



Subject: *Second Access Report - Motion C23(237)*
To: CAO for Planning Advisory Committee, January 16, 2024
Date Prepared: January 9, 2024
Related Motions: C23(237)
Prepared by: Debbie Uloth, Project Planner
Approved by: John Woodford, Director of Planning and Development

Summary

Planning staff have responded to Council Motion C23(237) and have prepared a report identifying areas in East Hants that are only serviced by one access into or out of the area. There are approximately 17 areas in East Hants that meet this criteria. Staff have further identified if there is a reasonable possibility of creating a second access for these developments.

C23(237) Direct staff to create a report highlighting the single way in and single way-out subdivisions in the Municipality (over 50 homes, or what is deemed appropriate) to send to EMO and explore lands available to provide the possibility of second exits within those subdivision.

Financial Impact Statement

Depending on Council's direction there may be a financial impact associated with the adoption of this report.

Recommendation

- Authorize staff to take this report to EMO Planning Committee for prioritization of communities for the Fire Smart Assessment; and
- Authorize staff to review planning and subdivision regulations to aid in the implementation of Fire Smart principles.

Recommended Motion

Planning Advisory Committee recommends that Council:

- *Authorize staff to take the Secondary Access Report dated December 20, 2023, to EMO Planning Committee for prioritization of communities for the Fire Smart Assessment.*

And

- *Authorize staff to review planning and subdivision regulations to aid in the implementation of Fire Smart principles.*

Background

In response to the fires in Nova Scotia this past spring, and comments from East Hants residents, Council has passed Motion C23(237), which directs staff to identify areas with 50 dwelling units or more that only have a signal access into and out of the area. The motion further directs staff to identify options to create new access points in these developments.

Planning staff have identified such developed areas and have provided maps and other data for Planning Advisory Committee’s review and consideration.

SUBDIVISION BYLAW REGULATIONS

Under provision 10.16 of the Subdivision Bylaw (SUB), no more than 100 lots and a remainder shall be serviced by a single road access to a collector or arterial street; unless, the development is subject to a development agreement, master plan, Comprehensive Development District, or phased Subdivision application which requires that a second road access to a collector or arterial street will be built in a future phase of development, in a manner and timeframe acceptable to the Municipality. This provision has been part of the SUB since a least the adoption of the 2000 East Hants Official Community Plan. The regulation does not apply to the number of dwelling units on a lot. A developer could apply for a subdivision of 100 lots but each of the lots could potentially have more than one dwelling unit if the zone permitted or if the property owner was permitted to have an accessory dwelling unit. An example of this from the Corridor area is Kali Lane. There are 63 lots on Kali Lane, less than the 100 permitted by the Subdivision Bylaw but there are 153 dwelling units that access the street.

In June of 2023, Council passed Motion C23(210), “...that Council direct staff to discontinue allowing developments to exceed the 100 unit minimum before requiring a second entrance/exit when negotiating development agreements prior to coming to Council.” This direction is not applicable to as-of-right developments.

NUMBER OF AREAS WITH ONE ACCESS AND OVER 50 DWELLING UNITS

Staff have identified areas of East Hants with 50 dwelling units or more and only one access into the area. Below is a list of the existing developments and the number of units in each area. Elmwood subdivision currently has the most dwelling units located on one access but this is planned to change with the construction of the FH Development Group agreement for Elmsdale. When this new development is constructed Elmwood Drive will connect to Roulston Drive, which connects to Highway 214. The development is also proposed to have a third connection that will link to Pinehill Drive, which connects to Highway 214. The second largest area with no second access out of the area is the South Uniacke Road and adjoining streets. For this area, it is more difficult to make a connection without either significant development in the area or a significant investment into a new connection. The presentation associated with this report includes maps of the areas described below.

Subdivision Name	Community	Number of Dwelling Units	Options
Elmwood Subdivision	Elmsdale	Elmwood=66 Blakeley=7 West Court=5 Tannery=58 Endale=27 Hemlock=135 Lilian=13 Vernon=14 Total = 325	A new development is approved that will connect Elmwood Drive to Highway 214 and another new road extending from the Elmwood Drive extension to Pinehill Drive to Highway 214; thereby, increasing the number of accesses to the Elmwood Subdivision to three. There was no maximum number of lots on one access regulations in place when Elmwood was initially developed.

Doyle Drive	Enfield	Doyle = 15 Parker Place=53 Total = 68	No road reserves and no opportunity to create access without purchasing a dwelling unit and adjoining lands.
John Murray Drive and Megan Lynn Drive	Enfield	John Murray= 83 Megan Lynn=33 Total = 116	No road reserves but there is a private access through Saint Bernard's Roman Catholic Cemetery from John Murray Drive to Highway 2 that could potentially be used in case of an emergency.
Concorde Way	Enfield	Total = 137	No road reserves but there is a 6 m wide AT right-of-way connecting Concorde Way to the neighbouring undeveloped lands. May have the potential to be upgraded to allow for a single travel width for a motorized vehicle if the neighbouring lands are developed in the future. There would be an associated cost to the Municipality and staff would not recommend that the AT trail be converted into a public street.
Kali Lane	Elmsdale	Total = 153	No road reserves but there is a walkway connecting Kali Lane to Tyler Street that could be upgraded to allow for single lane vehicle access between the two roads. There would be a cost to the Municipality and staff would not recommend that the walkway become a public street. A second walkway connects the end of Kali Lane to the neighbouring Elmsdale District School lands. There is no real opportunity to upgrade this connection to allow for vehicular traffic but if necessary pedestrians could use this route.
Robert Scott Drive	Lantz	Total = 62	There is an opportunity to have a second connection to Highway 2 once the remainder of the lands adjacent to the existing development are developed.
Budland Acres	Enfield	Edmund = 31 Whitney Maurice = 30 Malcolm Lucas= 17 Total = 78	There is a road reserve that connects Whitney Maurice Drive to the adjacent lands to the north and there is a second road reserve that connects Edmund Road to Park Road. The connection between Edmund Road to Park Road could be upgraded to improve connectivity for both Budland Acres and the Elmsdale Business Park. There would be a cost to the Municipality and staff recommend traffic calming be included with any proposed construction of the road reserve.

Renfrew Rd (from the intersection of Horne Settlement Rd) to end of Monta Visa Rd and adjoining streets	Enfield	Monte Vista=51 Hemlock=17 Grand Lake=7 Alder = 3 Bella Vista= 5 Edward = 31 Sullys = 3 Tracy = 17 Renfrew (civic 244-730) = 38 Total = 172	Options for a new public road access are limited in the area. There are forestry roads and Class K roads in the vicinity but staff are unsure of the quality of these roads. Also, there is no signage to provide directions and the network of logging roads is extensive and they go through many hectares of undeveloped land before reaching another public road. Boats could be used to move residents in an emergency.
Piggott Lake Road and adjoining streets	Lakelands	Piggott Lake=70 Waterview=28 Total = 98	Piggott Lake Road is a dead-end private right-of-way easement with no connection to adjoining roads. There is a potential for Waterview Drive to connect to Cockscomb Lake Drive. There is approximately 230 m separating the two roads.
Old Mines Road and adjoining streets	Mount Uniacke	Old Mines = 20 Morning Breeze= 25 Rockwell = 104 Total = 149	The Municipality has received inquiries regarding a future development that may connect Old Mines Road to Uniacke Mines Road; thereby allowing for a second connection from Old Mines Road.
Uniacke Mines Road and adjoining streets	Mount Uniacke	Uniacke Mines = 14 Cockscomb Lake= 56 Sawdust=6 Norman Lake = 11 Walker = 4 Partridge = 29 Total = 120	Cockscomb Lake Drive is a dead-end private right-of-way easement with no connection to adjoining roads. There is a potential for Cockscomb Lake Drive to connect to Waterview Drive. There is approximately 230 m separating the two roads. The Municipality has received inquiries regarding future development that may connect Old Mines Road to Uniacke Mines Road; thereby allowing for a second connection from Old Mines Road. There is also the possibility of making a connection between Uniacke Mines Road and Beamish Road, over an undeveloped provincially-owned section of Beamish Road. Significant financial investment would be required to upgrade the road.
Lakecrest Drive and adjoining streets	East Uniacke	Lakecrest=88 Jorphie = 11 Total = 99	There is a road reserve that extends from Jorphie Drive to an undeveloped provincially-owned section of Beamish Road. Significant financial investment would be required to upgrade the undeveloped portion of Beamish Road to create a connection with the currently maintained road. The road reserve on Jorphie Drive would also have to be constructed.
Lacey Road, Ridgeview Street	Milford	Lacey = 31 Ridgeview = 34	Limited future potential for second access onto Highway 2. If future development occurs on adjacent

and Riverview Drive		Riverview = 4 Total = 69	lands there may be an opportunity to negotiate for a second access to Highway 2.
Hunter Road and adjoining streets	Milford	Hunter = 20 Van Tol= 2 Valley View = 4 Angies Walk= 13 Cynthia = 14 Lisa = 8 Sylvia = 14 Total = 75	Limited future potential to join Hunter Road to Lacey Road. Only possible if future development occurs.
Bayberry Drive and adjoining streets	Milford	Bayberry=26 Rennie=31 Total = 57	There is no existing road reserve to adjoining lands. If PID 45390895 were to be further developed in the future there may be an opportunity to connect to Highway 2 or Highway 224 through adjoining lands.
River Country Estates	Nine Mile River	Dalrymple = 25 Pine = 17 Bell = 22 Analeigh = 3 River Country=8 Total = 75	A tentative plan of subdivision has been submitted that would connect Bell Court to Highway 14, which would create a second access to the development.
South Uniacke Road and adjoining streets	South Uniacke	South Uniacke=56 Withdraw=6 Davis = 38 Shirley = 13 Sue Ann = 13 Michael = 17 Nathanial = 21 Owen = 23 Christopher = 27 Bruce = 30 Total = 244	Additional developments have been approved to be located with access to the South Uniacke Road. The South Uniacke Road is a dead-end road that is approximately 2.5 km in length. There are currently no realistic options for connecting the South Uniacke Road to the East Uniacke Road or one of the subdivisions that connect to the East Uniacke Road without a substantial investment by the Municipality.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR CONNECTION IMPROVEMENT IN EXISTING DEVELOPMENTS

Planning staff have identified opportunities for improvement to connectivity in developments that do not match the parameters identified by Council. Some of these developments already have two accesses but development connectivity could be improved by building existing road reserves or by completing road improvements.

Connection Location	Community	Opportunity
Lants Connector	Lantz	Constructing the fourth leg of the Lantz Connector roundabout to connect into Tower View Court would provide an alternative access and could alleviate some of the traffic that would be directed onto Highway 2 in case of emergency. The roundabout

			connection to Tower View has many other benefits for the community as well.
Meadow View Way	Belnan		Staff to bring a report forward to Council in 2024.
Villages of Long Lake (Cottage Country)	East Uniacke		If Villages 1 and 2 of the Cottage Country development are completely built out there will be 400 dwelling units contained within the two Villages. Currently, there is one public road access into and out of the development and one private emergency access road. The emergency access road is required under the terms of the existing development agreement; therefore, the access should be monitored to ensure it remains passable.

There are several longer dead-end roads located in Mount Uniacke and Lakelands Districts. There are opportunities to increase the connectivity of these roads but at a significant financial investment. Staff have included a map showing how these roads should be connected using either the existing unmaintained road network or by using the abandoned rail line. In addition to creating connectivity, these routes would also allow for the future development of the community. Connectivity and critical connections in Mount Uniacke will also be reviewed as part of the Uniacke Secondary Planning Strategy.

Risk Assessment

At their December meeting of Executive Committee, Councillors received a presentation from Kara McCurdy, DNR regarding the Fire Risk Assessment program. Based on the information contained in staff's report and the presentation from Ms. McCurdy, Planning staff are recommending that Council authorize staff to bring this report to the EMO committee for review and ask for their input on the order of the Fire Risk Assessments.

The purpose of the assessment is to provide a comprehensive assessment of the wildfire hazards and risks for parts of the Municipality. The assessment estimates the risks, likelihood of occurrence of a significant wildfire events and hazards, the potential for undesirable effects resulting from an advancing wildfire, associated with wildland fire in proximity to communities. This information may be used to help the Municipality with future decision-making and should be provided to East Hants residents to help them make informed decisions about their property and their individual risk.

Planning staff have proposed a community priority list below for EMO Committee to consider:

1. Combine the communities of South Uniacke, Mount Uniacke, East Uniacke and Lakelands for one Fire Smart Assessment (subject to DNR).
2. Fire Smart Assessment plan for Renfrew and Monta Vista area.
3. Fire Smart Assessment for Budland Acres.
4. Fire Smart Assessment for River Country Estates.

Alternatives

Below are three alternative options that PAC may want to consider:

1. Change the order of communities suggested for the Fire Risk Assessment.

2. Direct staff to do further study into any of the potential connections, including but not limited to, land purchase or lease opportunities, and feasibility and cost of construction.
3. Accept the report and put it on file.

Attachments

- Maps have been included in the Second Access Presentation.