



Septic to Sewer Program Update

September 18, 2024

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Background

- BOS authorized \$1M in funding for the Septic to Sewer project in the FY23 budget to support the conversion of certain septic systems to hook up to the sewer systems
- Albemarle County contracted with Albemarle Housing Improvement Program (AHIP) for this body of work for the period of January 10, 2023 through December 1, 2024
- Programs goals:
 - support residents who have failing septic systems or systems that are at eminent danger of failing,
 - protect the general public from environmental harm,
 - improve wastewater management, and
 - preserve and improve the environment for fish and wildlife quality.



Criteria & Priority

- Eligibility criteria:
 - households were within the Albemarle County Service Authority (ASCA) district
 - did not already have a sewer account
 - within reasonable proximity to existing ASCA services
 - household income was below 80% Area Median Income (AMI)
 - property was owner-occupied
 - property was within proximity to an environmental impact such as a playground or endangered waterway
 - existing septic was failing or substandard



Status

- Notice of potential eligibility sent to over 250 households within the ACSA service district
- 5 septic to sewer conversions completed at the cost of \$313,702.13
- 4 additional households are in the contract development phase for an estimated addition of \$186,297.87 for a total of \$500,000 of the initial appropriation of \$1,000,000.
- *6 additional households have expressed interest:*
 - *5 meet with the income eligibility threshold*
 - *1 is near a waterway or playground*
 - *None have failing existing septic systems*
 - *3 have more than 1 person using the septic system in the household*



Request for Guidance

County staff seek guidance from the Board on the best and highest use of the remaining \$500,000.



Recommendation

Using the lens of serving the most vulnerable & using limited dollars to serve those that need it most, staff recommend the following distribution of the remaining funds:

- a) \$150,000 for AHIP to serve three additional households with a septic to sewer conversion,
- b) \$80,000 to continue housing navigation services provided by the Financial Opportunities Center for County residents,
- c) \$170,000 for the Albemarle County Emergency Relief Program providing funds to residents with an eviction or shut-off notice, and *
- d) \$100,000 to a homelessness service contingency account to support efforts to develop a low-barrier year-round shelter.

** Up to \$100,000 security deposit assistance for residents facing displacement*