

Antigonish Community Transit receives \$74K grant

LAURA HUBBARD

✉ laurahubbard@thecasket.ca

The most recent round of Nova Scotia Moves grants have been awarded, and an Antigonish organization is the recipient of \$74,084.

The grants, which offer organizations supporting sustainable transportation at all levels of groups, can reach \$200,000. The Antigonish Women's Resource Centre was awarded the funds to pilot an innovative transit service in the Antigonish

area: the Antigonish Community Transit group.

"It's a grant program that is really developed out of our sustainable transportation strategy," Maurice Smith, minister of transportation and infrastructure renewal, said.

Smith said the women's centre applied for the funding to complete a study to come up with a pilot program to involve and integrate transit service in Antigonish.

"That's something we don't have yet, and we have so many

students without cars and seniors that can't make it to appointments," he said.

Smith said the goal of the grant program is to have Nova Scotia communities see growth in sustainable transportation but also for communities to become connected through these transportation means. The grants are expected to be half of the full projects' cost.

The Antigonish Community Transit group is working on becoming a society rather than a group of individuals.

Alida Campbell, project officer for the group, said their next step is to complete community consultations regarding what type of services would be best implemented for the community.

"We're really looking at trying to work with the town to look at active transportation," Campbell said. "We want Antigonish to have a better bike culture and walking culture and have those ideas be user-friendly and appealing."

Campbell also said the group is

looking at several models of ride-share programs or bus transportation for the town and county.

"This is a rural community and if people don't have transportation, it really affects everything in their life: getting groceries or going to doctors appointments, or being socially excluded because they can't get out."

The Town of Antigonish was also awarded \$15,000 to develop an active transportation plan, which will focus on bike and walking trails.

The Casket - Sep 11/13