

**2008/2009
Annual Report**



Western Economic
Diversification Canada

Diversification de l'économie
de l'Ouest Canada

Canada

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chairperson's Message.....	1
Introduction	3
Board of Directors and Staff	5
Partnerships.....	6
Business Development Services	7
Community Development Services.....	9
2008/09 Award Recipients.....	12
Appendix A: Financial Statements	

CHAIRPERSON'S MESSAGE

Community economic development is what defines Community Futures Winnipeg River. Whether it be providing financing for the start-up or expansion of a business, counselling or training entrepreneurs to help them overcome challenges in the management of their businesses, assisting community groups with planning and coordination to undertake new projects, or strengthening the capacity of volunteer groups to do the valuable work they do to improve the economic and social conditions of their communities.

The region served by Community Futures Winnipeg River is large and diverse, stretching from the city outskirts to the Ontario border and from the Trans-Canada highway to communities on the east side of Lake Winnipeg. Our economy is driven by mining, forestry, agriculture, energy, R&D, and tourism and all are feeling the effects of the economic downturn. Over the past year we have seen a significant increase in business loan activity and participation in the Self Employment Program. We have also had a substantial increase in requests for assistance from community groups looking to undertake community economic development projects to help their local economies. Given the current economic climate, we don't see the demand for these services lessening over the next couple of years. But, that is what we're here to do.

At the heart of the Community Futures program is a firm belief that building capacity at the community level, by helping communities to help themselves, is the key to enabling them to shape their own futures and to develop and implement innovative strategies for dealing with a changing economic environment. Our continued ability to provide the tools necessary for this however, are only possible because of the important and valuable partnerships that we have with so many government departments and agencies, and regional and community organizations. I can't mention them all or you'd be here all night, but I would like to acknowledge a few that have been instrumental in contributing to the work that we do:

- Sunova Credit Union
- Business Development Bank of Canada
- Aboriginal Business Canada
- Employment Manitoba
- Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth, and MB4Youth
- Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives
- Manitoba Culture, Heritage and Tourism
- Community Futures Manitoba
- Canada/Manitoba Business Service Centre

Despite some challenges with staffing issues we have accomplished a great deal this year as you can see from the Annual Report, and we have met or exceeded all of our performance targets. This year we saw the conclusion of the Whiteshell Community Adjustment Fund Program, which we administered on behalf of Western Economic Diversification Canada. Through this program almost \$3.75 million was provided to community groups and municipalities in the region to support economic development projects to help mitigate the impact of the closure of AECL's Whiteshell Laboratories.

We are very proud to have received national recognition for our work with the Winnipeg River Learning Centre having received the Community Futures Network of Canada "Projects of

Excellence Award” that was presented last month at the National Community Futures Conference in Collingwood, Ontario.

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the hard work of our Board of Directors who volunteer their time, energy, and expertise to ensure that our organization meets the needs of our communities. In the past year they have collectively contributed over 1,000 hours of volunteer time to the work of our Corporation. In addition, many of them have spent countless hours in their own community promoting economic development and assisting local committees with their individual projects and programs.

We value our partnership with WD and thank them for their continued support and commitment to the Community Futures Program. And finally, on behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to thank the staff for their hard work and dedication to the Corporation, and for the integrity and passion with which they represent Community Futures Winnipeg River.

***Teresa Gmiterek
Chairperson
Community Futures Winnipeg River***

Introduction

Community Futures Winnipeg River is a community-based regional economic development organization serving the North Eastman region of Manitoba. Our mission is to serve our member communities in the pursuit of continued growth and prosperity through the support of sustainable economic development opportunities in the region.

Community Futures Winnipeg River serves a large geographic region roughly north of the Trans-Canada Highway to Bissett and Seymourville, and from the Ontario border to the outskirts of Winnipeg. The Corporation has been in operation since 1988 and is managed by a volunteer Board of Directors who are appointed to represent our member Municipal and Community Councils, Sagkeeng First Nation, and Whiteshell Provincial Park, as well as a Director at Large. The Directors bring considerable expertise to the organization and several of them are entrepreneurs. They are very knowledgeable about the communities they represent and the challenges that their communities face. 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.

We would like to acknowledge and thank Western Economic Diversification Canada (WD) for their continued commitment to the Community Futures Program. Without their support, we would not be able to operate this important economic development program. We are also fortunate to continue to have the support of Employment Manitoba for the delivery of the Self Employment Program. The valuable partnerships and strategic alliances we have formed with other provincial and federal government departments, the Western Canada Business Service Network, municipalities, and community and regional organizations have also contributed significantly to the work we do as a Corporation to promote and advance community economic development for our region.

We are a regional site for the Canada/Manitoba Business Service Centre and maintain an extensive business resource library. Two community access computers provide public access to high-speed internet. Service Canada operates an outreach site at our office which is staffed every other Thursday. The outreach site provides a one-stop shop for people to access information and resources related to federal government programs and services. In partnership with J.U.S.T Training Corporation, we also host the Manitoba Youth Job Centre in our offices during the summer.

With funding support from Community Futures Manitoba under the Rural Entrepreneurs with Disabilities Program, we revamped our website to improve accessibility and plain language components. We are very honoured that the Literacy Partners of Manitoba have recognized our website as an outstanding model for on-line accessibility. This Fiscal Year our website experienced 6,071 page loads by 2,414 visitors.

Winnipeg River continues to actively participate in the Community Futures movement. Mary Greber continued to serve as a member of the Manitoba Community Futures Professional Development Committee, and Marketing Committee. She also worked with the Manitoba Community Futures Human Resources Committee which developed a standardized HR Policies and Procedures Manual for use by Manitoba CF offices. We were also continued to be involved in a Pan-West Sub-Committee responsible for identifying issues and providing advice and recommendations related to the use of The Exceptional Assistant (TEA) software program for the online Performance Measurement Tool for reporting to WD. Director Roland Dandeneau serves as our representative

on the Board of Directors of Community Futures Manitoba and as their representative on the Community Futures Network of Canada.

We are very proud to have been the recipient of the Community Futures Network of Canada “Projects of Excellence Award” for our work with the Winnipeg River Learning Centre. The award and a video of the Learning Centre were presented at the National Community Futures Conference held in Collingwood, Ontario. We would like to congratulate Michelle Wazny for achieving Community Futures certification as a Business Analyst, and to Mary Greber and Kandace Nagy for successfully maintaining their previously awarded certification. The Community Futures Professional Development Certification Program acknowledges that staff meet stringent competency areas for work in the Community Futures Program across Western Canada.

Community Futures Winnipeg River has a cohesive and dedicated team of staff and Directors who continue to proudly serve the business development and community development needs of the region. Despite some staffing challenges, we managed to meet or exceed all of our performance targets. We measure the success of our organization to that of our clients and our communities, and we are very proud of the achievements made this year.

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:

Teresa Gmiterek, Chairperson	Town of Beausejour
Doug Thomasson, Vice-Chairperson	RM of Brokenhead
Chris Lund, Secretary-Treasurer	RM of Reynolds
George Harbottle	RM of Alexander
Paul Chapman	Town of Lac du Bonnet
Rick Lussier	RM of Lac du Bonnet
Clay McMurren	LGD of Pinawa
Rick Rusk	Town of Powerview-Pine Falls
Bob Bodnaruk	RM of Springfield
Glenn Malkoske	RM of Whitemouth
Roland Dandeneau	Member at Large
Vacant	RM of Victoria Beach
Anthony Seymour	Community of Seymourville
Vacant	Community of Manigotagan
Vacant	Community of Bissett
Vacant	Sagkeeng First Nation
Vacant	Whiteshell Provincial Park

Staff:

Mary Greber	Executive Director
Kandace Nagy	Office Manager
Michelle Wazny	Business Development Officer, SE Coordinator
Sharalyn Reitlo	Community Development Coordinator
Lindsey Otto	Administration Officer

Our Board members, whose direction and leadership have been instrumental to the success of the Community Futures Program in the North Eastman region, are to be commended for their dedication to the Corporation. During the 2008/09 Fiscal Year, they contributed over 1,020 hours of volunteer time working to promote and advance community and business development for the betterment of the region.

Partnerships

Partnerships are vital in advancing community economic development within the region and much of what we have achieved over the past year has been made possible by the support and involvement of many partners, including:

- Western Economic Diversification Canada
- Employment Manitoba
- Community Futures Manitoba
- Canada/Manitoba Business Service Centre
- Aboriginal Business Service Network
- Municipalities in the North Eastman Region
- Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada/Rural Secretariat
- Manitoba Agriculture, Food & Rural Initiatives
- Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth
- MB4Youth
- Manitoba Competitiveness, Training and Trade
- J.U.S.T. Training Corporation
- Women's Enterprise Centre
- Aboriginal Business Canada
- Indian and Northern Affairs Canada
- Tribal Wi-Chi-Way-Win Capital Corp.
- First Peoples Economic Growth Fund
- Business Development Bank of Canada
- Sunova Credit Union
- Royal Bank
- Community Economic Development Fund
- Farm Credit Corporation
- Canadian Youth Business Foundation
- Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs
- Manitoba Intergovernmental Affairs
- Manitoba Culture, Heritage and Tourism
- Manitoba Science Technology, Energy & Mines
- Community Connections
- Manitoba Labour and Immigration
- Manitoba Rural Team
- Service Canada
- Manitoba Model Forest
- Winnipeg River Regional Roundtable
- Winnipeg River Learning Centre
- Fillmore Riley
- Sunrise School Division
- AIM for Work
- Community Futures Triple R
- Sagkeeng First Nation
- Independent Living Resource Centre
- Society for Manitobans with Disabilities
- Network for Entrepreneurs with Disabilities
- Literacy Partners of Manitoba
- Mrs. Lucci's Resource Centre
- Beausejour Brokenhead Development Corp.
- 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
- Springfield Chamber of Commerce
- Whitemouth Chamber of Commerce
- Manitoba Science Academy
- Eastman Regional Assessment Committee
- Eastman Regional Development Inc.
- Manitoba Youth Job Centre
- Acsion Industries
- Channel Systems
- Conseil de développement économique des municipalités bilingues du Manitoba (CDEM)
- Solidarité Rurale du Québec
- Restigouche Community Business Development Corporation
- Edward Schreyer Senior School
- Winnipeg River Recreation District
- School District of Whiteshell
- Pinawa Business Incubator
- W. B. Lewis Business Centre
- Canadian Community Economic Development Network

Business Development Services

Technical Assistance

Community Futures Winnipeg River provides technical assistance to entrepreneurs interested in starting or expanding a business. Our staff has expertise in market research, business planning, and financial forecasting and analysis. We also provide counselling and training in a number of business-related areas. During the 2008-2009 Fiscal Year, we provided 1,014 business development services to 228 clients, including general information services, technical assistance and advisory services, monitoring, and training.

With support from Community Futures Manitoba, our office is equipped with videoconferencing technology. This equipment allows us to provide a convenient and cost-effective way for our clients and other members of the business community to participate in various entrepreneurial training seminars and workshops that are offered in Winnipeg through the Canada/Manitoba Business Service Centre. During the 2008/09 Fiscal Year we hosted 26 training sessions for 94 participants.

With support from Community Futures Manitoba through the Rural Entrepreneurs with Disabilities Program, we are undertaking a project to develop a standardized accessible loan application in plain language in both print and electronic form. The loan application is being reviewed by a plain language consultant from the Literacy Partners of Manitoba. Once finalized, the loan application will be provided for use to all Manitoba Community Futures offices.

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

Staff continue to serve as an information and pathfinding resource for clients, and were successful in partnering with Aboriginal Business Canada, Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs, Community Economic Development Fund, Employment Manitoba, Economy and Rural Development Branch - Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives, Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth, Business Development Bank of Canada, Canada/Manitoba Business Service Centre, Aboriginal Business Service Network, Sunova Credit Union, Royal Bank, Canadian Youth Business Foundation, First Peoples Economic Growth Fund, and Farm Credit Corporation to provide information and access services and/or funding for a number of clients. During this Fiscal Year, our business services helped clients successfully leverage \$932,100 in commercial financing.

We continued to participate in a national pilot project on Human Resource Practices in Small and Medium Enterprises in partnership with Restigouche Community Business Development Corporation based in New Brunswick. The goal of the pilot project is to increase the effectiveness of human resource management practices within small businesses in order to increase productivity and competitiveness. Throughout the Fiscal Year we worked with three businesses from our region to develop their human resource action plans, employee policies and procedures manuals, and performance assessment tools. The project will result in the development of a human resource tool-kit that will be available to our entire business community.

In celebration of Small Business Week, we partnered with Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives, Business Development Bank of Canada, and Sunova Credit Union to organize and host a Wine and Cheese Networking Event that was held at the Lac du Bonnet Community Centre. Invitations were sent to clients and other members of the business community in each of our

member communities to set up a display table to market their products and services. Guest speaker, Barbara Bowes, President of Bowes Legacy Group, delivered an excellent presentation on employee recruitment and retention strategies. Approximately 50 people attended the event and feedback received was very positive, with many feeling it was a good opportunity for them to network and establish some valuable contacts.

Investment Funds

The Corporation also acts as an alternative lender and manages investment funds that are used to provide business loans to help finance business start-ups or expansion. During the 2008/09 Fiscal Year, fifteen loans totalling \$468,790 were approved and an additional \$932,100 was leveraged through financial institutions or owner equity. Funds borrowed from the Corporation over the past year helped to create or maintain 36 full-time equivalent jobs in the region, as well as eight contract positions.

Our Loans program is operated as a revolving fund, with repayments on loans being reinvested to provide the availability of funds for other entrepreneurs to start or expand their business. The total principal and interest reinvested in the Fiscal Year was \$313,230.

Since its inception, Community Futures Winnipeg River has approved 229 loans valued at \$6,880,245 that helped to create or maintain 637 jobs.

REGIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF INVESTMENT FUNDS Inception to March 31, 2009

LOCATION	DOLLARS LENT	OTHER FUNDS LEVERAGED	JOB CREATED/ MAINTAINED
Alexander/Powerview-Pine Falls	\$ 477,408	\$ 906,862	55.0
Beausejour/Brokenhead	\$ 1,011,167	\$3,183,963	94.0
Lac du Bonnet (Town & RM)	\$1,527,519	\$1,528,119	109.0
Manigotagan/Seymourville/Bissett	\$ 171,295	\$ 230,003	25.5
Pinawa	\$1,071,106	\$1,177,086	89.5
Reynolds	\$ 471,578	\$ 553,500	52.0
Sagkeeng First Nation	\$ 26,000	\$ 10,900	4.0
Springfield	\$ 582,063	\$ 700,000	52.0
Victoria Beach	\$ 174,375	\$ 185,000	24.5
Whitemouth	\$ 637,654	\$1,543,440	61.0
Whiteshell Provincial Park	\$ 567,080	\$1,695,466	53.5
Other	\$ 163,000	\$ 621,575	17.0
Total	\$6,880,245	\$12,335,914	637.0

Self Employment Program (SE)

Our Corporation, on behalf of Employment Manitoba, 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 Officer 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, 430 services were provided to SE clients in the areas of business planning, monitoring, and counselling. In addition, SE clients participated in a Marketing Workshop, one-on-one bookkeeping training sessions, computer accounting training, and entrepreneurial training sessions via videoconferencing.

This year, sixteen new clients were accepted into the program and thirteen successfully completed the program. During the 2008/09 Fiscal Year, 15 jobs were created through new business enterprises. There are currently fifteen active SE clients. Since we began delivering the SE Program, 440 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 and organizations with project coordination and development, strategic planning, and facilitation services. We also act as a liaison between the community and various levels of government in the assessment of community challenges and the design of potential solutions. Our office also has current information available on various government programs that may be of benefit to community groups working on specific projects.

Over the past year, Community Futures Winnipeg River has:

- Facilitated nine strategic planning sessions with community groups
- Assisted seven non-profit organizations with the development of Terms of Reference, By-Laws, and Policies and Procedures, and provided advice to two groups related to Board governance issues
- Worked on three tourism-related initiatives
- Facilitated three community consultation workshops
- Provided assistance with preparing project plans and feasibility studies to eleven groups throughout the region who are undertaking community projects
- Assisted seventeen community groups in identifying potential funding programs and/or preparing funding applications for their projects. These groups were successful in accessing \$108,068 in grant funding during the year. Assistance with the preparation of fundraising plans was provided to four groups. A grant writing resource was developed to assist groups in project planning and developing effective funding proposals
- Provided resource support, counselling and advice on community economic development to another sixteen groups throughout the region

The following describes some of the major community development projects and initiatives that we have been involved with over the past year.

Whiteshell Community Adjustment Fund

Over the past several years we have been administering the Whiteshell Community Adjustment Fund on behalf of Western Economic Diversification Canada (WD). The program was put in place to assist the economic diversification efforts of communities affected by the downsizing and closure of AECL's operations at Whiteshell Laboratories. The program, which is now finished, provided support to 35 projects totalling \$3,735,323.

Under our Contribution Agreement with WD, all projects supported under the Whiteshell Community Adjustment Fund were to be completed and all costs incurred by March 31, 2009. Unfortunately, Mrs. Lucci's Resource Centre and Sunrise School Division, the proponents of the Winnipeg River Vocational Centre project, were unable to start the project by the end March, and the funding allocated to that project was withdrawn. In addition, the Pinawa Community Development Corporation, the proponent for the Pinawa Business Park project, was unable to utilize all of their approved funding. Given the remaining time available to utilize those funds for the benefit of the region, the Steering Committee reallocated the funds to two existing ongoing projects to cover incremental costs for things that could enhance those projects and that could be completed by the March 31, 2009 deadline.

The Pinawa Business Incubator project received an additional \$16,728 to assist with the completion of two new offices in W.B. Lewis Business Centre to accommodate additional businesses and included HVAC work, a demising wall, installation of baseboard heat and flooring, and the installation of a barrier for the parking lot to accommodate additional tenants. The Winnipeg River Regional Roundtable received \$250,000 to assist with initiating Phase 2 of the Winnipeg River Learning Centre project for the purchase of equipment for the delivery of the Electrical Certificate Apprenticeship training program, equipment for establishing a computer lab, classroom furnishings, and instructional resources.

Staff are continuing to work with proponents to ensure that the required reports and documentation are submitted. A final report on the results and impact of the Whiteshell Community Adjustment Fund program is also being prepared.

Winnipeg River Learning Centre

We continue to work with the Winnipeg River Regional Roundtable on the Winnipeg River Learning Centre project in Powerview-Pine Falls. This project is helping to address identified needs of residents and major employers for the provision of training and post-secondary educational opportunities locally. Current and upcoming curriculum includes: college and university Certificate and diploma programs; electrical, carpentry, welding, and mechanical trades; entrepreneurial and business management programs; environmental sciences and watershed management programs; and a variety of short courses and workshops.

We actively participated as a member of the Winnipeg River Learning Centre Advisory Committee. This past year we facilitated a number of planning sessions for the Advisory Committee to assist them in their efforts to incorporate as a registered non-profit organization and to help with the development of a strategic plan.

2008 Eastern Manitoba Career Symposium

With funding support from Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth, MB4Youth, and Employment Manitoba, Community Futures Winnipeg River coordinated the hosting of the 2008 Eastern Manitoba Career Symposium that was held in Beausejour in October 2008. A Planning Committee was established and met four times. Exhibitor packages, Teacher's Guide, registration forms, and posters were prepared and distributed. A website was developed, event signage was prepared, and a marketing strategy was implemented. Logistics for the venue, exhibitors, seminars, and volunteers were arranged and coordinated.

The event entailed a trade show with exhibitors representing post-secondary educational institutions, employers, employment and career service agencies, and government. A number of seminars were also delivered aimed at students and their parents to assist them in decision-making about future post-secondary education and/or employment options, including self-employment. The event drew about 1,800 students from 16 schools throughout the region. These students normally do not have the opportunity to attend a career fair since these schools do not send their students to the Rotary Career Fair in Winnipeg because of the distance. The event also attracted about 250 adults looking to re-enter the workforce, make a career change, or thinking about returning to school.

School District of Whiteshell Community Consultation Workshops

Community Futures Winnipeg River facilitated three community consultation workshops for the School District of Whiteshell. As part of their long-term strategic planning, the School Board was seeking input from community groups and interested members of the public about how to strengthen relationships with the community and develop community partnerships to enrich the educational experience and services for children. The first two workshops were held in November 2008 and included large group discussions and breakout sessions to get feedback on how current relationships with the School District could be strengthened, what role the District could play in supporting community groups, what potential partnership opportunities exist between the community and the School District, and how communications with the community could be improved.

The third workshop was held in January 2009 which brought together Trustees, educators, and members of the community to continue the planning process. Suggestions and recommendations from the first round of consultations identified four priority areas that were the focus of discussion: developing a collective approach to support the development of children; school age recreational opportunities; community and school communications; and linking with other schools and community experts. The participants developed action plans for each priority area, and a leadership team was established for continued communication, planning and review to help the community and School District to move forward together.

Community Recreation Planning

Community Futures Winnipeg River is assisting the Winnipeg River Recreation District with ongoing Community Recreation Planning projects in both Pinawa and Lac du Bonnet. These projects will result in the development of a five-year Community Recreation Plan for each community. Committees have been established with representation from a number of community groups and interested members of the public to develop a shared vision for the future of recreation in their

communities. A strategic Community Recreation Planning process is being utilized to determine priorities that will further enhance sport, culture and recreation programs, events, facilities, and services within the communities. The Committees meet on a monthly basis and we provide research, meeting facilitation, and planning support.

2008/09 Award Recipients

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

The Business of the Year Award and the Youth Entrepreneur of the Year Award recognizes outstanding efforts by our business clients who have demonstrated success in the development of their businesses, have clear objectives for growth, and who relay an attitude of commitment and cooperation to the community and other businesses.

The Self Employment Award is presented to Self Employment Program participants who have demonstrated above average effort and success during their year of the program, and who have achieved set goals and used innovation, judgement, and skill to deal with obstacles they faced in their first year of business.

The Community Initiative Award is presented to a community organization that has utilized our services, in recognition of their efforts to advance a project intended to contribute to community economic development in the region.

The Volunteer of the Year Award recognizes and celebrates the outstanding volunteer contributions made by a resident of the region to the community economic development efforts of their community.

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

- **Business of the Year Award:** Robert and Diane Hannah, Neptune Cleaners, Town of Lac du Bonnet
- **Youth Entrepreneur of the Year Award:** Dwight and Donovan Barkman, Barkman Transport (2006), RM of Whitemouth
- **Self Employment Award:** Marie Hiebert, Blueberry Rock Cleaning, RM of Lac du Bonnet
- **Community Initiative Award:** Lac du Bonnet Chamber of Commerce, Lac du Bonnet Ice Fishing Derby, Lac du Bonnet
- **Volunteer of the Year Award:** Randy Bialek, Beausejour