

For Immediate Release

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Mount Pearl setting sights on becoming the *Silicon Valley* of the east coast

City competing in Smart Cities Challenge to build a Technology Sandbox and transform its economy

MOUNT PEARL, NL — The City of Mount Pearl is facing the same challenges as many other communities throughout Canada — there are more people leaving than coming, the population is aging, and new graduates and young families are often choosing to leave the province in search of careers and opportunities elsewhere.

In this current day reality, there are two options for cities like Mount Pearl to consider: 1) sit back, assume the city has run its natural lifecycle, and accept it; or, 2) dig in, tap the potential and expertise that exists, and re-invent itself and prosper again. Mount Pearl is choosing the latter.

Today, the City of Mount Pearl announced its intention to enter the Smart Cities Challenge, a national competition that challenges communities to think outside the box and generate big, bold ideas to improve the lives of their residents through innovation, data and connected technology.

Mount Pearl is the first municipality in Newfoundland and Labrador to officially announce its intention to compete. The initiative has brought together a diverse group of citizens across many ages, industries and interests in a common pursuit. The successful cities from across Canada are competing for one of four awards:

- One prize of up to \$50 million (all communities)
- Two prizes of up to \$10 million (communities with populations under 500,000)
- One prize of up to \$5 million (communities with populations under 30,000)

“Mount Pearl has always been a progressive city that looks for ways to improve the quality of life of those who choose to live and work here,” said His Worship Dave Aker, Mayor of Mount Pearl. “We have a real opportunity here to push things even further, and transform our city, by building something significant that attracts and retains the best minds and the brightest companies.”

Mount Pearl’s Smart Cities initiative, branded A1Next, is a play on Mount Pearl’s postal code and representative of the inclusivity of the project. The A1Next initiative has been a consultative project. City representatives have met with students, seniors, the business community and others, to assess how people who live and work in Mount Pearl are feeling and what they want for the future of their city.

Office of the Mayor

There is still more to learn and hear – the City would like to hear from everyone who calls Mount Pearl home. Until April 11, 2018, residents can provide input on how to make Mount Pearl a “Smart City” and learn more about getting involved by visiting A1Next.ca.

The deadline for submissions for this round of the Federal Government’s Smart Cities Challenge is April 24.

- 30 -

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