



**Subject:** *Mount Uniacke Secondary Planning Strategy Scoping*  
**To:** CAO for Planning Advisory Committee, November 21, 2023  
**Date Prepared:** November 7, 2023  
**Related Motions:** None  
**Prepared by:** Debbie Uloth, Project Planner  
**Approved by:** John Woodford, Director of Planning and Development

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### Summary

The Mount Uniacke Secondary Planning Strategy has been identified as a future project under Section E3 Municipal Projects and Studies of the 2023 East Hants Official Community Plan and as part of the 2023/2024 Business Plan for East Hants. Planning staff are now recommending that Council give staff direction to initiate the study.

### Financial Impact Statement

Planning staff will be requesting funding for the Mount Uniacke Secondary Planning Strategy to pay for advertising, community open houses, hydrogeological study, and other items as part of the 2024/2025 Budget Cycle.

### Recommendation

Direct staff to initiate the Mount Uniacke Secondary Planning Strategy as outlined in this scoping report.

### Recommended Motion

*Planning Advisory Committee recommends that Council:*

- *Direct staff to initiate the Mount Uniacke Secondary Planning Strategy as outlined in the scoping report dated November 7, 2023, and presented to Planning Advisory Committee on November 21, 2023.*

## Background

As part of the East Hants Plan Update Council directed staff to add the Mount Uniacke Secondary Planning Strategy as a future project to Section E3 Municipal Projects and Studies of the Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS). The Secondary Planning Strategy was also approved by Council through the adoption of the East Hants 2023/2024 Business Plan. Now that the Plan Update is complete, the secondary planning strategy can be initiated.

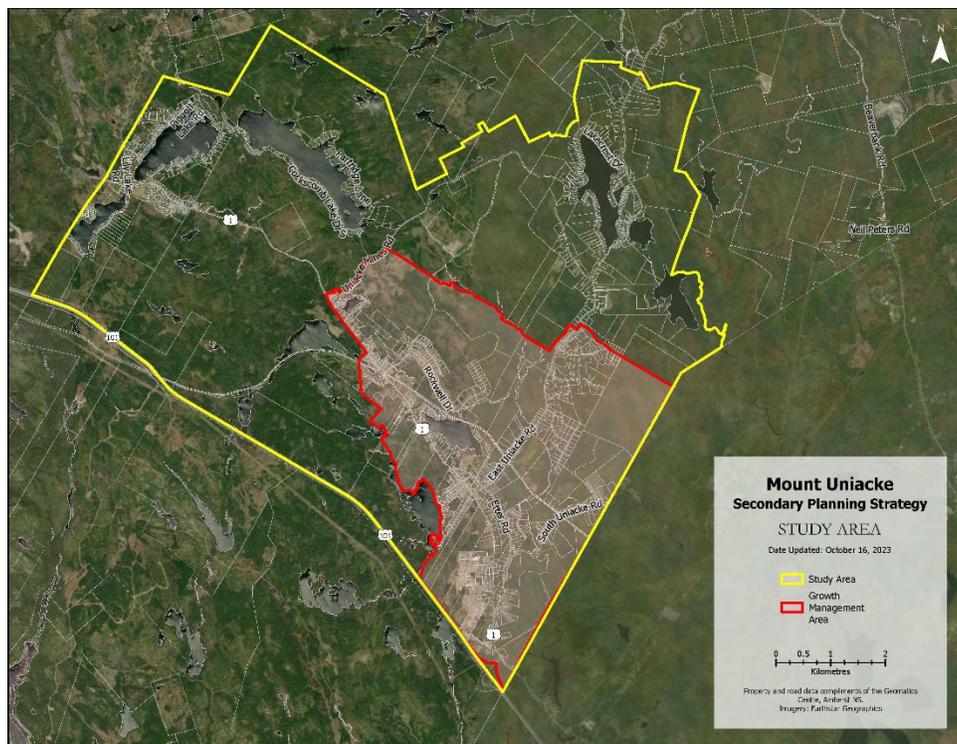
### WHAT IS A SECONDARY PLANNING STRATEGY

A secondary plan is part of the official community plan that contains policies and land use regulations in a defined area of the Municipality where major changes are expected and desired. In the case of the Mount Uniacke Secondary Planning Strategy, the study will assist the community by identifying large areas of underutilized land that would benefit from increased densification. The Secondary Plan also establishes a detailed planning framework, land uses, identifies transportation improvements, and considers issues surrounding on-site services such as potable water and wastewater disposal.

The goal of the Secondary Plan is to ensure that new development will promote and support high-quality design, and establish an appropriate mix of new land uses and new development. It also reinforces the need for a healthy, vibrant, complete, and sustainable community. The Secondary Plan's objectives are to build on the positive community aspects and to identify areas and methods of densification without hurting the current community character.

### BOUNDARY OF THE STUDY AREA

The first step in the Mount Uniacke Secondary Planning Strategy process is to delineate the study area. Planning staff used the Mount Uniacke Growth Management Area as a starting point and then expanded the boundary to take into consideration parcels of land where there has been developer interest. The proposed boundaries are shown on the map below.



## STUDY OUTLINE

A comprehensive Secondary Planning Strategy involves several steps, including but not limited to, background informational reports, surveys, community meetings, land use suitability analysis, consultation with provincial departments, and consultation with other reviewing organizations. Planning staff have developed a draft flowchart showing tentative process the study should follow.

1. Community Survey
2. Land suitability analysis
3. Consultation with reviewing agencies and stakeholders
4. Community Open House
5. Background reports
6. Recommendations



Many of the background papers that are to be prepared for the Secondary Planning Strategy will involve consultation with our reviewing agencies. Staff expect that background papers will

include, but are not limited to, wastewater disposal for multiple unit development; water quality and quantity in Mount Uniacke; walkability, connectivity and transit; future commercial land needs; an open space discussion; and consideration of watersheds.

## COMPLIMENTARY STUDIES

The Mount Uniacke Secondary Planning Strategy will use other Municipal documents and studies in the development of the Plan. Supporting documents include the new Mount Uniacke Recreation Plan; the Parks, Recreation, and Active Transportation Plan; the Playground Development Strategy; and the Economic Development Strategy.

In order to support the planning process, staff have identified the requirement for a hydrogeological study for the Secondary Plan area. Considering that there are no Municipal services in the study area, all potable water would come from private well water. In order to determine if densification in the study area is possible, staff need to determine if the quality and quantity of water is sufficient to permit development intensification. Staff expect that the hydrogeological study will be similar in scope to the study completed for the Milford Growth Management Area. The cost of the study will be added to the 2024/2025 Draft Budget for Council consideration.

Other complementary studies may also be identified through the Secondary Planning Strategy process. These studies may be included in future proposed budgets if Council supports the outcomes of the Plan.

## RESIDENT AND PROPERTY OWNER SURVEY

As one of the first steps in the Secondary Planning Strategy process, residents and property owners within the study area will be asked to complete a digital survey. Residents not able to complete a digital survey can request a hard copy of the survey for completion. The intention of the survey is to get an in-depth feel for how residents currently view their community, and how they would like to see their community evolve. Results from the Survey will be presented to Planning Advisory Committee and will be used to help in making informed decisions on future planning policy and regulation changes.

A sample of the survey questions has been attached as Appendix B. SurveyMonkey will be used to produce the survey, and will begin once staff are given direction to initiate the Mount Uniacke Secondary Planning Strategy process.

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## **Alternatives**

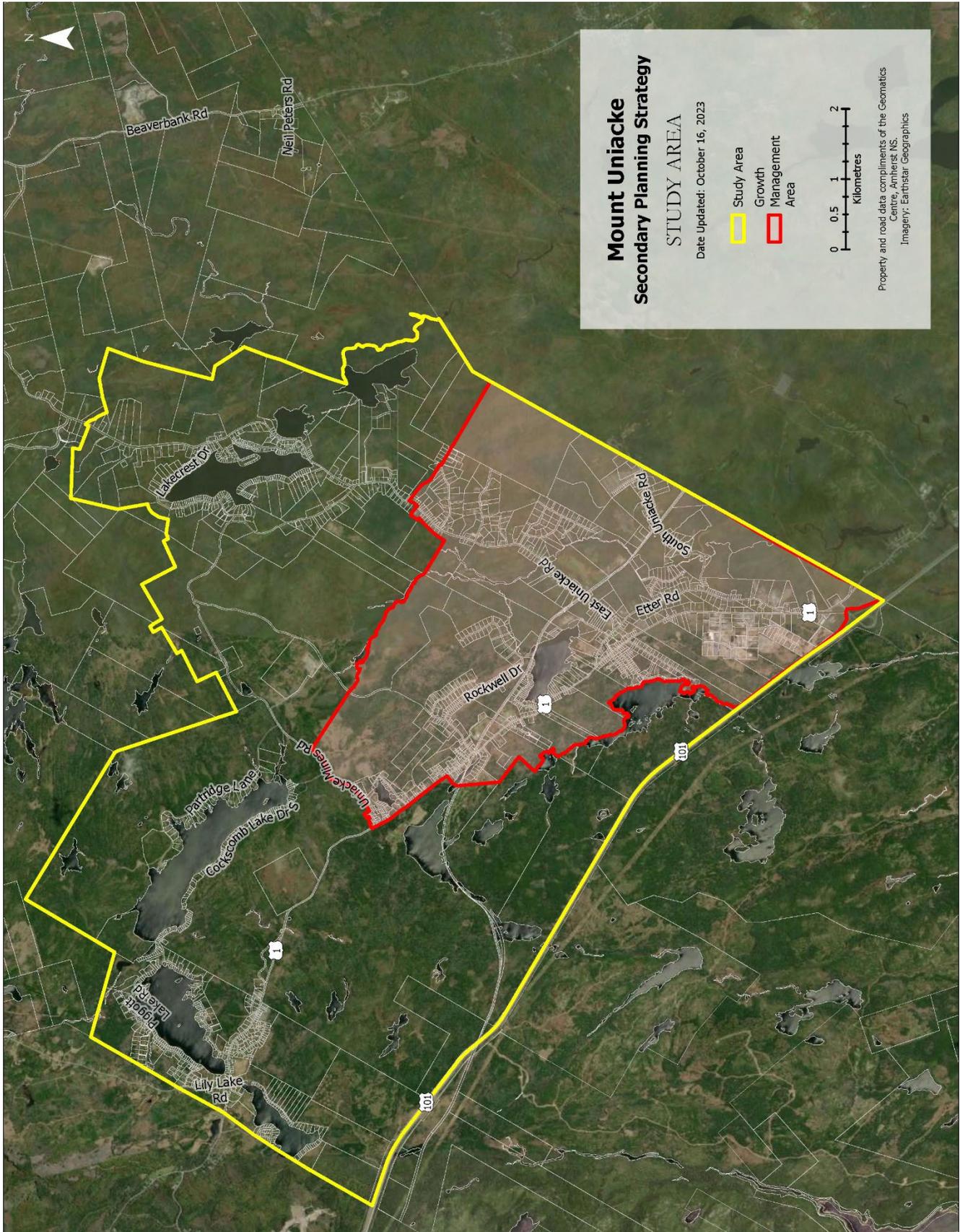
Direct staff not to proceed with the Mount Uniacke Secondary Planning Strategy.

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## **Attachments**

Appendix A - Map of the study area.

Appendix B - Sample survey questions



## *Appendix B - Sample Survey Questions*

### **Section 1: Complete Communities**

1. What attributes of your community are the most important to you?
2. What types of new housing would you like to see in the community (semi's, townhouses, small apartment buildings, mid-rise apartment buildings, tiny homes)?
3. What types of housing do you think are needed in your community for the different stages of life?
4. Where do kids in your community play (e.g. front yard, back yard, in the street, at a neighbourhood park)?

### **Section 2: A Well-Serviced Community**

1. What community services and facilities would you want in your community (e.g. larger library, emergency services, schools, community centres, etc.)?
2. What types of parks, open spaces and trails would you like to have in your community?
3. Is your current community well serviced or do you think more services and/or facilities are required as your community grows?
4. What new amenities would you like to have added to your community?

### **Section 3: A Sustainable Community**

1. What kind of open space do you enjoy?
2. What does sustainability mean to you and how can sustainability be implemented in your community?
3. Are you able to walk to amenities in your community?
4. What sustainable ideas can be implemented on a community-wide basis?
5. Do you feel that it is important to protect the headwaters of the Sackville River?

### **Section 4: A Connected Community**

1. What kind of biking and walking facilities would you like to see?
2. What locations or destinations should these connect to?
3. Do you commute out of your community for work?
4. What would your ideal commute to work look like?

### **Section 5: An Attractive Community**

1. What neighbourhoods or communities in Nova Scotia do you like the most?
2. What features and amenities make these neighbourhoods attractive and/or preferable?
3. What streets do you tend to feel most comfortable walking on?
4. What design features would you like to see in your community?
5. What do you like most about living in your community?