

Performance Results for 2015-16 CF West Yellowhead

Community Futures (CF) is a program that supports community economic development and builds the capacity of communities to realize their full sustainable potential. The purpose of the CF Program is to help communities develop and implement *local solutions to local problems*.

Community Futures Performance Results	2015-16 Results
<i>Strong rural community strategic planning and implementation</i>	
1. Number of local and regionally-based community strategic plan(s) developed and/or updated during the year:	6
2. Total number of community based projects (“new” and “on-going”):	52
<i>Rural access to business development services</i>	
3. Number of businesses created/ maintained/ expanded through business services	82
4. Number of business training session participants	261
5. Number of business advisory services	956
<i>Rural access to capital and leveraged capital</i>	
6. Dollar value of loans	\$967,500
7. Number of loans	14
Provide additional Information (e.g. Success stories, Links to priorities, leveraging work, communication events, etc...)	
<p>The fiscal year 2015-2016 was an exceptional year for Community Futures West Yellowhead in providing the Community Futures program to the West Yellowhead region. Ranging from the British Columbia border in Jasper National Park to the Pembina River and north to Grande Cache, Community Futures West Yellowhead focused on providing the Community Futures program through its 2015-2016 strategic goals:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Creating awareness and partnership in communities to support entrepreneurs; 2. Developing training and business supports for entrepreneurs; 3. Maintaining and increasing the level of financial support available to entrepreneurs through unique loan programs; and 4. Delivering the Community Futures program as directed by Western Economic Diversification with excellence and integrity. <p>CFWY staff are active in a number of community, regional and provincial organizations that help strengthen the relationships and partnerships of the organization. A new marketing campaign organized by the CFNA highlighted the importance of the Community Futures program in rural Alberta and as we head into our 30th year in the West Yellowhead, we will continue the marketing brands of “What If?” and “Building Communities One Idea at a Time”. Through ongoing community projects such as the Entrepreneurs with Disabilities program and BizStream, CFWY increased opportunities for business start-ups to grow and for current business to expand into new, diverse opportunities. CFWY expanded its outreach coaching to the eastern edge of Yellowhead County allowing for growth</p>	

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in our business clients and our loan portfolio in that end of the region. CFWY also partnered with the MS Society to feature a speaker in Hinton that highlighted the Entrepreneurs with Disabilities program and with the Edson and District Chamber of Commerce to bring the federal Minister of Labour to Edson. Through our partnerships, CFWY also helped six organizations grow their strategic and operating plans and helped to bring business skills to organizations that needed a hand in growing and expanding.

Training was a major focus in 2015-2016 as clients, staff and board took advantage of training opportunities to expand their skills. Business training opportunities were supported financially from grants from Alberta Human Services and Alberta Jobs, Skills, Training and Labour and included online training opportunities, Advanced Social Media training for businesses, Ask the Expert lunch time series and Office Boot Camp for front line staff. Our Business Analyst Tim Shain also received the first Community Futures Pan West Designation for a Business Analyst in Western Canada.

CFWY exceeded the Minimum Performance Standards established by Western Economic Diversification for all indicators with a total of 14 loans dispersed throughout the region for a total of \$967,500. These loans were evenly dispersed throughout the five communities in the region as well as a total of nine industries showing again how diverse and successful the West Yellowhead region can be in a challenging economy.

Our Entrepreneurs with Disabilities Program experienced tremendous growth as CFWY leveraged just over \$11,000 for EDP clients to access training and skills to start their businesses in the West Yellowhead region. CFWY also dispersed two EDP loans to clients who needed additional funding for their businesses. CFWY also received the 2015 Entrepreneurs with Disability Advocacy Award at the Annual CFNA Provincial Conference in Jasper.

Community Economic Development continued to be a priority for CFWY as we completed the second year of our three year Business Visitation Program in the region by focusing on Hinton and Yellowhead County. This year, we conducted interviews with 258 businesses in Hinton and 147 businesses in Yellowhead County. Results from both studies can be located on our website.

The Community Futures West Yellowhead Board of Directors experienced a very busy year with representation at the Community Futures National Conference in Quebec, the Community Futures Provincial Conference in Jasper and hosting a barbeque for the entire provincial association in Jasper as a pre-conference event for the CFNA conference. The board is strong in its representation of the five communities in which it serves and in the past year reviewed all relevant governance and internal policies for CFWY, developed an internal appeals process for loan appeals, supported an external review process developed by the CFNA and supported the work of the CFWY staff in the region.

CFWY is looking forward to another great year in 2016-2017 despite the many economic challenges that face the region. As an organization, we have once again shown that "We are the place for entrepreneurs" in the West Yellowhead region.