



**Subject:** *Official Community Plan Update Report 1 - Scope*  
**To:** CAO for Planning Advisory Committee, January 19, 2021  
**Date Prepared:** January 10, 2021  
**Related Motions:** C20(81), C20(259), C20(261), C20(293), C20(348)  
**Prepared by:** John Woodford, Director of Planning & Development  
**Approved by:** Kim Ramsay, CAO

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### Summary

The Official Community Plan (MPS, LUB & SUB) was extensively reviewed between 2014 and 2016. It was planned at the time to conduct a five-year update of that plan in 2021. Subsequently the Province has mandated that municipalities conduct comprehensive planning throughout their entire territory. 58% of the land area of East Hants currently does not have comprehensive planning. As a result, this plan update has become a much larger exercise and is estimated to take 18 months to complete with significant citizen engagement proposed. This first report outlines the proposed scope of this plan update.

### Financial Impact Statement

\$21,078 within the 2021/2022 Budget has been designated for the Plan Update project. This amount is intended to cover advertising, postage, newsletter and a summer planning intern associated with the Plan Update. In addition, an additional \$40,000 has been proposed in the budget to conduct a Fundy Shoreline Vulnerability Study.

### Recommendation

That staff be authorized to begin the plan update in keeping with this report.

### Recommended Motion

Planning Advisory Committee recommends that Council authorize staff to begin a project to update the Official Community Plan which will include comprehensive planning in the currently unplanned areas following the phases and format as outlined in the January 19, 2021 staff report.

## Background

The Official Community Plan (MPS, LUB & SUB) was extensively reviewed between 2014 and 2016. It was planned at the time to conduct a five-year update of that plan in 2021. Subsequently the Province has mandated that municipalities conduct comprehensive planning throughout their entire territory. 58% of the land area of East Hants currently does not have comprehensive planning. As a result, this plan update has become a much larger exercise and is estimated to take 18 months to complete with significant citizen engagement proposed. This timeline may be impacted by restrictions on public gathering due to the current global pandemic.

This first report outlines the proposed scope of this plan update including project phases, known planning issues to be addressed and citizen engagement events to be conducted.

## Project Phases

Staff are proposing five distinct phases to the project as shown in the following diagram. In subsequent reports this diagram will be updated as milestones are reached.

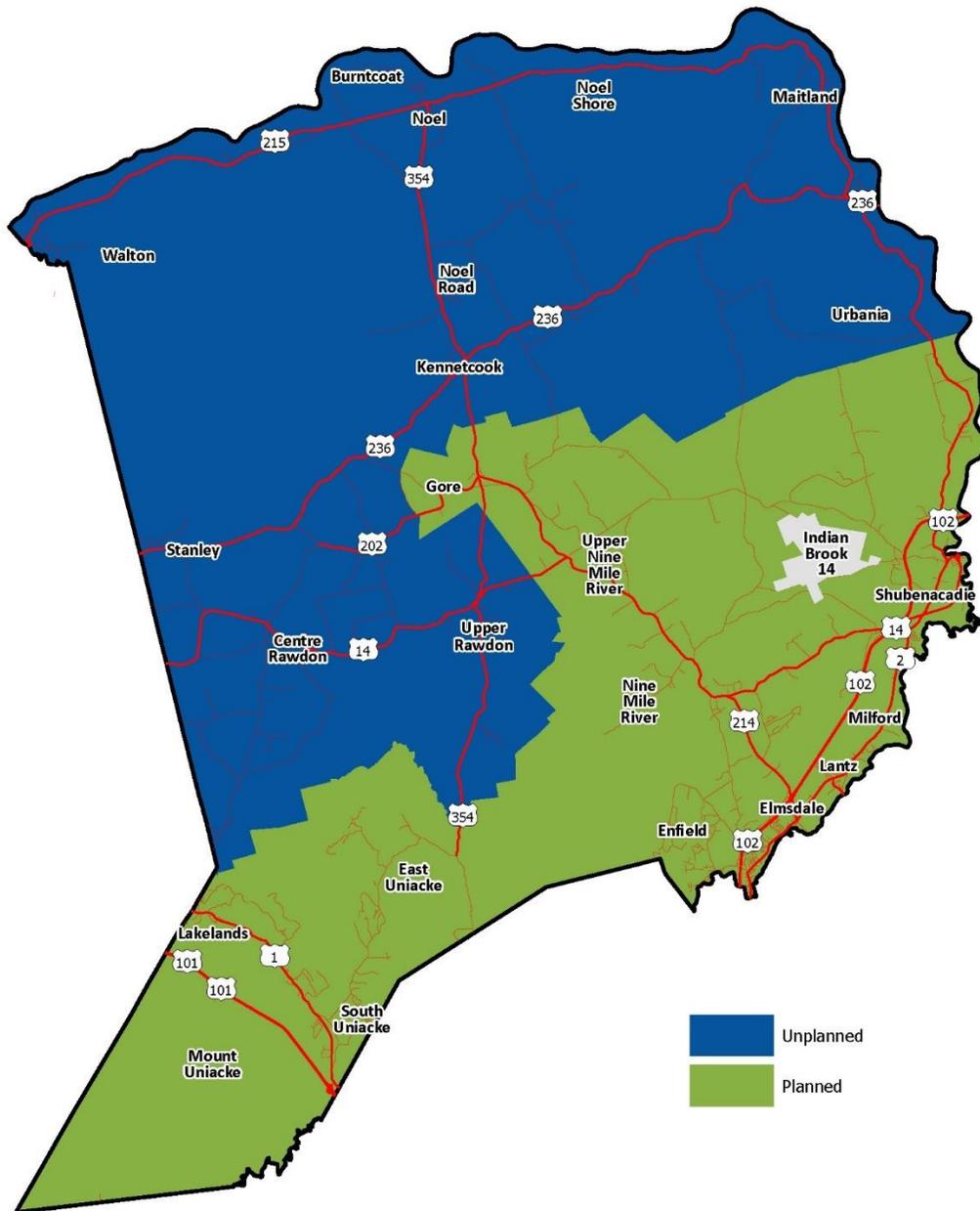
### PROCESS DIAGRAM



## Planning in Non-Comprehensively Planned Area

In the 2016 Review, Council considered whether comprehensive planning should be expanded throughout the entire municipality. Council ultimately decided to not expand comprehensive planning in 2016.

Since that review, however, the Province has amended the Municipal Government Act. These amendments require all municipalities to have comprehensive planning. There isn't a specific timeline associated with this requirement. However, the MGA specifies that municipalities conduct a plan review at least once every 10 years. This is the schedule that East Hants was on anyway in addition to a plan update conducted between major reviews. This 5 year update will also enable the municipality to fulfill the requirement to conduct detailed planning for the currently unplanned area.



## Current Regulations in Non-Comprehensively Planned Area

Although the area of East Hants that does not contain comprehensive planning is often referred to as 'unplanned' this is not entirely true. There are existing land use policies and regulations that do apply as follows:

- **Municipal Planning Strategy** - Section D, Rural & Fundy Shore Plan was added to the MPS as part of the 2016 Plan Review. This section discusses future planning for this area and contains non-prescriptive policies related to agriculture, tourism, heritage and coastal zone management.
- **Land Use Bylaw** - The Land Use Bylaw requires development permits for wind energy development and large scale events such as concerts or festivals with more than 1000 people.
- **Subdivision Bylaw** - The Subdivision Bylaw applies to the entire municipality, outlining minimum lot size and access provisions. In the unplanned area, these requirements default to the Provincial Subdivision Regulations.
- **Maitland Heritage Conservation District Plan & Bylaw** - While this bylaw does not restrict the use of land, it does limit the alteration or demolition of existing buildings and requires that new buildings be compatible with the existing heritage character of the village.
- **Building Bylaw & Codes** - This bylaw and relevant codes (ie., building, plumbing, fire, electrical, farm) apply to the entire municipality and set minimum standards to which all buildings must be built. This includes regulations such as 'limiting distance' between buildings.
- **Civic Addressing Bylaw** - All new roads and buildings are subject to this bylaw that has requirements for naming new roads, signage and civic numbers.

## Provincial Requirements Related to Planning

Although land use planning is clearly a municipal responsibility, the Province has several requirements in the MGA that must be followed in conducting a planning exercise. We must have a public participation program, we have to consult adjoining municipalities, there must be two readings of the planning documents and we must hold an advertised public hearing.

In addition to these procedural requirements, the municipality must address the following Statements of Provincial Interest. The full statements are listed in Appendix A of this report.

- **Drinking Water**
- **Flood Risk Areas**
- **Agricultural Land**
- **Infrastructure**
- **Housing**

## Key Planning Issues in the Unplanned Area

The existing unplanned area of East Hants is unique and has specific planning issues that should be addressed. A staff background paper from the 2016 Plan Review outlines these issues and has been reposted with this report for consideration.

- **Land Use Conflict** - The goal of any planning exercise would be to firstly reduce the probability of land use conflicts. A number of such issues have arisen in the unplanned area over the past several years including nuisance complaints from non-farm dwellings regarding intensive livestock operations and automobile repair garages. Through planning, tools such as setback requirements can be implemented to reduce such conflicts.
- **Floodlands** - Within the planned areas of East Hants one of two approaches are taken with floodlands. Where we have floodplain mapping, such as on the Shubenacadie and Nine Mile River, the High Risk (HF) or Moderate Risk (MF) zones are applied depending on the expected probability of flooding (1 in 20

years or 1 in 100 years). In areas where we do not have floodplain mapping the Watercourse Greenbelt (WG) zone is applied. This is a standard 30m setback from rivers such as the Sackville and Herbert River. It is anticipated that this later approach would be taken in this planning exercise.

- **Shoreline Vulnerability** - Zoning could be used to protect future construction along the Fundy shore. As part of this project, staff have proposed engaging a consultant to study the rate of erosion, saltwater intrusion and coastal flooding to more fully understand the risks in this area. Staff will also pay attention to Coastal Zone regulations being developed by Nova Scotia Environment that will apply to all coastlines in the Province.
- **Heritage** - Maitland was designated as the first Heritage Conservation District in Nova Scotia in 1995 due to its impressive legacy of intact built heritage. The designation is intended to provide some level of protection from demolition and inappropriate alteration of historic buildings. However, there is no land use zoning in the village. Complimentary zoning would be desirable in Maitland to ensure inappropriate uses are not located in and around the village that could degrade the historic context. This approach was taken in the Grand Pré Heritage Conservation District, where the Hamlet Historic Residential (R9) Zone was adopted by Kings County to do just that.
- **Agricultural Lands** - Agricultural soils are categorized within the Canada Land Inventory (CLI) System on a scale from 1 to 7. Nova Scotia has no class 1 soils and a limited amount of class 2 soils. In East Hants the vast majority of class 2 soils are found within the unplanned areas of the Municipality along the Fundy shore. In keeping with the Statement of Provincial Interest on Agriculture, the Municipality will have to show that steps were taken to preserve these lands for long-term agricultural use.

## Known Issues to be Addressed

The most time consuming and complex part of this project will be implementing planning in the area which currently does not have comprehensive planning. However, there are several known issues in the currently planned area that will also be addressed. Additional issues may also be drawn from public comments in Phase II of the project. Since beginning to work with the new planning documents in 2016 Staff have identified areas that need to be updated. In addition, Council has directed that certain issues be addressed in this project.

Issue	Origin	Notes
Private Roads	Council	Previous Council discussed but did not come to a conclusion on where private roads should be permitted and to what standard they should be built.
Building Transparency in Village Core	Planning Staff	Developers have brought to our attention that the 30% transparency requirement for the street facing façade of buildings is difficult to meet and should be reviewed.
Maximum Building Size	Economic Dev Staff	EBD Staff indicate that the maximum of 230 m <sup>2</sup> for single use commercial building permitted in VC Zone is too small.
Serviceable Boundary	I&O Staff	I&O Staff believe there are areas that are currently in the Serviceable Boundary that should be excluded (e.g., within floodplain, undevelopable)
Sheds/Garages in Front Yards	Council	Sheds and garages are not permitted in front yards of R1 and R2 properties in serviced areas. Council requested that this be reviewed for larger lots.
Commercial Vehicle Parking	Planning Staff	Limit of 1 commercial vehicle permitted on residential property which must be owned by property owner.

		What about tenants, more than one truck driver in family?
Auto wholesaler/Auction Sales	Planning Staff	Use does not fit auto dealer or auto service definition. This is a distinct new land use (2 now in EH) that needs to be defined.
Open Space vs Amenity Space	PRC Staff	Public open space contribution only required as part of subdivision process. PRC Staff would like this reviewed in light of large developments completed by development agreement where only private amenity space is required.
Beamish Road Zoning	Council	Council directed that consideration of changing several properties on Beamish Road, East Uniacke from Rural Use (RU) to Country Residential (CR) be given.
Other Edits & Issues	Planning Staff	Staff have identified numerous other edits and issues that should be considered to planning documents to improve clarity, logic and address other issues.

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## Out of Scope

While there are many land use issues that will be reviewed in this project, it is important to also indicate those that will not be included within the scope of the plan update.

The project is not expected to include the following:

- **Complete Policy Review** - Except for the new planning area, this is intended to be a plan update not a full plan review. As a result, a complete review of all policies and regulations will not be conducted. A full plan review would be expected in about five years time.
- **Growth Management Review** - policy review (e.g., GMA's & GRA's). Deciding to expand or create new growth management or growth reserve areas requires detailed study that is not within the scope of this review. This type of review asks the 'where do we grow next?' question. The general GMA/GRA concept was implemented in 2000 and these areas still have room for growth that is happening now. A more comprehensive review of the GMA/GRA concept and boundaries would be expected in the full plan review expected in an additional five years. However, the need for additional commercial/light industrial land may prompt an earlier project to focus on these land uses.
- **Individual Zone Changes** - In the 2016 plan review, individual land owners were able to request zone changes for their land without having to submit a rezoning application. Dozens of individual requests were reviewed at that time. It is not intended that this plan update enable individual zone requests.
- **Housing Strategy** - There has been a growing need identified for a housing strategy in East Hants given increasing house prices and rents as well as low vacancy rates. Such a project is not within the scope of this review and may be completed separately. Any resulting changes recommended to policy and zoning could be incorporated into the draft planning documents or added later.

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## Citizen Engagement

Bringing comprehensive planning to areas that have not had it previously, will require extensive engagement. In the midst of a global pandemic citizen engagement is more challenging than ever as some of the engagement

will have to be done virtually. The diagram below shows the proposed engagement associated with each of the five steps to the project.

- **Phase 1 - Project Scope**  
In this phase discussions are all at the Staff, PAC & Council level as we decide how to conduct the project.
- **Phase 2 - Community Inventory & Issues**  
In Phase 2 staff propose to kick off the public portion of the plan update by using the website, social media, hosting a virtual public information meeting, consulting stakeholders such as adjoining municipalities and the development community. The Agricultural Advisory Committee will also be introduced to the project.
- **Phase 3 - Community Vision**  
This phase will see community open houses and meetings held in Maitland, Noel, Walton, Kennetcook and Rawdon to specifically talk about those communities. In this phase Staff are also proposing to conduct a public survey that can be completed online or in person. This phase will also see us engage youth in the unplanned area to ensure they have a voice in shaping the future of their communities. In person events would most likely occur in the Autumn of 2021 but are dependent on provincial public health restrictions.
- **Phase 4 - Draft Planning Documents**  
In this phase newspaper advertising, the website, social media and 3 open houses/public information meetings would be used to discuss draft policies and zoning. In addition, a newsletter is proposed to be sent to every home in East Hants. Adjoining municipalities and the Agricultural Advisory Committee will again be consulted in this phase.
- **Phase 5 - Statutory Approvals Process**  
In the final phase newspaper advertising, the website and social media will be used to inform residents of a public hearing. In addition, it is proposed that letters be sent to every property owner who's zoning will change or who will be getting zoning on their land for the first time.



## ENGAGEMENT MILESTONES & EVENTS BY PHASE

PROJECT PHASE	PROJECT SCOPE	COMMUNITY INVENTORY & ISSUES	COMMUNITY VISION	DRAFT PLANNING DOCUMENTS	STATUTORY APPROVALS PROCESS
ENGAGEMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Internal Kick-Off Meeting</li> <li>PAC / Council Approval</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Kick-Off Meeting</li> <li>Virtual Stakeholders Consultation</li> <li>PAC / Council Approval</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Workshops (5)</li> <li>PAC / Council Approval</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Directors and CAO Update</li> <li>Community Open Houses (3)</li> <li>Council Approval</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Directors and CAO Update</li> <li>PAC and Council Meetings</li> <li>Public Hearing</li> </ul>
MEETINGS					
LEGEND					
Public		Development Community		Youth	
Planning Advisory Committee		Advisory Committees		Council	
Adjoining Municipalities					
Staff					

### Recommendation

That staff be authorized to begin the plan update in keeping with this report.

Appendix A  
Statements of Provincial Interest

**N.S. Reg. 101/2001**

**Introduction**

Nova Scotia's land and water resources are fundamental to our physical, social and economic well-being. But they are finite resources and using them in one way can mean the exclusion of other uses forever. Therefore, it is important that decisions about Nova Scotia's land and water be made carefully. Ill-advised land use can have serious consequences for the physical, economic and social well-being of all Nova Scotians.

These statements of Provincial interest recognize the importance of our land and water resources. The statements also address issues related to the future growth of our communities. They are intended to serve as guiding principles to help Provincial Government departments, municipalities and individuals in making decisions regarding land use. They are supportive of the principles of sustainable development.

Development undertaken by the Province and municipalities should be reasonably consistent with the statements.

As the statements are general in nature, they provide guidance rather than rigid standards. They reflect the diversity found in the Province and do not take into account all local situations. They must be applied with common sense. Thoughtful, innovative and creative application is encouraged.

**Definitions**

These definitions apply to the Statements of Provincial Interest.

**Agricultural Land** means active farmland and land with agricultural potential as defined by the Canada Land Inventory as Class 2, 3 and Class 4 land in active agricultural areas, speciality crop lands and dykelands suitable for commercial agricultural operations as identified by the Department of Agriculture and Marketing.

**Floodplain** means the low lying area adjoining a watercourse.

**Floodproofed** means a measure or combination of structural and non-structural measures incorporated into the design of a structure which reduces or eliminates the risk of flood damage, usually to a defined elevation.

**Floodway** means the inner portion of a flood risk area where the risk of flooding is greatest, on average once in twenty years, and where flood depths and velocities are greatest.

**Floodway Fringe** means the outer portion of a flood risk area, between the floodway and the outer boundary of the flood risk area, where the risk of flooding is lower, on average once in one hundred years, and floodwaters are shallower and slower flowing.

**Groundwater Recharge Area** means the area of land from which water flows to supply a well.

**Hazardous Materials** means dangerous goods, waste dangerous goods and pesticides as defined in the *Environment Act* c.1, S.N.S. 1994-95.

**Municipal Water Supply Watershed** means an area encompassing a surface watershed or recharge area, or a portion of it, serving as a water supply area for a municipal water system.

**Off-site Fill** means fill that has been imported from outside the floodplain or fill which is transported from the Floodway Fringe to the Floodway.

**Planning Documents** means a municipal planning strategy, land-use by-law, development agreement and subdivision by-law.

### **Statement of Provincial Interest Regarding Drinking Water**

#### **Goal**

To protect the quality of drinking water within municipal water supply watersheds.

#### **Basis**

A safe supply of drinking water is a basic requirement for all Nova Scotians.

Inappropriate development in municipal water supply watersheds may threaten the quality of drinking water.

Some water supply watersheds are located outside the municipality using the water. The municipality depending on the water therefore has no direct means of protecting its supply.

#### **Application**

This statement applies to all municipal water supply watersheds in the Province including surface watersheds and groundwater recharge areas.

#### **Provisions**

1. Planning documents must identify all municipal water supply watersheds within the planning area.
2. Planning documents must address the protection of drinking water in municipal water supply watersheds. Measures that should be considered include
  - (a) restricting permitted uses to those that do not pose a threat to drinking water quality;
  - (b) balancing the expansion of existing uses against the risks posed to drinking water quality;
  - (c) limiting the number of lots. Too many lots may result in development which cumulatively affects drinking water quality. The minimum size of lots and density of development should be balanced against the risks posed to the quality of drinking water;
  - (d) setting out separation distances between new development and watercourses to provide protection from run-off;

- (e) establishing measures to reduce erosion, sedimentation, run-off and vegetation removal associated with development.
3. Existing land use and the location, size and soil conditions of a municipal water supply watershed will determine the land-use controls that should be applied. Large surface watersheds, for example, may be able to sustain more development than a small groundwater recharge area.

It is recognized that in some situations the long-term protection of the drinking water supply may be impractical. In these cases planning documents must address the reasons why the water supply cannot be protected. Municipalities in this situation should consider locating an alternate source of drinking water where long-term protective measures can be applied.

4. The Province supports the preparation of watershed management strategies for all municipal water supply watersheds. These strategies should be prepared by the concerned municipalities and the municipal water utility, in consultation with all affected parties, including landowners.

### **Statement of Provincial Interest Regarding Flood Risk Areas**

#### **Goal**

To protect public safety and property and to reduce the requirement for flood control works and flood damage restoration in floodplains.

#### **Basis**

Floodplains are nature's storage area for flood waters.

New development in a floodplain can increase flood levels and flows thereby increasing the threat to existing upstream and downstream development.

Five floodplains have been identified as *Flood Risk Areas* under the Canada-Nova Scotia Flood Damage Reduction Program.

#### **Application**

This statement applies to all *Flood Risk Areas* that are designated under the Canada-Nova Scotia Flood Damage Reduction Program. These are

- (1) **East River**, Pictou County,
- (2) **Little Sackville River**, Halifax County,
- (3) **Sackville River**, Halifax County,
- (4) **Salmon and North Rivers**, Colchester County, and
- (5) **West and Rights Rivers and Brierly Brook**, Antigonish County.

There are other areas in the Province that are subject to flooding which have not been mapped under the Canada-Nova Scotia Flood Damage Reduction Program. In these areas, the limits of potential flooding have not been scientifically determined. However, where local knowledge or information concerning these floodplains is available, planning documents should reflect this information and this statement.

## Provisions

1. Planning documents must identify *Flood Risk Areas* consistent with the Canada-Nova Scotia Flood Damage Reduction Program mapping and any locally known floodplain.
2. For *Flood Risk Areas* that have been mapped under the Canada-Nova Scotia Flood Damage Reduction Program planning documents must be reasonably consistent with the following:
  - (a) within the *Floodway*,
    - (i) development must be restricted to uses such as roads, open space uses, utility and service corridors, parking lots and temporary uses, and
    - (ii) the placement of off-site fill must be prohibited;
  - (b) within the *Floodway Fringe*,
    - (i) development, provided it is flood proofed, may be permitted, except for
      - (1) residential institutions such as hospitals, senior citizen homes, homes for special care and similar facilities where flooding could pose a significant threat to the safety of residents if evacuation became necessary, and
      - (2) any use associated with the warehousing or the production of hazardous materials,
    - (ii) the placement of off-site fill must be limited to that required for flood proofing or flood risk management.
3. Expansion of existing uses must be balanced against risks to human safety, property and increased upstream and downstream flooding. Any expansion in the *Floodway* must not increase the area of the structure at or below the required flood proof elevation.
4. For known floodplains that have not been mapped under the Canada-Nova Scotia Flood Damage Reduction Program, planning documents should be, at a minimum, reasonably consistent with the provisions applicable to the *Floodway Fringe*.
5. Development contrary to this statement may be permitted provided a hydrotechnical study, carried out by a qualified person, shows that the proposed development will not contribute to upstream or downstream flooding or result in a change to flood water flow patterns.

## Statement of Provincial Interest Regarding Agricultural Land

### Goal

To protect agricultural land for the development of a viable and sustainable agriculture and food industry.

### Basis

The preservation of agricultural land is important to the future of Nova Scotians. Agricultural land is being lost to non-agricultural development.

There are land-use conflicts between agricultural and non-agricultural land uses.

### Application

This statement applies to all active agricultural land and land with agricultural potential in the Province.

### **Provisions**

1. Planning documents must identify agricultural lands within the planning area.
2. Planning documents must address the protection of agricultural land. Measures that should be considered include:
  - (a) giving priority to uses such as agricultural, agricultural related and uses which do not eliminate the possibility of using the land for agricultural purposes in the future. Non-agricultural uses should be balanced against the need to preserve agricultural land;
  - (b) limiting the number of lots. Too many lots may encourage non-agricultural development. The minimum size of lots and density of development should be balanced against the need to preserve agricultural land;
  - (c) setting out separation distances between agricultural and new non-agricultural development to reduce land-use conflicts;
  - (d) measures to reduce topsoil removal on lands with the highest agricultural value.
3. Existing land-use patterns, economic conditions and the location and size of agricultural holdings means not all areas can be protected for food production, e.g., when agricultural land is located within an urban area. In these cases, planning documents must address the reasons why agriculture lands cannot be protected for agricultural use. Where possible, non-agricultural development should be directed to the lands with the lowest agricultural value.

### **Statement of Provincial Interest Regarding Infrastructure**

#### **Goal**

To make efficient use of municipal water supply and municipal wastewater disposal systems.

#### **Basis**

All levels of government have made significant investment in providing municipal water supply and municipal wastewater disposal infrastructure systems.

Unplanned and uncoordinated development increases the demand for costly conventional infrastructure.

#### **Application**

All communities of the Province.

### **Provisions**

1. Planning documents must promote the efficient use of existing infrastructure and reduce the need for new municipal infrastructure. Measures that should be considered include:
  - (a) encouraging maximum use of existing infrastructure by enabling infill development on vacant land and higher density development;
  - (b) discouraging development from leapfrogging over areas served by municipal infrastructure to unserved areas;

- (c) directing community growth that will require the extension of infrastructure to areas where serving costs will be minimized. The use of practical alternatives to conventional wastewater disposal systems should be considered;
  - (d) identifying known environmental and health problems related to inadequate infrastructure and setting out short and long-term policies to address the problems including how they will be financed.
2. Where on-site disposal systems are experiencing problems, alternatives to the provision of conventional wastewater disposal systems should be considered. These include the replacement or repair of malfunctioning on-site systems, the use of cluster systems and establishing wastewater management districts.
  3. Installing municipal water systems without municipal wastewater disposal systems should be discouraged.
  4. Intermunicipal solutions to address problems and provide infrastructure should be considered.

### **Statement of Provincial Interest Regarding Housing**

#### **Goal**

To provide housing opportunities to meet the needs of all Nova Scotians.

#### **Basis**

Adequate shelter is a fundamental requirement for all Nova Scotians.

A wide range of housing types is necessary to meet the needs of Nova Scotians.

#### **Application**

All communities of the Province.

#### **Provisions**

1. Planning documents must include housing policies addressing affordable housing, special-needs housing and rental accommodation. This includes assessing the need and supply of these housing types and developing solutions appropriate to the planning area. The definition of the terms affordable housing, special-needs housing and rental housing is left to the individual municipality to define in the context of its individual situation.
2. Depending upon the community and the housing supply and need, the measures that should be considered in planning documents include: enabling higher densities, smaller lot sizes and reduced yard requirements that encourage a range of housing types.
3. There are different types of group homes. Some are essentially single detached homes and planning documents must treat these homes consistent with their residential nature. Other group homes providing specialized services may require more specific locational criteria.
4. Municipal planning documents must provide for manufactured housing.

## Implementation

1. These statements of provincial interest are issued under the *Municipal Government Act*. The Minister of Housing and Municipal Affairs, in cooperation with other provincial departments, is responsible for their interpretation.
2. Provincial Government departments must carry out their activities in a way that is reasonably consistent with these statements.
3. New municipal planning documents as well as amendments made after these statements come into effect must be reasonably consistent with them.
4. Councils are encouraged to amend existing planning documents to be reasonably consistent with the statements. Where appropriate, the preparation of intermunicipal planning strategies is encouraged.
5. Reasonably consistent is defined as taking reasonable steps to apply applicable statements to a local situation. Not all statements will apply equally to all situations. In some cases, it will be impractical because of physical conditions, existing development, economic factors or other reasons to fully apply a statement. It is also recognized that complete information is not always available to decision makers. These factors mean that common sense will dictate the application of the statements. Thoughtful innovation and creativity in their application is encouraged.
6. Conflicts among the statements must be considered and resolved in the context of the planning area and the needs of its citizens.
7. The Department of Housing and Municipal Affairs, with other Provincial departments, may prepare guidelines and other information to help municipalities in implementing the statements. Provincial staff are available for consultation on the reasonable application of the statements.