



**Subject:** *Uniacke Secondary Planning Strategy - Motion C24(443) - Uniacke SPS - New Land Use Designation and Zone*  
**To:** CAO for Planning Advisory Committee, February 18, 2025  
**Date Prepared:** February 12, 2025  
**Related Motions:** PAC23(59) and C23(383)  
**Prepared by:** Debbie Uloth, Community Planner II  
**Approved by:** John Woodford, Director of Planning and Development

### Summary

As part of the Uniacke Secondary Planning Strategy, East Hants Council directed Planning staff to create a new zone that would allow commercial and residential development in an identified area along Highway 1.

**Motion C24(443)** *Moved that as part of the Mount Uniacke Secondary Planning Strategy, that staff investigate a possible zone for R1 and R2 properties along Highway 1 that would be appropriate for mixed use and multi-unit developments.*

As a result of Motion C24(443), staff has considered ways to increase commercial and residential development.

### Financial Impact Statement

Planning staff has budgeted for the Uniacke Secondary Planning Strategy as part of the 2024/2025 Budget Cycle.

### Recommendation

Include the new Mount Uniacke Mixed Use Centre Overlay (MU-MC) Designation and Zone, outlined in the Uniacke SPS Motion C24(443) Report, be included in the draft Uniacke Secondary Planning Strategy Report.

And

Include the New Mount Uniacke Comprehensive Development District (MUCDD) Designation and Zone, outlined in the Uniacke SPS Motion C24(443) Report, be included in the draft Uniacke Secondary Planning Strategy Report.

### Recommended Motion

*Planning Advisory Committee recommends that Council:*

- *authorize staff to include the new Mount Uniacke Mixed Use Centre Overlay (MU-MC) Designation and Zone, outlined in the Uniacke SPS Motion C24(443) Report, be included in the draft Uniacke Secondary Planning Strategy Report.*

And

- *authorize staff to include the new Mount Uniacke Comprehensive Development District (MUCDD) Designation and Zone, outlined in the Uniacke SPS Motion C24(443) Report, be included in the draft Uniacke Secondary Planning Strategy Report.*

## Background

As part of the Uniacke Secondary Planning Strategy, East Hants Council passed the following Motion at their December 2024, meeting of Council.

**Motion C24(443)** *Moved that as part of the Mount Uniacke Secondary Planning Strategy, that staff investigate a possible zone for R1 and R2 properties along Highway 1 that would be appropriate for mixed use and multi-unit developments.*

This report will provide an option for allowing commercial and residential development along a portion of Highway 1. In addition, it will suggest a method of increasing residential density in the Mount Uniacke Growth Management Area.

### MOUNT UNIACKE MIXED USE CENTRE OVERLAY (MU-MC) ZONE

During their December 2025 meeting, PAC members indicated that they would like staff to investigate a new zone for lands around Eddy's Variety that would enable a mix of commercial and residential development. In response, staff have developed a new land use designation and zone to address Council's direction. The new designation and zone would be applied to land identified in Map 1 (Attached as Appendix A). Due to the variety of land uses currently taking place along Highway 1, staff suggest that rather than replacing the existing zones that an overlay zone is implemented in the prescribed area. An overlay zone will continue to allow single and two-unit residential uses, it maintains the industrial commercial uses, and it also allows for the other varied commercial uses to continue.

Planning staff have drafted new land use policies for the implementation of the new Mount Uniacke Mixed Use Centre Overlay (MU-MC) Zone.

Draft Mount Uniacke Mixed Use Centre Overlay (MU-MC) Designation policies:

#### Policy Goal

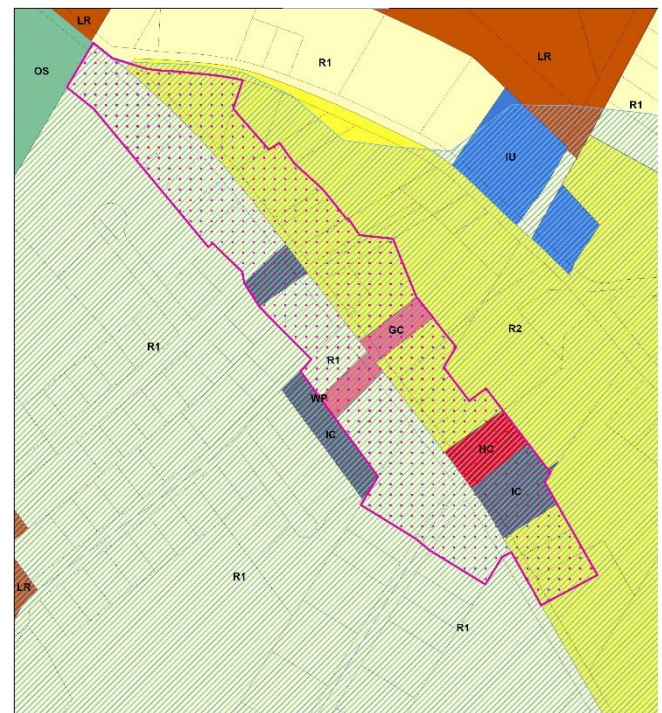
*Council's goal is to foster a mixture of local commercial uses and small to medium residential development in the heart of Mount Uniacke.*

#### Policy Statements

*Xxx Council shall establish the Mount Uniacke Mixed Use Centre Overlay (MU-MC) Designation for the purpose of allowing for a diverse mixture of local commercial and low to medium density residential uses in an environment serving the community of Mount Uniacke.*

*XXX Council shall implement the Mount Uniacke Mixed Use Centre Overlay (MU-MC) Designation through the Mount Uniacke Mixed Use Centre (MU-MC) Zone and that the purpose of the (MU-MC) Zone is to allow for an appropriate intensity and diversity of commercial and residential development within an environment that is serviced by onsite well and septic systems and that enhances the community through design standards for buildings and sites, thus contributing to an attractive rural community.*

Map 1



 Proposed MU-MC Overlay Zone

- XXX Council shall apply the Mount Uniacke Mixed Use Centre (MU-MC) Designation & Zone to the community of Mount Uniacke as indicated on the Official Generalized Future Land Use Maps and Land Use Bylaw Zoning Maps.
- XXX Council shall maintain a positive character, and streetscape in the Mount Uniacke Mixed Use Centre Overlay (MU-MC) Zone through requirements regarding the following matters: minimum lot sizes, frontage requirements, build-to-area requirements, yard requirements, maximum lot coverages, transparency requirements, the number of dwelling units permitted, the maximum ground floor finish level, maximum street facing building length, maximum building size, and maximum lot coverage.
- XXX Council shall adopt architectural and site design standards, for new buildings and alterations and additions to existing buildings within the Mount Uniacke Mixed Use Centre Overlay (MU-MC) Zone in the Land Use Bylaw. Requirements will address building form, articulation requirements for long buildings, roofs, siding & windows, screening, access, parking and pedestrian comfort.
- XXX Council shall consider small multiplex and townhouse development proposals in the Mount Uniacke Mixed Use Centre Overlay (MU-MC) Zone subject to design requirements and lot size requirements to ensure adequate size lots for onsite septic systems and wells and to avoid well interference with existing land uses.
- XXX Council shall consider the following by development agreement in the Mount Uniacke Mixed Use Centre Overlay (MU-MC) Designation, subject to the criteria of the implementing policies:
- a) Multiplexes having more than 8 dwelling units.
- XXX Council shall consider uses by site plan approval within the Mount Uniacke Mixed Use Centre Overlay (MU-MC) Zone for the purpose of improving the overall quality and appearance of development. The following uses shall not require site plan approval in the MU-MC Overlay Zone:
- a) Established Residential Neighbourhood (R1) Zone Uses
  - b) Two Dwelling Unit Residential (R2) Zone Uses
  - c) Lawfully Existing Uses
  - d) Uses permitted by the underlying zone
  - e) Open Space (OS) Zone Uses
- XXX Council shall utilize site plans in the Mount Uniacke Mixed Use Centre Overlay (MU-MC) Zone, pursuant to the Municipal Government Act, for the purpose of ensuring that proposed development does not impact negatively on the built and natural environment, and that such development enhances the overall character of the existing community. Council shall address the following matters through the site plan approval process:
- a) The location of structures on the lot.
  - b) The location of off-street loading and parking facilities.
  - c) The location, number, and width of driveway accesses to streets.
  - d) The type, location and height of walls, fences, hedges, trees, shrubs, ground cover, or other landscaping elements necessary to protect and minimize the land use impact on adjoining lands.
  - e) The retention of existing vegetation.
  - f) The location of walkways, the type of surfacing material, and all other means of pedestrian access.
  - g) The type and location of outdoor lighting.
  - h) The location of facilities for the storage of solid waste.
  - i) The location of easements.
  - j) The grading or alteration in elevation or contour of land, and provision for the management of storm and surface water.

- k) The type, location, number, and size of signs or sign structures.*
- l) Provisions for the maintenance of any of the items referred to in this Section.*

Land uses in the MU-MC Overlay Zone are proposed to be permitted by site plan approval. Site plan approval allows adjacent property owners to be notified of the proposed development and it allows the Development Officer to ensure that the proposed use, parking, landscaping, and other items can be accommodated on the subject lands. The property owner also has to sign a letter of undertaking indicating the site will be developed as shown on the site plan. The type of commercial land uses permitted in the MU-MC Zone would be similar to the commercial land uses permitted in the Mixed Use Centre (MC) Zone. Small multiplexes are also proposed to be permitted in the MU-MC Overlay Zone, as long as the lot can adequately accommodate a septic system and well. Larger multiplexes may be considered by Council through a development agreement application.

Proposed Mount Uniacke Mixed Use Centre Overlay (MU-MC) Zone Regulations:

*Underlying Zone Uses*

*Accommodations, Bed & Breakfast*

*Accommodations, General*

*Animal Hospitals & Veterinary Offices*

*Bank & Financial Institutions*

*Brewery, Distillery & Winery*

*Business Support Services & Printing*

*Commercial Club*

*Daycare, General*

*Daycare, Home-Based*

*Drinking Establishment open until 1 am*

*Dwelling, Multiplex (Small)*

*Dwelling, Townhouse (Cluster)*

*Educational Services*

*Funeral Services*

*Gambling Industries*

*Government Offices & Facilities*

*Health Care Services*

*Office & Professional Services*

*Personal Care Services*

*Recreation Facility, Indoor*

*Repair & Maintenance*

*Restaurant, Full & Limited Service*

*Restaurant, Take-Out*

*Retailers & Rental Services*

*Social Enterprise*

*Special Care (Residential Care Facility, Home for Special Care or Group Home)*

*Tradesperson & Craftsperson Businesses & Offices*

*Institutional (IU) Zone Uses*

Part 7.2 General Provisions for Mixed Use Zones, would also be applicable to the new proposed Mount Uniacke Mixed Use Centre Overlay (MU-MC) Zone. The general provisions include, but are not limited to, regulations for lighting, buffering, amenity space, and landscaping.

A new Mount Uniacke Mixed Use Centre Overlay (MU-MC) Zone section is proposed to be established. The new zone section would include the zone requirements (lot size, frontage, height, setbacks, etc.) and design requirements. Detailed regulations are proposed to be drafted as part of the implementation process for the Uniacke SPS.

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## Mount Uniacke Comprehensive Development District

As a method of increasing density in the Mount Uniacke Growth Management Area, staff suggest developing new Comprehensive Development District (CDD) policies that are specific to Mount Uniacke. The new Mount Uniacke CDD would allow for a variety of low to medium density residential development options; while ensuring that multiple unit lots are an appropriate size for well and septic systems. Housing options for the new land use designation and zone would include single unit dwellings, two-unit dwellings, townhouses, and small multiplexes. At this time, staff do not recommend pre-zoning land Mount Uniacke CDD. Groundwater is available over a larger area and specific spot zoning is not currently required to support groundwater requirements. The new zone would be applicable to land within the Mount Uniacke Growth Management Area, where appropriate connectivity to existing road networks can be achieved and increased density would be in close proximity to existing commercial, institutional, and recreational facilities.

Staff have developed a draft set of policies that would enable Council to consider applications to redesignate and rezone land to the Mount Uniacke CDD.

### **Policy Goal**

*Council's goal is to establish an avenue for the consideration of a mix of low and medium density residential development using the Comprehensive Development District tool. These developments should create a community with a variety of housing options, with connectivity for pedestrians and vehicles, and a preservation of the natural environment while ensuring lot size that adequately provide onsite services for those living in the development.*

*XXX Council shall establish the Mount Uniacke Comprehensive Development District (Mount Uniacke CDD) Designation with the intention of enabling property owners to create communities with low and medium density residential development and local commercial uses as described in this Strategy.*

*XXX Council shall consider the enactment of the Mount Uniacke Comprehensive Development District (Mount Uniacke CDD) provisions as outlined in this section for specified sites when an application for the CCD is requested.*

*XXX Council shall consider the enactment of Comprehensive Development District (CDD) mechanism by development agreement subject to the provisions of the Municipal Government Act.*

### **Criteria for Entering into a Development Agreement for a Mount Uniacke CDD**

#### **Policy Goal**

*To clearly outline criteria for the consideration of development agreements in the Mount Uniacke Comprehensive Development District (CDD) areas, to ensure the best interests of the Municipality and the community are protected, and to ensure the proposed development within the Mount Uniacke Comprehensive Development District (Mount Uniacke CDD) areas is appropriate in terms of its timing, content, appearances, and design. Finally, to ensure that the proposed Mount Uniacke CDD has the correct mix of residential, considers the environmental impact on the community, creates a healthy community, and is supportive of active transportation users.*

#### **Policy Statements**

- XXX *Council shall consider entering into a development agreement for a Mount Uniacke CDD in satisfaction of the following policies.*
- XXX *Council shall not consider Mini-home communities within the Mount Uniacke CDD Zone or designation to be compatible with the residential character of those areas.*
- XXX *Council shall consider entering into a development agreement for a Mount Uniacke CDD where the Mount Uniacke CDD is consistent with the intent and policies of the Municipal Planning Strategy and no one development within the Mount Uniacke CDD shall compromise or overwhelm the walkable, residential development focus of the Mount Uniacke CDD.*
- XXX *Council shall consider entering into a development agreement for a Mount Uniacke CDD where the Mount Uniacke CDD is not premature or inappropriate in terms of:*
- a) *The financial capability of the Municipality to absorb any costs relating to the development.*
  - b) *The adequacy of any groundwater and onsite services to support the Mount Uniacke CDD. Well and septic systems shall be located on the same lot as the building they are intended to service unless the Municipality otherwise agrees to absorb the maintenance and costs any proposed central sewer and/or water system.*
  - c) *Lots with over two (2) dwelling units shall be a minimum of 1.7 hectares in area to support onsite services and to ensure well interference does not impact neighbouring groundwater supplies and recharge.*
  - d) *A Level 2 Groundwater Assessment shall be conducted for developments with over 25 dwelling units.*
  - c) *The adequacy of existing and proposed active transportation and automobile distribution networks within and adjacent to the Mount Uniacke CDD, including the manner in which proposed roadways within the development are linked with streets of adjacent developments to provide for a cohesive, grid-like network of local and collector streets.*
  - e) *The adequacy of school, recreation, and community facilities to accommodate development.*
  - e) *The potential for the development to landlock or reduce subdivision potential of adjacent parcels.*
- XXX *Council shall consider the extent to which the proposed phased development provides for efficient pedestrian and vehicle movement into, out of, and within the development.*
- XXX *Council shall consider the extent to which, where applicable, proposed streets and pedestrian routes link up with streets and walking trails on abutting lands to provide for a cohesive network.*
- XXX *Council shall consider the relative comfort and design of streets and buildings to promote a development conducive to the protection of the natural environment.*
- XXX *Council shall require that the development of any Mount Uniacke Comprehensive Development District (Mount Uniacke CDD) only be considered through development agreements which shall specify:*

- a) *The type of land use zoning classification(s) proposed and locations of development(s) within the Mount Uniacke CDD site.*
- b) *The general phasing of the development relative to the distribution of the specific land uses within all or a portion of the Mount Uniacke CDD site.*
- c) *The distribution and function of proposed community facilities, amenity space, playgrounds, and public land uses.*
- d) *Architectural controls, site controls, and stormwater controls, and without limiting the generality of the foregoing, the following are examples: controls for external appearance and design of structures; yard and setback variations; berms, buffers, screens, fences, recontouring, and landscaping treatments; maximum lot coverage; protection of natural features and ecosystems; and stormwater controls;*
- e) *Matters regarding subdivision of lands within the Mount Uniacke CDD including the quality, quantity and placement of proposed open space.*
- f) *For residential, community, and business uses, matters addressing maintenance of the development(s) and hours of operation when appropriate;*
- g) *Any other matter relating to the development's impact upon uses within the Mount Uniacke CDD, uses adjacent to the Mount Uniacke CDD, and uses within the general community, based upon the intent of this strategy.*
- h) *Matters identified as: unsubstantial; uses not requiring a development permit, and; the basis for discharging the agreement upon completion of the development or phases of the development.*

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## Attachments

As per Council's direction, staff have developed a new zone for use around Eddy's Variety along Highway 1 in Mount Uniacke. Planning staff have also developed a new zone to enable increased residential density in the Mount Uniacke Growth Management Area.

If the MU-MC Overlay Zone and the MUCDD Zone are included in the Uniacke SPS, residents in the impacted areas will receive an opportunity to comment on the new designations and zones as part of updates to the East Hants Official Community Plan, after the Uniacke SPS has been adopted by Council.

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## Attachments