



KOSCIUSKO COUNTY

Strategic Investment Plan

CLEARLY
KOSCIUSKO®





KOSCIUSKO COUNTY

LETTER FROM THE COMMISSIONER



**CLEARLY
KOSCIUSKO®**

Kosciusko County is a great place to live, work, and thrive. Kosciusko County has a beautiful natural landscape with over 100 natural lakes making it one of Indiana's top vacation destinations. For this reason, hospitality is one of the economic drivers within the county. Seated in Northern Indiana, the county is situated conveniently outside of an urban footprint yet within a 2-hour drive to Chicago or Indianapolis. The location provides the perfect blend of small-town charm and cultural amenities of the not-so-far metropolitan cities.

Kosciusko County boasts manufacturing, agriculture, and small business. We are home to leaders of the orthopedic industry; Zimmer Biomet, DePuy Synthes, Paragon Medical Inc., Tecomet, Banner Medical, and Medartis, making us known as the Orthopedic Capital of the World®. In addition, as a rural county, we are positioned as an industry leader in agribusiness. Creighton Brothers LLC is a leading egg producer, Maple Leaf Farms Inc. is one of the largest duck producers and Louis Dreyfus is the largest bio-diesel plant in the world. Due to the healthy industry base Kosciusko County has one of the lowest property tax rates and local income tax (LIT) rates in the State.

As other developments that reflect the growth within the community, demand for new home construction is at an all-time high, the county has made significant investments in a comprehensive plan and a housing strategy, we have committed to installing broadband throughout the county and a recently formed County Parks Board is developing and working toward implementing a county-wide trail plan to connect our communities and recreational assets.

Kosciusko County hosts many festivals and events, home to a world-class Water Ski team, and the Wagon Wheel Theater which is a very popular live theater in the round. The natural lakes and beauty of our area, and the resilient bio-medical and agricultural industries make Kosciusko County ripe for investment. As you read through the Strategic Investment Plan, we have a multitude of investment opportunities, and the Kosciusko County local government is excited to maximize all our community has to offer.

Come grow and thrive with us!

Cary Groninger
County Commissioner



KOSCIUSKO COUNTY
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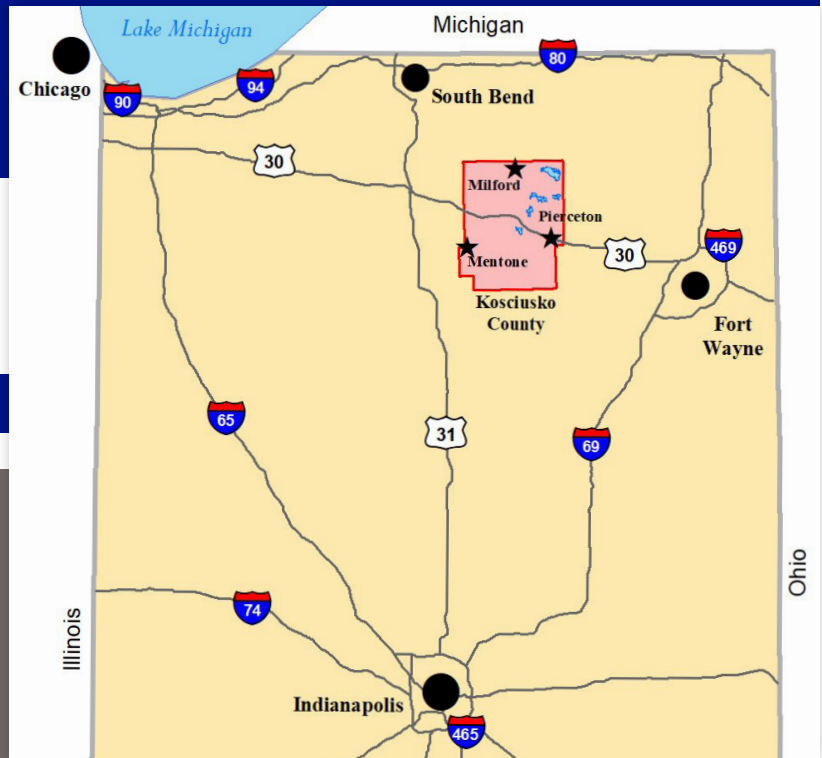
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INTRODUCTION

Kosciusko County, Indiana

In 1835, the Indiana State Legislature passed a bill authorizing the creation of thirteen counties in northeast Indiana. Named after the Polish general Tadeusz Kosciuszko who served in the American Revolutionary War, Kosciusko officially became a county in 1837. Based on area, Kosciusko is Indiana's 5th largest county. Kosciusko County is divided into 13 incorporated communities: Burket, Claypool, Etna Green, Leesburg, Mentone, Milford, North Webster, Piercetown, Sidney, Silver Lake, Syracuse, Warsaw and Winona Lake.

Kosciusko County affords country living in beautiful natural landscape yet only an average 20-minute commute to work. The county, regionally situated close to Ft. Wayne which was recently named the fastest growing metropolitan area in the Midwest, is also situated near Michigan and Ohio with access to rail, interstates, and airports within a 50-minute drive.



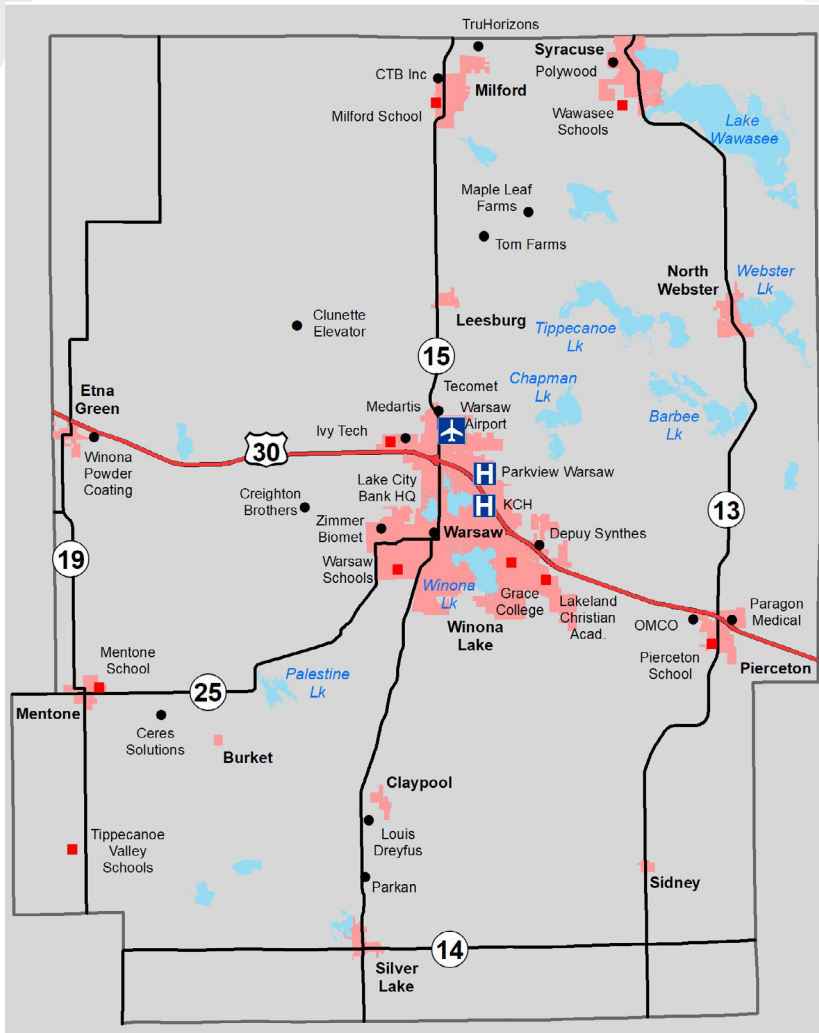
MISSION & VISION

Our past has provided us with a strong foundation. Our future is reliant on our ability to work together to become a stronger community. Our collaborative action will allow us to create a thriving community that all can enjoy.

Kosciusko County, and our local communities, are committed to prioritizing the needs of our people, places, systems, destinations, and partnerships to cultivate a community that ensures the safety, wellness, and success of local residents, provides for balanced, planned, and orderly growth, plans for effective public services and facilities, creates and nurtures unique destinations for local and regional enjoyment, and manages local resources and plans for continued reinvestment throughout the county.

Project	Local Municipal Investment	Grant Investment	Private Investment	Total Investments
County Road 1300 North Overpass	\$1,750,996	\$5,862,034		\$7,613,030
Public Safety Communications Towers	\$833,898	\$3,966,102		\$4,800,000
Center Lake Plaza (Warsaw)	\$600,000	\$1,615,000		\$2,215,000
Schrock Fields (Syracuse)	\$2,800,000	\$200,000	\$1,100,000	\$4,100,000
Miller Sunset Pavilion (Winona Lake)	\$4,600,000	\$1,500,000	\$300,000	\$6,400,000
Utility Building Upgrade (Mentone)	\$105,000			\$105,000
Well Communication Upgrade (Mentone)	\$57,000			\$57,000
CCMG 2019-2 Street Improvements (Milford)	\$43,542	\$130,625		\$174,167
CCMG 2020-2 Street Improvements (Milford)	\$78,845	\$138,829		\$217,674
CCMG 2021-2 Street Improvements (Milford)	\$82,055	\$246,565		\$328,620
Community Park Security (Pierceton)	\$14,709		\$5,000	\$19,709
Total	\$10,966,045	\$13,659,155	\$1,405,000	\$26,030,200





Legend

- Business
- School
- H Hospital
- ✈ Airport
- City/Town Boundary

Industry

The county is the Orthopedic Capital of the World®, representing 50% of the global orthopedic market. The medical device industry in the county provides over 22,000 jobs with \$19 billion in revenue. Kosciusko’s farming industry is exceptionally robust and diverse ranking 5th in the state. Two highlighted businesses are Louis Dreyfus, the largest soy processing plant in the US, and Maple Leaf Farms, which is the largest duck producer in the US.

Education

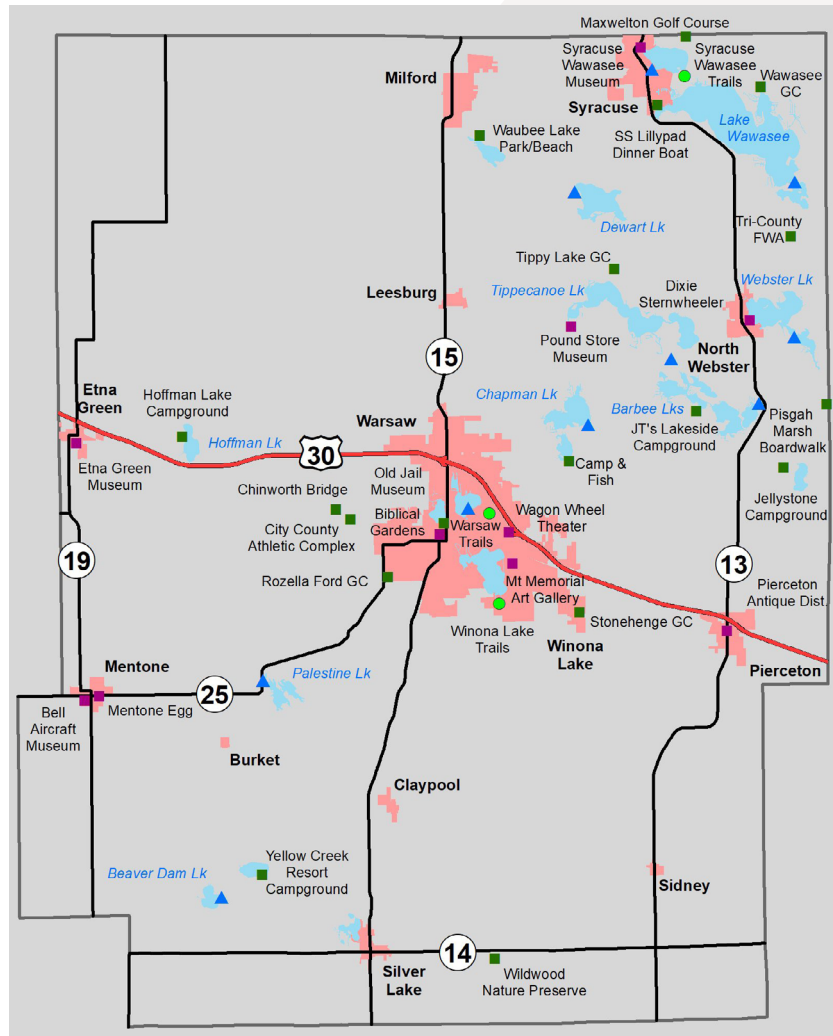
Kosciusko County is home to 3 public school corporations and also has several private schools. It boasts one of the highest concentrations of top-ranked public K-12 schools in Indiana and offers 3 local colleges: Grace College, Ivy Tech Community College, and Indiana Technical Institute.

Small Business

There are opportunities to patronize hundreds of local businesses. There are unique specialty and discovery shops around the county. You can walk the Village at Winona and experience a myriad of local shops or hunt for rare finds in the antique stores in the towns of Piercetion and North Webster.

Legend

- Art
- Recreation
- ▲ DNR Lake Access
- Trail System
- City/Town Boundary



Recreation

There is so much to do! In addition to nature preserves, the county has over 100 lakes with plenty of water recreational opportunities such as fishing, boating, kayaking, canoeing, water skiing, sailing, and boat excursions. Lake Wawasee is Indiana's largest natural lake, and you can find Indiana's oldest sternwheeler paddleboat on Webster Lake. Additional recreation includes the largest Biblical Gardens in the U.S. located adjacent to the Central Park Gardens. There are also plenty of opportunities for golf, walking, hiking, bicycling, swimming, tennis, pickleball, and disc golf. In addition to one of the top-ranked mountain bike trails in the state, there are 4 golf courses, 8 beaches, 11 trails, and 24 parks across the county and hosts one of the few universally accessible lake access points and park. Outdoor enthusiasts have the opportunity to rent a paddleboard, kayak, canoe, or bicycle.

Arts & Entertainment

Uniquely, the county is home to the Mentone Egg, the world's largest egg in the Great American Food Themed Attractions by Foder's Travel. The culture of the county includes: performing arts theatres, museums, art galleries, public art trails, craft shows, and numerous festivals and events throughout the year.

Restaurants

Food is a passion and an art in Kosciusko County. The county has 150+ restaurants featuring both American and International cuisine including Asian, Indian, Mexican, Italian, seafood and steakhouses. Enjoy craft breweries, wine selections, and Anthology, a whisky room that features the largest whisky selection in the Midwest.

POPULATION

Population

(2021)



80,106

Median Age

(2021)



38.1

ECONOMICS

Real Median Household Income



\$66,764

Age Demographics

(2021)



Under 25	32.5%
25-44	24.6%
45-64	25.2%
65+	17.7%

Home Ownership



Own	77.11%
Rent	22.89%

Median Owner-Occupied Home Value



\$160,500

Largest Job Counts



Production Workers	14.58%
Office/Admin Support	11.27%
Execs, Managers & Admins	10.40%
Sales	9.56%
Food Prep & Serving	6.19%

Top Industries

Manufacturing	Health Care & Social Services
Retail	Accommodation & Food Services

Employees Per Business

1-4	65.85%	20-49	4.75%
5-9	16.74%	50-99	2.79%
10-19	8.57%	100+	1.30%

Manufacturing

(2020)



Avg. Earnings for Employees — \$70,168

PROJECTS & PROGRAMS

in

KOSCIUSKO COUNTY



Enhancing Quality of Place

James Lake Launch

The newly adopted 5-year Parks Master Plan and the Greenway & Blueway Master Plan specifically expands on efforts already in progress. To promote conservation, access to nature, and health and wellness initiatives, the County is interested in providing additional non-motorized access to Tippecanoe River. The river is uniquely connected to a chain of lakes providing biodiversity that includes some endangered species. In partnership with Tippy River Adventures and Paddlers for Conservation, the County would like to build a canoe/kayak launch at James Lake which is located near other tourist sites in Syracuse and North Webster.



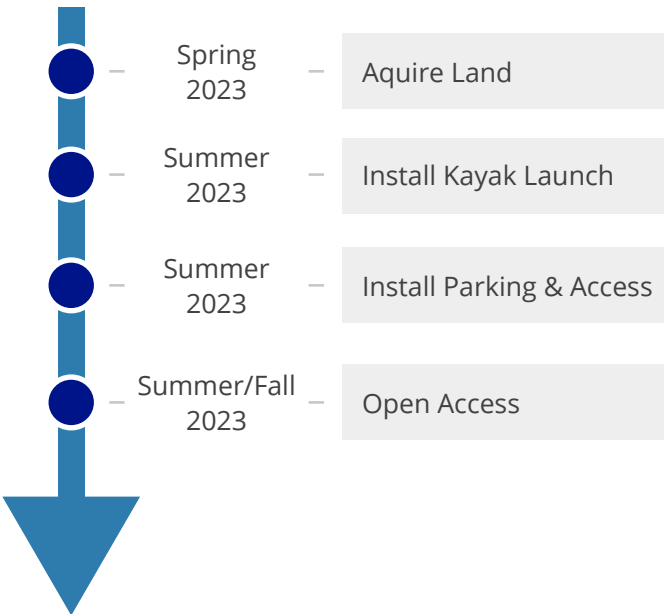
James Lake which is located near other tourist sites in Syracuse and North Webster.

The long-term vision is to create a greenway trail that connects Syracuse and North Webster to the kayak launch on James Lake, which begins the Blueway of Tippecanoe River through most of Kosciusko County.

Location

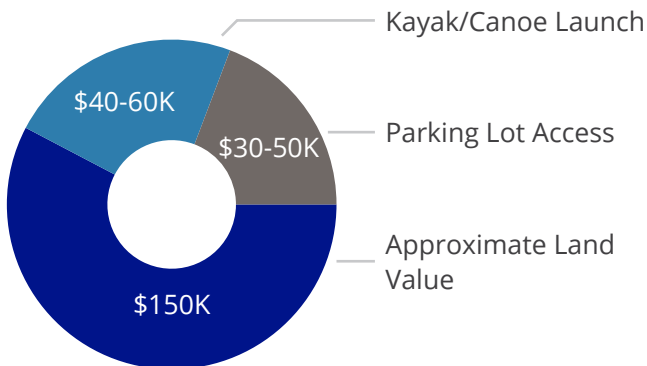
James Lake, east of the Edmond & Virginia Ball Nature Preserve

Project Timeline



Projected Project Cost

Total: \$250,000



Project Scope

COVID-19 emphasized the importance of providing opportunities for outdoor physical activity. The benefits of exercise are clear, especially during the stress of COVID-19. Regular physical activity has been key to improving health and wellness for individuals of all ages and abilities. This project will benefit the physical and mental wellness of the surrounding community.

Treasury Use Eligible Subgroup Category: Aid to tourism, hospitality, economic development.

Enhancing Quality of Place

Chinworth Bridge Greenway Extension

The Michiana Regional Active Transportation Plan and the Forward Kosciusko Plan include extending the greenway located west of Warsaw through Etna Green and into Marshall County along Old US 30. The first phase will include constructing a connecting road between the Chinworth Bridge and N 350 W to provide easier access to the region as well as tourist attractions.

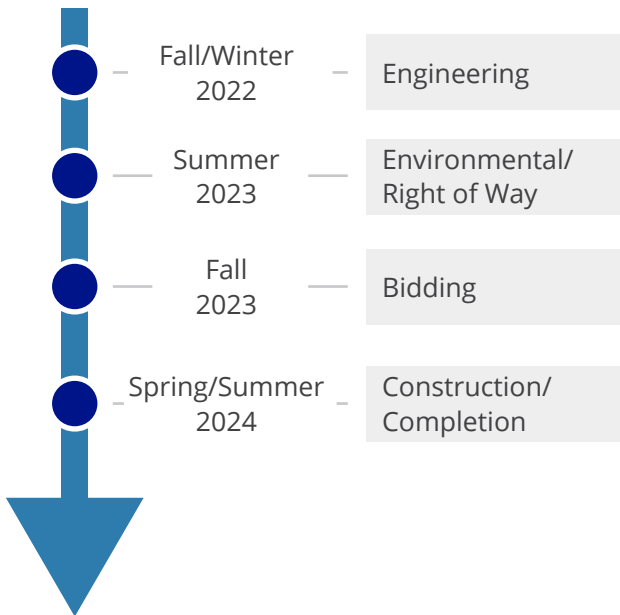
Location

0.7 mile greenway extension from the southside of W Old Rd 30 at approximately 3547 W Old Rd 30, Warsaw, IN 46580 to the west at 4221 W Old Rd 30

Site Description

The property would be considered county/state property for the public right-of-way along Old Rd 30. In most locations the right of way could be as wide as 20'.

Project Timeline



Projected Project Cost

Total: \$750,000

Project Scope

COVID-19 emphasized the importance of providing opportunities for outdoor physical activity. The benefits of exercise are clear, especially during the stress of COVID-19. Regular physical activity has been key to improving health and wellness for individuals of all ages and abilities. This project will benefit the physical and mental wellness of the surrounding community.

Treasury Use Eligible Subgroup Category: Aid to tourism, hospitality, economic development.



Promoting Community Wellness

Food and Access and Education Project

The Healthy Community Well-being Initiative promotes the health and well-being of the residents of Kosciusko County, Indiana. The initiative has a goal to transform the community into a thriving place to live, learn, work, play, and visit by improving each of the five essential elements of well-being: physical, financial, social, community, and career purpose. Results from baseline data gathered by a County-wide Gallup Well-being Index Survey indicate:

Well-Being Pillar	Residents Struggle	Residents Suffer
Physical	52.2%	13.4%
Financial	31.4%	15.5%
Social	49.1%	16.8%
Community	41%	6.9%
Career/Purpose	51.4%	12.4%



The year-round initiative provides essential public health services, aid to the nonprofit provider, *Live Well Kosciusko**, and funding for committees to launch short-term projects that result in improved well-being across all five well-being pillars. The program will be further sustained by funding from local foundations, businesses, government entities, partners, and community stakeholders as well as state and federal government grants.

The program will consist of 1 coordinator and 1 communications specialist for each of the well-being pillars. Coordinators will lead committees of volunteers in designing and implementing projects in multiple communities across the county. A program director will oversee the program, supervise coordinators, collect data through evaluations, manage financial and activity/service progress reporting, and assess for quality improvement. The program office is located within the K21 Health Services Pavilion in Warsaw where a variety of non-profit organizations provide health-related services and meet the needs of the community.

* The Healthy Community Coalition of Kosciusko County, DBA *Live Well Kosciusko*, is a 501(c)(3), non-profit organization in Kosciusko County, Indiana. Live Well is the fiscal agent of the Healthy Community Well-being Initiative and manages the program.

Location	Budget	Total Estimated Cost: \$944,000
K21 Health Services Pavilion 1515 Provident Drive Warsaw, IN 46580	Current Projected Funding: \$344,000	Projected Funding Needed: \$600,000

COVID-19 Response

The COVID-19 pandemic has had far-reaching consequences on the well-being of the residents of Kosciusko County. Members of the community continue to grapple with obesity, chronic disease, poor mental health, social isolation, loneliness, dissatisfaction at work, community division, and financial distress. The Healthy Community Well-being initiative responds to the negative impact of COVID-19 by creating committees of community members who work to improve the 5 pillars of well-being in Kosciusko County: physical, financial, social, community, and career/purpose. The initiative also prepares the community to prevent future disasters and public health emergencies by increasing the resiliency of community members, organizations, businesses, government entities, public safety managers, and emergency responders. Improvement in the well-being of residents positively impacts workforce development and economic development. This program provides essential public health government services while also providing aid to a non-profit doing the work. Fund Category: Public Health and Economic Distress. Treasury Subgroup: Provision of essential public health government services and aid to nonprofits doing the work.

Project Timeline



Advancing E-Connectivity

Kosciusko HELP Broadband Infrastructure

There are areas of Kosciusko County that do not have broadband (Internet) service that meets the established minimum speed requirements.

Background

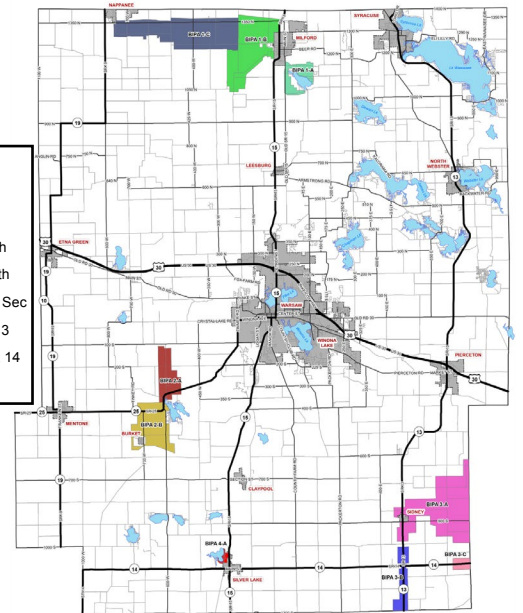
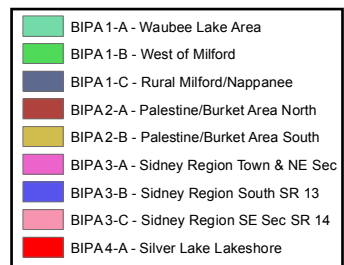
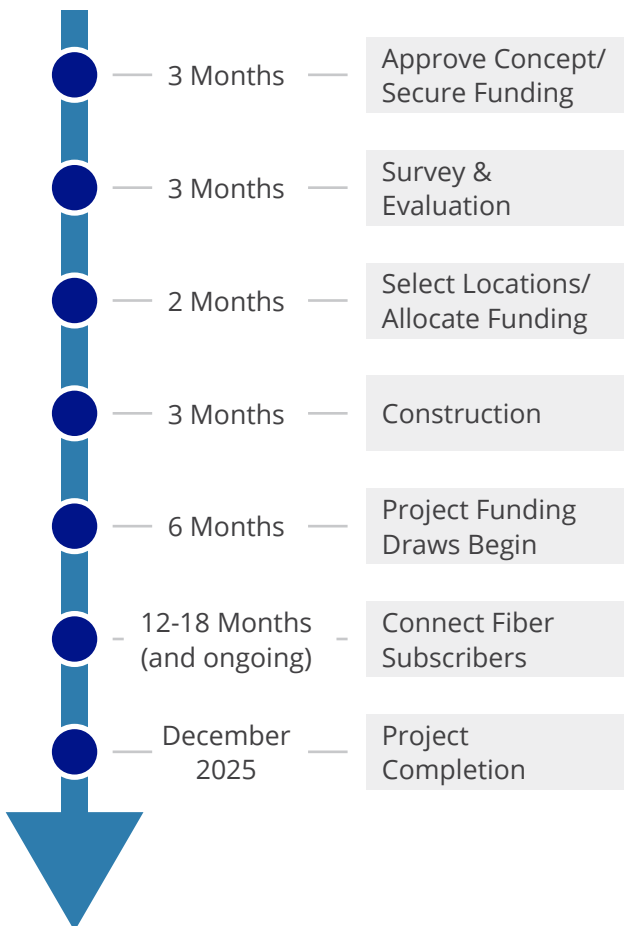
Beginning in 2019, the State Legislature provided funding for broadband projects throughout the state. These programs were administered by the Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA).

In September 2020, Kosciusko County REMC (rural electric membership cooperative) announced Kosciusko Connect, with plans to build an extensive fiber optic broadband system to serve their members throughout the county. Their final plans were made public, and work started in March of 2021.

Coinciding with that, the OCRA Next Level Connections Broadband Program opened applications for grant awards for broadband services.

Throughout 2021, several OCRA Round 3 grant awards were received for areas in Kosciusko County totaling \$8,713,202.

Project Timeline



Projected Project Cost

Total: \$2,162,400

Project Scope

The proposed project is fully compliant with federal and state initiatives to provide and expand high-speed broadband in response to the demands of COVID. These proposals are complementary to other funding sources for broadband.

Fund Category

The proposed project is Broadband Infrastructure.

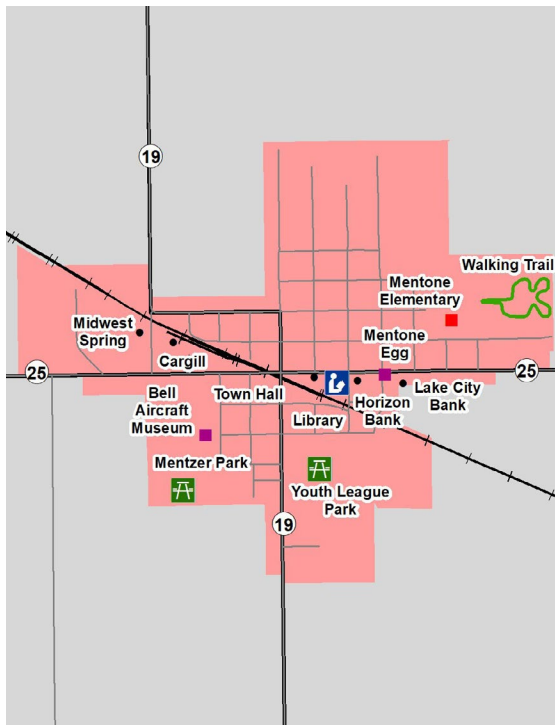
Treasury Subgroup

Aid to quality of life and Internet connectivity.

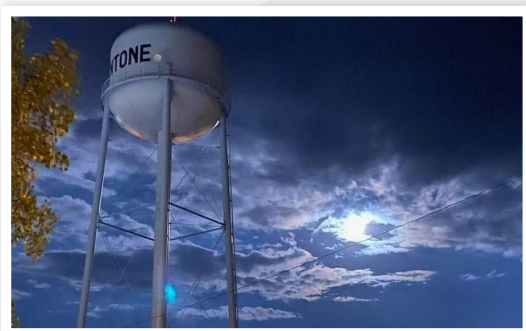
PROJECTS & PROGRAMS

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TOWN OF MENTONE



Mentone, formed in 1882, is a small town with a big heart and approximately 1,200 community members. This town supports the egg production industry, claiming the title "Egg Basket of the Midwest". A visit to the downtown area shops offers a unique attraction, named the world's largest egg, a 10-foot high 3,000-pound concrete egg statue. Mentone also supports several small businesses, restaurants, an elementary school, and a large spacious park. The largest share of employment is in the manufacturing sector, followed by education, healthcare, and social services. Conveniently, Mentone is located at the intersection of State Road 19 and State Road 25, making the town an attractive choice for individuals and businesses that commute.



Enhancing Quality of Place

Enhance Mentzer Park Project

Mentzer Park is located southwest of Mentone. It includes a vast area of undeveloped land divided by a small creek and joined by a single bridge. Mentone would like to build updated playground equipment that is fully accessible and all-inclusive. New climbing structures, slides, swings, safe ground base, and joining paths will support ADA standards. Disc golf is an inexpensive and fast-growing sport that may be played year-round. A disc golf course would be a tremendous low-cost, low-maintenance asset to the park that would enable affordable outdoor recreation.

Additionally, a covered pavilion with restrooms, a kitchen, picnic tables, and benches would provide an opportunity for hosting outdoor community events. The venue may then be rented to individuals as a source of revenue to maintain the site.

Location

Mentzer Park
 South Oak Street
 Mentone, IN 46539

Budget

Projected Cost	
Playground Equip.	\$178,000
Pavillion/Security	\$165,000
Paved Paths	\$157,500
Parking Lots	\$55,000
Total	\$555,500



Project Scope

Community members and business owners have expressed their concern that more members of the community are staying home because of Covid-19. To respond to this concern, the Town of Mentone believes an improved outdoor recreational park would be beneficial and encourage families to explore the outdoors.



Enhancing Quality of Place

Technology Training Program

The Tech Training Program would provide a computer lab at the Bell Memorial Public Library in Mentone. The purpose is to provide workshops to Seniors who wish to bridge the digital knowledge divide and utilize internet resources to accomplish everyday tasks that now require technology. Workshops will be facilitated in the Mentone Senior Center, inside the Public Library building. The program would require 5 laptop computers and 5 tablets for training participants on different technologies as well as larger monitors for ease of viewing.

The library will maintain the program and funds generated from programs and workshops will be used to equip and sustain the program.



Location

Bell Memorial Public Library
101 West Main Street
Mentone, IN 46539

Budget

Current
Projected Funding:
\$5,000

Total Estimated Cost:
\$23,738

COVID-19 Response

Project supports education to Seniors and others on the dangers still present from the COVID-19 by enabling program attendees how to use the broadband resources soon to be available in the area.

Fund Category

Project is relevant to both Public Health via education and to Broadband Infrastructure via bridging the technology divide by offering computer classes as well as loaning laptops/tablets with Internet Hotspots.

Treasury Subgroup

Aid to non-profits.

Enhancing Quality of Place

Building Facade Grant Program

Historic downtowns are a vital part of a small community that provides both a look at the town’s history as well as opportunities for the future of the town and community. The Town of Mentone desires to create a more attractive and vibrant downtown. The Town proposes developing a Facade Improvement Grant Program to assist business and building owners with projects such as updating, painting, remodeling, restoring, and repairing the historic facades, windows, and signs in downtown Mentone. This program would greatly help downtown as it could help to address the issues of downtown vacancies by attracting new businesses, or the issue of run-down-looking buildings by helping to fund changes.

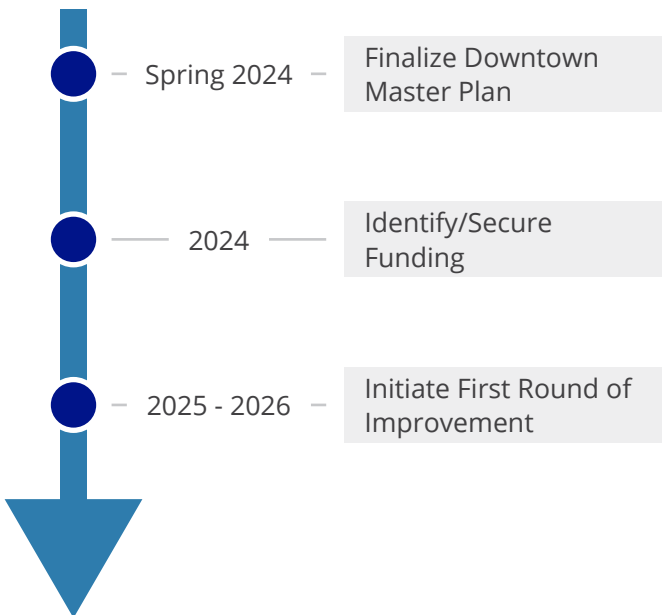
The Town of Mentone will be working on a Downtown Master Plan to help create a schematic design for the streetscape and facades downtown. This program supports the heart of the community by creating a strong and vibrant Downtown that brings residents and visitors to the heart of the community.



Location

Downtown Corridor, which includes Main Street (SR 25) from Franklin St to Yale St

Project Timeline



Projected Project Cost

Total: \$25,000

Treasury Subgroup

Aid to hospitality, economic development

COVID-19 Response

The project will assist with strengthening downtown businesses that were impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic and will re-engage community members to visit their brick & mortar hometown businesses.

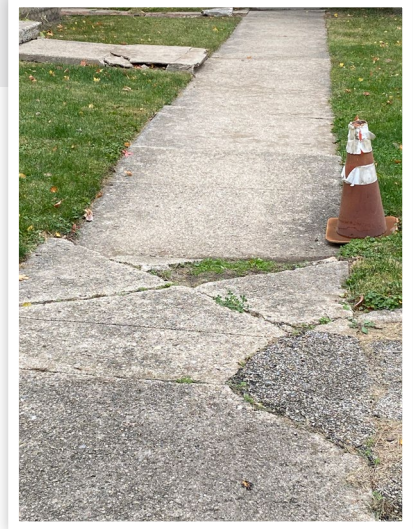
Enhancing Quality of Place

Mentone Sidewalks Project

Mentone lacks fully accessible sidewalks with ample lighting. Current sidewalks lack complete ADA compliance as well as ease of use. Mentone will benefit from better lighting and more accessibility down main sidewalks. Better walkability will encourage use and promote foot traffic towards Main Street. Creating better sidewalks will allow community members to use them more frequently.

Outdoor activities have increased in the past several years following Covid. School-age students will be able to safely travel these sidewalks to and from school or bus stops in the early morning darkness with the increased lighting. This project will also create better sidewalks to link the town with Mentzer Park on the southwest side and to Dollar General on the east side.

More attractive sidewalks and lighting will also benefit our downtown area by providing a safe, inviting route for foot traffic and strengthening commerce. Encouraging community members to walk and gather will promote local health initiatives, as well.



Location

Throughout the Town of Mentone

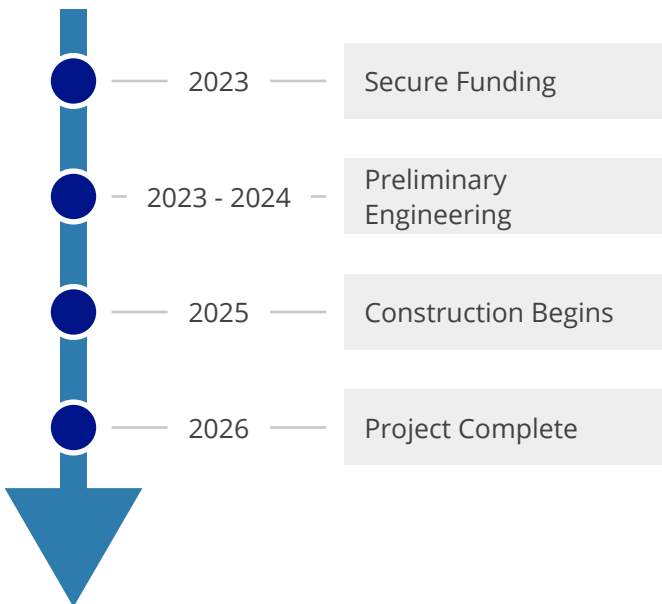
Ownership

Local Ownership / Existing Easement

Budget

Local Funding & Grants	
Lighting	\$1,000,000
Remove and Replace Sidewalks	\$1,124,000
Curb Ramps	\$150,000
Topsoil and Sod Restoration	\$96,000
Contingency	\$500,000

Project Timeline



Site Description

Light fixtures, sidewalks, and curve ramps

Treasury Subgroup

Aid to hospitality, tourism, economic development

Program Scope

Covid-19 emphasized the importance of opportunities for physical activity outdoors. The benefits of exercise are clear, especially during the stress of COVID-19. Regular physical activity has been key to improving health and wellness. This project will benefit the physical and mental wellness of our Mentone Community residents. Community members will be able to maintain or improve well-being and reduce health risks. By warding off health problems or lowering their incidence, our community will also save on long-term health costs thus allowing more economic freedom. It can also benefit businesses that were greatly affected by Covid-19 by providing better and easier access options.

Strengthening Local Economies

Downtown Master Plan

The Town of Mentone has the desire to create a more vibrant downtown that attracts businesses and provides residents and visitors with a place to shop, dine, and spend time. The Town of Mentone will undertake a downtown master planning process to build upon the recently adopted Comprehensive Plan to create a specific vision for the heart of the community. It would also create a plan for a healthy, accessible place to promote our community and engage residents.



The Downtown Master Plan will include the following elements:

- An assessment of current downtown conditions, amenities, and businesses.
- Input from the community at large and stakeholder groups, including the Comprehensive Plan and HELP planning processes.
- An evaluation of the present opportunities, constraints, and goals.
- Develop a schematic plan for streetscape, sidewalk, and facade improvements; public space enhancements; integration of public art; and other relevant downtown improvements.

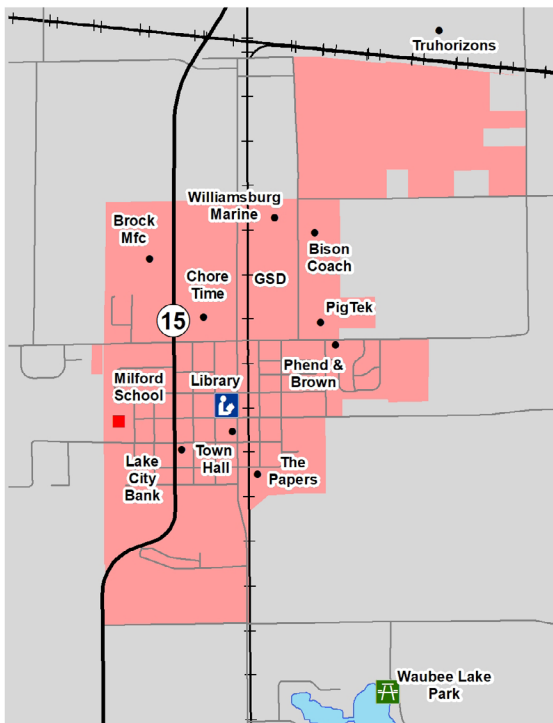
The Town of Mentone is committed to completing this plan and implementing the projects identified through the planning process.

Project Timeline		Location	Projected Project Cost
Spring 2023	Secure Funding	Downtown Corridor, Main Street (SR 25) from Franklin St to Yale St.	Total: \$70,000 (OCRA & Local Funding)
Spring 2023	Identify Firm	Zoning	Ownership
Summer 2023	Stakeholder Engagement	Commercial	Predominantly Local Ownership
Fall/Winter 2023	Draft Plan	Program Scope	Treasury Subgroup
Winter/Spring 2024	Final Plan	This project will assist with strengthening downtown businesses that were greatly affected by Covid-19 closures and provide better outdoor activities for public use.	Aid to hospitality, tourism

PROJECTS & PROGRAMS

in the

TOWN OF MILFORD



The northernmost Kosciusko County town, Milford, is known for its manufacturing and agricultural community. Incorporated as a town in 1880, Milford is home to Chore Time Brock, The Papers, Phend & Brown, Bison, LLC, and Williamsburg Marine. The agricultural community allows for the most stunning scenes in the county, one being Waubee Lake. Milford sits less than 2 miles from Waubee Lake, a 116-acre freshwater lake with a public park and beach that is safe for swimming, fishing, and boating. Moreover, the community of 1,500 comes together for annual fun to celebrate Memorial Day weekend with a parade, carnival, crafts, and entertainment.



Enhancing Quality of Place

Milford Community Building Wi-Fi

The Milford Community Building hosts a variety of events, meetings, and gatherings used by various local organizations. With Wi-Fi, the community would have more opportunities to rent the building and use funds to host events for local residents.

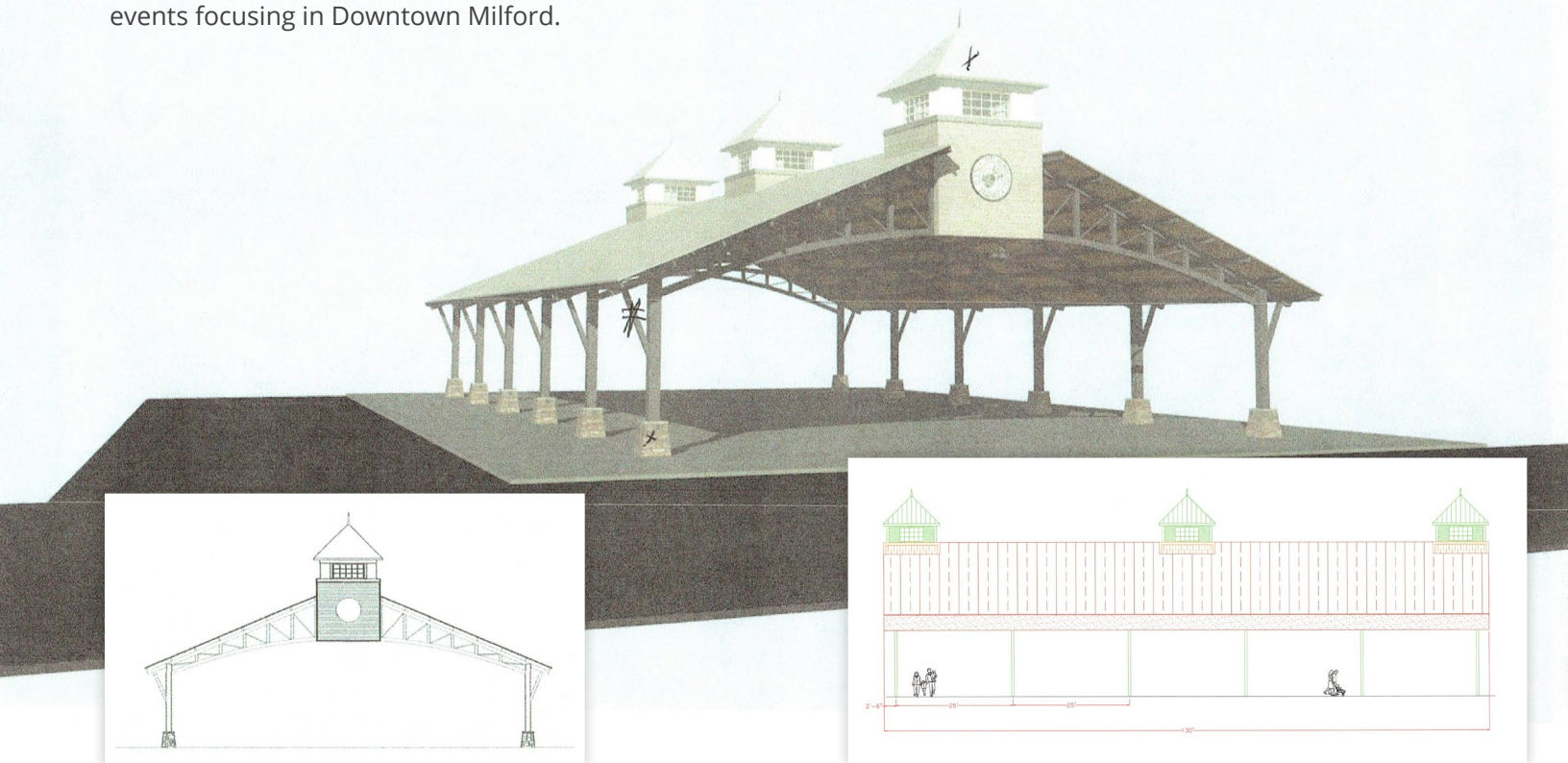
Location	Site Description	COVID-19 Response
Milford Community Building 111 S Main Street Milford, IN 46542	Meeting room, kitchen, restrooms, & EMS station.	The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the importance of having access to high-quality internet for business and educational needs. The Town of Milford will be providing free public internet access for use within and outside of the Community Building in downtown Milford. This will help individuals access the internet as well as support local businesses in Milford that were directly impacted by the COVID-19 response.
Projected Project Cost	Project Timeline	
Total: \$15,000	Quotes have been received from local vendors. Installation can be completed within 60-90 days from signed agreement.	



Strengthening Local Economies

Outdoor Pavillion

Historic downtowns are vital for small communities, providing rich history as well as providing opportunities for the future. The Town of Milford owns the only public parking lot in downtown Milford, located next to the Community Center in the heart of downtown. The Town would like to build a pavilion covering the lot. The pavilion would improve the ability of the town to host events, such as Food Truck Friday and Milford Family Fun Fest, bringing thousands of people (both residents and non-residents) to the town. With a covered outdoor space and increased power availability for vendors, the Town will have the ability to create more opportunities for events focusing in Downtown Milford.



Location

109 S. Main Street, Milford, IN 46542
 Located adjacent to the Community Center and Town Hall in the heart of Downtown Milford.

Projected Project Cost

Total: \$500,000

Treasury Subgroup

Aid to tourism, hospitality, & economic development.

Ownership

Owned by the Town of Milford.

COVID-19 Response

This project will assist with strengthening downtown businesses that were greatly affected by COVID-19 restrictions by attracting customers to outdoor events. Additionally, with the onset of COVID-19, there has been a need for more events held in an outdoor environment where proper precautions can be implemented. With the construction of an open-air pavilion, the Town will be able to increase their capacity to host outdoor events. This would include additional events such as a farmer's market.

Zoning

Commercial

Strengthening Local Economies

Business Incubator

In recent years, Milford’s downtown properties have seen high vacancy rates, storefronts converted to apartments, and a lack of new and exciting businesses. The Town of Milford would like to assist by renovating an existing building and offering it as a business incubator space for entrepreneurial youth.

The business incubator will be a collaborative partnership between the Kosciusko Economic Development Corporation and the Wawasee Community School Corporation to provide youth with space and resources to explore, test, and build their entrepreneurial skills. The incubator may spur interest in young adults investing their talent in the local community, resulting in more talent staying in our small town.

<p>Location</p> <p>128 Main Street Milford, IN 46542</p>	<p>Ownership</p> <p>Listed for sale at \$99,900.</p>	<p>Project Scope</p> <p>This project will rejuvenate downtown businesses that were greatly affected by Covid-19 closures. It will bring in people from outside the area and aid all businesses on the main street.</p>
<p>Projected Project Cost</p> <p>Total: \$150,000</p>	<p>Treasury Subgroup</p> <p>Aid to tourism & economic development.</p>	



Strengthening Local Economies

Downtown Master Plan

Historic downtowns are a vital part of a small community that provides both a look at the town’s history as well as opportunities for the future of the town and community. In recent years, Milford’s downtown properties have seen high vacancy rates and a lack of interaction from residents. A Downtown Master Plan would allow for a plan of improvements to support downtown businesses to help address vacancies and struggles. It would also create a plan for a healthy, accessible place to promote our community and engage residents.



The Downtown Master Plan will include the following elements:

- An assessment of current downtown conditions, amenities, and businesses.
- Input from the community at large and stakeholder groups, including the Comprehensive Plan and HELP planning processes.
- An evaluation of the present opportunities, constraints, and goals.
- Develop a schematic plan for streetscape, sidewalk, and facade improvements; public space enhancements; integration of public art; and other relevant downtown improvements.

The Town of Milford is committed to completing this plan and implementing the projects identified through the planning process.

Project Timeline		Location	Projected Project Cost
● Spring 2023	Secure Funding	Downtown Corridor, Emeline St from SR15 to Main St. Main St from Emeline St to Catherine St, and Catherine St from Main St to SR15	Total: \$70,000 (OCRA & Local Funding)
● Spring 2023	Identify Firm		
● Summer 2023	Stakeholder Engagement	Zoning	Ownership
● Fall/Winter 2023	Draft Plan	Commercial	Predominantly Local Ownership
● Winter/Spring 2024	Final Plan	Program Scope	Treasury Subgroup
		This project will assist with strengthening downtown businesses that were greatly affected by Covid-19 closures and provide better outdoor activities for public use.	Aid to hospitality, tourism, and economic development

Promoting Community Wellness

Milford Health and Wellness Center

Milford does not have adequate health and wellness resources or an indoor fitness facility. A health and wellness center would offer the opportunity to have a space for individual workouts, group fitness classes, nutrition education, and private meeting space. Private meeting spaces would allow residents, including those with limited or no transportation, to connect with county services, such as WIC and the Health Department, and other service providers, such as mental health counselors, who may not have a permanent office located in Milford, but provide valuable services to the community.



Project Scope

The mental health benefits of exercise are clear, especially during the stress of COVID-19— regular physical activity has been key to improving health and wellness. With the onset of Covid-19, there has also been an increased need for mental health services.

This project will benefit the physical and mental wellness of our Milford Community residents by offering increased availability to wellness services, as well as, preventative. Community members will be able to maintain or improve well-being and reduce health risks. By warding off health problems or lowering their incidence, our community will also save on long-term health costs thus allowing more economic freedom. It can also benefit businesses that were greatly affected by Covid-19 by providing more attractive incentives available for their employees in Milford.

Projected Project Cost

Estimated Total:
\$2,500,000 - 4,500,000

Treasury Subgroup

Aid to tourism & hospitality.

Enhancing Quality of Place

Building Facade Grant Program



Historic downtowns are a vital part of a small community that provides both a look at the town’s history as well as opportunities for the future of the town and community. The Town of Milford desires to create a more attractive and vibrant downtown. The Town proposes developing a Facade Improvement Grant Program to assist business and building owners with projects such as updating, painting, remodeling, restoring, and repairing the historic facades, windows, and signs in downtown Milford. This program would greatly help downtown as it could help to address the issues of downtown vacancies by attracting new businesses, or the issue of run-down-looking buildings by helping to fund changes.

The Town of Milford will be working on a Downtown Master Plan to help create a schematic design for the streetscape and facades downtown. The program will be managed by a nonprofit downtown organization that will seek ongoing funding and distribute the grant funds (up to \$5,000 per year, per address).

This program supports the Town’s goal of creating a strong and vibrant Downtown that brings residents and visitors to the heart of the community.

Location

Downtown Corridor, which includes Emeline St from SR15 to Main St. Main St from Emeline St to Catherine St, and Catherine St from Main St to SR15.

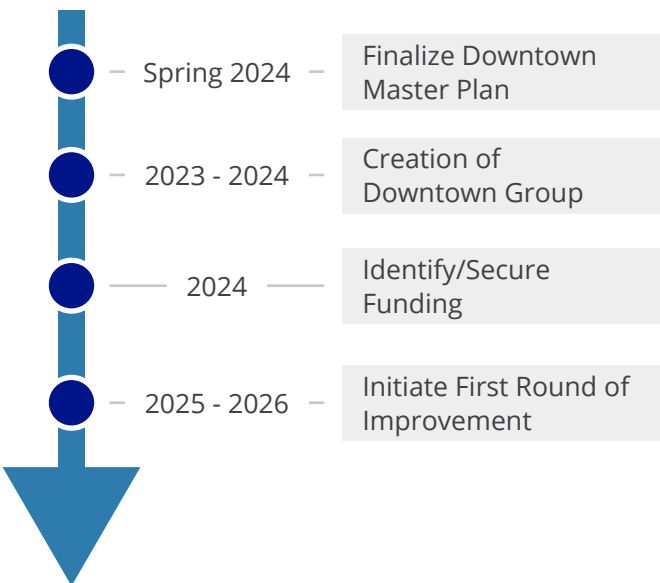
Treasury Subgroup

Aid to hospitality, economic development

Budget

Total Projected Cost	\$25,000
Initial Commitment of Funds (OCRA Main Street Program)	\$25,000
Ongoing Annual Commitment of Funds (Local Funding)	\$15,000
Contribution from Kosciusko Chamber of Commerce (Membership Requirement, Private Funding)	\$5,000

Project Timeline



Program Scope

This project will assist with strengthening downtown businesses that were greatly affected by Covid-19 closures. This project directly serves the downtown business and building owners. The expected impact of this project is the beautification of downtown Milford, as well as increased business and traffic for business owners. The Facade program will provide financial assistance for businesses to mitigate economic impacts due to the COVID-19 pandemic response.

The Town of Milford will provide assistance to form a local downtown group to manage and sustain this project as well as other downtown initiatives. The Town will consider ongoing financial commitments as well as securing other funding to supplement this initiative.

Enhancing Quality of Place

Restoration of Mural

Historic downtowns are a vital part of a small community that provides both a look at the town’s history as well as opportunities for the future of the town and community. Public art plays a significant role in creating a unique and memorable experience in any public space. The mural located on the building at 102 S. Main Street, is the last externally visible mural in Downtown Milford.

Unfortunately, it is in poor condition and is hardly visible today.

The Town of Milford would like to restore this mural in order to preserve its historical significance to local residents and business owners. This will be a part of a larger effort to restore and enhance downtown Milford through a Downtown Master Plan and a Main Street Facade Improvement Grant.



Location

102 S Main St, 2 story downtown building with a historic mural on the north facing exterior wall

Zoning

Commercial

Ownership

Local

Project Timeline



Budget

Local Funding	
Masonry Repair	\$5,300
Artist Restoration	\$10,000

Program Scope

This project will rejuvenate downtown businesses that were greatly affected by Covid-19 closures. It will bring in people from outside the area and aid all businesses on the main street.

Treasury Subgroup

Aid to tourism, economic development

Enhancing Quality of Place

Water Meters

The Town of Milford owns and operates the town Water Department, supplying water to all town residents and businesses. The current water metering system has reached the end of serviceable life ahead of the expected time frame, requiring the replacement of the entirety of the system's meters. The current meters are experiencing component-related failures and repair time delays that have made them an unsustainable product for the utility. The meters give the town the ability to accurately bill for the water delivered which creates revenue for the maintenance of the town's services.

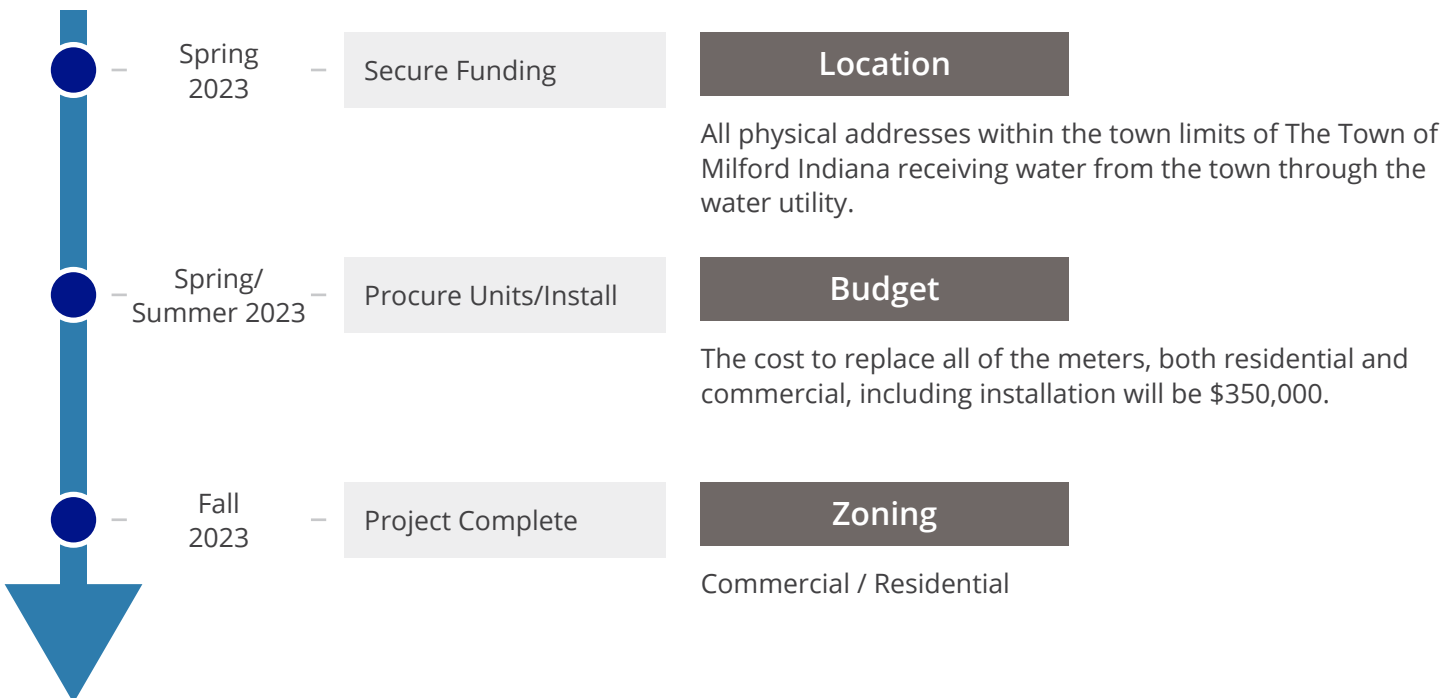
Unfortunately, with the faulty meters, the Town's billing is inaccurate, often resulting in underbilling. By replacing all of the meters in residential and business locations, the town will be able to accurately bill for all water consumed, and more accurately provide information for required Water Loss Audits (which will help to establish plans for the repair of leaks within the system), and mitigate the loss of water.

In 2021, a committee was established to research the water meters that would best meet the Town's needs. In comparing three different options, and in consultation with Commonwealth Engineering (currently conducting a Water Utility Plan for the town), the committee selected the Mach 10 meter from Neptune.

This project is ready to move forward once an appropriate funding strategy is established. The installation can be performed by town employees or a sub-contractor approved by the Town. The Town will continue to maintain the units after installation to ensure they remain functional for the useful life of the product.



Project Timeline



Enhancing Quality of Place

Trailhead Park

The only public park owned and maintained by the Town of Milford is located outside the town limits on Waubee Lake. In the Spring of 2022, the Town of Milford received \$978,000 from INDOT to construct a trail from Waubee Lake Park to 1st Street in Milford. The Town of Milford desires to construct a trailhead park at the terminus of the trail within the town limits.

The new park will be a benefit to the community in several ways including allowing the community access to outdoor recreational activities and eventually acting as a destination alongside the Waubee Lake Trail. This park will be sustained through maintenance done by the town. This park project relates directly to the town’s ongoing construction plan to build the Waubee Lake Trail.

Location

Park/Green-space at trailhead of the Milford to Waubee Lake trail

Lot Size

3 to 10 acres

Project Timeline

This project will be timed to coincide with the development of the Waubee Lake Trail. Construction on the trail is estimated to be 2027.

From acquisition to completion would take 18 to 24 months depending upon the results of initial necessary studies to determine design and any excess site work beyond the normal scope of a project of this nature.

Budget

Depending upon land costs, and the cost of actual work approximately \$750,000.00 would be required to fund this project. Given the timeline for completion of the trail project, specific funding has not been identified but will be pursued in the next year or two.



Promoting Community Wellness

Milford Sidewalks Project

The Milford sidewalks project would be located on Emeline Street from State Road 15 to Main Street, then Main Street to Catharine Street, concluding on Catharine Street back at State Road 15. This improved pedestrian path would provide better accessibility to downtown. Encouraging community members to walk and gather will promote local health initiatives, as well.

Budget

Projected Cost	
Lighting	\$1,000,000
Sidewalk Remove/ Replace	\$1,124,000
Curb Ramps	\$150,000
Topsoil/Sod Restoration	\$96,000
Contingency	\$500,000
Total	\$2,870,000

Project Scope

Covid-19 emphasized the importance of opportunities for physical activity outdoors. The benefits of exercise are clear, especially during the stress of COVID-19. Regular physical activity has been key to improving health and wellness. This project will benefit the physical and mental wellness of our Milford Community residents. Community members will be able to maintain or improve well-being and reduce health risks. By warding off health problems or lowering their incidence, our community will also save on long-term health costs thus allowing more economic freedom. It can also benefit businesses that were greatly affected by Covid-19 by providing better and easier access options.

Treasury Subgroup

Aid to tourism, hospitality, & economic development.



Promoting Community Wellness

Part-Time Coordinator

The Town of Milford owns the Community Building located in the heart of Downtown Milford. This is a great resource for local residents and organizations to use to host events, meetings, and gatherings. Currently, there is not a dedicated staff member in the Town that manages the scheduling and maintenance of the facility. As a result, the space is often underutilized.

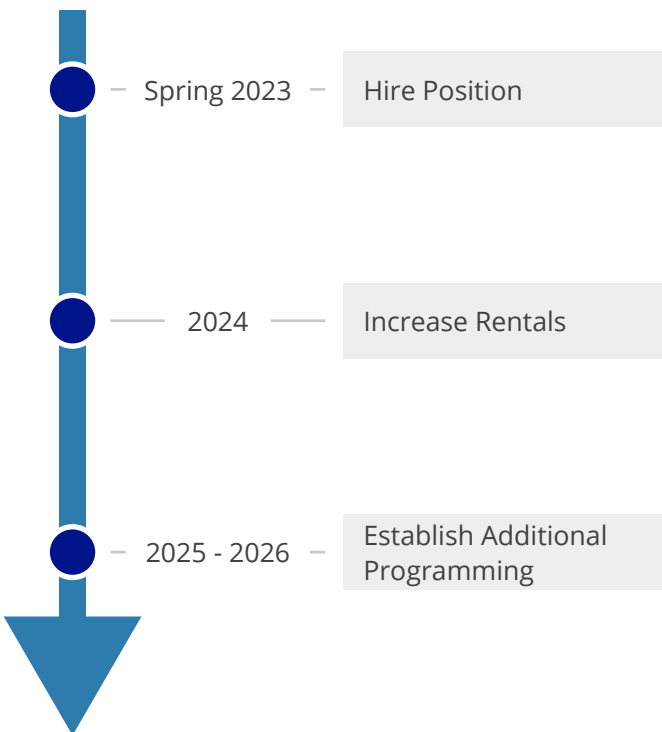
Additionally, there is a need to offer more programs relating to health and wellness.

It is the desire of the Town to hire a part-time coordinator to manage the scheduling and rental of the Community Building, oversee cleaning and maintenance needs, and organize and promote health and wellness programming in the space. The Town plans to initially fund the position for three years but hopes that during that time increased rental utilization and programming would pay for the continuation of the program.



Project Timeline

If this would be a 36-month funded program, then this would allow the town budget to continue this position.



Location

Milford Community Building
111 S Main Street
Milford, IN 46542

Zoning

Public Use

Budget

Would hire an individual at \$20.00 per hour for 15-20 hours per week. For this 36-month program it would be a cost of \$63,000-\$65,000

Site Description

Currently used for Community Building and EMS station. Lot Size: 160 X 166

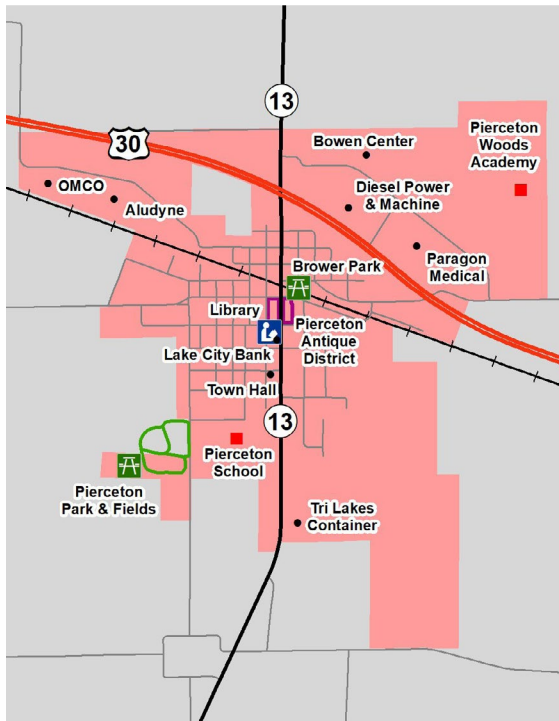
Project Scope

The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the importance of having community space available for programming and events to promote health and wellness for residents. A coordinator will allow the Town to better facilitate these types of events and encourage residents to attend. As the Town is looking to expand available public space with an outdoor pavilion next to the Community Building, the coordinator will be able to assist in creating program opportunities in an outdoor space as well.

PROJECTS & PROGRAMS

in the

TOWN OF PIERCETON



The Town of Pierceton was incorporated in 1866 and named in honor of President Franklin Pierce. While the town's population is small at 880, Pierceton still maintains a variety of attractions including several popular antique shops, an Old Train Depot turned restaurant and the nearby Jellystone Park campground. Additionally, the town hosts a number of annual events including Pierceton Days and the Heirloom Tomato Festival. Most working-age Pierceton residents are employed in the manufacturing industry or education, healthcare, and social services. The Town includes several areas of developable land, with sewer and other infrastructure capacities beyond the current level of development.



Enhancing Quality of Place

Facade Improvement Program

The goal of the initiative is to provide resources that promote facade improvement in the Town of Pierceton for property owners and business operators who may not have sufficient funds to make the necessary investments or are reluctant after just emerging from the effects of the pandemic, inflation and the uncertainty in the economy. The Facade Improvement Program will provide up to a \$15,000 matching grant (50% of the total project costs on a rebate basis) to incentivize and enable property owners to make investments that improve property values and the community.

The program would be administered through KEDCO or Pierceton Main Street, which would accept and vet applications and manage the fund.

Location	Expected Impact	Benefactors
First Street Pierceton, IN 46562	Enhancement of buildings and quality of place and improved businesses (sales) and attraction of more customers and visitors.	Small business operators and property owners and customers, visitors and residents of Pierceton.
Budget		Total Estimated Cost: \$400,000
State Funding Source: \$200,000		Private Funding Source: \$150,000



Future Funding Plan

The town will work to find additional funding from charitable foundations and other not-for-profits, the private sector, and the county.

COVID-19 Response

Helps businesses/property owners recover by providing them support to improve their building and increase sales.

Fund Category

Revenue Replacement and Economic Distress

Treasury Subgroup

Aid to tourism, travel, & hospitality.

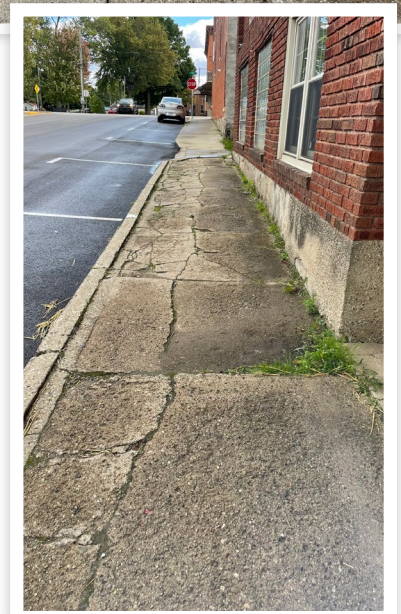
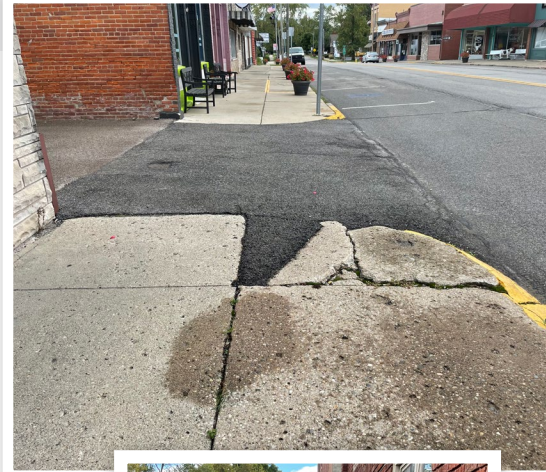
Enhancing Quality of Place

Piercetown Sidewalk Project

Historic downtowns are a vital part of any small community. This is especially important to small business owners located in the heart of the community. The Downtown Piercetown sidewalks are in severe need of repair. Many sections are not ADA-compliant with large upheavals or broken-up concrete surfaces. Curb ramps are also not compliant with current ADA guidelines, including missing the detectable warnings and proper slopes. In addition to sidewalk repairs, the downtown business owners would like to see other streetscape improvements. This includes historic lamp posts, seasonal/event banners, benches, and other distinctive enhancements to make Downtown Piercetown unique.

This project would need to be planned to include repairs and improvements of underground infrastructure, including water, sewer, and electrical. The Town of Piercetown will be working on identifying the specific needs for improvements to best time the sidewalk improvement project.

This project will overall promote the quality and accessibility of our downtown merchants. This will promote town growth and support businesses and infrastructure for many years in the future.



Location

First Street, Piercetown. From Columbia St. to Elm St. To also include Market Street from Third St. to just east of Washington Street to include those commercial/business areas.

Budget

The project quote from December 2020 estimated the cost at just over \$500k, considering current inflation, we are adding 30% to Project Cost for a total of \$650k.

Site Description

Sidewalks in front of personally owned property and commercial buildings, approximately 8 blocks.

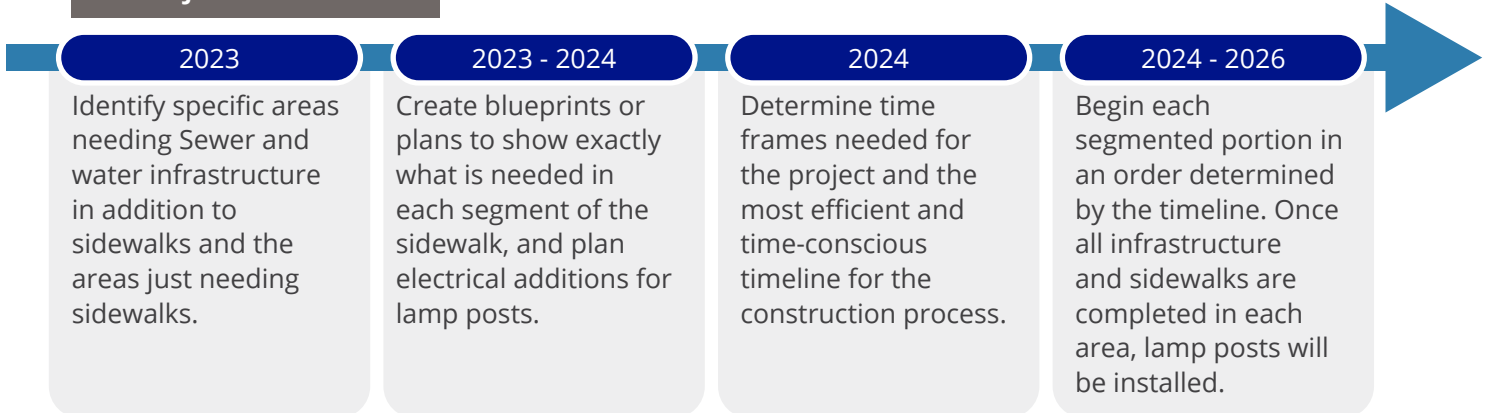
Treasury Subgroup

Aid to tourism and hospitality.

Project Scope

This project will assist with strengthening downtown businesses that were greatly affected by Covid-19 closures and provide better outdoor activities for public use.

Project Timeline



Enhancing Quality of Place

Water Infrastructure Utility Plan

The Town of Pierceton has several water, sewer, and storm sewer projects that need to be addressed to better serve its utility customers and support future development opportunities. There are several major issues the Town needs to address to improve its utility systems. Although the Town provides public utilities, the Town has never conducted a detailed study of its utility systems to understand the conditions of utility systems, resulting in them having to address issues as they arise. This is not an efficient method to manage the public utilities and inhibits the Town's Utility Departments from developing a proactive management plan.

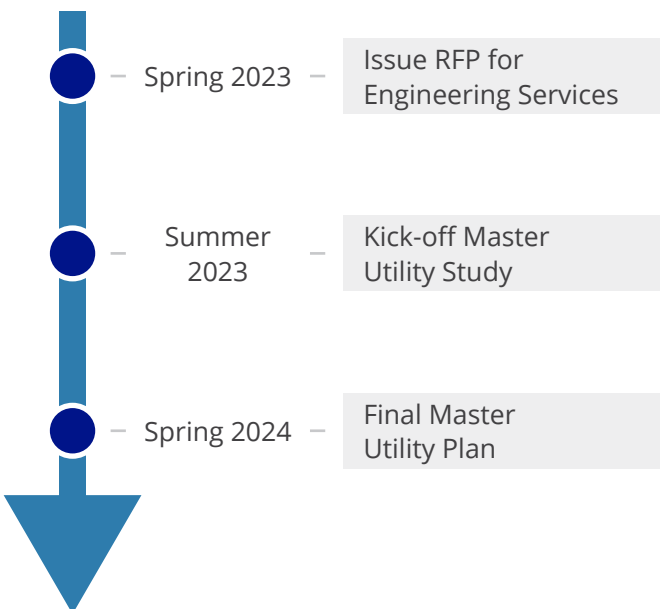
According to the Utility Superintendent, the Town's water infrastructure is aging and many of the water lines are failing and in need of full replacement, rather than doing spot repairs as what's been traditionally done by the Town. The Town has fixed known water leaks throughout the community, but more noticeably, the lines on the west side of SR 13 have frequently been failing. The areas of focus will be the locations where repairs have been made on the same line and in or near a trench that was previously excavated. A Master Utility Study is needed to thoroughly analyze the current conditions to determine the actual lengths of the lines and the specific locations within the lines that need to be replaced. The sewer system has frequently been inundated with overflows during excessive rainfalls with a high number of downspouts and residential sump pumps unnecessarily connected to the Town's sewer system. The Utility Superintendent states they need to have a smoke test done to determine incorrect connections. Another major sewer system issue is lining the laterals again to mitigate overflow occurrences from heavy rainfall events. This poses a serious strain on the pumps at the wastewater plant, causes short detention time in the treatment tanks to allow an increased risk of waste passing through, and employees have to spend overtime to monitor the treatment plant. The Utility Superintendent documents major issues with the storm sewer system. The system located on East Mill Street, E. Tulip Street, and W. Elm Street need to have the lines cleaned out and repaired. The drainage does not work properly and the utilities department has attempted to fix it. It has been determined, by shooting a laser, that the storm sewer line does not have a constant fall and that it "bellies". This causes the collection of debris in the line and does not allow for proper drainage. At least three properties are dealing with standing water because of this issue (507, 609, and 618 E. Mill Street). In addition to water standing on these properties, Mill Street has flooded many times to the point of closing the road and using a trash pump to divert the water to another catch basin. In the winter, this leads to slick conditions when the temperature gets below freezing. The Utility Department has attempted to address these issues but in the last five years, the magnitude of these issues has increased beyond the Town's capacity in staff and finance capabilities. The benefit of these projects includes reducing impacts to its utility customers by addressing health and safety issues and preventing water loss. Therefore, the Town needs to hire a qualified engineering firm to develop a Master Utility Study to thoroughly analyze the conditions of the Town's utility systems and provide alternative solutions. The Town doesn't have adequate cost estimates for these projects and will also be a beneficial factor to know with a completed Master Utility Study.

The master utility study will be the foundation of the Town's utility strategy and planning discussions and will guide the Town to program funds in a fiscally responsible way to reduce any burden on residents. The Town of Pierceton will sustain the project by conducting a utility rate study every 4 to 5 years. Additionally, Pierceton's Utility Superintendent(s), Town Clerk-Treasurer and Town Council will evaluate the

master utility study each year to prepare budgets and financial requests and to ensure the evolving needs of users are met and treatment facilities and infrastructure assets are properly maintained. After 10 years, the master utility study will be updated by Pierceton's Utility Superintendents or professional engineering services to reevaluate system needs. Water, wastewater, and stormwater local utility funds will be used to fund any changes to the plan. If the council decides to move forward with specific projects or suggestions from the Master Utility Study, then the Town Clerk and Pierceton's Utility Superintendents will work together to plan the implementation of projects.



Project Timeline



Budget

Master Utility Study: \$90,000

Project Scope

The project is designed to improve sanitation to prepare for or prevent COVID-19 or future health crises.

State and Local Fiscal Fund Expenditure - Water & Sewer Infrastructure

Promoting Community Wellness

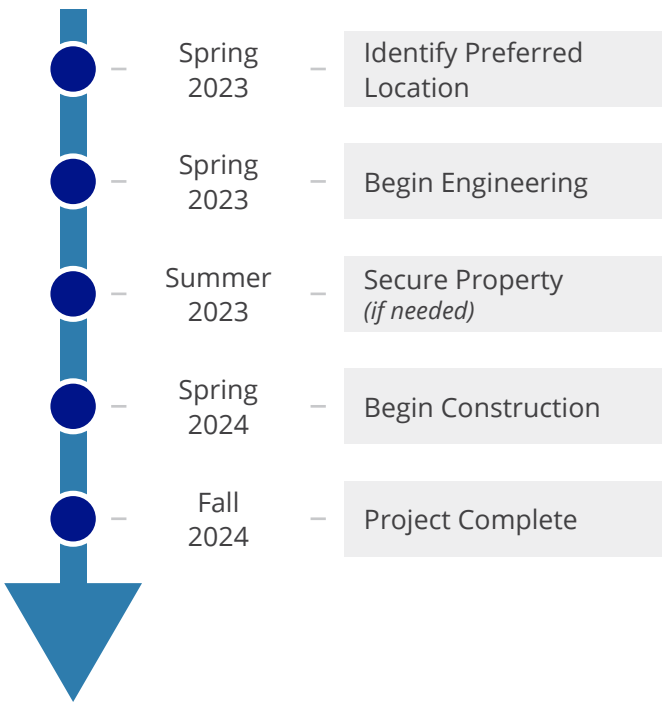
Heated Pole Barn for Winter Use

Pierceton does not have a facility to host indoor events, which is particularly problematic during the winter months for adults and kids. The Town of Pierceton proposes to build a heated pole building with a large open space for games and gatherings, restrooms, and a kitchen area. This building would be built within the town to create easy access for kids and adults to walk year-round.

In partnership with other organizations, such as the Pierceton Chamber, events such as a flea market or festivals could be hosted year-round drawing visitors to Pierceton. Other organizations can use the facility to host exercise classes, youth sports, family activities, and school study sessions. It can be a space for everyone in the community to come together.

In addition to organized activities, the building could be rented out by residents to host large gatherings, such as parties, family reunions, or wedding receptions. This will assist in maintaining the facility and provide a much-needed resource for local residents.

Location	Budget	Project Scope
Potential site available at the Pierceton/Washington Township Community Park	Total Estimated Cost: \$700,000	The Heated Pole Building will function as a community center for Pierceton. This center will have multiple uses, including hosting health-related fairs and community health outreach. In partnership with County Health Organizations, the community center would be able to host vaccine clinics and other outreach events responding to COVID-19. Additionally, the building will help drive visitors and other residents to attend events and activities within Pierceton, creating more opportunity to spend time and shop at local establishments.
Ownership	Treasury Subgroup	
Town of Pierceton	Aid to tourism, hospitality, economic development.	
Project Timeline		



What were the COVID-19 community impacts and responses?

Kosciusko County was impacted by Covid-19 in significant ways. Due to a lack of broadband and e-connectivity, the county found itself unprepared to provide government services online, support remote work for businesses, or provide e-learning access for educational needs. Covid-19 also highlighted the urgent need to upgrade adequate public safety communications infrastructure. The pandemic showed the county that there was a significant need to increase community wellness by supporting residents in developing healthy habits to combat Covid-19 and other chronic diseases. Poor nutrition, food insecurity, lack of physical activity, and decreased access to health services increased the risk of severe illness and hospitalization from Covid-19. Stress and social isolation increased the prevalence of mental health and substance misuse disorders. The requirement to suspend travel and remain close to home to decrease the spread of Covid-19 showed a need to address the quality of place in the county. Additionally, Covid-19 emphasized the need to continue county-wide comprehensive planning to increase the resiliency of our county and smaller communities to withstand economic hardship brought on by Covid-19.

While Kosciusko County responded to the immediate challenges of the pandemic, the opportunity to participate in HELP allows the county to expand its response to the long-term impacts of Covid-19. The county will continue to partner to expand broadband and e-connectivity capabilities which will improve government services, support for remote work and e-learning opportunities. The county will address urgent public safety communications infrastructure. The county will increase community wellness behaviors by supporting the Healthy Communities Initiative and a newly created County Parks Board. Finally, the county will continue to lead in the development and implementation of Forward Kosciusko, a multi-jurisdictional comprehensive plan for the county and its communities to proactively plan and implement projects which will improve quality of place and strengthen local economies. Kosciusko County plans to utilize this opportunity to increase local communities' capacities to proactively plan for their futures and to offer high quality of life. The pandemic presents an opportunity for the rural communities to see population growth as people can access the same level of services and quality of life as offered in the urbanized areas, including broadband. Kosciusko rural communities are seeing increasing trends in population growth and the county wants to ensure its communities continue to be seen as attractive places to live, work, and do business.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Which pathways were chosen the most in the community?

Approximately 350 project ideas were submitted during the community engagement period across Kosciusko County. Here are the results:

37.41%
noted their area of focus in

Promoting Community Wellness

35.88%
noted their area of focus in

Enhancing Quality of Place

19.08%
noted their area of focus in

Strengthening Local Economies

07.63%
noted their area of focus in

Advancing E-Connectivity




Cary Groninger


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Core Team

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- Thaine Tribalski
- Tracy Tribalski
- Chris Treber
- Crista Barker
- Ken Long
- Doreen Ruch
- Kelsea DeGaetano
- Michelle Ball
- Scott Greene
- Greg Demopoulous

Strengthening Local Economies

- Allyn Decker
- Scott Werstler
- Cindy Dossat
- Elizabeth Tutorow
- Aaron Zolman
- Tim Bradley
- Scott Gingerich
- Angela Deak
- Sue Mort
- Brian Hartman
- Tony Peterson
- Todd Davis

Promoting Community Wellness

- Jennifer Stewart
- Lisa Harman
- Laura Baker
- Kim Waggoner
- Lee Ann Rock
- Timothy Farley
- Karena Wilkinson
- Steven Marquart
- Georgia Tenney
- Chris Stahly
- Sherry Searles
- Dr. Kevin W. Roberts

Advancing E-Connectivity

- Bill Holder
- Curt Barkey
- Jason Hefner
- Jennifer Hefner
- Stephen Boggs
- Larry Krueger
- Phil Huffman
- Mark Grady
- Scott Werstler
- Matt Brubaker
- Councilwoman Kathy Groninger
- Michael Pahl

