

10/28/2026

Dear Neighbor,

We are writing to provide an update on the Reservoir Road wastewater expansion project, including recent construction, changes made in response to community feedback, funding challenges, and potential financial assistance for qualifying residents. While meaningful progress has been made, the project remains a long-term undertaking. We believe it is important to keep residents informed about both our progress and the obstacles that remain.

Project Progress and Construction Update

The force main connecting Contracts 1 and 2 has been completed. Residents may have noticed construction activity in the neighborhood associated with this work. Although this represents an important milestone, no additional construction is anticipated for at least six months. Unfortunately, the planned force main work on East View Street could not proceed because the required Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Chapter 105 permit for excavation within a floodway had not been obtained. Consequently, this work could not be completed before the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) grant's September 30, 2026, expenditure deadline. As a result, the unfinished East View Street work will no longer be funded through the expired ARPA grant. The Authority is actively pursuing additional grant opportunities to help offset the cost of this work and advance Contract 1. With the ARPA funding period concluded, the Authority's immediate construction priority is shifting toward Contract 2. A \$3.8 million Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) award applies specifically to this portion of the project and must be utilized before its June 2028 deadline. Our priority is to put this funding to work before it expires. Although construction efforts will focus on Contract 2, Contract 1 must also be completed before the entire sewer system can become operational. Even under the best-case scenario, completion of the overall project remains several years away.

Redesigning in Response to Community Feedback

One of the most significant developments since our last newsletter has been the completion of the door-to-door community survey. The responses provided valuable insight into residents' concerns about the project. Most respondents did not object to the concept of public sewer service itself. Rather, many expressed concerns about granting easements and having sewer infrastructure installed through their yards. The Authority has taken this feedback seriously and redesigned the project to address these concerns. Under the revised design, proposed easements have been relocated away from the middle of properties and toward the front edges of yards, running parallel to the road. The revised approach also reduces the need for permanent easements in these locations by utilizing temporary construction easements, where feasible. These easements will allow construction equipment to access property edges while sewer infrastructure is installed alongside the road. The redesign required changes to the system itself, including converting several planned gravity sewer systems to grinder pump systems. A portion of the remaining ARPA funds was used to purchase grinder pump equipment, helping to avoid

the need for homeowners to purchase that equipment individually. The redesign also eliminated the need for Pump Station 1, which had been planned within a federal floodway and presented significant permitting challenges. Eliminating this station resulted in substantial project savings and allowed the Authority to return a parcel of land acquired through eminent domain in 2024. These changes reflect the Authority's effort to balance the need for public sewer infrastructure with the property rights, concerns, and interests of the residents affected by construction.

Easements: Current Status and Next Steps

The revised design reflects the Authority's efforts to address residents' concerns and minimize the impact of construction on private property. While these changes have helped to reduce certain property impacts, easements remain necessary to move the project forward. Of the 144 easements required, **41 have been signed and recorded, leaving 103 outstanding.** It is important to understand that these figures do not represent a simple vote for or against the project. Each easement represents a property interest, and the number of easements does not correspond directly to the number of individual property owners or households affected. Some property owners hold multiple easements, some properties are owned by churches, businesses, or nonprofit organizations, and some owners reside outside of the area and have been difficult to reach. Many of the easements already secured have come from residents who live on the very properties affected by the project and who have agreed to work with the Authority. Their cooperation is appreciated and represents meaningful progress toward making the project a reality. Likewise, an outstanding easement does not necessarily indicate opposition. In some cases, the Authority has not received a response from the property owner, while other easements remain unresolved for various reasons. For these reasons, the number of outstanding easements alone does not provide a complete picture of community support for the project. The Authority will continue working with property owners to obtain the remaining easements voluntarily wherever possible. However, to keep the project moving forward, the Authority will also consider whether eminent domain is necessary to obtain outstanding temporary construction easements when voluntary agreements cannot be reached. Any such action would be considered in accordance with applicable legal requirements and the Authority's responsibility to advance the project.

Understanding the Alternatives

We recognize that some property owners may wish to explore potential alternatives. The Authority remains available to discuss the project, answer questions, and explain what options we are authorized to offer. The Township's ACT537 plan requires the Authority to make earnest effort to complete the project in Contracts 1 & 2. For questions or to discuss potential alternatives to the BTWSA sewer project, please contact the Blair Township Sewer Enforcement Officer, **Luke Helsel**, directly at **814-696-1229**.

Potential Financial Assistance for Qualifying Residents

The Authority recognizes that the cost of connecting to the public sewer system may present a financial hardship for some households. We are actively exploring ways to reduce this burden for residents who qualify for income-based assistance. Blair Township currently has just over \$100,000 allocated toward individual sewer lateral construction costs. These funds are subject to a June 2027 deadline, and efforts are underway to identify eligible uses that would allow the funding to benefit residents before it expires. According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the current income limits for Blair County (Altoona Metropolitan Statistical Area), effective June 1, 2026, are as follows:

Household Size	Maximum Annual Household Income
1 person	\$51,600
2 people	\$59,000
3 people	\$66,350
4 people	\$73,700
5 people	\$79,600
6 people	\$85,500
7 people	\$91,400
8 people	\$97,300

These income limits may help to identify households that could qualify for assistance, depending on the applicable funding requirements. The Authority is investigating how the available funds can be used to help eligible residents with individual lateral construction costs before the June 2027 deadline. Residents who believe their households may qualify for financial assistance should contact the Blair County Grants Coordinator's Office **814-693-3023** for information about potential assistance, applicable eligibility requirements, and available programs. Please note that the income limits listed above do not, by themselves, guarantee eligibility for this funding. Assistance will depend on the requirements of the applicable program and the availability of funds.

Funding and Financial Responsibility

The Reservoir Road expansion has relied on multiple funding sources, including ARPA and CDBG grants. Each program has deadlines and restrictions governing how its funds may be used. The expiration of the ARPA grant creates a funding challenge for the unfinished work in Contract 1. The Authority is pursuing additional grant opportunities to help address this shortfall

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while prioritizing Contract 2, where the CDBG award must be utilized before June 2028. Our goal is to secure the necessary funding, control costs wherever possible, and complete the project in a financially responsible manner. We will continue exploring opportunities to minimize the financial burden on residents while meeting the requirements and deadlines associated with available funding.

Further Updates and Contact Information

The Reservoir Road sewer project is a substantial undertaking, and we understand that delays and uncertainty can be frustrating. We remain committed to keeping residents informed as the project progresses. **As previously announced, future newsletters will be posted on the Blair Township Water and Sewer Authority website (btwsa.org) rather than be sent in paper through USPS.** Additional newsletters will be available by U.S. mail on an opt-in basis for residents who request them. Meeting agendas, meeting minutes, and Authority contact information are also available in our office or on the website. Thank you for your patience and continued participation as we work toward a long-term wastewater solution for the Reservoir Road community.

Blair Township Water and Sewer Authority



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**BLAIR TOWNSHIP WATER AND SEWER AUTHORITY
COVID-19 ARPA H2O PA GRANT SPENDING SUMMARY
OCTOBER 5, 2026**

Total Grant Available: \$2,510,000
Required Match: 1/3 of Total Costs

Spending As Of 9/30/2026 (Deadline to Incur)

Reservoir Road Expansion Project

Contract 1-2 Force Main and Pressure Sewer (Guyer Brothers).....	\$706,800
Pump Station #2 Equipment Purchase (Pumpman Pittsburgh).....	\$663,500
Grinder Pump Equipment Purchase (CW Sales).....	<u>\$241,000</u>
Total Reservoir Road Expenditure	\$1,611,300

Existing System Improvements

Applewood Sewer Lining (Guyer Brothers)	\$250,000
Existing Pump Station Replacement Pumps (Pumpman Pittsburgh).....	\$197,000
Stowell Farm Sewer Replacement (Kukurin Contracting).....	\$330,300
(Includes Materials for Newry Lane Crossing)	
Total Existing System Expenditure	\$777,300

Engineering Costs (Used as Partial Match Demonstration)

Previously Paid and Newly Invoiced	\$542,800
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Total Project Expenditure.....	\$2,931,400
Total Grant Reimbursed	\$1,954,267
Total BTWSA Match	\$977,133
Engineering Costs Used as Match	\$542,800
Additional Contribution from Capital Reserve.....	\$434,333