



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

County HELP program encourages residents to share ideas for community development efforts

May 23, 2022 (Warsaw, IN) – Kosciusko County leaders are seeking feedback from residents about community development efforts across the County as part of the Hoosier Enduring Legacy Program (HELP). Residents can participate via an online survey or in-person at upcoming events.

Kosciusko County was one of three communities selected by the Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA) to participate in the first cohort of the HELP program. The program focuses on training up small rural communities, and assists communities in developing Strategic Investment Plans which culminates in a legacy project for each community focused on four community development areas of focus: advancing e-connectivity, enhancing quality of place, promoting community wellness, and strengthening local economies.

The Towns of **Etna Green, Mentone, Milford, and Pierceton** are participating with Kosciusko County in the 12-month HELP program. HELP is continuing to gather feedback from residents in each of the four communities and throughout the County with a brief [survey](#). The brief 3-question survey focuses on which of the four community development areas of focus mentioned (advancing e-connectivity, enhancing quality of place, promoting community wellness, and strengthening local economies) are most important to each of the communities, and obtaining project ideas related to those areas of focus. The digital survey can be found by visiting the direct link: bit.ly/HELPSurvey. The deadline to complete the survey is **Tuesday, June 7** at 5 p.m.

“We’ve begun gathering feedback from residents by kicking off our first Art Infused events in May, and we have two more coming up in June. And now, we’re adding a more accessible method for residents to submit ideas who may not be able to attend an in-person event,” said HELP Kosciusko County Coordinator Amy Roe. “This feedback is critical in helping us determine priorities in each of the communities, and for planning transformative projects.”

As Roe mentioned, there are two more Art Infused community-centric events coming up for local residents to attend and share ideas. The events made possible by The Indiana Arts Commission, focus on using art to bring communities together and help them dream about what their community could be. The HELP program, in partnership with Spoonful of Imagination, will offer the in-person Art Infused events to the public on:

- **Saturday, June 11** from 1 p.m. – 3 p.m. at Remembrance Park in Etna Green (106 S. Walnut St.)



- **Friday, June 17** from 5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. Milford Community Building parking lot (111 S. Main St.)

These events are FREE to attend, and open to all ages. Spoonful of Imagination will lead participants through a collaborative art project, while participants share project ideas related to the four HELP program areas of focus.

The HELP program will utilize the \$1.28 billion allocated directly to Indiana communities from the Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Funds through the American Rescue Plan Act.

Additionally, there will be one last in-person opportunity for residents to share input at a community engagement session on Tuesday, June 7, 2022 from 5 p.m. – 6 p.m. at the Westminster East Banquet Hall at [Grace College](#). Participants will again have the opportunity to select which of the four community development areas of focus is most important to them and share a project idea for their community. For more HELP program updates visit www.kcgov.com.

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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