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Managing Future Growth in Mount Uniacke

Final Report Presentation

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Innovative Growth Solutions.

Agenda

1. Project Overview
2. Demographic Profile
3. Spatial Analysis
4. Growth Analysis
5. Local Consultation/Policy & Document Review
6. Jurisdictional Scan
7. Discussion & Recommendations

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Our Team

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EAST HANTS

We live it!

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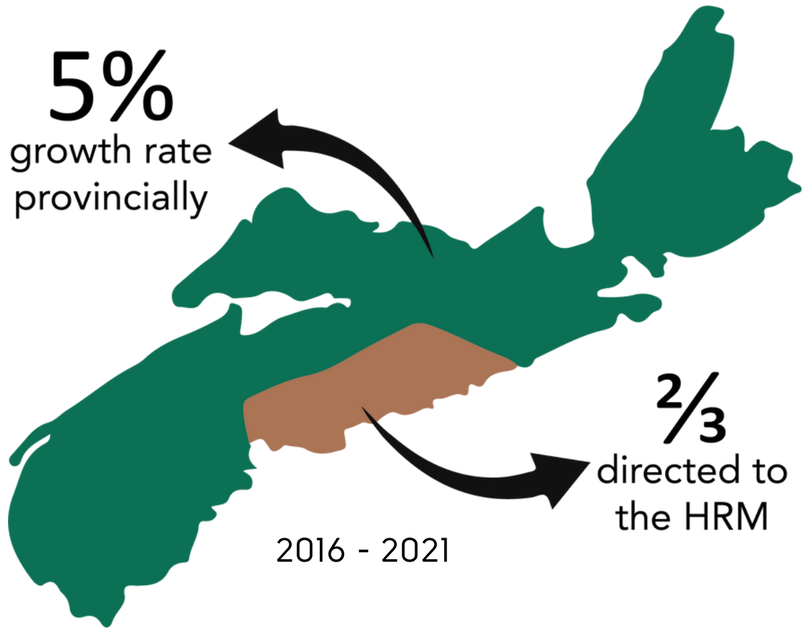
Project Overview

1. Provincial/regional context
2. Study area
3. Goal & objectives
4. Research design

Provincial/Regional Context

Nova Scotia is growing, especially in the HRM. This has implications for neighboring municipalities like East Hants.



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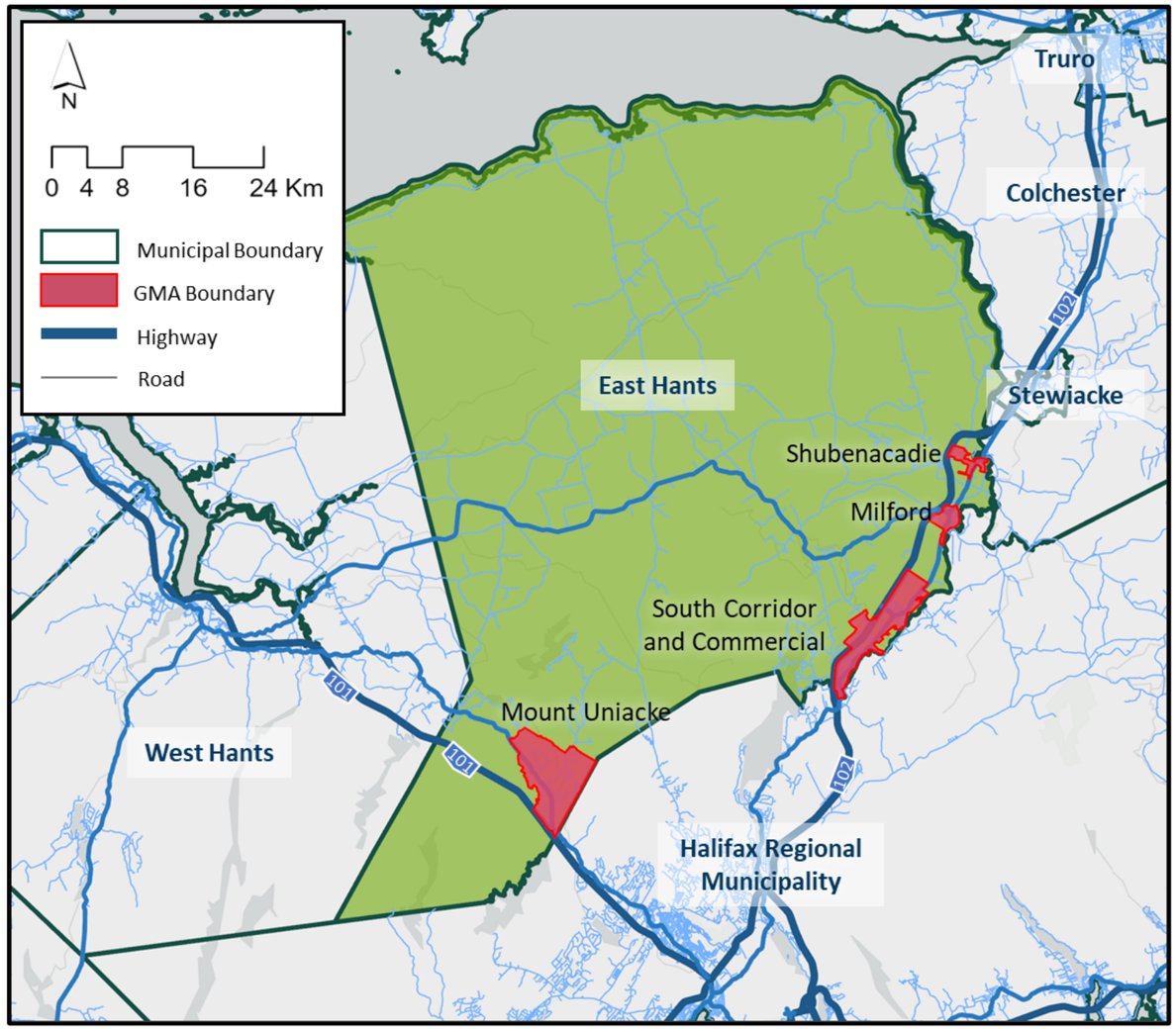
Study Area

- Growth and development pressure is making impacts across the municipality
- Four growth management areas in East Hants
- Mount Uniacke GMA unique in being unserviced



Map Data: East Hants. (2016a). Dataset: Growth Management Areas; Nova Scotia. (2023a). Dataset: Municipality and Village Boundaries; Nova Scotia. (2023c). Dataset: Nova Scotia Road Network.

Project Goal & Objectives

Project Goal

Provide the Municipality of East Hants with a series of recommendations for how future growth in Mount Uniacke can be managed.

Objective 1

Identify drivers and barriers to growth in Mount Uniacke

Objective 2

Identify land use arrangements/policies for growth in unserviced areas

Objective 3

Assess the suitability of new and existing policies to manage future growth

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Research Design

QUANTITATIVE

PHASE 1

Understanding the local growth context

- Demographic Analysis
- Spatial Analysis
- Growth Analysis

QUALITATIVE

PHASE 2

Tools for creating a desirable future

- Semi-structured Interviews
- Policy and Document Review
- Jurisdictional Scan

PHASE 3

Developing Recommendations

- Polices and regulations for growth management
- Enabling new land use arrangements

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Demographic Profile

1. Growth rates
2. Population & household characteristics
3. Housing typologies

*Developed using 2016 & 2021 Census Aggregate Dissemination Area data

Demographic Profile

Growth Rates

Mount Uniacke is growing faster than the region as a whole.

+5.05%

Mount Uniacke growth rate, 2016 - 2021

+1.96%

Municipality of East Hants growth rate, 2016 - 2021

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Demographic Profile

Population Characteristics

Households tend to be small, and have been getting smaller.

Percentage of households in Mount Uniacke with 2 or less persons

2011	2016	2021
61%	65%	66%

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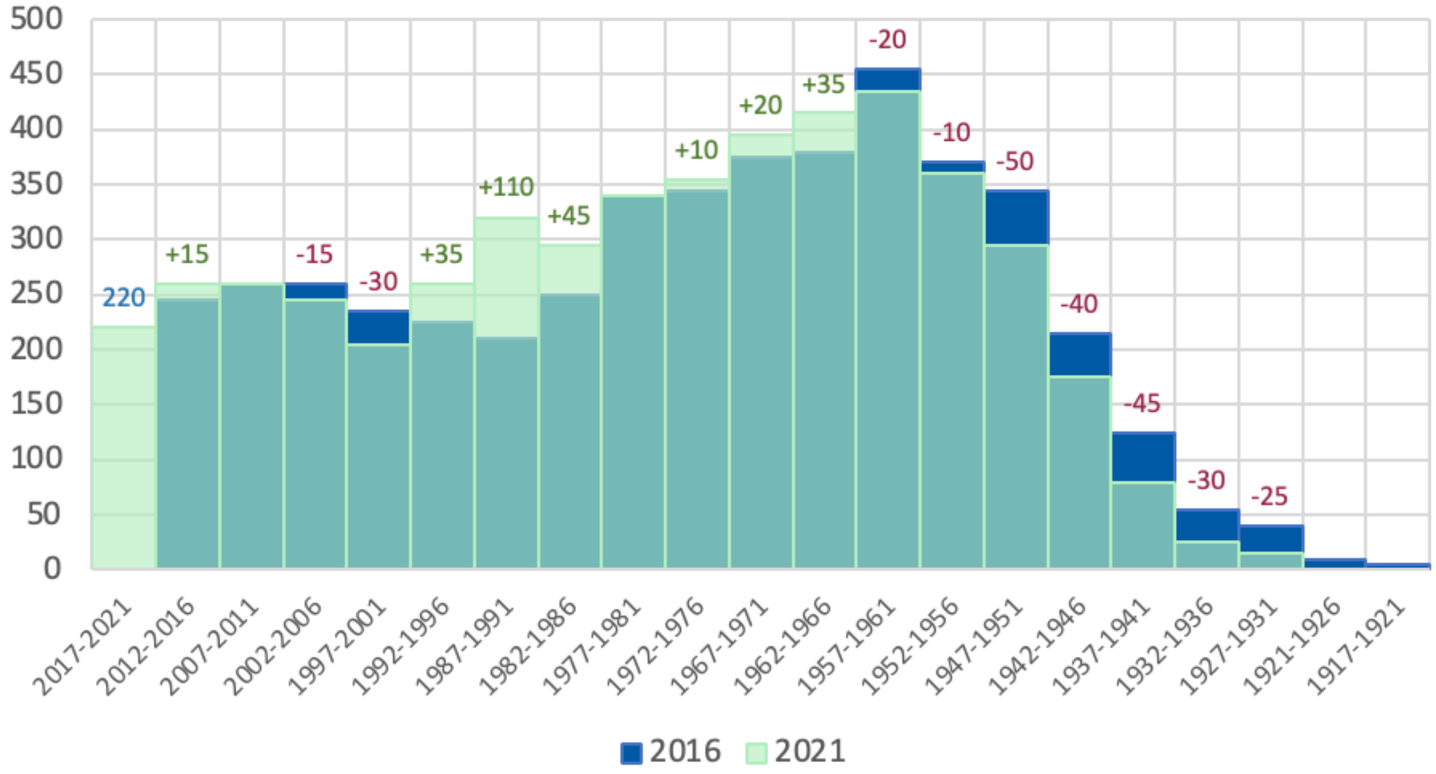
Demographic Profile

Population Characteristics

Population by birth year cohort



- Significant loss in population of residents 60+
- Significant growth in populations 25-39

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Demographic Profile

Housing Typologies

Single detached homes dominate local housing stock.

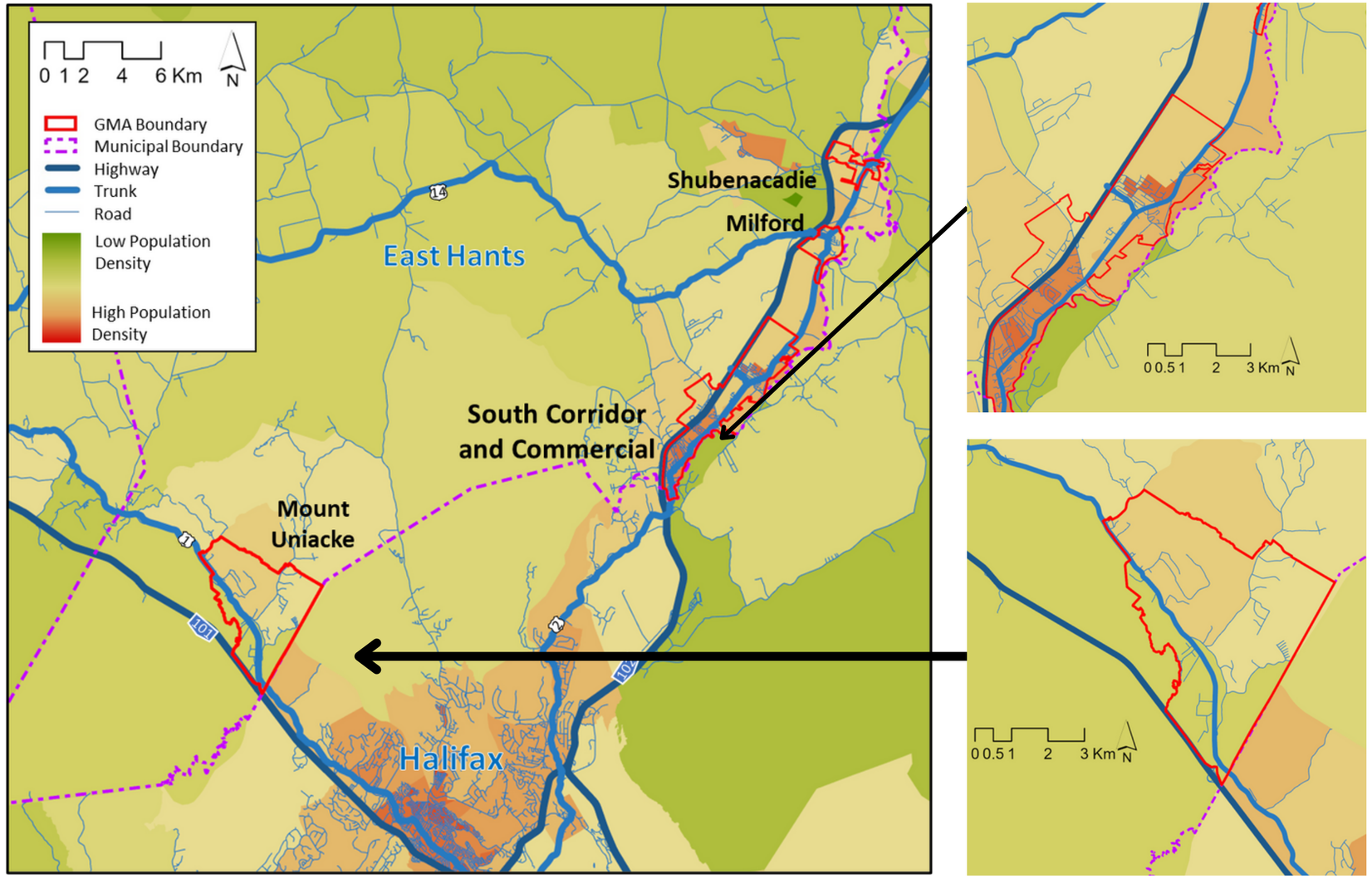
87%

Spatial Analysis

1. Transportation network analysis
2. Land use in the Mount Uniacke GMA

Spatial Analysis

Transportation Networks



- Growth Management Areas are strategically located along major highway corridors
- Population densities are highest where highway networks cross municipal boundary with HRM

Map Data: 2021 Canadian Census Boundary files, East Hants' Growth Management Areas dataset, Nova Scotia's Municipal and Village Boundaries dataset, Nova Scotia's Road Networks dataset

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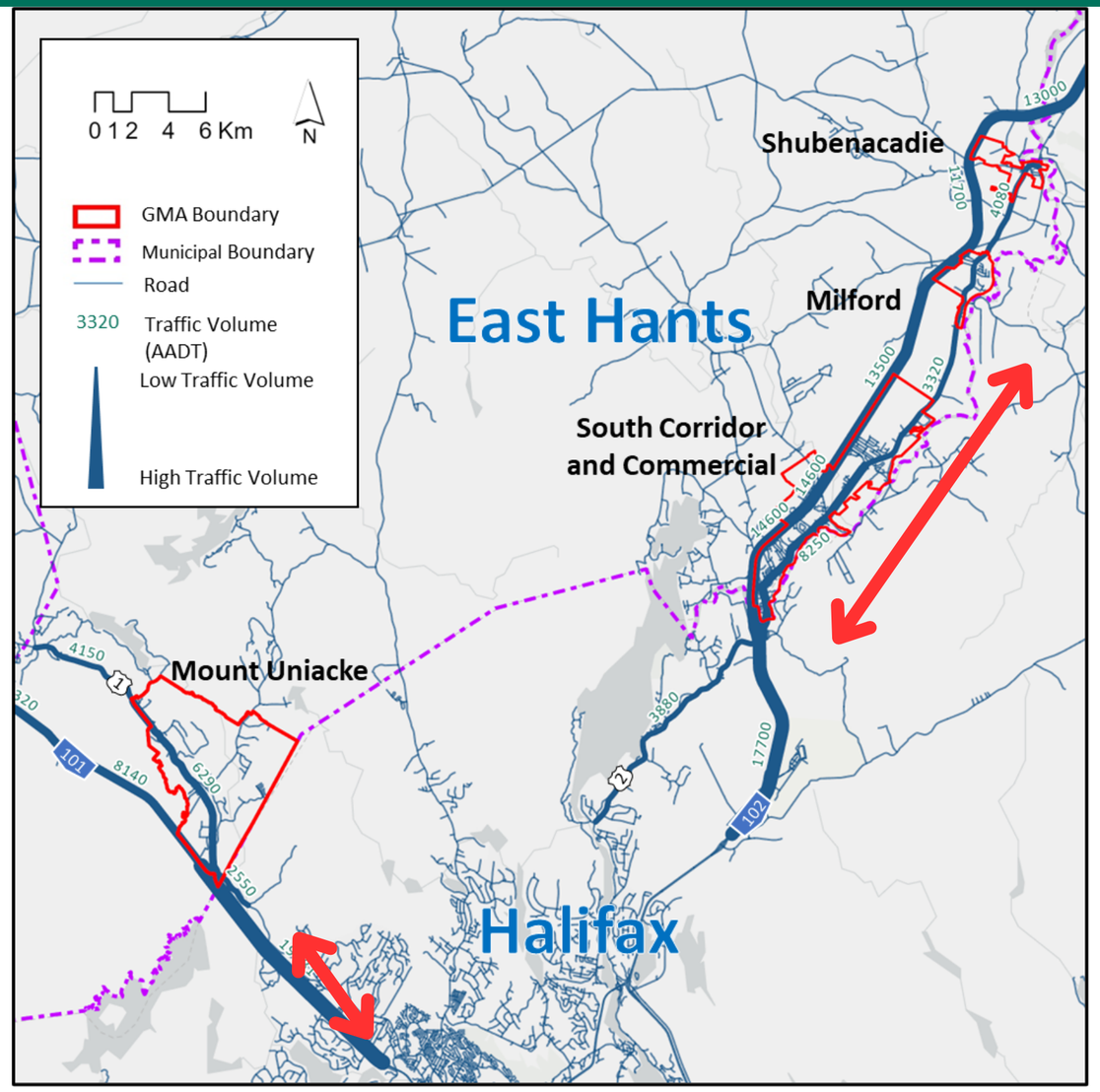
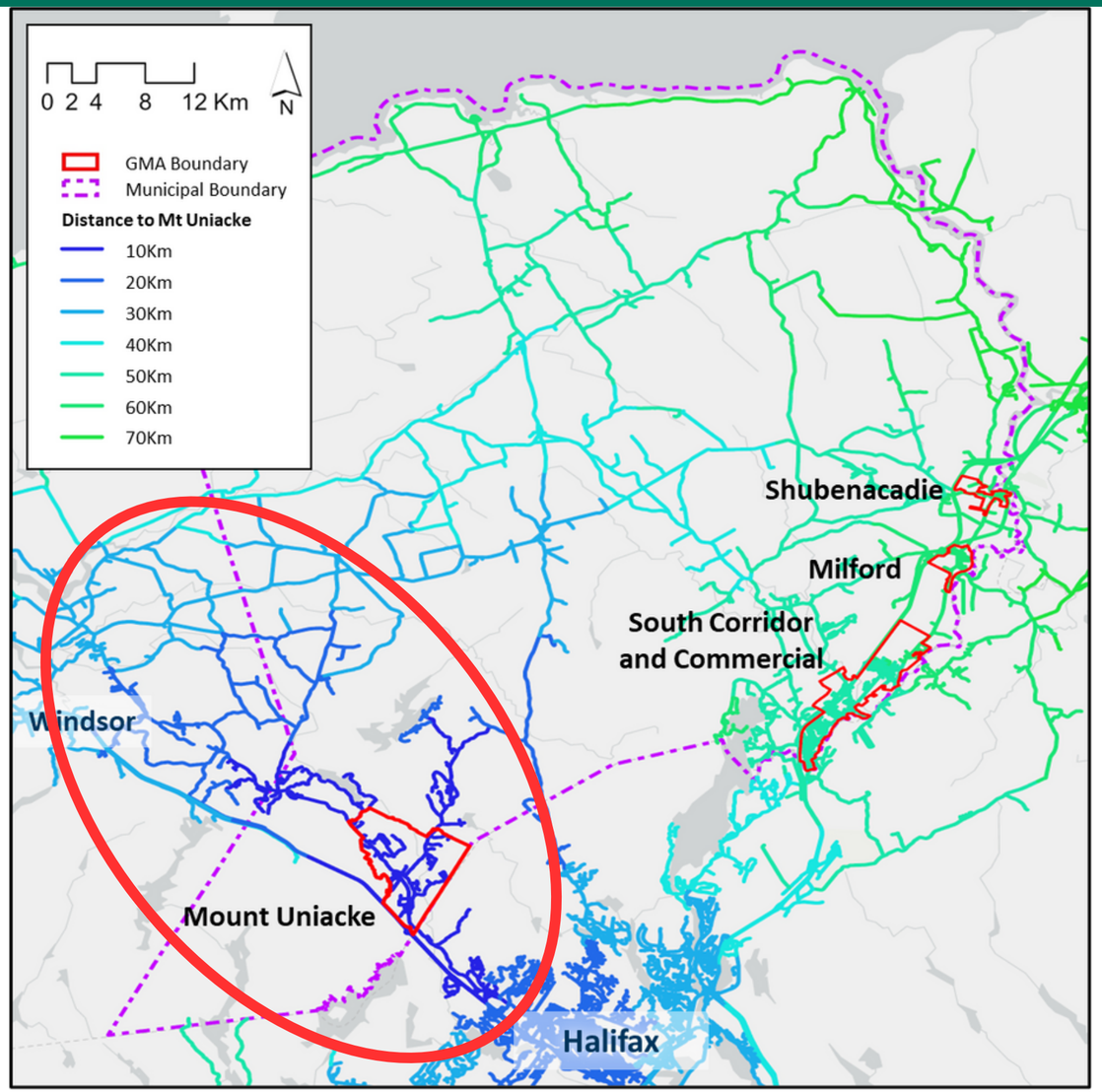
Spatial Analysis

Transportation Networks



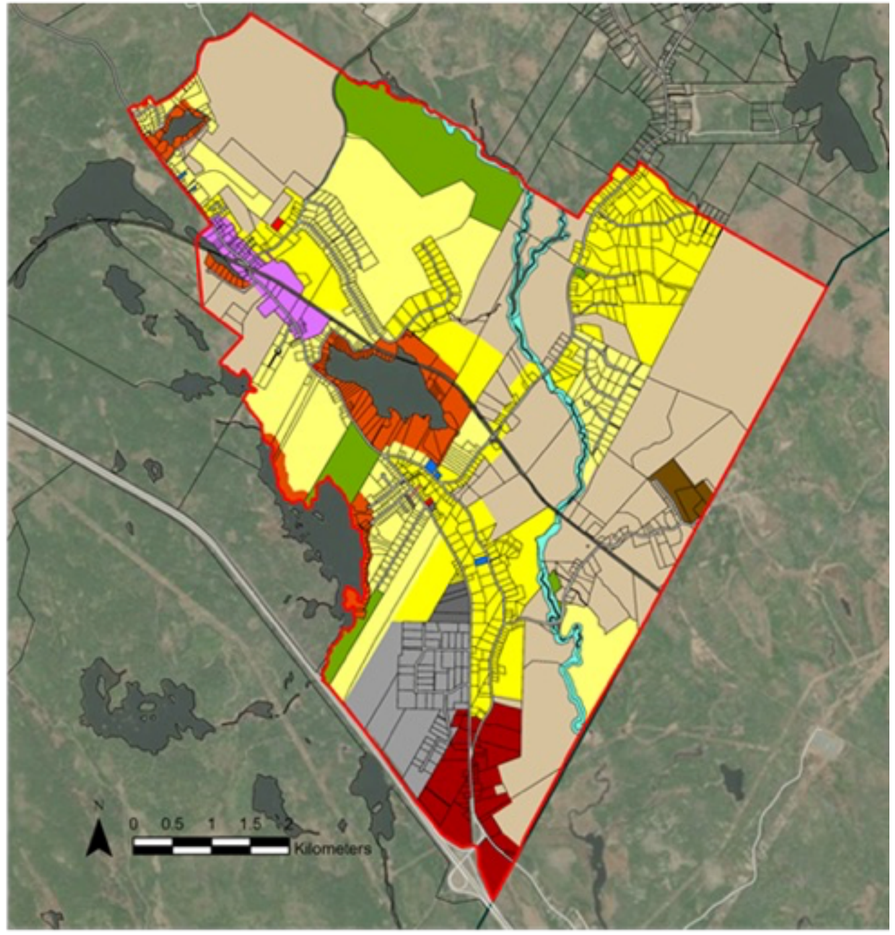


Map Data: East Hants' Growth Management Areas dataset, Nova Scotia's Municipal and Village Boundaries dataset, Nova Scotia's Traffic Volumes - Provincial Highway System dataset

Spatial Analysis

Land use in the Mount Uniacke GMA

	zone	Acreage	Percentage
Rural	RU	2139.8	35.92%
Residential	R1	1148.1	19.27%
	R2	983.2	16.51%
	LR	231.5	3.89%
	CR	0.0	0.00%
	MH	39.5	0.66%
Mixed Use & Commercial	BP	277.9	4.67%
	RC	207.5	3.48%
	VC	88.2	1.48%
	GC	0.9	0.02%
	HC	3.4	0.06%
Other	OS	317.3	5.33%
	IC	27.5	0.46%
	IU	5.8	0.10%
	WG	116.7	1.96%



- Zoned primarily for residential land uses
- Limits for mixed-use development

Map Data: East Hants' Growth Management Areas dataset, Nova Scotia's Road Network dataset, East Hants' Land Use Zoning dataset

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Growth Analysis

1. Recent development trends
2. Population forecasting
3. Land use capacity

Growth Analysis

Recent Development Trends
in the Mount Uniacke GMA

-28.2%

Average annual decrease in lots created by subdivision, 2016 - 2020

+302.7%

Average annual increase in lots created by subdivision, 2020 - 2023 (so far)

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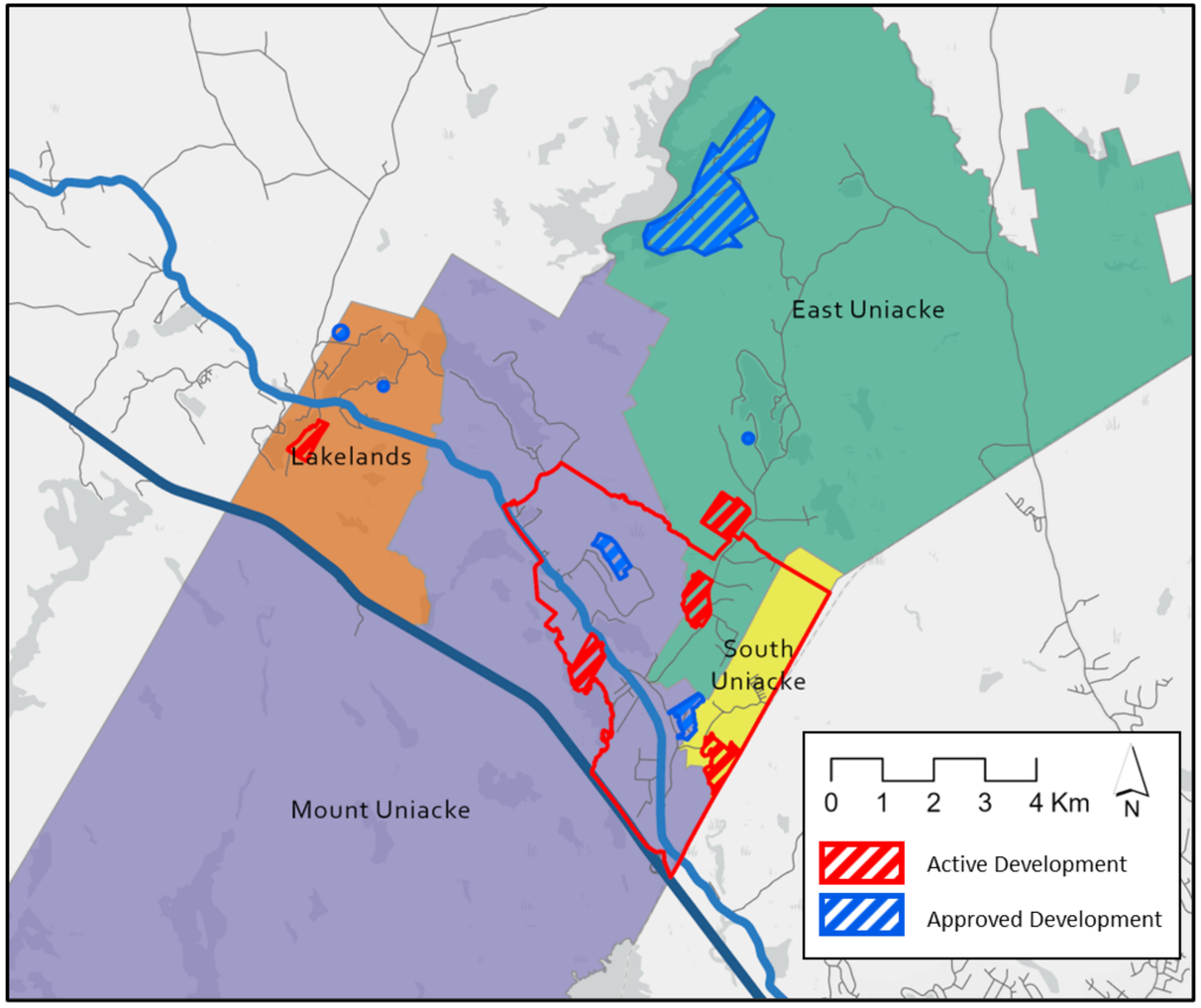
Growth Analysis

Subdivision Trends (2021 - present)



- Built form is dominated by single-detached homes on large lots (4.8 acres on average)
- One larger-scale subdivision occurring outside of the GMA boundary

Map Data: East Hants' Growth Management Areas dataset, Nova Scotia's Road Network dataset, East Hants' Land Use Zoning dataset, East Hants' Subdivision Data - Mount Uniacke 2021 - 2023 [Internal Municipal Document] dataset

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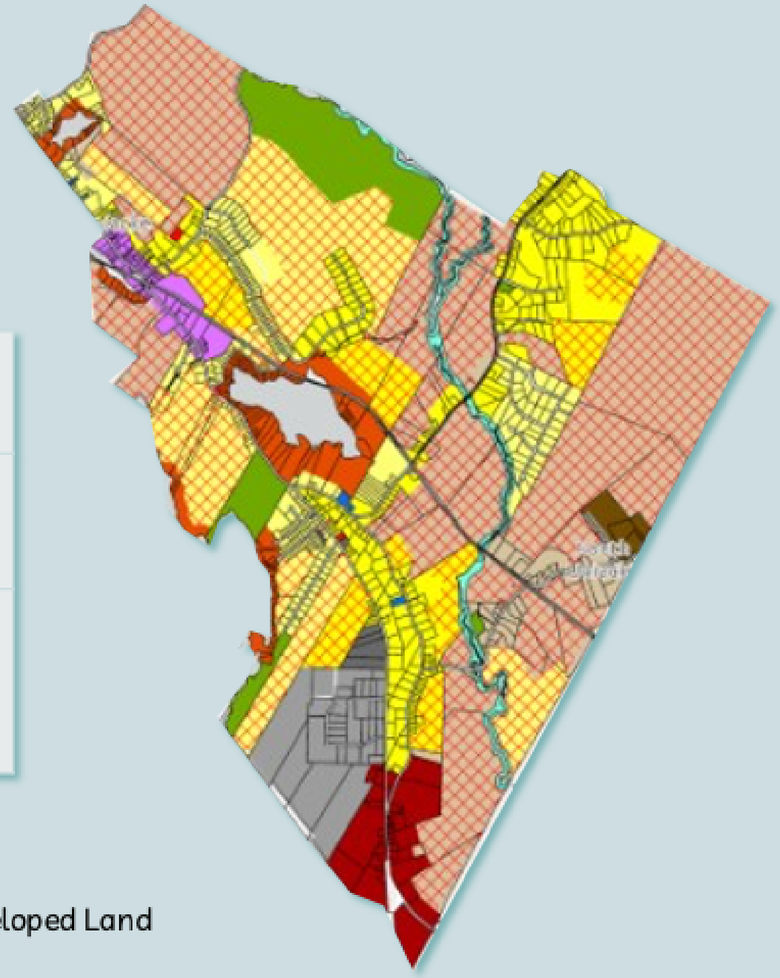
Growth Analysis

Development Capacity

Zoning	R1	R2	RU
Undeveloped Area	766.95	357.57	1982.81
% of Undeveloped Area	66.80%	36.37%	92.66%



Undeveloped Land

Map Data: East Hants' Growth Management Areas dataset, Nova Scotia's Road Network dataset, East Hants' Land Use Zoning dataset, East Hants' Subdivision Data - Mount Uniacke 2021 - 2023 [Internal Municipal Document] dataset

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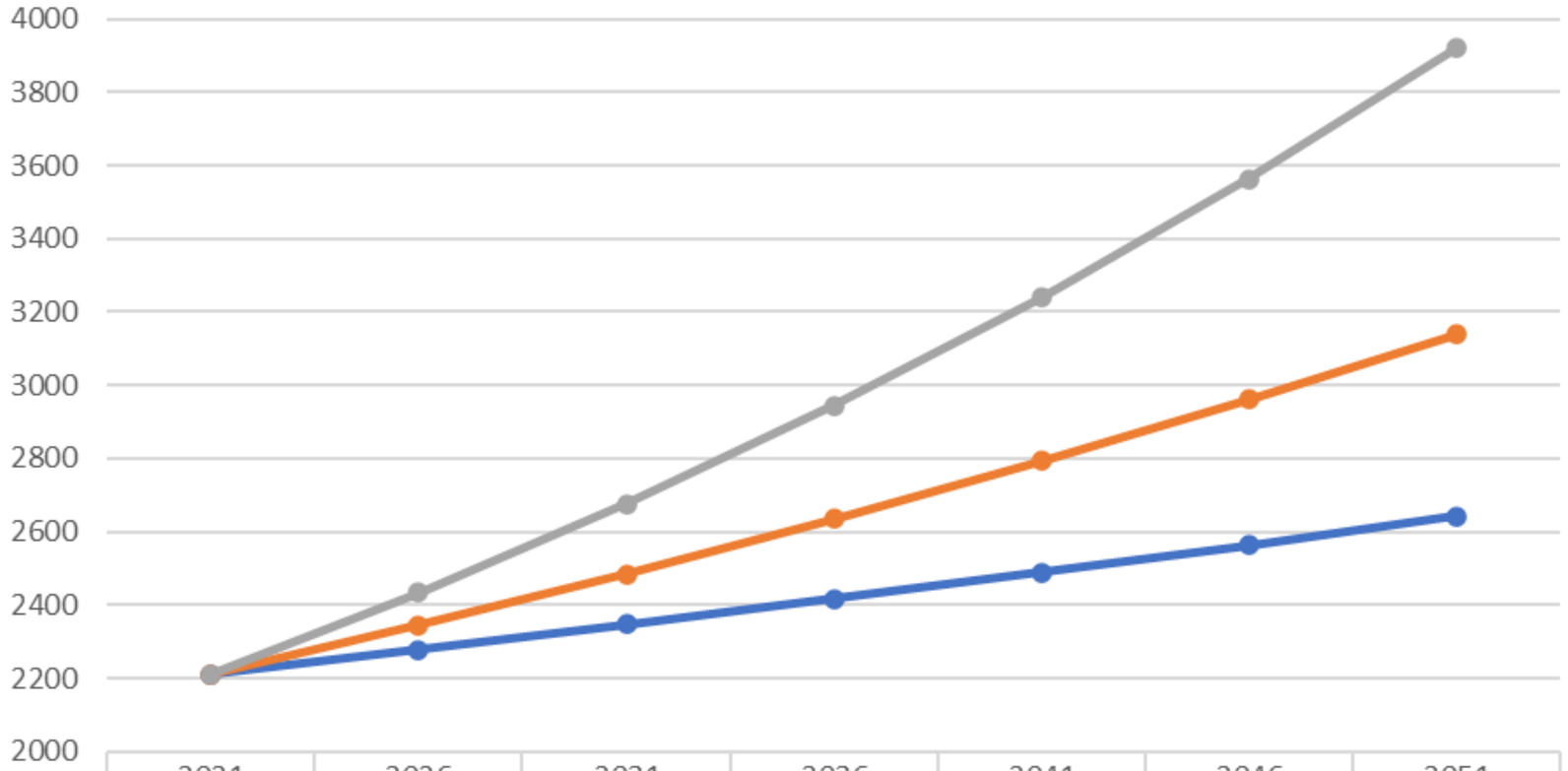
Growth Analysis

Population Forecast

Forecasted Scenarios:



	2021	2026	2031	2036	2041	2046	2051
3%(Moderate)	2212	2278	2347	2417	2490	2564	2641
6%(Nomal)	2212	2345	2485	2635	2793	2960	3138
10%(Strong)	2212	2433	2677	2944	3239	3562	3919

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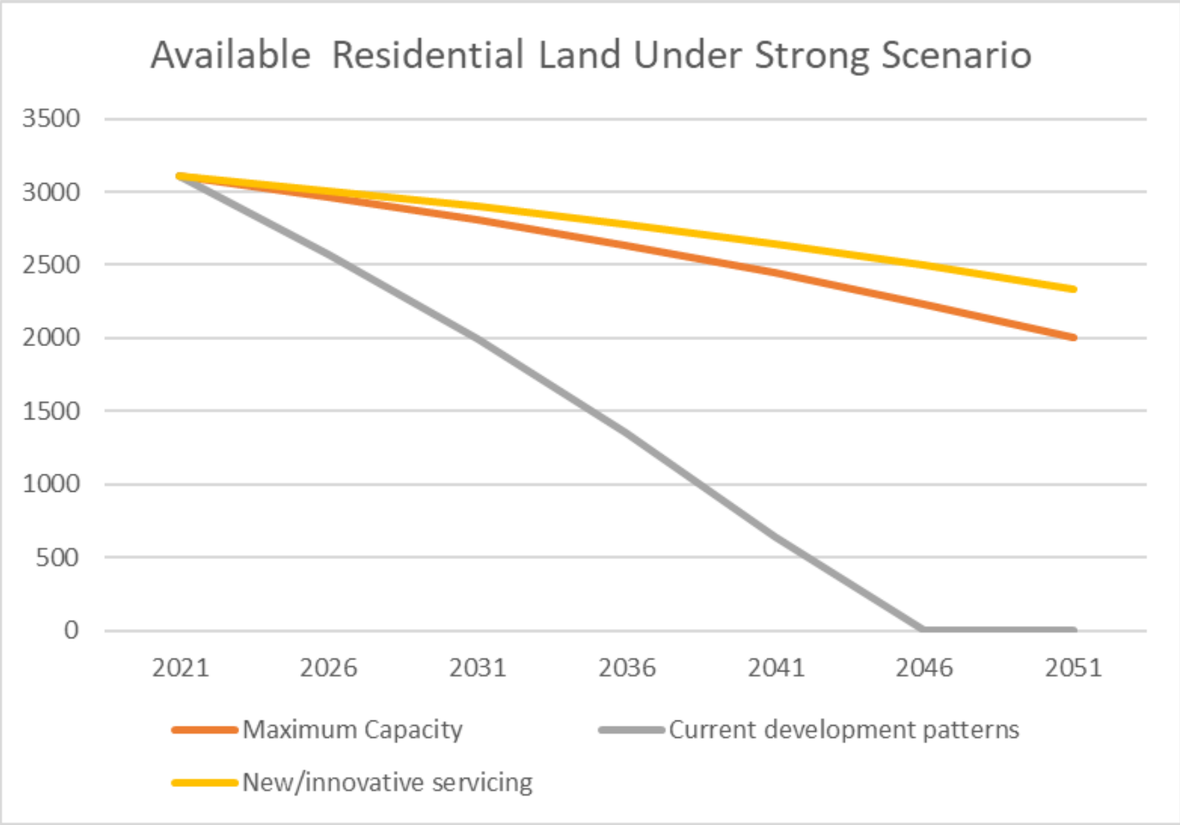
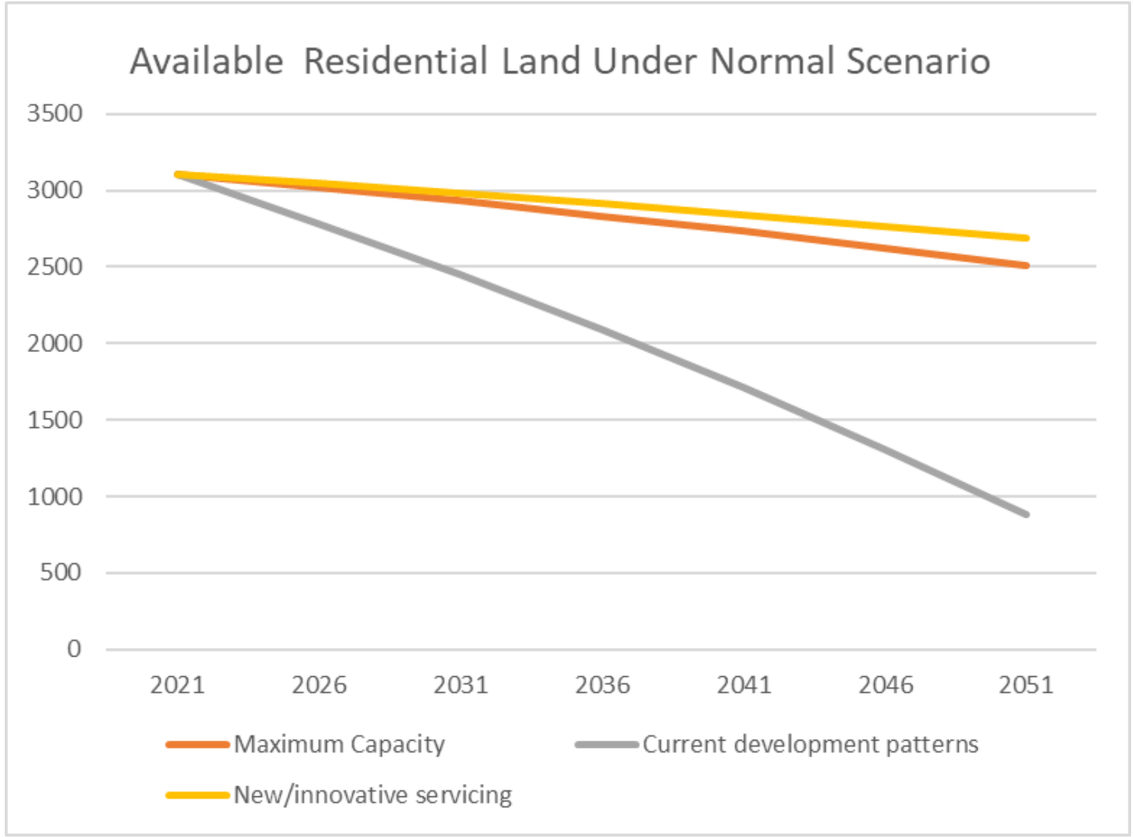
Growth Analysis

Population Forecast

Development Capacity Models:





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Local Consultation & Policy and Document Review

Local Consultation

7

Interviews with Planners
and Local Area Councillors

3

Main Themes

Preservation of Community Character

Development Trends and
Local Housing Needs

Challenges within Current Policy

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Policy and Document Review

Intended Growth Patterns

- Need to balance existing community character and need for new housing types

Limits on Growth in Unserviced Areas

- Large lot size for residential and commercial uses
- Barriers for mixed-use development

Infrastructure: Limits & Opportunities

- Alternative systems and servicing provisions - Comprehensive Development District Designation

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Jurisdictional Scan

1. How cluster septic systems work
2. Enabling cluster septic systems
3. Managing cluster septic systems
4. Applicability in Nova Scotia

Jurisdictional Scan

Identify new and innovative land use arrangements for growth in unserviced areas.

Cluster & Community Septic Systems

How are these systems enabled in policy?

How are these systems managed in practice?

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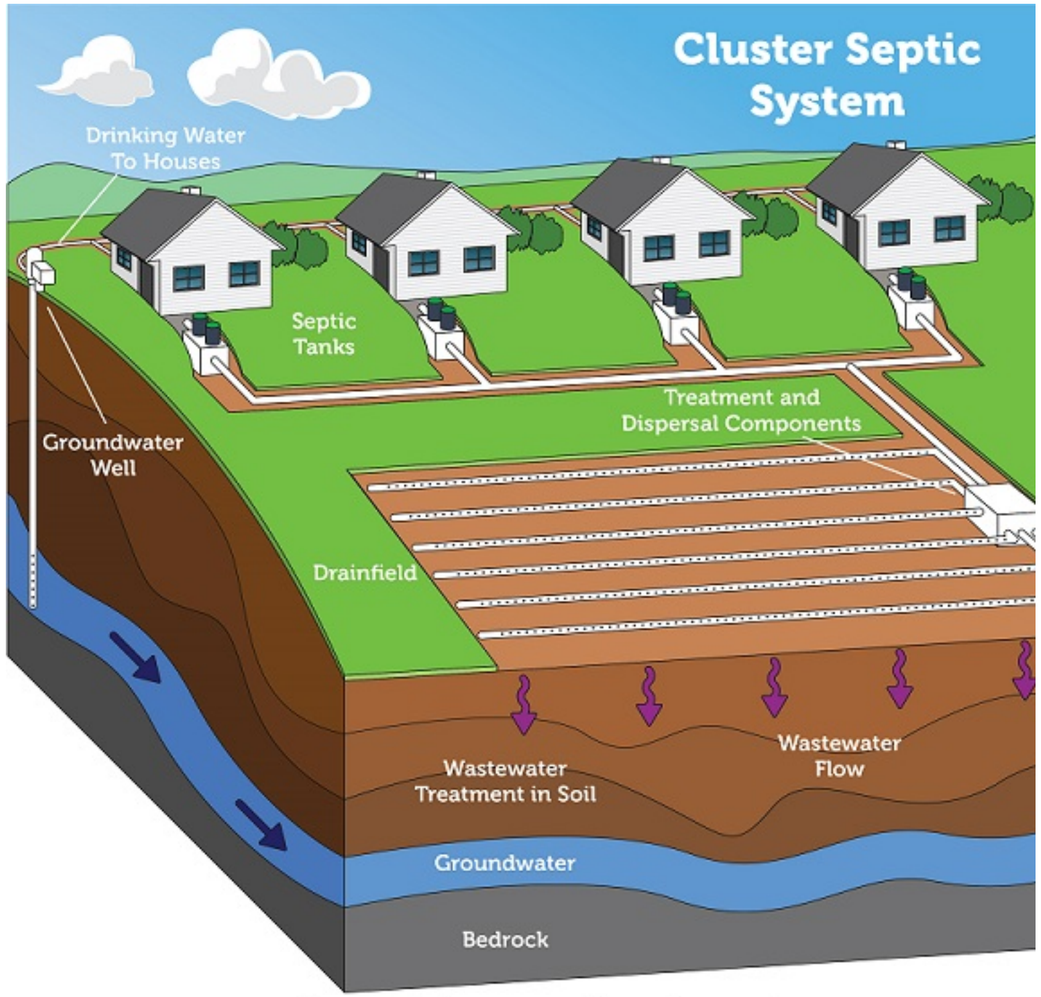
Jurisdictional Scan

How Cluster Systems Work



Please note: Septic systems vary. Diagram is not to scale.

Source: United States Environmental Protection Agency

Cluster Systems are centralized wastewater systems that can service various types of developments

- Operate like traditional private on-site systems, but rely on a **centralized outlet** for treated wastewater
- Allow for smaller minimum lot sizes in unserviced areas, and therefore more compact development patterns

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Jurisdictional Scan

Enabling Cluster Systems

Planning strategies and land use by-laws can be used to enable and regulate cluster septic systems

- Define cluster septic systems
- Regulate construction standards
- Establish management responsibility
- Develop new minimum lot sizes

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Jurisdictional Scan

Managing Cluster Systems

Two pathways for management

Municipal Management

- By-law granting municipal authority to own, manage, and maintain
- Transfer agreements
- User Fee Models

Private Management

- Maintenance paid for by the condo corporation or landowner
- Level of maintenance dependent on ownership

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Jurisdictional Scan

Cluster Systems in Practice
in Nova Scotia

Provincial Regulatory Documents

Only allow individual property owners to connect to a shared cluster system in cases of "condominium" or **"municipal" developments**

Wastewater Management Districts

- Allow municipalities to takeover, own, operate, and maintain private on-site systems & **cluster systems**

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Jurisdictional Scan

Cluster Systems in Practice
in Nova Scotia

Wastewater Management Districts

- While WMDs provide an opportunity for municipalities to facilitate **cluster systems** they are not intended for that purpose

- Statement of Provincial Interest notes WMDs and cluster systems should be considered "**where on-site disposal systems are experiencing problems**"

- **Challenge:** regulations do not intend for WMDs to be used for fostering growth and non-traditional development patterns

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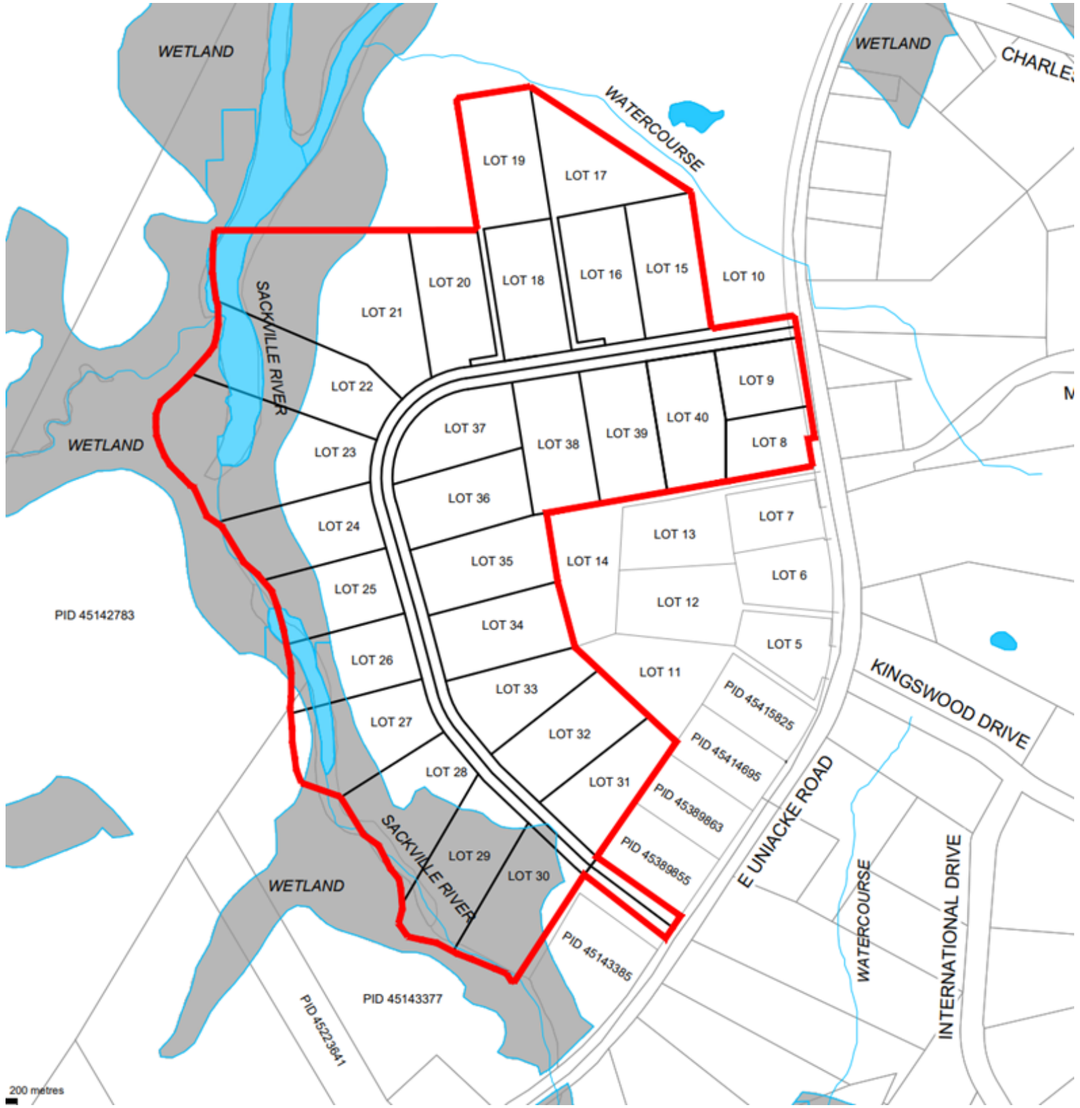
Jurisdictional Scan

Cluster Systems in Practice
in Mount Uniacke



2022 Subdivision Serviced with Private On-Site Systems

- Total land area: 56.9 acres
- Re-zoned for residential use
- Resulted in 35 new lots (all for single-detached homes)
- Average lot size: 1.6 acres

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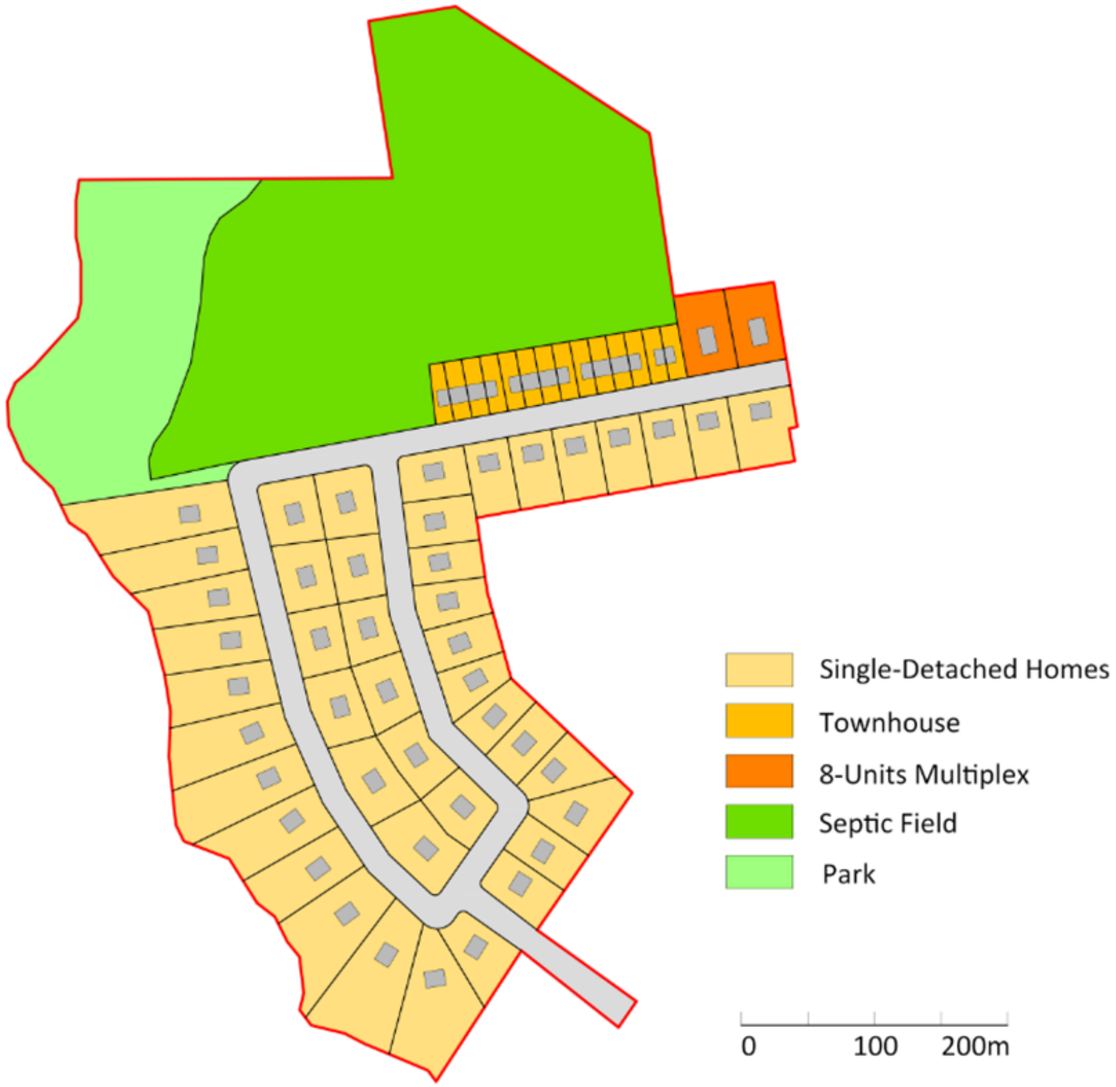
Jurisdictional Scan

Cluster Systems in Practice
in Mount Uniacke



Re-imagining the site using cluster systems

- Total land area: 56.9 acres
- Reduced minimum lot sizes
- 44 single-detached homes, 14 townhouses, 2 8-unit apartment complexes

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Discussion & Recommendations

1. Need for new growth policy frameworks
2. Cluster septic systems as a solution
3. Recommendations

Discussion

Mount Uniacke can be expected to continue growing. Current policy makes achieving needed/desired growth patterns difficult.

Investigate avenues for enabling and encouraging the use of cluster septic systems

Need for expanded studies and secondary consultation

Recommendations

1. Enable and encourage the use of cluster septic systems
2. Expand the growth management study
3. Explore Provincial interest for collaboration on a pilot project

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Recommendation #1

Enable and encourage the use of cluster septic systems in a secondary planning strategy for Mount Uniacke

- Define cluster septic systems in the secondary planning strategy and relevant land use by-law.
- Develop policy establishing that cluster septic systems are to be approved by the Department of Environment and that private developers are responsible for the construction.
- Develop policy statements in the secondary planning strategy asserting that cluster septic systems are enabled for efficient development and increased housing diversity.
- Set new minimum lot size requirements for lots connected to cluster septic systems and develop policies that direct mid- to large-scale developments serviced by cluster septic systems to lands deemed most suitable.

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Recommendation #2

Expand the growth management study

- Commission a study into land and soil conditions in the Mount Uniacke GMA.
- Conduct an internal investigation into municipal capacity to own, manage, and maintain cluster systems.

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Recommendation #3

Explore collaborative opportunities with the Province

- Explore possibility of a pilot project where cluster systems are owned and operated municipally through a WMD by-law to achieve non-traditional development patterns.
- Draft a memorandum to the Province that explains the municipality's interest in cluster systems and potential benefits the Province could derive from participation in a pilot project.
- Begin dialogue with Province for updating current infrastructure policy and technical guidelines/requirements to better support growth in unserviced areas.

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Limitations

1. This report provides a preliminary study, need for secondary analysis
2. Lack of Secondary knowledge of engineering and system regulation
3. Lack of engagement
    a. Lack of engagement with public works to consider capacity and willingness for implementation or change
    b. Timing constraints did not allow for greater engagement with local residents
4. Lack of fully accurate demographic data, ADA and GMA don't directly align and may not be fully realized in community.

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Thank you!

Questions?

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