

To: Mayor and Council
From: Heather Miller,
Date: 9 July 2026

Re: Item 3.1: Eagle Cliff and Cove Bay Water Systems Update (VCH and BIM Engineering delegation presentations)

Dear Mayor and Council,

A few questions on the Eagle Cliff to Cove Bay connection, offered for the record.

The Municipality's own engagement model routes water-system updates for Cove Bay and Eagle Cliff through Community Information Meetings, with one Committee of the Whole in spring. A joint VCH and BIM delegation to Council, with aligned messaging on the water advisories, is a departure from that. People are rightly concerned about their water, and clear reassurance is welcome. My questions are about what sits alongside the reassurance.

The staff presentation notes that the process for properties between the two service areas is still being clarified. Households on the municipal system sit alongside households on private wells, in an area with no firm boundaries. Has the Municipality assessed how many households outside the municipal systems are connecting to the new lines, and why?

Also before Council, at Item 12.6, is a response from the provincial Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship. It confirms that groundwater on Bowen is monitored through two provincial observation wells. Are two wells a sufficient basis for understanding aquifer conditions across the island's seven mapped aquifers, as households on failing private wells connect to municipal systems? And is the aquifer study the Municipality discussed with the Ministry being pursued?

A municipal connection is possible only where a main reaches a property and the existing pipework can actually connect to it. Across the island, whole neighbourhoods depend on private wells, with no realistic prospect of connection to a municipal or other large system, now or in the future. As cost-sharing is still being developed, has the Municipality considered those with no connection option, for whom private-well failure, or the cost of connecting, falls on the owner alone, with no guarantee of water in fractured bedrock?

The commitment stated to Eagle Cliff residents is quality water for all. I ask these questions in that spirit, for the residents the connection reaches and for those it does not.

With thanks,

Heather Miller