

# A JOURNEY TO NET ZERO

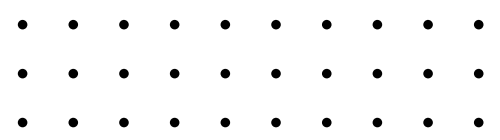
## Community Retrofits in Pictou County

A NET-ZERO APPROACH TO REVITALIZE  
NON-PROFITS AND COMMUNITY HALLS

Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities

April 21, 2026





# CORNERSTONE OF THE COMMUNITY

Rural Halls have a long-standing history in their communities.

They hold the identity, memories, and the social fabric of the community.

Often, the last spaces for inclusive, free, recreational and social gatherings.

“Over 46% of Atlantic Canadians live rural.”



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# LOSING THESE LAST COMMUNITY ASSETS

Non-Profit Owned and  
Operated Halls are Witnessing:

- Fewer Volunteers
- Increased Energy Poverty
- Neglected Maintenance
- Forced Closures and Sell-offs



# KEY CHALLENGES OF GOING IT ALONE

## Individual Halls Often Lack:

- Staff Capacity to Coordinate Retrofits
- Subject Matter Experts
- Project Funding
- Bridge Financing
- Access To Larger Grant Opportunities
- Local Qualified/Trusted Contractors

“It can be hard to find experienced contractors willing to travel 2+ hours.



# VISION FOR NET-ZERO ADOPTION

Save Community Assets  
By Eliminating Energy Bills

## The Solution:

- Capture Community Interest
- Keep Upgrades Affordable
- Use Proven Retrofit Methods
- Support Local Contractors
- Increase Community Resiliency



“Nobody wants to fundraise  
just to pay the oil bill.”

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# CHAMPIONS & NAVIGATORS

## Avoid Going Alone

### Champions:

- Early Engagement and Buy-in
- Introductions to Decision Makers
- Promote and Drive Local Interest

### Navigators:

- Single Point of Contact for Halls
- Expert Technical Guidance
- Access to Funding Programs
- Contractor Selection & Coordination



# PICTOU COUNTY NET ZERO PROJECT

## Enrolled:

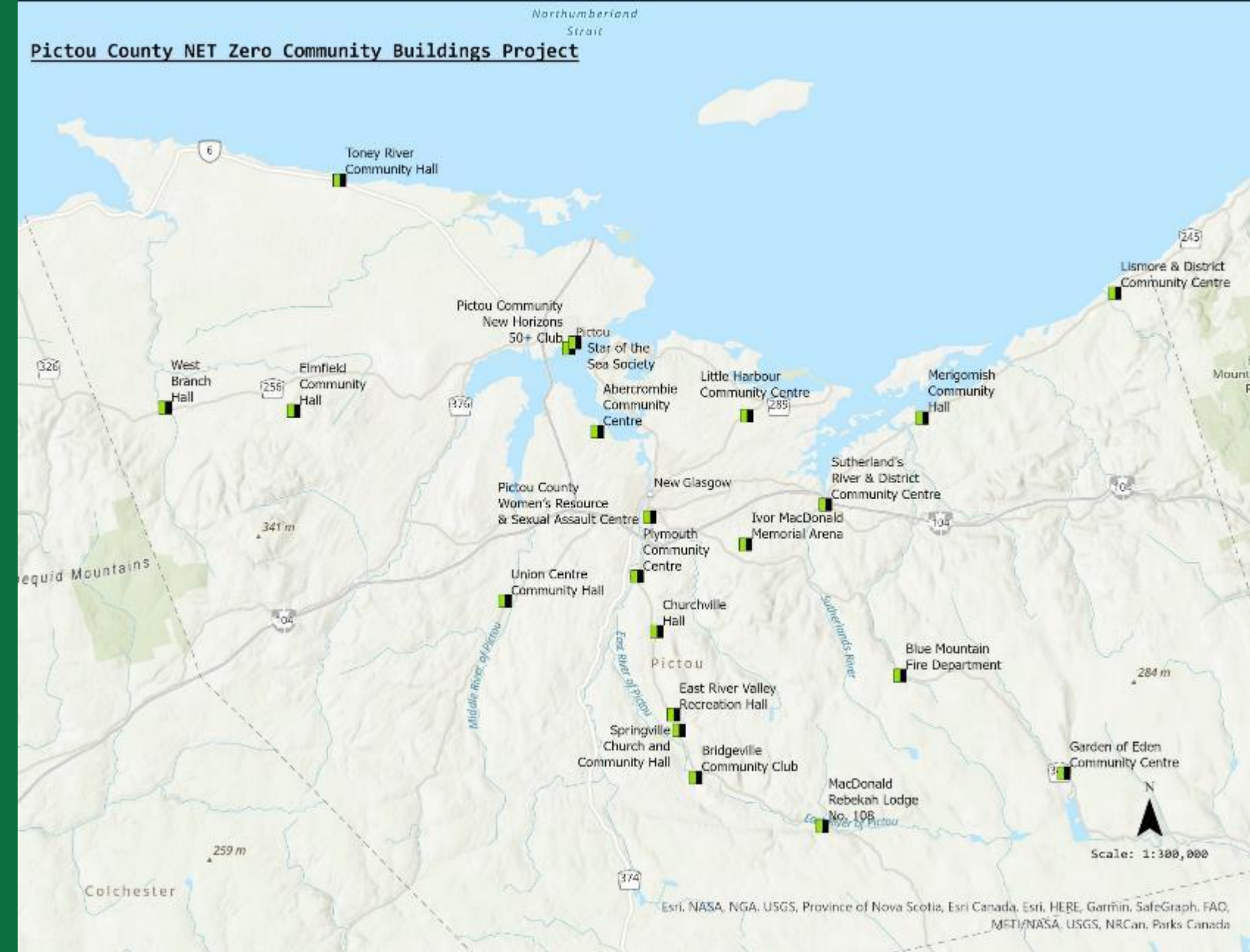
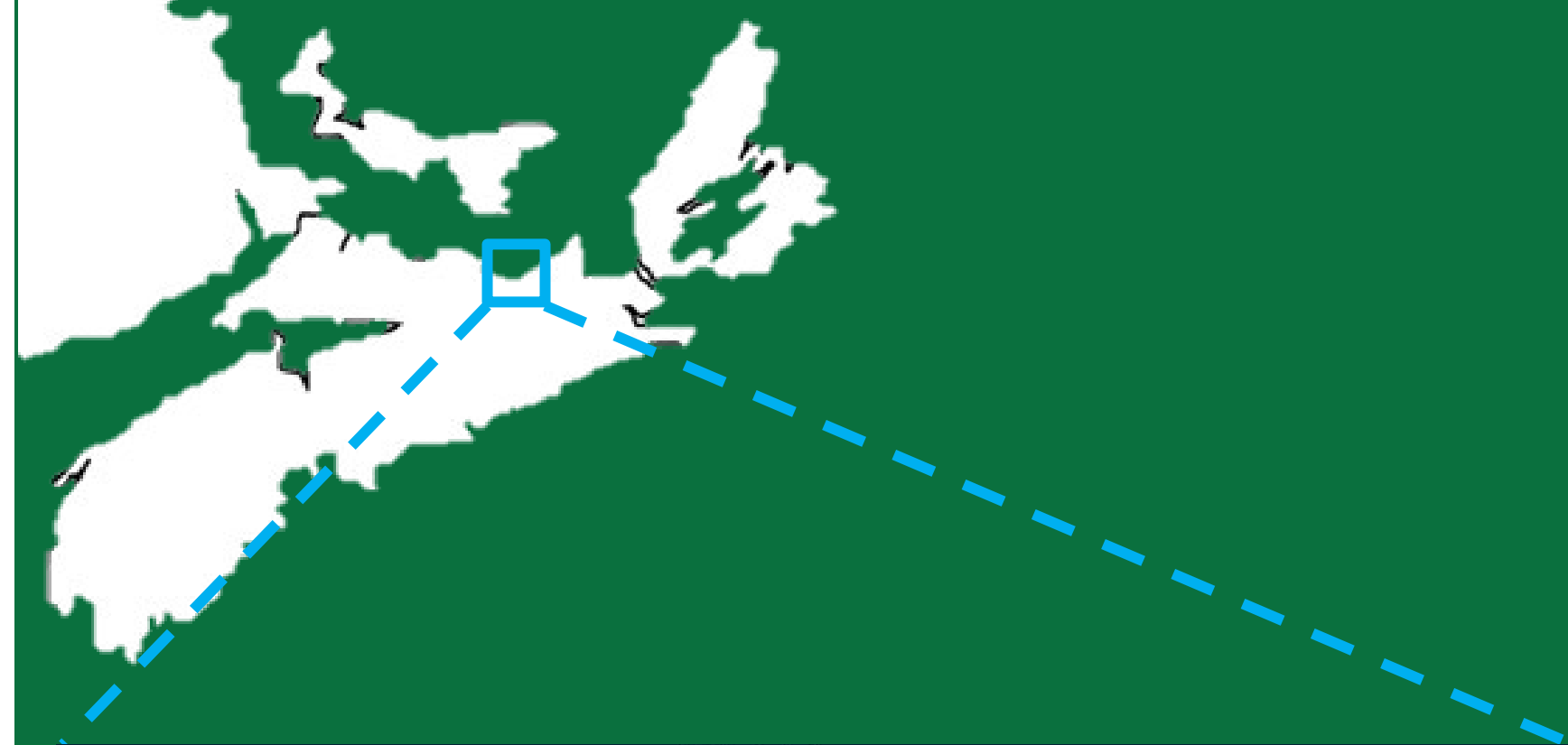
- 21 Non-Profit Community Centres
- Over 40 Letters of Support

## Created:

- \$1.35M In Stacked Grants and Rebates
- Centralized Draw-Down Fund

## Achieved:

- Saved \$115,000 in Annual Energy Bills
- Eliminated 30,000L of Oil/year
- Offset 1,200 tonnes of GHGs
- Installed over 400 Solar Panels



NOVA SCOTIA FEDERATION  
OF MUNICIPALITIES



UNIVERSAL UPGRADES

Identify The Opportunities

- o Energy Audit and Condition Walkthrough

Eliminate Energy Waste

- o Address Failures in the Building Envelope
- o Increase Insulation (Basement, Walls, Attic)
- o Add Heating and Lighting Controls

Reduce Costs with Efficiency and Electrify

- o Convert to LED Lighting (interior and exterior)
- o Install Cold Climate Heat Pumps
- o Upgrade Electrical Service (as required)

Eliminate Electricity Costs with Renewables

- o Add On-site Solar PV



“Grateful to have made our building efficient and usable in every season!”

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# GARDEN OF EDEN COMMUNITY CENTRE

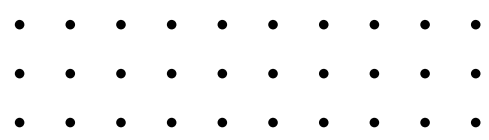
A Community Showpiece  
Eliminated Oil and Power Bills

## Upgrades Included:

- Increased Insulation
  - Attic R60
  - Basement R24
- Removal of Oil Furnace and Oil Tank
- Cold Climate Central Heat Pump
- 10kW Solar PV

“ Our January power bill  
already has a credit from  
the solar panels!





# BREATHING NEW LIFE INTO OLD SPACES

## Measured Successes

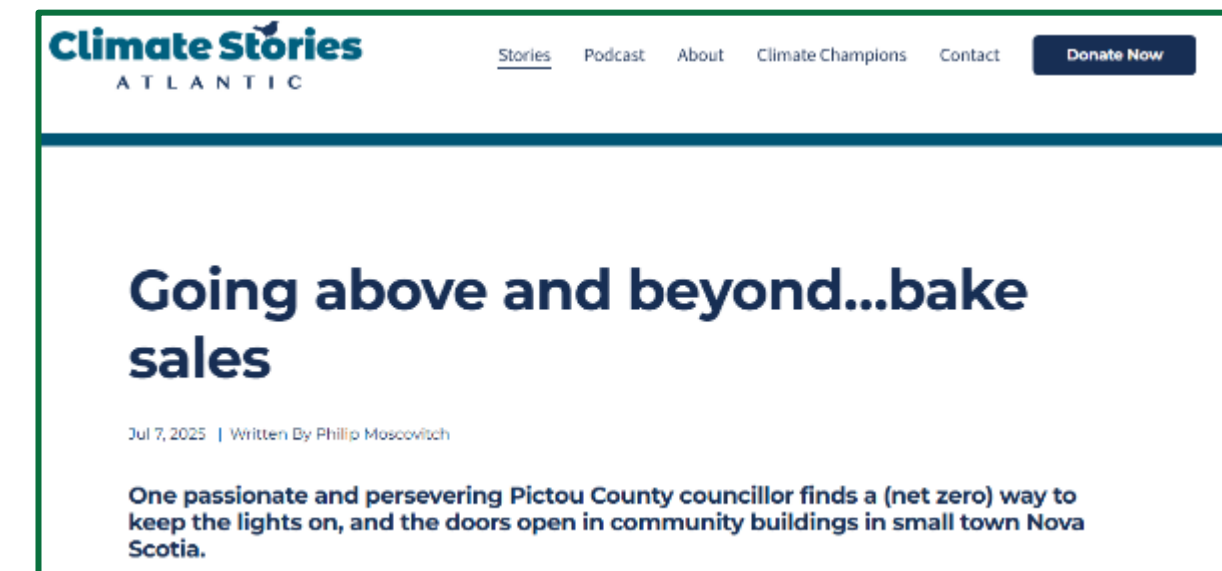
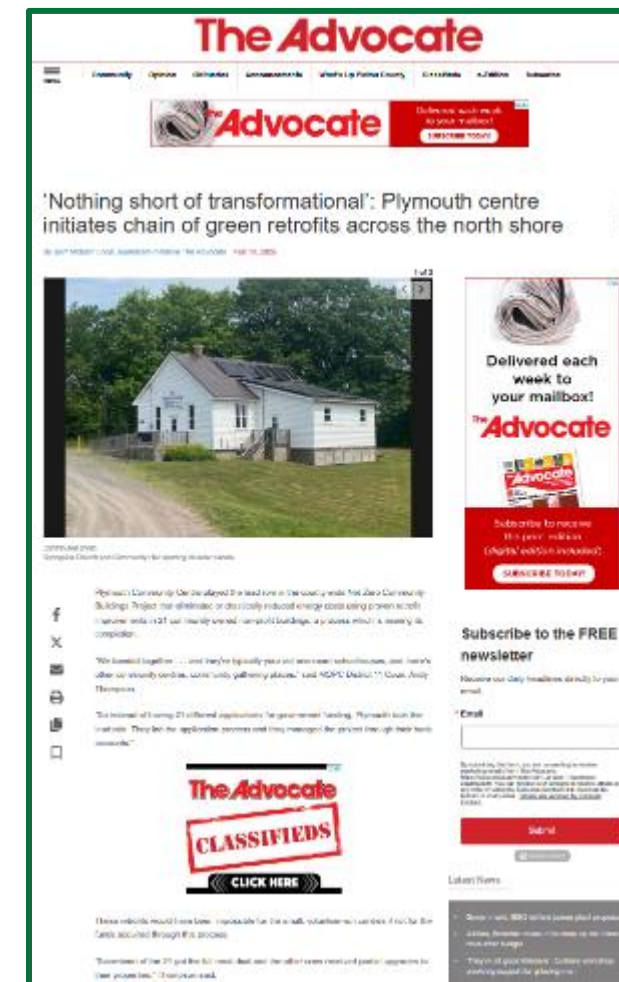
- Increased Use in Community Spaces
- Renewed Volunteer Participation
- Overlap With Comfort Centres
- Eliminated Their Highest Bills
- Enhanced Community Resiliency
- Demonstrating Cookie-Cutter Solutions
- \$115,000/year in Community Energy Savings
- Eliminates 30,000 Litres in Annual Oil Use
- Offsets 1,200 Tonnes of Annual Emissions



# SCALING UP SUCCESS

## We've Built a Model That Works & Others Are Stepping Up To Support

- **Provincial Government:** Support and collaboration through CCTH and ANSA
- **HCI3:** Funding for outreach to rural and marginalized communities
- **Municipal Supports:** *Climate Ready Infrastructure Service* to Assess Community Halls
- **Individual Interests:** Salvation Army, Legions, volunteer fire halls, small towns and municipalities



# COMMUNITY THRIVES IN THRIVING BUILDINGS



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