

ISSUE:

HMB must obtain an additional \$940K in grants to complete this project. This amount is necessary to cover increased construction costs \$0.6M (up 50%) and reduced MSI availability of \$0.3M due to delays in SLRWWC Water For Life grant funding and MSI rule changes.

KEY MESSAGES:

In 2021, based on Stantec’s 2020 OPC, HMB had the funding in place to complete the Force Main WW System project such that HMB resident’s cost to connect to the WW system would be similar to what SBC residents experienced. Funding was \$0.7M grants, \$0.4 HMB Reserves, and \$0.3M HMB Residents. The HMB project was put on hold waiting for SLRWWC to receive Water For Life grant funding for their South Shore Line project.

In 2024, Stantec updated the Force Main WW System OPC. Construction costs increased by over 50 percent, up \$0.6 million.

As a result of **Alberta Government errors in the Water For Life grant funding for the SLRWWC South Shore Line project and changes to the MSI program rules**, HMB was forced to complete another capital project ahead of the HMB WW System project as they were caught in a “use it or lose it” scenario on MSI funding. These items **reduced available MSI funding for the HMB WW System project by \$0.3 million**. Background - In April 2023, the Alberta Government using incorrect data awarded only 50 percent of the applied for Water For Life grant to the SLRWWC. In July 2023, HMB decided to shelve the WW System project and bring forward, and complete, a different capital project from their 10 year capital plan. In November 2023, the Alberta Government corrected their error and the full Water For Life grant was awarded.

Based on the two items above, **HMB must now secure an additional \$940K in grant funding to complete their project**. Without additional funding the total cost for an HMB resident to connect to the HMB WW system is forecast to be \$27K, this includes all work on private property. If a new septic tank is required the forecast cost jumps to \$34K. Similar costs for SBC residents were \$11K and \$16K.

Without additional grant funding for HMB, the SLRWWC South Shore Line (Phase 5A) will not proceed even though it has received the necessary Water for Life grant funding (\$12 million). This will impact Lacombe County’s ability to connect their current lakeside communities to a WW system. It will impact future subdivision development around the south side of Sylvan Lake. The Town of Eckville will also be impacted, as it will no longer have the option of a low cost WW treatment solution available to them.

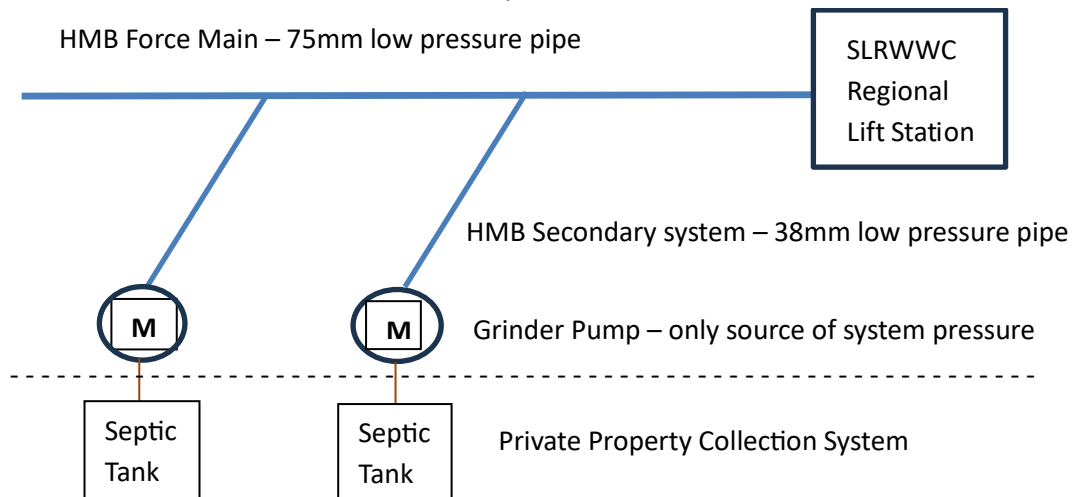
HMB does have an alternate solution and that is to eliminate the use of private property septic fields. While it is not the most elegant solution, this option will protect the health of the lake and water quality of the aquifer. A Septic Tank inspection program could also be introduced to ensure tank compliance.

HMB PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

HMB Force Main Wastewater System project consists of 3 components.

1. Force Main – a large low pressure pipe that runs through the entire municipality and terminates at the SLRWWC Regional Lift Station, (\$1.0M)
2. Secondary system – a system of small low pressure pipes. Each of these pipes originates at the grinder pump located in a septic tank on each property and terminates at an isolation valve that is connected to the Force Main. There are 66 of these pipes and that corresponds to the number of lots in the municipality, (\$0.8M)
3. Prime Mover – grinder pumps are located at each source of wastewater and provide the only source of motive power for the entire Force Main system. There are 66 grinder pumps. More specifically, they are located in the septic holding tank at each property. Without them the Force Main system would not function, (\$0.2M)

Figure 1. Schematic of HMB Force Main Wastewater System



HMB PROJECT – 2024 FINANCIALS:

HMB Project cost is estimated to be \$2.0 million.

HMB currently has these funding sources:

- Alberta Government grants \$0.4 million; a combination of MSI, CCBF, and LGFF
- HMB WW Reserve \$0.4 million
- Cash directly from Residents \$0.3 million. This amount is equal to \$4300 per lot. It is similar to what SBC residents had to pay up front for the SBC WW construction costs.

HMB must obtain an additional \$0.9 million in grants to complete this project.