

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****East Coast Credit Union Wins National ESG Award**

**Antigonish, NS, May 18<sup>th</sup>, 2022**— East Coast Credit Union (East Coast CU) is honoured to share that we are the recipient of the Canadian Credit Union Association's National Environment, Social and Governance (ESG) Award. We received this honour for our contributions that help the community of St. Andrews, Nova Scotia meet its strategic goal of reducing the town's carbon footprint. East Coast CU is committed to supporting practices and initiatives that promote a greener and more sustainable future in the communities where we live and work.

The St. Andrews Branch of East Coast CU is situated centrally in the rural community, on a large plot of land. Known as a strong community partner, the community of St. Andrews asked for our support with a two-part request. First, to house a ground-mount solar system on our land behind the St. Andrews Senior Housing Authority (S.A.S.H.A), a community run, non-profit assisted living facility, to improve their heating efficiency and to make it more affordable for its residents. Second, to use our land to extend the St. Andrews walking and biking trail, to promote healthy living and nurture an appreciation for nature. Additionally, the expanded trail offers community members the option to choose a greener alternative to get around, reducing vehicular traffic.

East Coast CU's partnership with S.A.S.H.A. began in 2000 when we donated a section of land, provided financial assistance, and spent time working with the community to obtain support from the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation to create the affordable housing complex for local seniors. We were thrilled to be a part of the sustainable upgrade to the seniors complex that we helped make a reality more than 20 years ago.

In its first 11 months of operation, the Solar PV System generated 37,957 kWh to create an estimated 20.1 tonnes of carbon reduction.

"If it wasn't for East Coast Credit Union and their great community spirit, in giving us the land required to install environmentally friendly solar panels for our seniors housing facility, we could not have completed this very worthwhile project. The community and the environment will benefit for years to come because of East Coast CU's generosity," said Bernard Hanifen, Chair of St. Andrews Community Partnership and of the St. Andrews Seniors Housing Association.

The now expanded walking and biking trail provides residents more options for an active and healthy lifestyle with a safer walking and biking route to the hub of the community, which includes S.A.S.H.A., East Coast CU, and the local



convenience store, school (grades 1-7), church, fire department, post office, and curling rink. The connection of the trail to these local businesses improves accessibility to core community organizations.

“Supporting local projects like this one is very important to East Coast Credit Union and we believe this trail has added value to the community and provided another means for residents to get out and be active,” said Sally Van de Wiel, VP Operations East Coast CU.

See more about this story by watching the [ESG Award Video](#).

### **About East Coast Credit Union**

East Coast Credit Union is a dynamic, full-service financial co-operative locally owned by its members. We use a member-first approach to partner with individuals and businesses to help them achieve financial success. East Coast CU is the largest credit union in Atlantic Canada with over \$1 billion in assets and serving more than 42,000 members. With a branch network spanning from Cape Breton to Halifax including a branch in the rural community of St. Andrews, members have more access when and where they need it. A strong credit union, East Coast CU is focused on investing in communities, providing competitive products and new services, and building relationships with its members’ unique financial needs in mind. Convenient and flexible banking options means our members can do their banking any way, anywhere! We are proud to be a part of the credit union system ranked first in customer service excellence, out of all financial institutions, for 17 years in a row. The staff at East Coast CU is committed to supporting the communities in which we live and work through not only financial support but also countless volunteer hours.

### **About The Community of St. Andrews, Nova Scotia**

St. Andrews is a rural suburban community in the Canadian province of Nova Scotia, in Antigonish County. The community of St. Andrews puts a premium on self-sufficiency, community spirit, and care for others. Their success has not only motivated community members to volunteer their time to contribute to local projects, but it has also inspired other communities in the region to follow suit.

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