



# Fact Sheet 1 Introduction

Plan Victoria is a project to develop a Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) and Land Use By-law (LUB) for all parts of the Municipality of the County of Victoria that currently have no land use planning documents in place. In 2018, the Provincial Government passed new legislation that requires every municipality to adopt land use rules that meet newly established minimum planning standards. The wider project, Plan Eastern Nova, will bring the Municipalities of the Counties of Victoria, Richmond, Inverness, and Antigonish into compliance with this provincial mandate.

## What is Planning and Why Does it Matter?

Planning is the process by which communities can control change and development in their physical environment. Planning seeks to balance the needs of people, the economy and the environment by determining where, at what intensity, and in what form certain land uses should take place. It plays a big role in keeping populations safe and healthy, and allocates growth through proactive (or deliberate) transportation and infrastructure planning, making it easier and more efficient for people to get around.



Planning **helps us prepare for change**. This can be environmental change, like sea level rise, or social change, like an aging population.



Planning **supports our community's character and culture** by promoting good urban design, a quality public realm and by keeping development consistent and complementary.



Planning **protects special and sensitive environments** by preventing or limiting development in these areas.



Planning **helps to protect people** from developing in areas where the natural environment presents a high risk.



Planning **helps to maintain a healthy, sustainable economy** by ensuring there is a good balance and proximity between places of work and places to live.

For more information or to share your feedback on the draft documents, please visit [www.planvictoria.ca](http://www.planvictoria.ca) or email the project team at [hello@planvictoria.ca](mailto:hello@planvictoria.ca)



**PLAN  
VICTORIA  
COUNTY**

## Project Timeline

The project began in the Fall of 2021 with the initial phase of consultation held from Oct. 2021 - Jan. 2022. The first Draft MPS and LUB were written over the winter of 2022 with another round of public consultation in Spring 2022. Edits were made over the following year and now the second Draft MPS and LUB are out for public review. Final adoption of the new documents by Council is expected to take place in 2024.

## Statements of Provincial Interest

Nova Scotia's land and water resources are crucial to the health and wellbeing of our communities. Recognizing this, the *Municipal Government Act* specifies five topics that all municipal planning documents must address through policy (these are called the *Statements of Provincial Interest*): drinking water, flood risk areas, infrastructure, housing and agricultural land.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### How will the project affect me and my property?

- The new planning documents, once adopted, will apply to anything you may want to build or develop on your property in the future. Existing land uses and associated structures (that were legally constructed) are protected under the *Municipal Government Act* as a “non-conforming use” and are not required to comply with the new LUB unless they are enlarged or the use is discontinued.

### How do I find out what zone my property is in?

- You can access the online mapping platform on the project website ([www.planvictoria.ca](http://www.planvictoria.ca)) which will allow you to search by civic address, or by the eight-digit Parcel Identification Number (PID). Simply enter your address or PID and you can view the proposed zoning for your property. To learn more about the permitted uses in that zone (or any other zone), you can consult the zone description in the online map, or, for a more in-depth description, the Draft Land Use By-law itself, both available on the project website. If you do not have access to the internet and would like to speak to a member of the project team, you can call the UPLAND office at **(902) 423-0649**.

### Will the introduction of zoning have any impact on my property taxes?

- No. Property taxes are calculated based on what's actually happening on the property, not by the zoning. For example, if your property is a residence that now has commercial zoning on the property, your taxes will still continue to be calculated based on the residential tax assessment. This would only change if you - for example - build a store or hotel on your property.

### Are these documents set in stone?

- These documents are currently drafts. Even once final versions are adopted, planning documents are dynamic and change over time to adapt to changing demographics and trends. Your elected municipal Council has the power to make changes to planning documents through an amendment process at any time (this is a public process). Smaller amendments are made whenever needed. A full review of documents takes lots of time and community input, so that typically happens every 5-10 years.

### What if I want to change the zoning on my property in the future?

- If you wish to have your property “rezoned” in the future, you can apply for a rezoning via the Eastern District Planning Commission. This is a public process involving a public hearing and is a decision made by your local Council.