



**NORTH AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK
FACT SHEET
SOMERTON, ARIZONA**

Project: Water Main Replacement Project

Cost: US\$3,436,791

Sponsor: City of Somerton, Arizona

Location: Somerton is located in the southwest corner of the state of Arizona, in southwest Yuma County. It is approximately 180 miles east of San Diego, California, 10 miles southeast of the city of Yuma, and 10 miles north of the U.S.-Mexico border.

Background: The city of Somerton provides water and wastewater services to all its residents. These services are provided 24 hours a day except when maintenance requires temporary shutoff of water service.

Raw water is supplied by three wells located within the city and drawn from an aquifer shared with the Cocopah Tribe and many private residences in the area. The city also has a 750 acre-feet allotment of Colorado River water that is currently not being used because of prohibitive treatment and conveyance costs. The water treatment facilities consist of two parallel treatment plants with a combined capacity of 3.0 million gallons per day (mgd).

The city's water distribution system consists of 2- to 14-inch asbestos cement pipes and 6- to 12-inch polyvinyl chloride (PVC) pipes with cast iron fittings, which vary in age and condition. Most of the water mains in the central part of the city are comprised of 4- and 6-inch cement pipes. These mains were primarily designed and constructed to provide residential water service with only a very limited capacity for fire protection. Moreover, large sections of the system must be taken out of service during maintenance of fire hydrants for lack of isolation valves.

The existing cement pipes are old, deteriorating and undersized by today's standards. Although the quality of drinking water has not yet been affected by the pipes, continued deterioration will compromise their integrity and pose a serious health and safety risk for the community.

Description: The proposed project entails replacing and rehabilitating about 35 percent of the city’s water distribution system. Specific system improvements include:

- replacing 42,670 feet of old undersized water mains
- installing 236 valves
- replacing 111 fire hydrants
- replacing 822 water meters

BECC Certification: September 14, 2000

NADB Funding: Border Environment Infrastructure Fund (BEIF):
Construction Grant Assistance: US\$ 527,205
Transition Grant Assistance: US\$ 251,662
Total: US\$ 778,867

Institutional Strengthening Development Program (IDP)

The Bank financed a water and wastewater rate study which determined a rate structure that should allow the city to generate sufficient revenues from user fees to cover its costs while at the same time being fair and equitable to users.

Other Funding Sources: The United States Department of Agriculture-Rural Development (USDA-RD) office is providing both grants and a loan for this project. In addition, the city is contributing a cash match for one of the USDA-RD grants.

Benefits: Upgrading the waterlines will reduce system failures, maintenance requirements and costs, as well as potential health risks for users of the old deteriorating lines. In addition, improved water pressure will increase fire safety.

For more information, contact Juan Antonio Flores,
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