

THE SILOS @37

HAMILTON COUNTY 4-H FAIRGROUNDS & EVENT CENTER



P PURDUE
UNIVERSITY

Extension - Hamilton County

**HISTORY
HERITAGE
FAMILY
FUTURE**

Dear Friends of Extension,

Purdue Extension Hamilton County is excited to share more with you about the Master Plan for improving, upgrading, and advancing our cherished fairgrounds.

A RICH HERITAGE

Purdue Extension has called the Hamilton County 4-H Fairgrounds home since 1950. From the first buildings erected in the 1950s to the 1997 dedication of the Exhibition Center, Purdue Extension has provided programming and educational opportunities for our community. Indiana's first organized 4-H club began in Hamilton County, and Purdue Extension has been the local face for Purdue University ever since.

As our community has grown and changed, the fairgrounds are not just the home of the annual 4-H Fair. The fairgrounds are used for emergency preparedness, voting, government meetings, partner events, private parties, vendor shows, livestock events, and rented storage. It is an event center and meeting place, and it offers community engagement on every front.

In 1887, the federal government had the foresight to ensure that each state would receive up-to-date research in agriculture, health, and engineering to support economic development and improve daily living. This landmark legislation, the Morrill Act, provided opportunities for higher education and led directly to the funding of Purdue University as Indiana's home for cooperative extension.

Hamilton County has deep roots with Cooperative Extension. Indiana's very first organized 4-H Club began in Hamilton County in 1904, created by the Superintendent of Schools. The "Corn Club" boasted 93 members.

The Smith-Lever Act was passed in 1914, providing Extension programs to communities and local residents through the land-grant university. Our Purdue Extension office is an extension of Purdue University, Indiana's land-grant institution. Extension programming reaches every township and corner of Hamilton County with nearly 1,000 volunteers helping make it happen.



SUSAN PETERSON

County Extension Director
Extension Educator
Health & Human Sciences



JANE SIPE

President
Hamilton County Extension Board



MOVING FORWARD

In 2016 the Hamilton County Extension Board established a Life Sciences Team to explore future programming needs of youth, adults, and partners, and to consider a physical plan to support them. Stakeholders were invited to meetings to share their ideas. Our team found that our facilities wouldn't meet our future programming needs.

In 2022 the Hamilton County Commissioners contracted Mussett Nicholas Associates to investigate the 4-H Fairgrounds current location and develop a Master Plan for this site if it was deemed workable for our vision. A Master Plan for our current location was approved by the commissioners in July 2022.

JOIN US AS WE LOOK TOWARD A FAIRGROUNDS FOR THE FUTURE

The total proposed cost of the Master Plan is \$65 million. The Hamilton County Council has approved \$15 million for Phase 1-A. This phase includes plans for improving drainage, building a new maintenance garage, upgrading the Llama Barn and existing Exhibition Center spaces, and constructing a new Bicentennial Pavilion to replace the Annex and O.V. Winks buildings.

Our fairgrounds will be rebranded as The Silos@37 – The Hamilton County 4-H Fairgrounds and Events Center, honoring our agricultural heritage while creating a modern learning and meeting space for Extension Programming and community needs.

Purdue Extension is beginning private fundraising to support the next phase which includes a new Show Arena and Education Halls. The proposed cost of this phase is \$11 million. Our design team (made up of Extension stakeholders, architects, developers, and public officials) is striving to be good stewards of the public and private funds dedicated to The Silos@37 project.

It is an exciting time in Hamilton County! Let's not forget that with all the investment in physical infrastructure, we also need social infrastructure. We need places for people to gather socially, engage in learning, and serve each other in our communities. For decades, our county fairgrounds has been a great venue for engaging our community and we are building a fairgrounds for future generations.

Get involved:

Contact Purdue Extension Hamilton County to learn more about donating.

Sign up to stay updated on our Fairgrounds for the Future. <https://bit.ly/futurefairgrounds>