

LowCarbonCommunities Connect2



Supporting Nova Scotia in reducing our Greenhouse Gas
Emissions through Community Initiatives

*Program Description
2020- 2021*

Introduction

The Nova Scotia Department of Energy and Mines is committed to supporting locally driven projects that create long-lasting greenhouse gas (GHG) reductions in addition to helping communities develop bright ideas for low-carbon, clean energy, and clean transportation projects. **Low Carbon Communities (LCC)** and **Connect2 (C2)** are two streams of a Provincial Grant Program that have been designed to respond to the growing need from communities to offer clean transportation solutions and mitigate GHG emissions in the energy sector. **LCC & C2** aims to jump-start these local projects and initiatives by funding feasibility studies, designs, pilots, plans, engagement activities, and the implementation of a variety of clean energy initiatives throughout Nova Scotia.

Main objectives of the program:

Decarbonization of our energy sources
Learning by doing/knowledge transfer to grow our capacity and share our experience

Electrification of our community assets
Community lead/readiness approach to clean transportation and energy transformations

Program Overview

LOW CARBON COMMUNITIES (LCC) – Area of Focus: Low Carbon Energy

The LCC grant program will help communities at any readiness level in their clean energy and climate change planning, including supporting the process of development, engagement, and implementation. The program provides communities an opportunity to leverage funding presently available for energy projects and help applicants prepare the plans and studies necessary to implement projects. LCC will also help proponents capture more energy-cost-savings and job creation by promoting the new efficiency and solar programs supported by the Low Carbon Economy Fund.

The Province has allocated a fund of \$600,000 to the Department of Energy and Mines to advance low carbon energy projects throughout Nova Scotia for the 2020-2021 fiscal year.

CONNECT2 (C2) – Area of focus: Clean Transportation

The Connect2 grant program expands Nova Scotian communities' options for walking, biking, rolling, shared mobility, ZEVs, and transit while reducing GHG emissions. The program supports projects that create or enable clean transportation options and builds infrastructure for short-distance travel and modes of transport using alternative fuel. We're seeking projects that test new ideas or best practices that connect destinations, increase equity and access in transportation opportunities, and decrease dependency on personal vehicles by improving transportation hubs and integrated mobility.

The Province has allocated a fund of \$600,000 to the Department of Energy and Mines to advance clean transportation options throughout Nova Scotia for the 2020-2021 fiscal year.

Projects are eligible for funding up to 75% of their total project costs and **are due to be completed by September 30th, 2021.**

2020-2021 Project Submission Process

We will be accepting and reviewing submissions for the 2020-21 fiscal year on an ongoing basis until **September 30th, 2020** or until all funds have been allocated.

- Step 1** **READ AND REVIEW** the updated program description for eligibility requirements and guidelines to determine if your project fits under LCC or C2. Contact us if you have any ideas you want to discuss.
- Step 2** **EXPRESS YOUR INTEREST** by submitting a brief overview ([Expression of Interest\(EOI\)](#)) of your project idea. You will receive a confirmation that we have received your submission within two business days. The Program Coordinator may contact you for clarification before confirming the project’s eligibility.
- Step 3** **RECEIVE AN APPLICATION** upon the approval of your project idea/expression of interest. Please reach out if you have questions when filling out your application form. The applicant is responsible for completing the application in full. We will confirm the receipt of your submission via email.
- Step 4** **SUBMITTING YOUR APPLICATION PACKAGE** In addition to the application form you will also need to include the following documentation:
- a. confirmation of matching funds **(required)**
 - b. proof of permits and/or support from other provincial departments if project involves design/infrastructure/construction **(required)**
 - c. letters of support from community or partners
 - d. visual materials (i.e. map of location)
 - e. any additional relevant information

NOTE: Applicants are expected to ensure all forms are completed and that supporting documents are provided at the time of submission.

Questions? Staff are available year-round to discuss potential projects and partnerships. Please contact one of the Program Coordinators:

LCC:	C2:
Catherine Chase at 902-424-4073, or lowcarboncommunities@novascotia.ca	Salima Medouar at 902-717-7026, Gabrielle Riley Gallagher at 902-424-8090, or connect2@novascotia.ca

Program Categories

Low Carbon Communities – Project Categories:

Advanced Buildings

Projects under this category may include:

- Energy audits and design plans for community buildings (non-electric)
- Deep energy retrofits and/or innovative heating systems
- Benchmarking, modeling, data analysis that informs energy efficiency measures
- Advanced building design and plans

Low Carbon Communities will provide grants of up to **\$75,000** per project in this category.

Clean Electricity & Energy Transformation

Projects under this category may include:

- Plans and feasibility studies for: smart grids & storage, district energy, and/or solar & solar gardens.
- New energy financing mechanisms
- Community or neighbourhood energy planning
- Project strategies and implementation plans

Low Carbon Communities will provide grants of up to **\$75,000** per project in this category.

Connect2 – Project Categories:

Active Transportation Infrastructure & Design

Projects under this category may include:

- Tactical urbanism that test approaches to design and infrastructure with temporary installation of bike lanes, public space and active transportation routes
- Support for minimum bike grid infrastructure or design
- Minimum bike grid network plans
- Engineering or feasibility studies

Connect2 will provide grants of up to **\$100,000** per project in this category.

Clean Fleets and Shared Mobility

Projects under this category may include:

- Shared mobility services pilot projects
- Bicycle fleet pilot projects
- Zero-emission fleet pilot projects (max. \$15,000/vehicle within grant request)
- Zero Emission Vehicle strategies

Connect2 will provide grants of up to **\$75,000** per project in this category.

Low Carbon Communities & Connect2 Program – Shared Project Category:

Capacity Building and Community Engagement

Projects under this category may include:

- Municipal staff training, capacity building, or networks
- Education – energy literacy initiatives
- Marketing and communication – social marketing and support for existing low-carbon programs
- Public engagement activities
- Community energy conservation challenges and other education and awareness campaigns

Community Building and Engagement will provide grants of up to **\$50,000** per project in this category.

Please Note: Low Carbon Communities or Connect2 funding will not exceed the value of 75% the total project cost and/or the category capped value. The examples provided above are illustrative but not exhaustive. We welcome project ideas outside those listed, provided they align with a category.

The program coordinator will confirm the category your project is eligible under.

Eligibility

Eligible Applicants

This program welcomes applications from community groups, municipalities, universities, First Nations Bands, and non-profit organizations that have community connected projects. Non-profits must be registered entities under *Nova Scotia Registry of Joint Stock Companies*. Applicants demonstrating connections and or partnerships with surrounding communities, local organizations, utilities, and private sector businesses will be viewed more favourably.

Program Specific Eligibility Criteria

LCC & C2 Eligibility Criteria	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The primary partner must be based in Nova Scotia and ideally will be based in the community or region the project will serve; Project should be identified as a community priority, or identified in a community plan/municipal document, or should have a letter of support from Council; You must be able to clearly demonstrate the project’s ability to reduce GHGs; You must demonstrate that you have all necessary permits at the time of application; You must provide proof of matching funds and/or in-kind contributions; and Multiple submissions are allowed; however, the priority level of each submissions must be identified. 	
C2 Ineligible Projects	LCC Ineligible Projects
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any active transportation infrastructure that does not connect two major destinations/services within a reasonable distance; Sidewalks are not eligible under Connect2; Trails that are primarily used for recreational purposes and activities that are not commute related; Trails that allow Off Highway Vehicle (OHV) use (e.g. ATVs, snowmobiles, off-road motorcycles); AT infrastructure projects constructed alongside of provincial transportation infrastructure projects; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Projects that are substantially a single large capital expense (example: purchase of solar panels); Projects that have not demonstrated strong community support; Projects does not materially advance the objectives of the Pan Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Change

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operational costs for charging infrastructure, fleets, transit and shared-mobility services; Organizational administration and restructuring; 	
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LCC & C2 Funding Guidelines

LCC: This grant will cover up to **75% of eligible costs**, up to a maximum of **\$75,000** for both Advanced Buildings and Clean Electricity and Energy Transformation categories, and up to a maximum of **\$50,000** for Community Building and Engagement projects.

CONNECT2: This grant will cover up to **75% of eligible costs**, up to a maximum of **\$100,000** for the infrastructure and design projects, up to a maximum of **\$75,000** for clean fleets and shared mobility, and up to a maximum of **\$50,000** for community building and engagement projects.

All reasonable and direct project costs are eligible for funding under this program. NS Department of Energy and Mines staff reserve the right to question/decline funding for costs that are deemed unreasonable.

For all projects, applicants must provide a matching fund and/or in-kind contribution that meets the following criteria:

- In-kind contribution:**
 - Qualified in-kind contributions include donated material, equipment and labour from another party (in-kind reporting form will be provided)
 - Incremental costs incurred by the applicant or partners must be in association with the proposed project. To be eligible, incremental costs must be new costs incurred because of the initiative, including new space provided for the project or volunteer labour associated with the project.
- Remaining funding:**
 - Funding can include other sources of municipal, federal provincial or community government contributions and/or other sources of funding, including resources from community organizations, non-profits or businesses. However, no more than 75% of the total project cost can be funded through the provincial government.

For more information and resources, assessment criteria, and examples of potential funding partners, please visit the “LCC/C2 Additional Resources” section of our website or contact one of our Program Coordinators.

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