

Background: Green plans for sustainable land use planning Island-wide and protecting our shorelines

1. Implement land use planning Island-wide.

Currently, land-use planning is only conducted in municipalities that have an official plan (i.e. the larger urban ones). This covers about 10% of the Island land mass. This may increase as the Municipal Government Act is fully implemented and all municipalities are required to conduct land-use planning. Even with this, however, close to 70% of the Island (and 30% of the population) is outside of municipalities and will not be covered by municipal planning.

Land-use planning affects the province's ability to tackle various challenges, including climate change, infrastructure, agriculture, environmental protection, economic development, housing, and others. The absence of land-use planning in the vast majority of PEI is an underlying cause of many of the challenges facing the province today. Several major reports dating back 50 years, and most recently the [2021 Land Matters report](#), have all unequivocally said that PEI needs to institute land-use planning Island-wide.

Staff in the Department of Agriculture and Land said during a Standing Committee hearing last year province-wide this can be done within 2 to 3 years.

We will also follow the Land Matters recommendation to “immediately implement province-wide interim regulations to further regulate subdivision and development in areas without an official plan until a province-wide land use planning framework is adopted.”

2. Give municipalities the resources they need to implement strong local planning.

Under the Municipal Government Act, all municipalities are responsible for land use planning within their boundaries. However, for many of our smaller municipalities this can be very challenging to carry out.

The current multi-year funding agreement between the province and municipalities expires this year, so a new agreement will need to be negotiated. As part of this, we will make sure municipalities have the resources necessary to implement strong local land use planning.

3. Make land ownership and purchases more transparent to make sure the *Lands Protection Act* can be properly enforced.

In order for Islanders to have confidence that the *Lands Protection Act* is being properly enforced it is important for land ownership and purchases to be transparent. A Green Government will explore various avenues to increase transparency including:

- Releasing the report on the Brendel Farms land purchase.
- Giving IRAC the final decision on land purchases, instead of Cabinet, and increasing the transparency of IRAC's decisions and investigations.
- Making the registry of deeds online and searchable.
- Introduce a *Land Ownership Transparency Act*, as was done in British Columbia.

4. Maintain the shoreline development moratorium until new and improved shoreline protection legislation is in place.

In response to pressure from the public and in the Legislature, government implemented a partial moratorium on shoreline development^{1 2 3}. This moratorium applies to work in buffer zones under the but ignores planning approvals (i.e. land use changes and building permits). A Green Government will maintain this moratorium, but will also extend the moratorium to include planning approvals. This will likely be part of the interim planning regulations recommended by the Land Matters report (see above).

Shoreline protection legislation would be designed through extensive public consultation similar to the development of the Water Act. Some of the objectives for this legislation will be to:

- Guarantee and improve public access to beaches for all Islanders
- Tightly limit what activities are permitted in buffer zones
- Eliminate any grandfathering policies that allow developers to circumvent the normal rules
- Better protect delicate coastal ecosystems
- Account for increasing erosion and flood risk due to climate change and more severe storms
- Create public consultation and participation requirements for coastal developments
- Increase penalties for ignoring the rules and require those who do not follow the rules to undo the harm they cause at their own cost.

¹ <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/prince-edward-island/pei-moratorium-myers-buffers-1.6671151>

²

<https://www.saltwire.com/atlantic-canada/news/pei-government-releases-order-freezing-new-development-in-buffer-zones-100820358/>

³ <https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/en/news/shoreline-protection-order-put-in-place>