

# Safe and Connected Communities

The province's investments in programs, services, and key infrastructure can help connect people and communities to opportunities. Connected communities support innovation and drive a strong, diverse economy.

## **Budget 2018–19 includes**

### Community Supports and Connections

- \$16.2 million increase in the Disability Support program to help more people with disabilities move from institutions into the community, to enhance respite care, and to fund more complex cases
- \$2.1 million to help create eight small options homes and two community options homes, for a total of \$4.2 million over two years
- \$3 million to double the tax-free poverty reduction credit to \$500 through quarterly payments of \$125 to eligible Nova Scotians
- \$4 million for initiatives under the Blueprint to End Poverty as part of a four-year, \$20 million commitment — bringing the two-year total to \$6 million
- \$3.4 million to fully exempt child support payments from income assistance calculations
- \$2.8 million to expand options for children in care and support family members who care for children
- \$1.3 million more for the Maintenance Enforcement program, which helps children receive money owed to them — with investments in technology to improve both consistent enforcement and client service
- \$2 million to help prevent domestic violence, the first year of a four-year commitment
- \$270,000 to support the recently opened Domestic Violence Court in Halifax
- \$710,000 more to African Nova Scotian Affairs to fund new programs and initiatives and advance work to address systemic racism and discrimination
- Continuing work to help African Nova Scotians in North Preston, East Preston, Cherrybrook, Lincolnville, and Sunnyville get land title
- \$2 million, which includes an increase of \$50,000, to help make small businesses and communities more accessible
- \$1.8 million to improve access to courts by making them barrier-free

### Affordable Housing

- \$12.4 million more to improve Housing Nova Scotia's public housing buildings
- \$3 million to offer 400 more rent supplements to low income Nova Scotians, the first year of a three-year commitment to expand the rent supplement program by an additional \$9 million annually
- \$250,000 to continue supporting first-time home buyers with their down payment

## Rural High-Speed Internet

- Outlining an approach in the coming months to ensure progress is made to bring better internet service to communities, leveraging a significant provincial investment made in 2017–18 of an estimated \$120 million to help secure private sector, municipal, and federal government investment

## Highways, Infrastructure, and Transportation

- \$60 million more for a total of \$285 million in capital spending on highways, bridges, and roads – which includes \$10 million more to improve gravel roads (for a total of \$20 million)
- Multi-year investment in projects to twin 100-series highways, including Highway 101 (Three Mile Plains to Falmouth), Highway 103 (Upper Tantallon to Ingramport), and Highway 104 (Sutherlands River to Antigonish)
- \$5 million increase to highway maintenance budget to improve safety on roads
- \$2.4 million more to expand and support community transportation under SHIFT
- \$500,000 for a new community beautification program for main streets and communities
- \$1 million in continued funding to expand trails across Nova Scotia