

# Lindale Mobile Home Park Septic Rebuild – 10/17/24

**\$876,000** Water & Waste Disposal Grant  
**\$203,000** Water & Waste Disposal Loan  
**\$1,079,000** Total

[Salutation]

Thank you for inviting me and my colleagues to what is surely a landmark celebration for this resilient, future-facing community.

During my time as State Director for this agency, I've become quite a connoisseur of ribbon-cuttings: hospitals, schools, libraries, community centers—you name it—they've given me quite a work-out these last four years! But I have to say, and please don't tell our other admired customers this, but projects like this one are my personal favorite to welcome into the world.

You might want to know why I get a little extra excited when we help build a waste-management system for a small community, and I'll tell you that there are any number of reasons. For now I'll give you a few:

Like many leaders, I am big on unity and teamwork and trust and all the good glue that holds a staff, and thus an operation, together. In USDA Rural Development, our personnel and activities are focused on three major mission areas: safe housing for low-income families, small-business support, and essential facilities for rural communities. For this project and others like it, the Community Facilities funding has a direct path to improving low-income housing for hundreds of rural residents, even though that money is restricted by federal regulation from applying improvements to individual homes. In other words, I'm fond of these projects because they offer a better quality of life to people who might not have the resources to engage individual help.

In our office, we often talk about the transformational power of water. Recently, of course, the devastation of back-to-back floods on our farmers and residents of river communities has darkened the typical tenor of positivity on the subject. And as we all know, when the water rises, it's the lowest-income folks who suffer the most. Not just totality of property damage and loss of possessions, but the severity of a life disrupted and dislocated from routine, transportation and income. People already in fragile economic states have the fewest resources to mitigate the effects of disaster, and their suffering is inevitably asymmetrical.

So today we take time to remember and remind ourselves why safe water and waste management are so important. From now on, the Lindale septic system will not back up, rain or no rain. Residents and their kids and maybe their kids' kids will life in a safe, sanitary, vibrant place to call home.

I will always be inspired by the collaboration, imagination and teamwork of committed people who come together to make essential services possible for their neighbors. This is yet another reason for my soft spot regarding crucial water and waste-management systems in small communities: This celebration is a tribute to unified purpose and partnership. The Addison County Community Trust reached out for help, and their call was heeded by friends in commercial lending, the nonprofit world, and in state and local government.

That's what it's all about in rural development: Build a plan, build relationships, build a future. *Together.*

Congratulations to the ACCT and the residents of the Lindale community on this monumental day. You are an example of fortitude, creativity and resourcefulness we can all strive for.

[Handoff]