

Senanus study awarded History

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How much will it cost for a glass of water fresh out of the tap? That question will be answered by Bullock Baur Associates who will undertake the cost estimation study to determine just how much bringing water to residents of Senanus Drive in Central Saanich will cost.

Last June Central Saanich council directed staff to invite qualified engineering consultants to submit written proposals for the preparation of cost estimates for potential water main extension scenarios to the west end of Senanus Drive.

Bullock Baur proposed to do the job for \$13,391, plus GST, approximately \$4,000 less than the other proposal staff received. The approved budget for the project is \$15,000.

One of the district's requirements is that an agrologist be engaged to determine agricultural water demands for the Mount Newton valley.

Bullock Baur will not engage an agrologist, but will use agrology data from a study that they completed in 1998 for the district. The past study looked at the irrigation needs for all the farm land within the district and determined what infrastructure upgrades would be required to achieve them.

During discussion on awarding the contract Tuesday evening, councillors Alastair Bryson and Christopher Graham excused themselves due to potential conflict of interest. Council asked the municipal engineer, Nirmal Bhattacharya, if the eight-year-old agrology data would still be relevant.

"It is staff's opinion that there have been no major changes to the [demand for water] in that area," Bhattacharya told Mayor Jack Mar.

Mar noted there are two small vineyards and an organic farm now operating in the area, but that he did not feel they had increased the demand for water significantly.

The study will provide data on the cost of bringing basic potable water service only to the Senanus area and for an enhanced and or upgraded water service which would provide adequate flows for fire suppression and potential irrigation of agricultural properties.

Bullock Baur will review the district's existing water distribution system on Mount Newton X Road and determine the appropriate size, and cost estimate in 2007 dollars, for a water main extension along Mount Newton X Road to the western end of Senanus Drive to service only Senanus Drive area properties and those

properties located immediately adjacent to a water line that would potentially be constructed within the Mount Newton X Road allowance.

They will also be responsible for conducting a complete subsurface geotechnical investigation to determine the extent of the rock that may be encountered during construction. They will also review the Fire Underwriters recommendations and, with information from district Fire Chief Ron French, determine the appropriate water volumes to meet the district's fire fighting capabilities.

The finalized report will be submitted to the district by the end of November.

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Residents of Senanus Drive have long been requesting water service to their area from the District of Central Saanich. Residents maintain that their wells, which supply water to their homes, are subject to salt water intrusion and contain high levels of minerals which make it unpalatable.

In the past, the district has denied extending the water line to the area in part, because it is zoned Rural Estate and is outside the district's settlement area.