Project profile

City of Laurel

Laurel, Montana

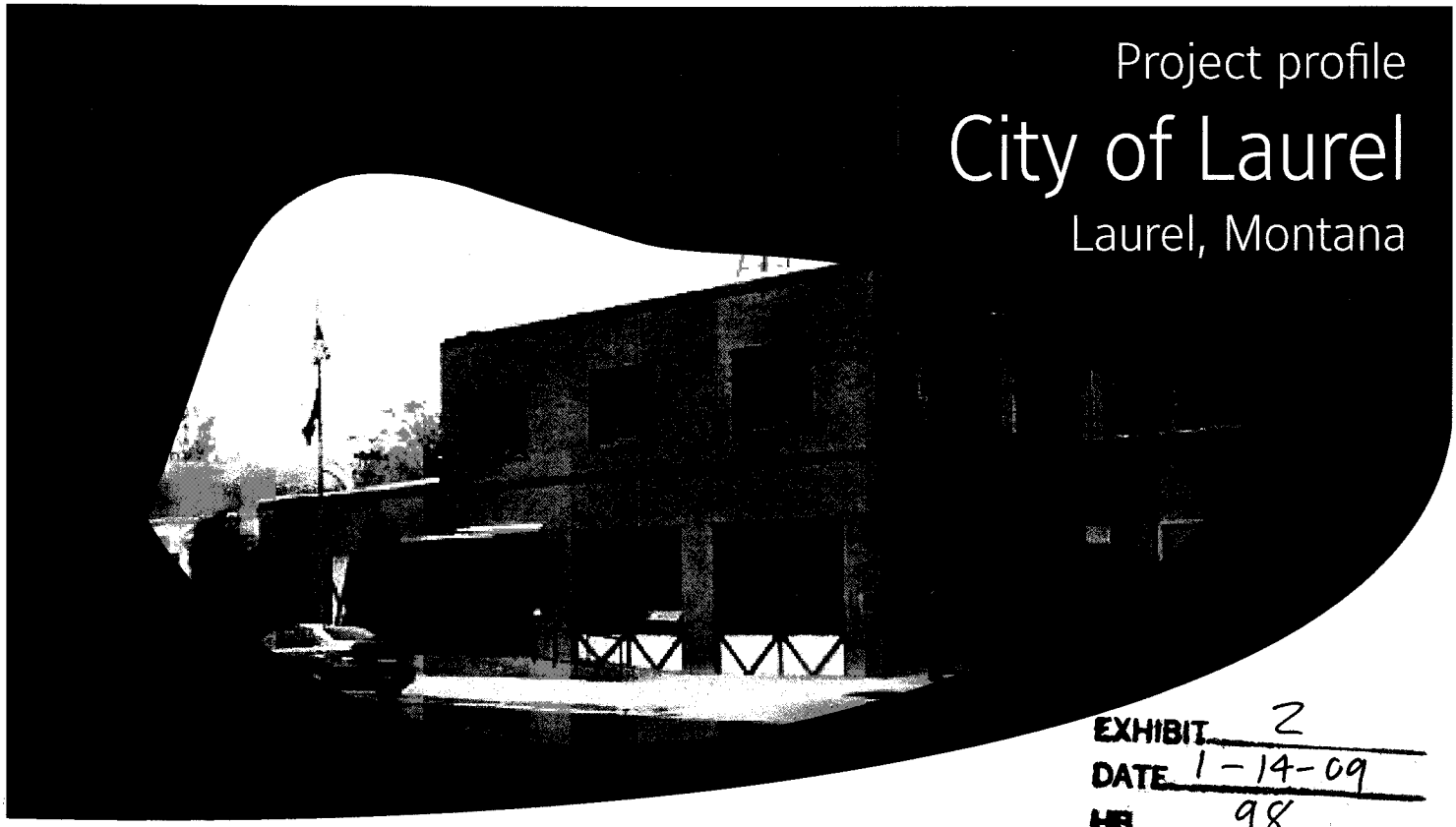

EXHIBIT 2
DATE 1-14-09
HB 98

New water meters, better facilities funded through energy and operational improvements

With a population of 7,000, Laurel, Montana, is firmly rooted in the historic and natural beauty of the American west. When city leaders needed to upgrade municipal facilities and improve the accuracy of water meters, Johnson Controls proposed an innovative project that pays for both from savings that will accrue. It is expected that the $1.7 million contract will save the city more than $97,000 in annual utility and operational expenses.

Water meter reading made easy

Many of Laurel's 2,353 residential and business water meters dated back to the 1970s. Johnson Controls oversaw installation of new meters fitted with radio transmitters that send a signal carrying precise information about water usage. The meters are monitored from vehicles that pass by on the street. Work is performed much faster than with individual service people going home-to-home, plus human reading errors are eliminated.

In addition, the automatic devices catch anomalies far in advance of billing. That means the city is able to quickly identify and repair water leaks at homes or businesses. The result: less water lost and fewer billing surprises. Also, the water usage is reported in gallons rather than hundred cubic feet, which eliminates lost revenue from incomplete or rounded-off consumption values. Through frequent reports, Johnson Controls can help the city analyze water usage and plan for the future.

Making city buildings more efficient

Johnson Controls also is providing energy upgrades for 12 city buildings. Through highly efficient lights, lighting controls, programmable thermostats, an energy management control system, improved insulation and a new boiler for city hall, the city will save energy, reduce its impact on the environment and provide more comfortable working conditions for city employees.

Johnson Controls worked with city leaders and financing firms to negotiate a tax-exempt municipal lease to fund the projects. It is one of the first performance contracts under the state of Montana's new legislation. Annual savings will be determined during the first year, but early reports indicate significant reductions.

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