

Allegheny County denies Harmar grant request to repave Rich Hill Road

By [Michael Aubele](#), VALLEY NEWS DISPATCH
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About the writer

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Harmar won't be getting at least one of the grants local officials said is needed to pave Rich Hill Road.

Allegheny County officials have denied the township's most recent request for a \$250,000 Community Development Block Grant, County Councilman Nick Futules said.

Based on estimates from Harmar officials, the grant would have covered half the cost of paving a mile-long stretch between Route 910 and the Indiana Township border.

Indiana Township residents have been the ones complaining most that the road needs to be resurfaced.

Futules said the county would send letters today to municipalities that applied for funding, notifying them if their projects will receive CDBG money — federal money which, in this case, is administered by the county.

This marks the second time Harmar failed to get the grant. Township officials were rejected last year, too.

Futules said township officials' refusal to commit matching funds to the project was one of the major reasons county officials denied the request.

"There was no commitment on Harmar's side," Futules said.

Megan Dardanell, a spokeswoman in County Executive Dan Onorato's office, said the township also needed to prove that paving Rich Hill Road would create jobs. Without that proof, getting the funding wouldn't be likely, she said.

Dardanell wouldn't confirm that county officials denied the grant request.

Officials with some businesses along Rich Hill Road have said that improving the road would have no affect on how many people they hire.

Harmar officials also reapplied with the county for a \$250,000 grant through the state's Community Infrastructure and Tourism Fund.

Dardanell said county officials are reviewing the latest round of CITF grant requests and haven't announced which projects will be funded.

Harmar officials indicated the township can't pave the road without supporting grants.

"There's no way we can do it," Supervisor Barbara Noll said.

Supervisors set aside \$70,000 in this year's budget for paving projects, although that money isn't dedicated to Rich Hill Road.

Noll and Supervisor Kim Toney said township crews are doing their best to maintain the road by patching potholes.

Noll said closing the road is an option, albeit one of last resort because of the impact it would have on the businesses there.

Futules said he supports the paving project but indicated he can't do much to attract funding without a financial commitment from Harmar.

"It's a project that needs to be done," Futules said.

Dardanell said county officials have suggested that Harmar apply for a loan through the county's Authority for Improvements in Municipalities (AIM) program. Harmar hasn't applied for the loan, she said.

Meantime, Futules said the county will be giving Harmar about \$23,500 in CDBG funding for a retaining wall project along Terrace Drive in Harmarville.