

April 18, 2018

Privy Council Office
Attn: Impact and Innovation Unit
Room 1000
85 Sparks Street
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A3

Re: Support for Town of Bridgewater Smart Cities Challenge Grant Application

To the Smart Cities Challenge jury panel,

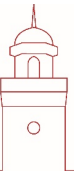
This is a letter confirming the full support and confidence of the Department of Community Development at Acadia University for the Town of Bridgewater to address energy poverty by pursuing the Smart Cities Challenge grant.

The Department of Community Development's works to develop healthy, socially just and sustainable communities and lifestyles, with a particular focus on towns and municipalities across Nova Scotia. We do this through a combination of teaching, research and service and have been engaged with the Town of Bridgewater and its Energize Bridgewater initiative across five years. Dr. John Colton and I from the Department have been academic advisors on the Energize Bridgewater Advisory Committee and our students have been engaged in a number of elements of this work over time in both research and service roles.

Energy poverty is a critical issue across Nova Scotia and particularly in the Town of Bridgewater as it impacts individual and community wellness in addition to slowing the critical transition to a sustainable energy economy. It is unacceptable and unjust that people are sacrificing basic needs such as food and health in order to pay energy bills. This is a complex and multi-faceted problem that does not have simple solutions. We critically require action research to examine a range of strategies to effectively address this problem, and our Department has an interest and expertise in supporting research and program development on these issues in line with our mission.

We believe the Town of Bridgewater is the ideal municipality to work on research and program development to address this issue given its proven track record in innovation for community sustainable development at the municipal level. The awards it has received speak for themselves. Moreover, the Community Development Department receives many requests each year to support towns and rural areas through action research, and therefore we must prioritize where we devote our limited resources based on the effectiveness of the partner organization. With respect to sustainable energy and community development issues such as energy poverty, Bridgewater, given its track record, commitment and leadership resources, is our number one choice as a partner in this province. Investing resources in Bridgewater has a tremendous payback for all involved. Our Department is committed to continuing to work with Bridgewater on these issues through providing research expertise for specific initiatives and through engaging students to work on the project as part of their educational programs.

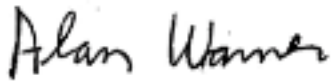
It is important to recognize that energy poverty is an issue that interconnects with many aspects of social inequality, poverty and well being. Addressing these issues will improve the housing stock, increase housing affordability in the longer term, and enable and empower low income individuals and families to divert energy payments to other critical basic needs. It is one aspect of a holistic approach to achieving community development and well-being, which is the heart of our Department's mission and work. Bridgewater has already demonstrated its leadership through Energize Bridgewater and is committed to not only addressing this issue within



Bridgewater, but also to sharing expertise and knowledge on these issues across the country. As an academic institution, we have a particular interest and commitment in working with Bridgewater on this knowledge sharing process.

In summary, we are very pleased to be a long-standing partner with the Town of Bridgewater through Energize Bridgewater and look forward to strengthening this partnership as we move forward. We strongly support the Smart Cities grant application and cannot think of a more deserving or more effective organization to contribute new knowledge and programming to reduce energy poverty in Bridgewater, and ultimately through knowledge sharing, across Nova Scotia and Canada.

Sincerely,



Alan Warner
Professor
Community Development