

**HAMILTON COUNTY, TENNESSEE**  
**OFFICE OF THE COUNTY MAYOR**  
**WESTON WAMP**

For Immediate Release

May 1, 2024

Contact: Haley Burton, 423-619-5311

**State of Tennessee Encouraged by Recently-Restored Harrison Center,  
Invests \$1.4 Million to Further Enhance Facility**

*Hamilton County opened the former elementary school as the county's first senior and community center  
in February*

Hamilton County Mayor Weston Wamp is thrilled to announce the county will receive \$1.4 million from the Tennessee Department of Economic & Community Development for improvements to the newly-renovated Harrison Center. The facility opened as a hub of civic life in the Harrison community earlier this year offering a broad range of amenities.

“We are grateful that the State of Tennessee has chosen to support our vision for The Harrison Center as a place where our youngest and oldest citizens can gather,” said **Mayor Wamp**. “The state’s investment will allow us to build on the county’s recent renovation of this historic school to transform it into a hub of senior activities, youth recreation, healthy living, and entrepreneurship.”

The \$1.4 million from the Connected Community Facilities (CCF) Grant Program will fund the following projects at The Harrison Center:

- Culinary Incubator to assist students and citizens in developing valuable culinary skills to spurring entrepreneurship throughout Hamilton County
- State-of-the-art computer lab for all ages increasing access to educational opportunities
- Enhancements to audio/visual equipment and installation of new sound system in the auditorium elevating the county’s ability to host a wide array of events from conferences to concerts
- Enhancing the amenities within the existing fitness room
- Adding outdoor play equipment and fitness pieces
- Upgrades to building infrastructure
- Incorporate additional parking spaces

The facility currently has an auditorium, rec center with indoor batting cages, office space, meeting rooms, classrooms, and space dedicated for the Forgotten Child Fund– a nonprofit run by local first responders who collect and distribute Christmas gifts to tens of thousands of children in need.

“With the support from the State of Tennessee, local officials are able to further build out this space for seniors and young people to come together in a way that really builds community,” said **Senator Bo Watson**, Chair of

the Senate Finance Committee. “The workforce development and educational opportunities that lie within this facility will serve families in Hamilton County for generations to come.”

“The Harrison Center is a unique asset in the east part of Hamilton County, drawing families to a central location with resources that are scarce in rural areas,” said **Representative Patsy Hazlewood**, Chair of the House Finance Committee. “Strong families are the building blocks for a strong community and a strong state. As county officials laid out the vision for this space, it was clear additional funding was needed to ensure families, as well as our seniors, have access to resources that will enable those families to thrive and provide opportunities for our seniors as well.”

“The State of Tennessee sees the promise this facility holds to support workforce development initiatives and enhance educational opportunities,” said **Representative Greg Martin**. “Many families will utilize this robust community asset for decades to come.”

The grant will require a 10 percent match from Hamilton County, totaling a \$1.5 million investment into the facility.

###