

*Uniacke Secondary Planning Strategy:
Motion C23(348)*

Planning Advisory Committee
November 12, 2024

Planning and Development



EAST HANTS

Background

- As part of the Uniacke Secondary Planning Strategy, Municipal Council has passed the following motion:

C23(348): Passed to direct staff to bring a report regarding the extension/development of private roads in the Rural Use zone allowing subdivision of lots for discussion.

- In response to Council's motion staff have prepared the following staff report outlining the importance of Municipally owned infrastructure in Growth Management Areas and Growth Reserve Areas to prepare for future commercial and residential development.

Mount Uniacke Growth Management Area

- The policy goal of the Mount Uniacke Growth Management Area is to promote and encourage a combination of residential and commercial growth within designated portions of Mount Uniacke by establishing a Growth Management Area.
- The purpose of the Mount Uniacke Growth Management Area is unique in that it is intended to act as both a growth management area and a growth reserve area simultaneously.
- Although the Mount Uniacke GMA currently has on-site services, Council has directed staff through the Uniacke Secondary Planning Strategy process, to undertake a municipal servicing (water and wastewater) feasibility study as part of the 2026/2027 draft budget.

Mount Uniacke Growth Management Area

- To effectively manage growth and the impact on East Hants infrastructure in the GMAs, infrastructure, including roads, would ideally be owned by the municipality in order to provide sustainable, consistent, and cost effective services, including but not limited to, municipal water and wastewater infrastructure, as well as public road maintenance and other services.
- A growth management approach to development allows for the natural progression of growth while protecting the inherent integrity of the Municipality.

Growth and Municipal Services

- The purpose of the Uniacke Secondary Planning Strategy is to help support growth in the community.
- Mount Uniacke and the surrounding communities act as bedroom communities for HRM.
- Although much of East Hants' population growth occurs in the Corridor area of East Hants, Mount Uniacke has experienced and will continue to experience steady population growth.

Rate of Population Change (%) by Region	2006-2011	2011-2016	2016-2021
Corridor	6.1%	2.9%	8.1%
Uniacke/Rawdon	3.7%	1.3%	5.3%
Shore/Central	-4.0%	-2.9%	-2.7%
East Hants	3.5%	1.5%	5.6%

Growth and Municipal Services

- To plan for and encourage population and commercial growth in Mount Uniacke, the roads should be public in the Mount Uniacke GMA.
- Public road ownership allows for future local improvements.
- As the community grows and densification occurs improvements can be made to the road network in terms of sidewalks, active transportation routes, transit routes, and bike lanes. These same improvements have been undertaken in the Corridor as the community has grown.
- Public road ownership also allows for better waste management services, EMS access, and allows for public services to be located on the public road. Public roads are part of the public realm.

Rural Use (RU) Zoned Land

- If a developer wishes to build a new private road subdivision in the communities immediately outside of the Mount Uniacke Growth Management Area, a new private or public road can only be constructed if the property is rezoned from a Rural Use (RU) Zone to another appropriate residential zone.
- The regulation was added as part of the 2016 East Hants Plan Review to protect future residents.
- When a land use redesignation and rezoning planning application is submitted, a developer has to comply with the MPS policies in order for East Hants Council to consider the land redesignation and rezoning.



MPS Policies

- Policy RR5 outlines the Policies that Council may consider when entertaining a new planning application.
- Potable water has been an issue for many East Hants residents and when considering an application for a redesignation and rezoning of land a developer has to have a professional hydrologist prepare a hydrogeological assessment to the adequacy of the property to provide an adequate and safe water supply for its future residents.
- Other policies that help in Council's decision-making process are the environmental impacts of the proposed development; the financial impacts to the Municipality; whether there are soft services to support the development such as schools, recreation facilities, police, and fire services; and whether the road network and proposed transportation connections are appropriate.
- All of these policies are also considered when a Rural Use (RU) Zoned property in the Mount Uniacke Growth Management Area is redesignated and rezoned to allow for new public roads.

MPS Policies

- Examples of how policies work to inform Council's decisions on an application or to ensure water availability can be seen in past applications.
- As an example, there have been two approved redesignation and rezoning applications along the East Uniacke Road.
- Results of the hydrogeological study for one of the application sites led to the developer slightly lowering the number of lots due to the availability of potable water.
- Another example is a previous application on Monta Vista Road where Council turned down an application based on access and connectivity concerns.

Conclusion

- Changes are not recommended to be made to the Mount Uniacke GMA, such as zoning changes and allowing private roads in the Mount Uniacke GMA, until a municipal servicing (water and wastewater) feasibility study has been completed for the GMA.
- A servicing feasibility study could consider the ideal area of the Mount Uniacke GMA to be serviced and the cost of the servicing.
- The results of the study could be used to help identify potential changes to the Uniacke GMA boundary or future zoning changes.
- Planning staff continue to work on future reports for the Uniacke SPS. The next report will address Motion C24(221) - Extension of the Village Core (VC) Zone.
- A draft of the Uniacke Secondary Planning Strategy is anticipated to be ready early in 2025.

Recommendation

Acquire additional information on the feasibility of servicing the Mount Uniacke Growth Management Area with municipal water and wastewater before making changes to the GMA.

Recommended Motion

Planning Advisory Committee recommends to Council that Council:

- ***Include the consideration of future changes to the Mount Uniacke Growth Management Area, after a Mount Uniacke GMA Servicing Feasibility Study has been completed, in the draft of the Uniacke Secondary Planning Strategy.***