

RESOLUTION NO. R14-17

**A RESOLUTION ACCEPTING THE FINDINGS OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND DETERMINING THAT AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT IS NOT NECESSARY FOR THE PHASE 3 WATER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT.**

WHEREAS, the City of Laurel, Montana ("City") has completed an assessment to identify potential environmental impacts of the Phase 3 Water System Improvements Project; and

WHEREAS, the draft Environmental Assessment was made available for public comment and the findings were presented and reviewed at a public meeting; and

WHEREAS, no substantive public comment was received; and

WHEREAS, the City has determined that the Phase 3 Water System Improvements Project will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment and accordingly, the City has determined an Environmental Impact Statement is not necessary;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council as follows:

That the City of Laurel does hereby adopt the final Environmental Assessment for the Phase 3 Water System Improvements Project.

Introduced at a regular meeting of the City Council on April 15, 2014, by Council Member Mountsier.

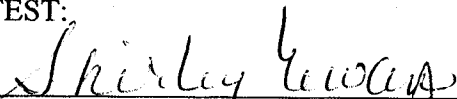
PASSED and APPROVED by the City Council of the City of Laurel this 15<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2014.

APPROVED by the Mayor this 15<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2014.

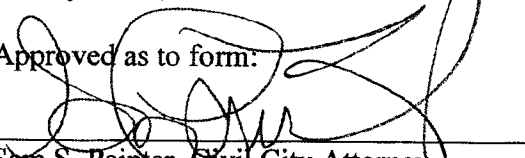
CITY OF LAUREL

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mark A. Mace, Mayor

ATTEST:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Shirley Ewan, Clerk/Treasurer

Approved as to form:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Sam S. Painter, Civil City Attorney

CITY OF LAUREL  
PHASE 3 WATER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS  
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

I. PROJECT CONTACT PERSON

Name: Kurt Markegard, Public Works Director  
Address: 115 W. First Street  
Laurel, MT 59044  
Telephone: (406) 628-4796

II. PROPOSED ACTION

The City of Laurel recently completed a comprehensive engineering evaluation, the 2014 Water System Preliminary Engineering Report, of the City's water system. The PER included a comprehensive evaluation of each component of the water system based upon current federal and state design standards and regulations as well as impacts to health and safety, operations and maintenance, environmental, performance, etc.

The PER found major deficiencies in the water system including the following, all of which were considered for improvements:

Water Supply – All deficiencies to be completed as a separate project

Water Treatment Plant

- Dilapidated flocculation and sedimentation basins
- Backwash water and sludge pond needs replacement
- Backwash water storage tank needs replacement
- Misc. equipment upgrades necessary
- Lack of security at the water treatment plant

Water Storage

- Critical to remain in operation as there is no backup storage tank
- Existing tank does not have sufficient height to serve higher elevations within the distribution system

Distribution System

- Undersized and aging water mains
- Low pressures in portions of the distribution system

As discussed in the next section, various alternatives were considered to address the major deficiencies and after careful consideration and comparison, a preferred alternative was selected. The City then determined potential available funding as well as their own financial capabilities to determine how many of the improvements could be constructed in this next

phase of improvements (Phase 3). All other alternatives are considered to be part of future phases.

The proposed Phase 3 Water System Improvements includes:

- Construction of new, covered flocculation and sedimentation basins using conventional treatment with tube settlers
- Construction of new backwash water and sludge ponds
- Construction of a new backwash water storage tank
- Miscellaneous water treatment plant improvements
- Improved security at the water treatment plant
- Relocation of the Cherry Hills booster station

### III. ALTERNATIVES

As part of the 2014 Water System Preliminary Engineering Report (PER) prepared by Great West Engineering, Inc., many different alternatives were investigated for the water treatment plant, water storage, and pumping stations.

The PER included an extensive cost comparison and ranking for each of the alternatives. The cost comparison was completed using a present worth analysis, which considered capital costs and operational and maintenance costs over the 20 year design life. In addition to life cycle cost, other ranking criteria were used select the recommended alternatives. The criteria included: life cycle cost, operation and maintenance (non-monetary), permitting, social impacts, environmental impacts, sustainability considerations, and land acquisition. Each criteria was given a weighted value and then each alternative given a score for each criteria. The scores and weighting factors were summarized in a decision matrix table. Please refer to chapter 6 of the PER for more detailed information regarding the cost comparisons and decision matrix.

After ranking and scoring different characteristics of each alternative, the following were selected as the preferred alternatives:

#### Water Treatment Plant

Alternative T-2A: Conventional Treatment with Tube Settlers

#### Water Storage

Alternative R-1: Buried Concrete Tank

#### Pump Station

Alternative P-1: Relocate Cherry Hills Booster Station (if Alt R-1 not completed during this phase)

OR

Alternative P-3: Zone 2 with Relocated Cherry Hills Booster Station (must be done in conjunction with Alt R-1)

### IV. MITIGATION

There were several items determined that would require mitigation for the project but none were noted to have negative long-term environmental impacts. These items include:

- Hazardous Facilities – There are two Underground Storage Tanks (USTs) and one Leaking Underground Storage Tank (LUST) site located near the possible water treatment plant expansion area. During design, the LUST site will need to be reviewed to determine and mitigate potential impacts (if any) from the LUST site.
- Floodplain Management – There is a possibility that the work located at the water treatment plant or the expansion area of the water treatment plant may be within the floodplain. Design will need to confirm elevations to ensure the project is either out of the floodplain or if any work will be within the floodplain, a floodplain permit will be necessary.
- Cultural Resources Impacts – Most of the project is not anticipated to have any impacts on cultural resources. However, there is little information available around the location of the new storage tank and transmission main. Thus, a cultural resources survey will need to be completed to ensure there are no negative impacts. In addition, there are several ditches within the project area that are more than 50 years old. As such, the State Historic Preservation Office will need to be contacted prior to making any alternations.
- Noise and Air Pollution – Dust and noise will be created by heavy machinery during construction. In order to mitigate these issues, disturbed areas will be watered down if dust becomes a problem and work hours will be limited from 7:00 AM to 7:00 PM in residential areas to eliminate excess disturbance.
- Transportation Networks – The new storage tank is located within close proximity to the Laurel Airport. The actual tank will be a buried tank and should not have any negative impacts on air traffic. However, the work will need to be coordinated through the Federal Aviation Administration and a permit may be necessary.

V. IS AN EA OR EIS REQUIRED?

After considering several items, it has been determined that this project is not a candidate for a Categorical Exclusion and this project instead contains elements which conclude a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) so this Environmental Assessment is required. There is a need for this Environmental Assessment due to the fact that this project is not just a minor upgrade, it is more than just a minor expansion of system capacity. However, the project will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment, so it will not require an Environmental Impact Statement. An Environmental Checklist was completed as part of the 2014 Water System PER and is included in Appendix A of the PER and all environmental issues were addressed during this time.

VI. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

The City of Laurel held a public hearing during a regular scheduled Council meeting at 6:30 PM on April 1, 2014. This was the first of two public hearings specifically dedicated to discussion of

the proposed project. At the public hearing, the recommended improvements were explained along with the purposed and proposed area of the project, activities, budget, possible sources of funding, and any costs that may result for local citizens because of the project.

A second formal public hearing was held on April 15, 2014 at another City Council meeting to further gather public input on the proposed improvements. The same items were discussed at this meeting with the exception that the environmental assessment process was discussed in much greater detail.

VII. PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE FOR PREPARING

This EA was prepared by:

Crystal Bennett  
Crystal Bennett, PE

4/15/14  
Date

This EA was approved by:

The City of Laurel:

Mark A. Mace  
Mark A. Mace, Mayor

4/15/2014  
Date

Attest:

Shirley Ewan  
Shirley Ewan, City Clerk/ Treasurer

4/15/14  
Date