

## **Water System Improvements**

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The Town of Alberton has two water sources: a spring and a groundwater well; one 300,000-gallon at-grade steel storage tank, an 8" diameter transmission main from the storage tank to Town, and a distribution network of ¾" to 6" diameter watermains.

Planning studies completed in 2016 and 2018 identified and prioritized a number of system deficiencies that needed correction. Alberton received a \$125,000 grant from the Montana Department of Natural Resources in 2019 and is currently implementing improvements at the spring and well that address the most critical issues. The Town also received a \$15,000 planning grant and completed a Preliminary Engineering Report (PER) in May 2020 that proposes a strategy for implementing the next phase of water system improvements. In June 2020, the PER was submitted with \$875,000 in grant applications to help fund the next phase. Alberton's PER can be viewed at the following website: <https://www.a-mce.com/uploads/105/Alberton-PER-website.pdf>. The PER shows that Alberton's existing distribution system is incapable of delivering adequate domestic demand and fire flows throughout town. Typical demand conditions north of Railroad Avenue result in low system pressures in the individual mains. Minimum fire delivery rates of 1,000 gpm. as required by Uniform Fire Code, cannot be delivered by the ¾", 1¼" or 2" watermains that exist throughout Alberton. Furthermore, the majority of individual water meters are non-functional due to age, encouraging overuse.

What is the next phase? Proposed improvements include: the replacement of all undersized mains with minimum 6" diameter pipe; looping of all watermains; upsizing the trunk line from the storage tank; adding hydrants; replacing all water meters, and; rehabilitating/securing the spring source collection system. The estimated total cost for the proposed project is \$1.91M. The proposed funding package includes: \$125,000 MDNRC grant; \$750,000 TSEP grant; \$884,680 SRF Loan and \$150,000 in Town reserves. The Town will also seek \$438,240 in "forgiven principal" on the SRF Loan to reduce its debt. If Alberton is successful in securing all of these funding sources, the expected user rate increase will be approximately \$11<sup>88</sup>/user-month. The Town may apply for a \$450,000 Community Development Block Grant in 2021 to further reduce user rate impacts.

Environmental impacts of the proposed project are generally considered beneficial, including: enhanced ability to fight fires; public health through delivery of safe drinking water; water conservation through properly metered usage, and; reduced energy use by improving the spring source.