Va. (Population Up to 150,000)**
York County's governance, data quality initiatives, and the integration of dashboards with planning and decision-making is best-in-class. With over 1 million records digitized using AI-based classification, the county is advancing transparency and scalability in public service modernization.

[Full List of 2025 Digital Counties Survey Winners](#)

Population of 1,000,000 or more
1st – County of Alameda, Calif.
2nd – County of Fairfax, Va.; Orange County, Fla.
3rd – County of San Diego, Calif.
4th – Fulton County, Ga.
5th – Miami-Dade County, Fla.
6th – County of San Bernardino, Calif.
7th – Wake County, N.C.
8th – Cook County, Ill.; Hennepin County, Minn.
9th – Maricopa County, Ariz.
10th – Palm Beach County, Fla.

Population 500,000 – 999,999
1st – Westchester County, N.Y.
2nd – Snohomish County, Wash.
3rd – Washoe County, Nev.
4th – Polk County, Fla.
5th – New Castle County, Del.
6th – County of Ventura, Calif.
7th – DeKalb County, Ga.
8th – Macomb County, Mich.
9th – County of DuPage, Ill.
10th – City of Indianapolis–Marion County, Ind.

Population 250,000 – 499,999
1st – Chesterfield County, Va.
2nd – Prince William County, Va.
3rd – County of Cumberland, N.C.
4th – Dutchess County, N.Y.
5th – Sonoma County, Calif.
6th – County of Hamilton, Ind.
7th – County of Placer, Calif.; Union County, N.C.
8th – Lane County, Ore.; Leon County, Fla.
9th – Durham County, N.C.
10th – Clayton County, Ga.

Population 150,000 – 249,999

1st – Cabarrus County, N.C.
2nd – Pitt County, N.C.
3rd – Stafford County, Va.
4th – Onslow County, N.C.
5th – Charlotte County, Fla.
6th – Berkeley County, S.C.
7th – Clay County, Fla.
8th – Davidson County, N.C.

Population Up to 150,000

1st – County of York, Va.
2nd – County of Roanoke, Va.
3rd – Calvert County, Md.
4th – County of Nevada, Calif.
5th – James City County, Va.
6th – Coconino County, Ariz.
7th – Bedford County, Va.
8th – Franklin County, Va.
9th – County of Albemarle, Va.
10th – Orange County, Va.

All winners will be recognized at the 2025 Digital Counties Awards Dinner, held during the [NACo Annual Conference](#) on Friday, July 11, 2025, from 6:00–8:00 p.m. ET at the Philadelphia Marriott Downtown. CDG expresses its gratitude to the Digital Communities underwriters of this year's survey and awards program: Premier Members – Amazon Web Services, CGI, Smartsheet, and Warshall; Standard Members – Accela, Genesys, Granicus/Carahsoft, SHI Public Sector, and Tyler Technologies.

Survey Findings: Key Priorities Driving County Innovation

The 2025 Digital Counties Survey not only recognized the most forward-thinking counties—it also identified the top IT priorities guiding technology strategy and investment at the county level. These findings highlight where counties are focusing their efforts to modernize services, strengthen operations, and deliver measurable results.

Top 10 County IT Priorities in 2025:

1. Cybersecurity
2. Artificial Intelligence (AI), Generative AI, and Machine Learning, including Pilots
3. Budget and Cost Control
4. Constituent/Customer Engagement/Experience
5. Application Modernization
6. IT Governance
7. Business Process Automation

8. Agency/Departmental IT Collaboration
9. Talent Management: Hiring, Retaining, Nurturing Skilled IT Personnel
10. Data Governance: Transparency, Open Data

These results reflect both the urgency of current challenges and the strategic priorities of forward-thinking counties:

- **Cybersecurity** holds the top spot for the 12th consecutive year, reinforcing its role as the foundational investment area for counties navigating increasingly sophisticated threats.
- **AI and GenAI** remain the second-highest priority for the second year in a row. Many counties are advancing from pilots to real-world deployments—leveraging AI to streamline services, automate help desks, and improve decision-making.
- **Budget and Cost Control** surged from #8 in 2024 to #3 in 2025—reflecting ongoing economic pressures and the need to prove return on digital investments.
- **Data Governance** appeared in the Top 10 for the first time this year, signaling a shift toward greater transparency, open data, and ethical data stewardship.
- While **Talent Management** dropped from #4 to #9, it remains a challenge nationwide. Counties are focused on building long-term IT workforce strategies but report difficulties in rapid scaling.

About the Center for Digital Government

The Center for Digital Government is a national research and advisory institute focused on technology policy and best practices in state and local government. A division of e.Republic, CDG offers strategic insight, benchmarking, and recognition programs to support innovation in the public sector.

About NACo:
The National Association of Counties (http://www.naco.org) strengthens America's counties, including nearly 40,000 county elected officials and 3.6 million county employees. Founded in 1935, NACo unites county officials to advocate for county government priorities in federal policymaking; promote exemplary county policies and practices; nurture leadership skills and expand knowledge networks; optimize county and taxpayer resources and cost savings; and enrich the public's understanding of county government.

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