

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

TO: Board of Directors

FROM: J. Zaffino, Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: July 16, 2026

RE: Use of Temporary Holding Tanks in Vintage Views Wastewater System

Administrative Recommendation:

THAT the Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen Temporary Holding Tanks Bylaw No. 3157, 2026 be read a first, second and third time.

Alternatives:

THAT the Board not proceed with first, second and third readings of Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen Temporary Holding Tanks Bylaw No. 3157, 2026 and direct staff to continue restricting new residential development within the Vintage Views Wastewater System Service Area until the system has sufficient capacity to accept additional connections.

Purpose:

To establish a regulatory framework that allows the temporary use of holding tanks for residential development within the Vintage Views Wastewater System Service Area until the Regional District confirms that sufficient wastewater treatment and disposal capacity is available to accommodate additional sewer connections.

Strategic Priorities:

5.3 Provide Infrastructure

Background & Analysis:

The Regional District assumed ownership and operation of the Vintage Views Wastewater System on September 29, 2025. The system services properties in the Heritage Hills area on the east side of Skaha Lake and was transferred to the Regional District from private ownership. The service area includes a mix of developed and vacant parcels. There are 34 vacant properties that have been unable to proceed with residential construction due to constraints on the wastewater system.

Pollution Prevention Order

The Vintage Views Wastewater System has been under a Pollution Prevention Order issued by the province for more than five years. The order has prevented additional connections to the wastewater system and has been the primary reason building permits have not been issued for new residential development in the service area.

It is anticipated that once the operating permit is transferred into the name of the Regional District, the Province may cancel the Pollution Prevention Order as the order was issued in relation to private ownership of the system. However, cancellation of the Pollution Prevention Order would not, on its own, create additional wastewater capacity. The system will still require significant upgrades before it can reliably accept additional flows from new development.

The Regional District is completing engineering and project planning work to confirm the required upgrades. This includes reviewing treatment capacity, disposal capacity, regulatory requirements, and options for upgrading the wastewater treatment plant and related infrastructure. The upgrades will take time to plan, fund, design, and construct.

Several property owners have expressed interest in building homes within the service area while the Regional District completes the required wastewater system work. In many cases, homes may take a year or more to construct before wastewater service is required for occupancy.

The proposed bylaw is intended to provide a limited interim option for these properties while the Regional District works through the longer-term wastewater system upgrades.

Temporary Holding Tank Framework

Staff reviewed whether temporary holding tanks could allow some residential construction to proceed while the required system upgrades are being planned and completed.

Holding tanks are not considered a preferred long-term wastewater management solution. They can create public health and environmental risks if they are not properly designed, permitted, maintained, pumped out, and monitored. For that reason, the proposed bylaw only allows holding tanks as an interim option within the Vintage Views Wastewater System Service Area until the Regional District confirms that system capacity is available.

Interior Health has been consulted during development of the bylaw and has provided feedback on the safeguards required if temporary holding tanks are permitted.

Under the proposed bylaw, a holding tank would only be permitted where:

- A permit has been issued by Interior Health under the BC Sewerage System Regulation;
- The holding tank has been designed and installed by an appropriately qualified person in accordance with provincial requirements;
- The owner provides the Regional District with the required permit and maintenance information;
- The owner enters into a covenant with the Regional District;
- The covenant is registered on title pursuant to Section 219 of the Land Title Act;
- The owner agrees to operate and maintain the holding tank in accordance with the permit and maintenance plan;

- The owner maintains pump-out, disposal, and maintenance records and provides them to the Regional District on request or at required intervals;
- The owner agrees to connect to the Vintage Views Wastewater System when capacity becomes available; and
- The owner agrees to decommission and remove the holding tank after connection to the community sewer system.

Section 219 Covenant Requirement

The Section 219 covenant is intended to ensure that the temporary holding tank requirements remain tied to the property if ownership changes before the property connects to the community wastewater system. The covenant would secure the owner's obligations to operate and maintain the holding tank, remedy any health hazard or unsanitary condition, connect to the Vintage Views Wastewater System once capacity is available, remove the holding tank after connection, and indemnify the Regional District.

Enforcement Provisions

The proposed bylaw includes enforcement through injunctive actions to address non-compliance, including failure to maintain the holding tank, remedy a health hazard, connect to the community wastewater system when required, or remove the holding tank after connection. These provisions are not intended to replace any responsibilities of Interior Health under the provincial regulatory framework.

Building Permit Application Processing

As part of the application for a building permit, a temporary holding tank permit will be required prior to building permit issuance. The Public Works Division will coordinate with the Building and Bylaw Enforcement Division for the application process, and track temporary holding tank approvals, confirm required Interior Health permit information, monitor records submitted to the Regional District, and issue written notice when wastewater system capacity becomes available. Building permit applications would continue to be reviewed through the normal building permit process.

Summary

The proposed bylaw provides a limited interim option for affected property owners while the Regional District continues to advance the required wastewater system upgrades for the Vintage Views Wastewater System. The bylaw does not replace the need to complete those upgrades.

Staff will continue to prioritize the planning, design, funding, and implementation of upgrades required to bring the Vintage Views Wastewater System into compliance and provide reliable service to existing and future users.

Financial Implications:

Property owners who choose to proceed with a temporary holding tank would be responsible for all costs associated with design, permitting, installation, operation, pump-out, disposal, maintenance,

future connection to the Vintage Views Wastewater System, and decommissioning and removal of the holding tank. The fees for the IHA holding tank permit and the registration of the covenant will also be the responsibility of the owner. These costs are in addition to any applicable Regional District wastewater fees, charges, and future capital costs associated with the Vintage Views Wastewater System.

Communication Strategy:

If the bylaw receives readings, staff will provide information through the Regional Connections project page and respond directly to property owners who inquire about building permit requirements. Communications will clearly explain that holding tanks are temporary, require an Interior Health permit under the BC Sewerage System Regulation and a Section 219 covenant, and that owners must connect to the community wastewater system once capacity is available.

Staff will continue to coordinate with Interior Health and the Building and Bylaw Enforcement Division to ensure property owners receive consistent information before proceeding with any building permit application.

Will a PowerPoint presentation be presented at the meeting? Yes

Some material in this report was generated using Microsoft Copilot and was reviewed for accuracy by the Public Works Department before publication.

Respectfully submitted:

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Endorsed by:

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