



# Letter To The Editor: Comments On County Admin Building Use and Hillsboro Annex

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*The purpose of this report is to provide information and to aid in government transparency.*

Use of County Administration Building and Hillsboro Annex: Preliminary Concerns:

Recently, I toured the County Administration Building and Hillsboro Annex with County Board Member Chris Hankins and Interim Facilities Director Chris Milton.

Observation: The County Administration Building, built on prime Edwardsville Real estate may be under - utilized. For example, two (2) Mental Health employees work in an area built for eight (8), there are twelve (12) unused personnel spaces in IT, an unused IT storage area, and perhaps six (6) unused spaces in the Recorder's area.

The Hillsboro Annex also in downtown Edwardsville prime real estate. The aging Hillsboro Building situated on prime real estate in downtown Edwardsville remains plagued by asbestos issues, aging HVAC, aging boiler, and electrical system, and has no life safety systems.

The Hillsboro Annex currently houses two departments; Community Development with 24 personnel and Probation Department with 17. Staff estimates we might place an additional sixty six (66) personnel in the Hillsboro Building. First, the unused second floor area could accommodate approximately forty - four (44) probation employees. In addition, Community Development space is oversized it doesn't need all of its space, changes to the areas around Annex rooms 107, 108, and 109 could accommodate an additional twelve (12) personnel.

Unofficial Estimated Hillsboro Building Improvement Cost: Previous Facilities Manager Rob Schmidt estimated it would cost an estimated two (2) million dollars to repair the Hillsboro Annex according to code with life safety. However, more recent unofficial estimates indicate upgrades could cost three and a half (3.5) million dollars.

Wood River Facility: Wood River remains under - utilized with over half the property space empty due to asbestos. It needs new boilers, electrical, life safety, and elevators. Unofficial Estimated Wood River Facility Improvement Cost: Highest unofficial estimate by Facility Director Rob Schmidt was twenty (20) million dollars for entire building with life safety, asbestos abatement, new elevators, HVAC, boilers, and parking. There doesn't seem to be a plan for additional space utilization. Other options exist for partial improvements to the building would cost less but are unknown. There appear to be proponents who desire to keep this property. Additional research on these properties is being done.

PTELL Some people want PTELL on the ballot and some don't. If you desire to educate yourself perhaps the following article would prove helpful. Ted Dabrowski, Erik Randolph, and John Kligner state in; Growing Out of Control: Property Taxes Put Increased Burden on Illinois Tax Payers , 'PTELL is ineffective in reducing the property tax burden.'

**Respectfully,**

**Phil Chapman County Board District Three**

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