

*Uniacke Secondary Planning Strategy:
Commercial Lands*

Planning Advisory Committee
April 16, 2024

Planning and Development



EAST HANTS

Background

- As part of the Uniacke Secondary Planning Strategy, staff have undertaken a review of commercial lands in the Uniacke area.
- This review has included lands zoned Village Core (VC) Zone, Regional Commercial (RC) Zone, and Business Park (BP) Zone.
- Planning staff have also met with EBD staff to discuss the future of commercial development in the Uniacke area and to determine if any changes to commercial land uses may want to be considered as part of the Uniacke Secondary Planning Strategy.

Village Core (VC) Zoned Lands

- The Village Core (VC) Zone is located on the land that has been the traditional centre of the community.
- Many of the properties are developed with commercial land uses or single unit dwellings.
- As with other traditional community centres in the corridor that are also zoned Village Core (VC), staff feel that as development pressure warrants many of the homes located in the VC Zone will be converted to other uses.
- One such instance is the church that was sold and is being converted into a veterinarian's office.
- As the population in the Uniacke area increases, and demand for amenities increases, opportunities for redevelopment will be undertaken.
- However, redevelopment is market dependent.

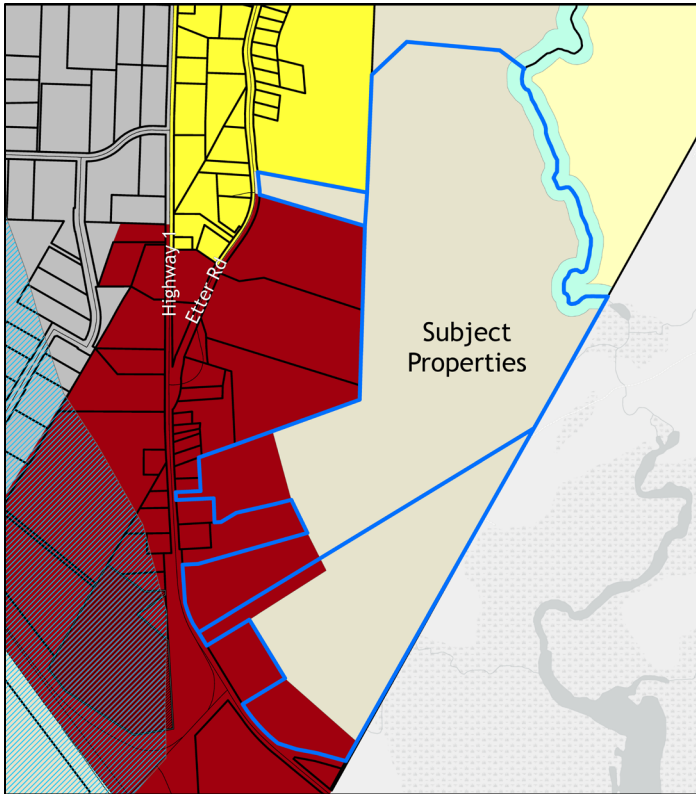
Village Core (VC) Zoned Lands

- The village core contains some undersized lots and it would be difficult to obtain approval for a septic system for these lots.
- Other lots are large, and contain a single unit dwelling, but there is potential for additional development along Highway 1.
- In both of these cases there may be an opportunity for the development of food truck related businesses. A development permit for a food truck can be issued as a temporary commercial use, for a season, on commercially zoned lands.
- Food trucks allow businesses to test the market without having to invest in a bricks and mortar building.

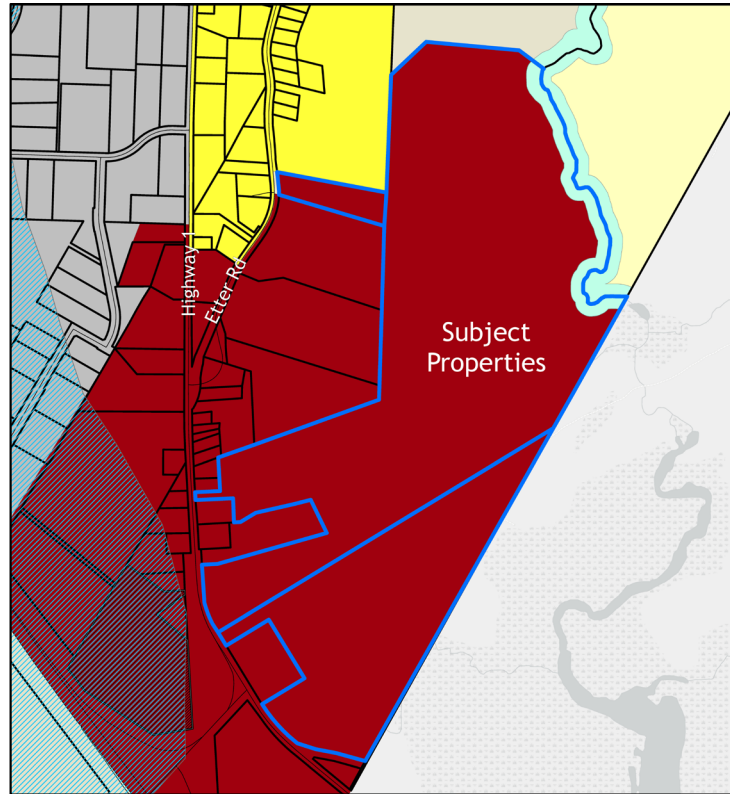


Regional Commercial (RC) Zone Lands

- There are several Regional Commercial (RC) Zoned lots available for new commercial development or have the potential to be further developed.
- Regional Commercial (RC) Zoned lands are located near the interchange for Highway 101 and Highway 1 and offer good connections to the Highway system.
- Further expansion of the Regional Commercial (RC) Zone, to the east, would allow for a new road to be constructed and additional lands to be developed.



Current Zoning



Proposed Zoning

Regional Commercial (RC) Zoned Lands

- Staff also recommend that a Required Future Transportation Connections Map be developed for the Uniacke area and be added to Appendix D of the Subdivision Bylaw.
- A connection should be added to the map showing a possible road connection starting at Highway 1 through the newly proposed Regional Commercial (RC) Zoned lands and connecting back to Highway 1.
- A future background paper on transportation will contain more details.

Business Park (BP) Zoned Lands

- The Uniacke Business Park is full. Lands owned by the Municipality have been subdivided and sold.
- There are a limited number of properties in private ownership that are zoned Business Park (BP) that could be further developed and possibly subdivided to create smaller lots.
- Expansion of the Uniacke Business Park is difficult due to constraints such as Highway 101, Highway 1, and the location of nearby residential development.
- As the population in the Uniacke and Lakelands areas increase, there may be a future need for a new interchange to be located in the Lakelands/Ardoise area.
- If a new interchange is identified as a future project by Nova Scotia Public Works, staff recommend working with West Hants and the province to determine the best location for the interchange so that both Municipalities could benefit from the new connection.

Uniacke Land Use Survey - Commercial Lands

- As part of the Uniacke Land Use Survey residents were asked what type of amenities they would like to see in their community.
- Respondents were happy with Eddy's Variety and Withrow's Farm Market but they would like to have a larger grocery store.
- The Regional Commercial (RC) Zone allows for a wide variety of commercial uses, including grocery stores and other retail uses.
- The Village Core (VC) Zone also permits smaller retail uses.
- Therefore, there is land that is appropriately zoned in the Mount Uniacke area to support a grocery store.

Uniacke Land Use Survey - Commercial Lands

- Daycares (home-based and general) were the most requested amenities identified in the survey.
- Home-based daycares can be located as a home-based business in every residential zone, in the Rural Use (RU) Zone, and in the Village Core (VC) Zone in the Uniacke area.
- Commercial daycare centres are permitted to be located in the Village Core (VC) Zone, Regional Commercial (RC) Zone, and Business Park (BP) Zone.
- Appropriately zoned land is available and a daycare can be located nearly anywhere within the Uniacke area.

Uniacke Land Use Survey - Commercial Lands

- Restaurants are another amenity that survey respondents would like to see additional options for.
- Residents identified restaurant-related uses such as cafes, bakeries, and pubs as needed amenities for the community.
- All three of the commercial zones that staff have identified permit full and limited-service restaurants.
- Appropriately zoned land is available in the community.
- Respondents also indicated that they would rather have locally owned and operated business than large chain restaurants and take-out food locations, though the Municipality cannot issue permits based on ownership type or location.

Uniacke Land Use Survey - Commercial Lands

- Mount Uniacke and the surrounding area has land that is appropriately zoned for noted uses.
- However, East Hants cannot control market demand for the land or control if the businesses are locally driven or from outside Mount Uniacke or the province.
- Demand for commercial land will continue to be market driven and the commercial amenities identified by respondents in the Uniacke Land Use Survey will only be developed when the market is ready.

Recommendations for Draft Report

- Below is a list of recommendations from the commercial report for the draft Uniacke Secondary Planning Strategy.
 - Extend the Regional Commercial (RC) Designation and Zone by changing the land use designation and zone of PIDs 45289311, 45337714, and 45141207 to the Regional Commercial (RC) Designation and Zone.
 - Create a Required Future Transportation Connections Map for Mount Uniacke and include the new map Under Appendix D of the Subdivision Bylaw.
 - On the new Mount Uniacke Required Future Transportation Connections Map add a road connection through the Regional Commercial (RC) Zone lands that would allow for the additional development opportunities.

Recommendation

- Include the recommendations outlined in the Uniacke Commercial Review report to be included in the draft Uniacke Secondary Planning Strategy Report.

Recommended Motion

Planning Advisory Committee recommends that Council:

- *authorize staff to include the recommendations outlined in the Uniacke Commercial Review report in the draft Uniacke Secondary Planning Strategy Report.*