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Abstract (Summary)

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Water project delay slammed by residents By Susan Chung Times Colonist staff Some Central Saanich residents could be getting a project they don't want while others may miss out on one they need. Angry citizens expressed those views to council Monday night. Residents of East Saanich Road are concerned the municipality may get \$3.3 million to widen their road. They fear this could ruin the neighborhood. Residents of **Senanus** Drive, on the other hand, are upset because they feel the municipality has left little time to get funding for a \$800,000 neighborhood water project and the application will fail to get approval as a result.

"I've got great difficulty with this," Frank Towler of **Senanus** Drive told council, noting he and 30 homeowners on **Senanus** Drive have been lobbying for a water hook-up for seven-months. "There are no winners in a civil war."

Towler and his neighbors' wells are running dry and say what water they have is not fit to drink.

The water hook-up would cost Central Saanich nothing if the municipality received a provincial-federal infrastructure grant, that would pay two-thirds of the project's costs. Residents have pledged to pay the remaining third.

But Central Saanich decided Monday not forward the water project grant application until Dec. 1 or until it hears a decision on the East Saanich Road-widening grant application. The latter application has been before the province since April.

The delay means funding for the water project will likely fail. The deadline for approval is Dec. 31 and it is unlikely the project will be able to wind its way

through two levels of government next month.

The East Saanich Road project is the reason the water project has not been submitted.

Mayor Wayne Hunter said council decided not to submit both projects simultaneously for fear the higher levels of government would choose the cheaper water project. The district prefers funding for the road upgrade, despite the vociferous opposition from local residents, because it cannot afford the \$3.3 million price tag on its own.

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