

NSFM NEWS

BRIDGEWATER PAYS IT FORWARD

Town Shares Secrets of Success

Since Bridgewater's big win in the national **Smart Cities Challenge**, the biggest town on Nova Scotia's South Shore has been sharing its success story with cities all over the world.

"It has put an international spotlight on Bridgewater," Mayor David Mitchell said of the \$5 million winning entry to reduce energy poverty in the town.

Currently, about 20% of Bridgewater residents can't afford to pay for the energy to heat and power their home or fuel their car.



Mitchell will attend the **C40 Cities World Mayors Summit** in Copenhagen next week where he'll tell some of the

largest cities in the world about how the town will use innovation, data and connected technology to make energy more affordable.

They're planning a variety of initiatives, including making homes more energy efficient; setting up a local energy investment program; and making transportation cheaper and more accessible for everyone.

The international spotlight is now almost a regular occurrence for Bridgewater, a town of 8,700.



"It's in everyone's best interests for us to share this. I kind of equate it to Freeware or Shareware, it's not ours to keep," Mitchell says.

Last month, they presented to the **Art of City Building Conference** in Halifax; and later this month will travel to Mount Pearl, NL, to be the keynote in **Atlantic Idea Camp: How to be Smart, but Small**.

"We are honoured to participate," says Bridgewater's Sustainability Planner Leon de Vreede.

"We have to take time out of our work plan to share what we're doing with others, but we value it. So, we try our best to make those arrangements whenever possible."

In addition to the national and international invites, de Vreede has also been welcomed at several municipal councils in the Valley and the South Shore over the past year.

SHAREWARE

When they created their **Community Energy Investment Plan** in early 2018, Bridgewater produced a tool kit for other municipalities that's now available on their website.

"We try our best to disseminate our work," says Mitchell.

He's familiar with the political barriers that go up whenever the environment is raised.

"What you hear is 'Green means job losses, green means it costs money.'"

"But what I tell my colleagues around the globe is: 'Remove that political barrier. Because that's all a myth.'"

The economic potential in the Smart Cities win has no rival.

"This creates more economic diversity than any other group of business."



Road to Employment Equity

A conference this November will emphasize diversity and eliminating racism and discrimination.

Bridging the Gap will be held November 4 & 5 at the Halifax Convention Centre.

Hosted by the Valley African Nova Scotia Development Association, the conference will help bridge the demand of employment vacancies with the supply of qualified workers.

Register: www.vansda.ca



NEWS WANTED

This is the second edition of **NSFM NEWS**. It's the new e-newsletter for members of **The Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities**.

We're already getting ready for the next edition so send your feedback, news tips, items and ideas to:

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Middleton Cyclists Riding High with NSFAM Award

A Valley town keen on boosting its active transportation levels is seeing good returns on a pair of bike repair stations along the **Harvest Moon Trail**.

Their bike repair station project was one of two winners of NSFAM's **Carbon Surcharge Fund Award** in 2017. The town was awarded the \$1,125 prize at the fall conference that year.

"There's no bike shop in town, not even close, and people were coming into our recreation office looking for help," Middleton Director of Recreation and Community Development **Andy Kerr** told *NSFM News* Friday.

"We thought some self-maintenance might be in order."

The town installed two bike stations, about half a kilometer apart, close to the trail head.

Both are adjacent well-used parks, including the family-oriented **Centennial Park** and the youth-focused **Rotary Park**, next to the town skateboard bowl.

The stations are self-contained units with a pump and wrenches, as well as tools to remove and replace a tire.

If a few patches are needed to finish the job, there are a few minor replacement parts in the recreation department's head office nearby.

Once the stations were installed last year, the town organized two well-attended

workshops with a bike expert who taught basic repair.

Being known as a bike-friendly town is paying off for Middleton, which hosts a bike and run event over a weekend in early August.

This year, **The Heart of the Valley Century Ride** attracted close to 400 cyclists when it was held through the roads of the Annapolis Valley.

Carbon Surcharge Fund

Middleton is one of the seven winners of the Carbon Surcharge Fund, established in 2012.

That's when NSFAM Board of Directors passed a motion to add a \$5 carbon surcharge to spring and fall conference registration fees to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions generated from hosting the events.

All money collected is held in a special account and disbursed annually to support local, small-scale initiatives to help a municipality reduce energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions.

There's \$2,400 to hand out at this year's fall conference.

This week, the Carbon Surcharge Fund Committee met with NSFAM's Infrastructure and Sustainability Officer **Debbie Nielsen** to evaluate applications. The results will be announced in Halifax in November.