

*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*

## **County HELP program progresses: Strategic Plan Adoption**

**March 30, 2023 (Warsaw, IN)** – The Hoosier Enduring Legacy Program (HELP) Kosciusko is approaching an exciting milestone with plans to adopt the final Strategic Investment Plan at upcoming public meetings.

Two meetings to adopt the final Strategic Investment Plan will take place on:

**Tuesday, April 11 at 9 a.m.** at the County Commissioner’s Meeting

**Thursday, April 13 at 6 p.m.** at the County Council Meeting

Both meetings will take place at the Kosciusko County Courthouse, in the former courtroom on the third floor at 100 W Center Street in Warsaw.

“These meetings will complete the final planning phase of the program before funds can be released. Then we’ll move forward with determining funding sources for the projects,” said Kosciusko County Community Coordinator Amy Roe. “We’re getting even closer to executing projects which will leave a lasting legacy for our small communities and for Kosciusko County all because community members gave of their time to be a part of this process.”

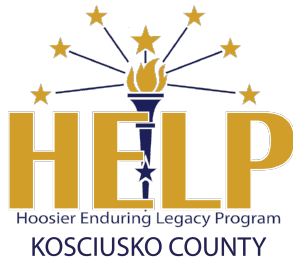
To recap the program thus far, Kosciusko County was one of three communities selected in 2021 by the Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA) to participate in the first cohort of the HELP program. HELP assists and equips rural communities with developing Strategic Investment Plans, resulting in a legacy project for each community focused on at least one of four community development pathways including **advancing e-connectivity, enhancing quality of place, promoting community wellness, and strengthening local economies.**

With a special focus on rural communities, the towns of Etna Green, Mentone, Milford, and Pierceton self-identified to participate collectively with the County in the HELP program.

The first phase of the program included community members submitting project ideas through a number of ways including hands-on community engagement activities and surveys. Nearly 350 responses were collected from communities throughout the county.

Respondents representing each community prioritized:

**Etna Green:** 43% of respondents said Enhancing Quality of Place is most important to them.



**Mentone:** 56% of respondents said Enhancing Quality of Place is most important to them.

**Milford:** 46% of respondents said Enhancing Quality of Place *and* Promoting Community Wellness are most important to them.

**Pierceton:** 71% of respondents said Enhancing Quality of Place is most important to them.

**County (which included other non-HELP communities):** 37% of respondents said Promoting Community Wellness is most important to them, and 36% said Enhancing Quality of Place is most important.

After several project review phases by community committees, local units of government, and the local Core Advisory Team, comprised of town clerks, county-wide leaders and local funding agencies, proposed Capstone Legacy Projects were earmarked in each community.

All members of the community are invited and encouraged to attend the upcoming meetings as the final Strategic Investment Plan is adopted.

For updates on HELP Kosciusko visit [www.kcgov.com](http://www.kcgov.com) and follow HELP Kosciusko on Facebook @HELPKosciusko.

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**About the Hoosier Enduring Legacy Program (HELP) in Kosciusko County**

The Hoosier Enduring Legacy Program (HELP) from the Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA) supports communities directly by building capacity, creating a peer network system between communities participating in the program, developing a strategic investment plan and providing access to set-aside funding. HELP is a 52-week process culminating in a dynamic Strategic Investment Plan rooted in four pathways: advancing e-connectivity, promoting community wellness, enhancing quality of place, and strengthening local economies.

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