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CIRCULAR TO MUNICIPALITIES & PLANNING CONSULTANTS

**URBAN AND RURAL PLANNING ACT, 2000
PUBLIC HEARINGS, PLAN REGISTRATIONS & APPEALS
Updated October 2022**

In the Spring of 2020, a circular was sent to municipalities and planning consultants regarding public hearings, registrations, and appeals. At that time, as a result of the COVID-19 public health emergency, municipalities adapted to public health restrictions while still carrying on necessary activities. The prior circular is rescinded. The public health restrictions have been lifted, therefore municipalities should now make arrangements to adhere to the requirements outlined in the **Urban and Rural Planning Act, 2000 (URPA)**, including the requirement to hold in-person public hearings. Please note, in the Department's view, a municipality has the discretion to supplement the physical, in-person hearing event with a virtual component. For instance, an in-person hearing with an option for attending virtually is acceptable, as long as the legislative requirements are met, and public notices are suitably instructive.

With respect to the registration of plans and amendments, you may have experienced delays in releasing and registering plans. The Department is working diligently to release and register plans in a timely manner. To avoid delays, please ensure that you submit documents in accordance with our submission standards, which can be obtained from the Department or can be viewed online at: <https://www.gov.nl.ca/mpa/local-governance-division/submission-standards/>. Please send submissions to:

Local Governance and Land Use Planning Division
Department of Municipal and Provincial Affairs
4th Floor, West Block, Confederation Building
St. John's, NL A1B 4J6 landuseplanning@gov.nl.ca

Respecting the work of the Regional Appeal Boards, the Department has continued to accept appeals pursuant to subsection 42(1) of URPA. While hearings were suspended during certain points of the public health emergency, in-person appeal hearings have resumed, and Board members and staff have been working diligently to address appeals in a timely manner.

If you have any questions, please contact Lori Evoy, Director of Local Governance and Land Use Planning at 709-729-6528 or lorievoy@gov.nl.ca.

Sincerely,



JUDITH HEARN
Deputy Minister