

**2013/2014
Annual Report**



Western Economic
Diversification Canada

Diversification de l'économie
de l'Ouest Canada

Canada 

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CHAIRPERSON'S MESSAGE

Community Futures Winnipeg River (CFWR) is dedicated to community economic development and our activities help build capacity at the local and regional levels strengthening the communities we live in. Our services have helped entrepreneurs start new businesses and create employment, and have helped organizations improve the economic and social conditions of their communities.

CFWR's service area is more than 13,000 square kilometres, reaching from the city outskirts to the Ontario border and from the Trans-Canada Highway to the east side of Lake Winnipeg as far north as Seymourville. It encompasses a culturally diverse population and has a varied economic base that includes agriculture, forestry, mining, tourism, retail, and various service agencies.

Our organization is part of the larger network of 269 Community Futures offices operating across Canada that support community-based economic development projects, business development and training to entrepreneurs and non-profit organizations. Since the inception of the Community Futures Program, CFs across Canada have helped 114,306 entrepreneurs and invested over \$3.9 billion directly into the rural economy. In Manitoba, there are 16 Community Futures offices that employ 65 people and are directed by Boards that involve over 200 volunteers.

CFWR experienced a year of change that began with the retirement of Executive Director, Mary Greber. Jimm Simon served a six-month trial period as Executive Director but the Board decided to go in a different direction. Business Development Coordinator, Michelle Wazny resigned to take on a new employment opportunity. In addition to losing key human resources, financial challenges were also being felt with operational expenses continuing to increase and revenue remaining the same. After much deliberation, the Board determined to downsize from five to four staff members on a one-year trial basis. Job descriptions were revised and both internal and external hiring processes were conducted with the following results:

- Executive Director and Community Development Coordinator: Sharalyn Reitlo
- Business Development and Self Employment Coordinator: Lindsey Otto
- Financial and Self Employment Administrator: Kandace Nagy
- Office Administrator: Kim Oswald

Despite transition and downsizing, staff maintained a high volume and quality of service delivery in all areas. Some of the highlights of our achievements over the past year include:

- 683 business services were provided to 157 clients and resulted in 23 new businesses, 31 jobs and \$409,031 leveraged from other funding sources.
- 5 loans were provided for a total value of \$230,585. Lending services resulted in 5 new/expanded businesses; 7 full-time and 6 part-time jobs; and \$292,450 leveraged.
- Our community economic development services provided assistance to 35 projects, 19 community-based plans and leveraged \$112,808.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank and acknowledge our staff and board members who bring expertise, energy and dedication to providing services to entrepreneurs and our communities. I would also acknowledge our ongoing partnership with Western Economic Diversification Canada and thank them for their continued support and commitment to the Community Futures program.

**Clay McMurren, Chairperson
Community Futures Winnipeg River**

Introduction

Community Futures Winnipeg River (CFWR) is a regional non-profit corporation whose mission is to pursue continued growth and prosperity for the North Eastman region by supporting sustainable community economic development. CFWR serves a large geographic region including eleven municipalities, three Northern Affairs communities, one First Nation, and two provincial parks.

The Corporation has been in operation since 1988 and is managed by a volunteer Board of Directors comprised of representatives of our member communities and Directors at Large. The Directors bring considerable expertise to the organization. Their participation on our Board ensures that the needs of their community are reflected in our planning and the development of our programs and services.

Community economic development is what defines CFWR. The core services provided fall within the areas of Business Development and Community Development. The types of people we serve are aspiring entrepreneurs with a new business idea; existing businesses that hope to expand; a person or group with a new project idea; a community group wanting to examine their direction; and boards/businesses requiring training to enhance skills and knowledge.

Business Development Services

- ◆ Business loans up to \$150,000
- ◆ Business planning and counselling
- ◆ Entrepreneurial training and development
- ◆ Accessing business resources
- ◆ Self Employment Program

Community Development Services

- ◆ Strategic and operational planning
- ◆ Board training and development
- ◆ Project development assistance
- ◆ Non-profit corporation development
- ◆ Regional partnership development

In addition to our core services, we also host a regional resource library for the World Trade Centre Winnipeg (previously Canada/Manitoba Business Service Centre); maintain two community access computers for public access to high-speed internet; and house a Service Canada outreach site every Thursday.

We would like to acknowledge and thank Western Economic Diversification Canada (WD) for their continued commitment to the Community Futures Program. We are also fortunate for continued support of Manitoba Jobs and the Economy (previously Employment Manitoba) for the delivery of the Self Employment Program. Valuable alliances we have formed with other government departments, the World Trade Centre Winnipeg, municipalities, Chambers of Commerce, Community Development Corporations and other local organizations have also contributed significantly to the work of advancing community economic development in our region.

Community Futures exist to strengthen the capacity of businesses, volunteer groups, communities, and the region as a whole to improve the economic and social conditions of their communities. Our region is as strong as the people and the combined efforts of all sectors. This Annual Report highlights the major activities and accomplishments of Community Futures Winnipeg River over the past year.

Board of Directors and Staff

Board of Directors:

Clay McMurren, Chairperson	LGD of Pinawa
Gus Wruck, Vice-Chairperson	RM of Lac du Bonnet
Norm Plato, Secretary-Treasurer	Town of Lac du Bonnet
Karen Lalonde	RM of Springfield
Florence Campbell	RM of Reynolds
Roland Dandeneau	Member at Large
Allan Courchane	Sagkeeng First Nation
Gord Watson	Town of Powerview-Pine Falls
Hermann Saxler	RM of Whitemouth
Glen Dudeck	RM of Brokenhead
Vacant	Town of Beausejour
Vacant	RM of Alexander
Vacant	Community of Seymourville
Vacant	Community of Manigotagan
Vacant	Community of Bissett
Vacant	Whiteshell Provincial Park

Staff:

Sharalyn Reitlo	Executive Director and Community Development Coordinator
Lindsey Otto	Business Development and Self Employment Coordinator
Kandace Nagy	Financial and Self Employment Administrator
Kim Oswald	Office Administrator

Our Board members provide the direction and leadership that is instrumental to the success of the Community Futures Program in the region. They are to be commended for their dedication to the Corporation. During the 2013/14 fiscal year, they contributed 539 hours of volunteer time working to promote and advance community and business development for the betterment of the region.

We would like to acknowledge the contributions of the following past Board members who worked with us during the past fiscal year:

- Bob Bodnaruk, RM of Springfield
- Bev Dube, Town of Powerview-Pine Falls
- Jeff Goethals, Town of Beausejour
- Kim Robertson, RM of Alexander

We would also like to acknowledge the contributions that Michelle Wazny made to CFWR in the nine years that she worked as the Business Development and Self Employment Coordinator. Michelle is greatly missed and we wish her well in her new job opportunity. Best wishes also to Jimm Simon in his future endeavors.

Partnerships

Partnerships are vital to advancing community economic development within the region and much of what we have accomplished this year was possible because of the support and involvement of many partners, including:

- Western Economic Diversification Canada
- Manitoba Jobs and the Economy
- Community Futures Manitoba
- The World Trade Centre Winnipeg
- Aboriginal Business Service Network
- Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Development
- Manitoba Healthy Living and Seniors
- MB4Youth
- Manitoba Education and Advanced Learning
- Entrepreneurship Manitoba
- J.U.S.T. Training Corporation
- Women's Enterprise Centre
- Tribal Wi-Chi-Way-Win Capital Corporation
- First Peoples Economic Growth Fund
- Business Development Bank of Canada
- Sunova Credit Union
- Futurpreneur Canada
- Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs
- Manitoba Local Government
- Manitoba Culture, Heritage and Tourism
- Manitoba Innovation, Energy & Mines
- Community Connections
- Service Canada
- Manitoba Model Forest
- Winnipeg River Learning Centre
- Fillmore Riley
- Sunrise School Division
- AIM for Work
- Winnipeg River Arts Council
- Recreation Opportunities for Children Eastman
- Interlake-Eastman Regional Health Authority
- Independent Living Resource Centre
- CBDC Restigouche Inc.
- Wings of Power
- Association of Community Living - Beausejour
- Society for Manitobans with Disabilities
- Network for Entrepreneurs with Disabilities
- Literacy Partners of Manitoba
- Beausejour Brokenhead Development Corporation
- Pinawa Community Development Corporation
- St-Georges Community Development Corporation
- Grand Beach and Area Development Corporation
- Seymourville Community Development Corporation
- Whitemouth Community Development Corporation
- Beausejour & District Chamber of Commerce
- Lac du Bonnet & District Chamber of Commerce
- Falcon, West Hawk & Caddy Lakes Chamber of Commerce
- Pinawa Chamber of Commerce
- Blue Water Chamber of Commerce
- Whitemouth Chamber of Commerce
- Eastman Regional Assessment Committee
- Manitoba Youth Job Centre
- Conseil de développement économique des municipalités bilingues du Manitoba (CDEM)
- School District of Whiteshell
- Pinawa Business Incubator
- W. B. Lewis Business Centre
- Canadian Community Economic Development Network
- Economic Developers Association of Manitoba (EDAM)
- Manitoba Marketing Network
- Royal Bank of Canada
- Volunteer Manitoba
- Louis Riel Capital Corporation

Business Development Services

Technical Assistance

Community Futures Winnipeg River provides technical assistance to entrepreneurs interested in starting or expanding a business. Our staff has extensive background and experience in market research, business planning, financial forecasting and analysis, and business counselling. This expertise allows our staff to work one-on-one with clients so that their specific needs are met. They put particular emphasis on monitoring and aftercare to ensure success of new business ventures. During the 2013-2014 Fiscal Year, we provided 683 business development services to 157 clients, including general information services, technical assistance and advisory services, monitoring, and training. Our business services contributed to the creation of 23 businesses and 31 jobs.

Community Futures Winnipeg River acts as a service provider for the Provincial Youth Entrepreneurs Program, and during the fiscal year we assisted two clients in the preparation and submission of financing applications under the program.

Our staff continue to serve as an information and pathfinding resource for clients, and were successful in partnering with Manitoba Jobs and the Economy, Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Development, Manitoba Education, Business Development Bank of Canada, Canada/Manitoba Business Service Centre, Aboriginal Business Service Network, Canadian Youth Business Foundation, First Peoples Economic Growth Fund, and to provide information and access services and/or funding for a number of clients. During this past year, our business services helped clients successfully leverage \$409,031 in funding through other sources.

Investment Funds

The Corporation also manages investment funds that are used to provide business loans to help finance business start-ups or expansions. During the 2013/2014 Fiscal Year, nine loan applications were processed and presented to our Investment Review Committee. Four applications were declined. The five remaining loan applications were approved and disbursed by March 31, 2014. Those five loans totalled \$230,585 and an additional \$292,450 was leveraged through financial institutions or owner equity. Funds borrowed from the Corporation over the past year helped to create or maintain 7 full-time and 6 part-time jobs in the region.

Our Loans Program is operated as a revolving fund, with repayments on loans being reinvested for other entrepreneurs to start or expand their business. The total principal and interest reinvested in the fiscal year was \$168,829.

Since its inception, Community Futures Winnipeg River has approved 269 loans valued at \$9,808,640 that helped to create or maintain 795.5 jobs.

REGIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF INVESTMENT FUNDS
Inception to March 31, 2014

LOCATION	DOLLARS LENT	OTHER FUNDS LEVERAGED	JOB CREATED/ MAINTAINED
Alexander/Powerview-Pine Falls	\$830,520	\$1,116,862	72.0
Beausejour/Brokenhead	\$1,682,623	\$4,741,913	129.0
Lac du Bonnet (Town & RM)	\$2,505,388	\$2,427,179	149.5
Manitotagan/Seymourville/Bissett	\$171,295	\$230,003	25.5
Pinawa	\$1,169,606	\$1,298,586	98.0
Reynolds	\$561,578	\$618,500	58.5
Sagkeeng First Nation	\$121,000	\$140,900	13.5
Springfield	\$968,263	\$1,493,800	82.5
Victoria Beach	\$174,375	\$185,000	24.5
Whitemouth	\$893,912	\$1,893,440	72.0
Whiteshell Provincial Park	\$567,080	\$1,695,466	53.5
Other	\$163,000	\$621,575	17.0
Total	\$9,808,640	\$16,463,224	795.5

Self Employment Program (SE)

Our Corporation, on behalf of Manitoba Jobs and the Economy, administers the Self Employment Program (SE) for the North Eastman region. The program provides an opportunity for unemployed individuals who are EI-eligible to start their own business while still being able to collect their employment insurance benefits. SE clients work with our Business Development Coordinator who assists them with business plan development, marketing, and financial analysis, and provides counselling and monitoring for the full term they are on the program.

Over the past year, 313 services were provided to SE clients in the areas of business planning, monitoring, and counselling. In addition, SE clients participated in the 3-day Manitoba Business Start Program, bookkeeping training, and entrepreneurial training sessions via webinars.

During the 2013-2014 fiscal year, there were eighteen clients active on the program and five successfully completed the program. As a result of the Self Employment Program, 13 full-time jobs and 3 part-time jobs were created through new business enterprises. Since we began delivering the SE Program, 503 people have participated in the program.

Community Development Services

Community Futures Winnipeg River provides assistance to Municipalities, Chambers of Commerce, Community Development Corporations, and other community groups to build strong organizations and to ensure that community projects are realistic and sustainable. Our staff help with coordination and development of community projects, facilitate strategic and operational planning sessions, and deliver workshops and training related to board development and community capacity and leadership. We also act as a liaison and connecting agency to bring communities, various levels of government, and local group together to address challenges and opportunities. Our office also has current information available on various funding programs and resources that may be of benefit to community groups working on specific projects or aiming to increase their capacity.

Over the past year, Community Futures Winnipeg River has:

- Participated and provided various support to 19 new and 16 ongoing CED projects in the region.
- Provided 49 consultation and/or resource services to aid groups with various organization development activities and development projects.
- Provided direct support to 13 non-profit organizations to enhance organizational operations through activities such as restructuring of human resources; developing/updating constitution and bylaws; developing marketing strategies; and defining purpose and goals.
- Facilitated or assisted with 19 strategic/community planning sessions with local groups.
- Participated in 5 regional committees to help advance regional partnerships and initiatives.
- Facilitated regional connections which helped move 4 projects and initiatives forward.
- Delivered 7 community development workshops/presentations to build skills and knowledge within social, economic and other non-profit groups. 91 participants attended the workshops in total.
- Developed one new workshop titled “Effective Boards and Committees” to add to our Community Development Workshop series.
- Provided project planning assistance to 4 groups.
- Assisted 7 community groups in preparing and strengthening funding applications for their projects which helped leverage \$112,808 for CED projects.
- Provided assistance in developing and administering 3 surveys/studies in the region.

CFWR Project Highlights

Over the course of the 2013//2014 Fiscal Year, staff have been involved with numerous projects throughout the region. The following section provides some of the project highlights from over the past year.

Regional Labor Market Study

CFWR participated in a committee headed by the Winnipeg River Learning Centre (WRLC) that implemented a Regional Labor Market Study in 2013. CFWR administered the project funding and participated as a committee member to help steer the project. Probe Research was hired to conduct the study which was completed in September. Information was gathered on:

1. Occupational growth outlook including high demand occupation so we could determine industry workforce needs and required occupational skills sets.
2. Training needs of area employers and available training programs so we could determine where training gaps exist.
3. The existing labor market supply in the region so we could determine where both training and recruiting may be required.

Key findings and recommendations were provided in a report to the WRLC and will be used in setting future directions.

New Regional Personal Care Home

Regional municipalities have been tasked with raising \$3,200,000, the community portion of funds required to build a new 80-bed personal care home in Lac du Bonnet. With many “extras” desired that are not in the project scope, a Fundraising Committee has been struck to raise additional dollars to cover items such as paved walkways, a chapel, and various design touches to create a homey atmosphere for the residents. CFWR has worked with the committee to develop a revenue generating plan and to develop a capital campaign as the process for receiving donations. This campaign and the other fundraising initiatives will be carried out by the group between April 1, 2013 and December 31, 2015. This project will lead to enhanced jobs, infrastructure and services for seniors in the North Eastman region.

Lac du Bonnet Trails Extension Project

Project planning and grant writing assistance was provided to The Town of Lac du Bonnet and the Lac du Bonnet Trails Association. Combined efforts resulted in leveraged dollars of \$50,000 via an Active Transportation Grant for a trails extension project that will take place this spring/summer. The sidewalk near the elementary school will be extended down McArthur Avenue to enhance safety and to encourage activity on this busy route.

Effective Boards and Committees Workshop

As part of a series of Community Development Workshops, a full day workshop titled "Effective Boards and Committees" was developed during spring 2013. Workshop content includes board roles and responsibilities, teamwork, communication, by-laws, policies, planning, etc. The workshop has been met with good response. It was delivered five times within four communities of our region in 2013-2014. In total seventy three people representing various nonprofit organizations have attended the workshop. The outcome of this workshop is increased capacity within our volunteer/nonprofits groups.

Essential Digital Skills Project

CFWR has become involved in a National Pilot Project with CBDC Restigouche along with six other service providers across Canada. The goal of the Digital Essential Skills Project is to develop a tool that SME's can use to improve digital skills of employees in the workplace. As part of the project, CFWR enlisted two businesses in the region that would commit to allowing at least five employees to participate in being tested on their digital skills and would then later participate in completing up to eight training modules developed to enhance digital skills. Wings of Power from Powerview-Pine Falls provided seven participants and Association of Community Living – Beausejour Branch provided thirteen participants. The individual skill testing process was completed in 2013-2014. The training part of the project will continue and conclude in 2014-2015. Participants will provide feedback on the training tools prior to national release. The key outcome of this project will be enhanced business skills development within the twenty participants.

Small Business Week Event

CFWR coordinated and held a regional business networking/training event in celebration of Small Business Week on October 22nd in Beausejour. The event was conducted in partnership with the Beausejour and District Chamber of Commerce, Manitoba Marketing Network, MAFRI, and Sunova Credit Union. The evening featured comedian Matt Falk; keynote speaker Chris Fougere who owns and operates a successful sales and marketing firm and a thriving restaurant in Winnipeg; and a tradeshow for local business owners and service providers to showcase their products/services. Seventy people attended the event and ten businesses participated in the tradeshow, including CFWR. Key outcomes of this event included business networking, showcasing of local products, and knowledge development of entrepreneurs.

Oakbank Business Forum

CFWR facilitated an open forum for Oakbank business owners on November 6th to identify and discuss common challenges and opportunities that exist for downtown businesses as a result of larger businesses emerging in the area. The need for a business survey for all businesses within the RM of Springfield was identified as a priority action. CFWR has assisted in preparing a draft survey and will continue to work with the group on survey distribution, compiling survey results, and developing strategies and actions for joint initiatives/partnerships.

2013/2014 Award Recipients

Each year, Community Futures Winnipeg River honours outstanding business clients and community initiatives.

The **Business of the Year** is given annually to a client of the Corporation who has demonstrated success in the development of their business, and who has shown initiative and commitment to the community. This award recognizes the outstanding efforts of local businesspeople and award recipients embody the positive attributes of an entrepreneur such as determination, passion, and commitment not only for the development of their business, but to their community as well.

The **Self Employment Award** is an entrepreneurial recognition given to a participant of the Self Employment Program who has demonstrated above average effort and success during their year on the program. Success is not only based on the financial bottom line, but more importantly on the achievement of set goals, and the innovation, judgement and skill used in dealing with obstacles along the way.

The **Community Initiative Award** is given annually to a community organization in recognition of their outstanding efforts in the area of community development, and which has shown initiative and commitment to the community. The recipients of this award portray dedication and cooperation throughout the work they do to advance a project or cause that improves the social and economic well-being of our region.

The **Volunteer of the Year Award** recognizes and celebrates the outstanding volunteer contributions made by a resident of the region that impact economic growth and social wellbeing in their community. The CFWR Board of Directors selects the award recipient from nominations that are received from groups and residents of the region. Recipients of this award demonstrate initiative and leadership and have contributed significant service to their community on a volunteer basis.

Community Futures Winnipeg River is very pleased to acknowledge the winners of this year's awards:

- **Business of the Year Award:** Tyler & Dawn Scarfe, HPI Customs Inc., RM of Brokenhead
- **Self Employment Award:** Melissa Haywood, Kids Come First, Town of Beausejour
- **Community Initiative Award:** Recreation Opportunities for Children Eastman Inc.
- **Volunteer of the Year Award:** Barry Cyr, Town of Powerview-Pine Falls