



COMMUNITY FUTURES KOOTENAY COLUMBIA BOUNDARY REGIONAL REPORT 2015/16

**Community
Futures** 
Boundary
Central Kootenay
East Kootenay
Greater Trail
Revelstoke

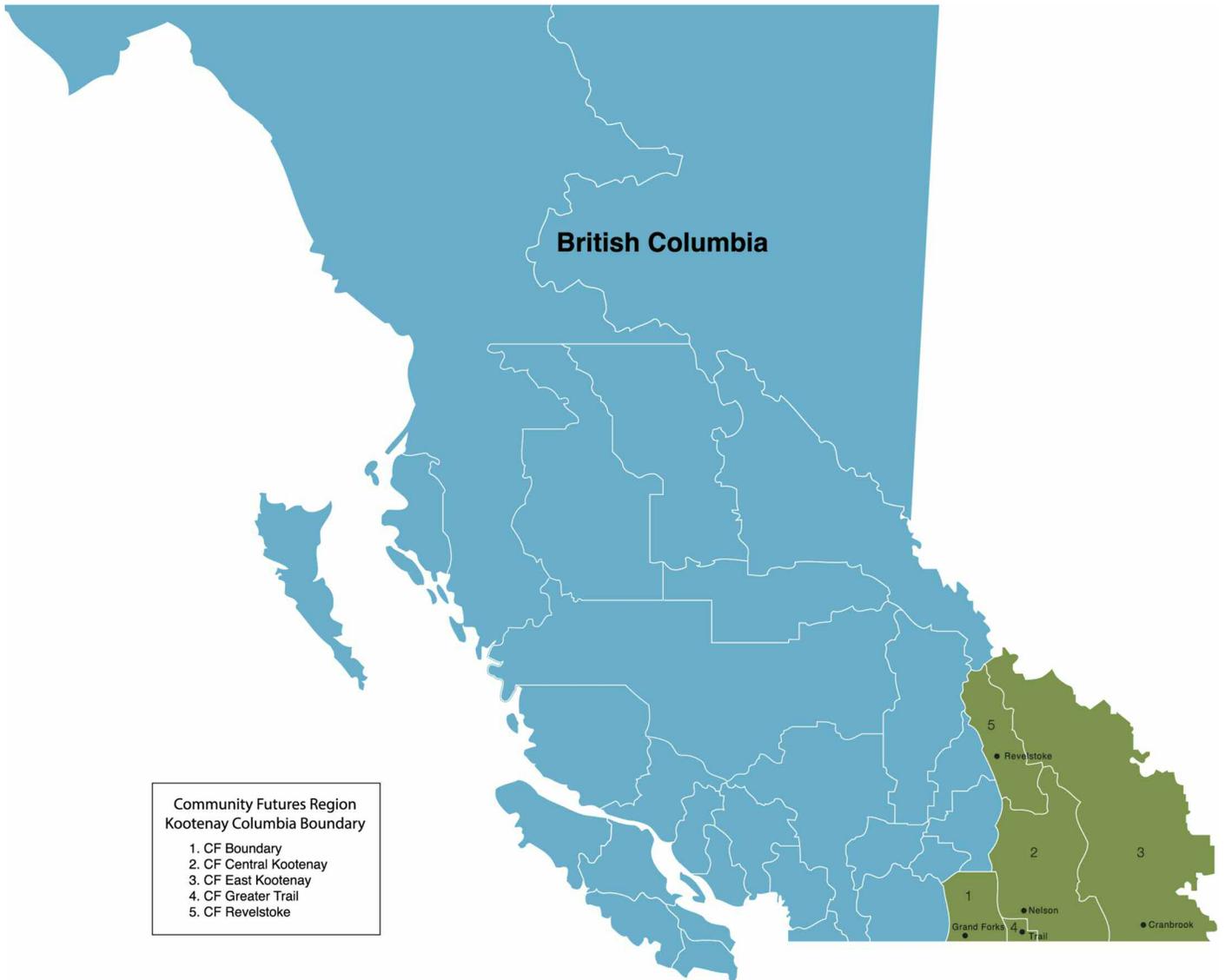


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Cover photo credits: Left - Madison Adams, photo courtesy of the Cranbrook 4-H Multi Club. Right - Trail, Rossland & Area from: www.imaginekootenay.com. Bottom - Kaslo Jazz Festival, by Sean Arthur Joyce, www.chameleonfire1.wordpress.com.

Community Futures Kootenay Columbia Boundary Regional Report

Founded in 1985, Community Futures is a community-based economic development program that helps rural communities build sustainable economies across Canada.

This 2015/16 Regional Report highlights some of the achievements of the five Community Futures organizations serving the Kootenay-Columbia-Boundary region in southeastern British Columbia. These five – representing Greater Trail, Revelstoke and the Boundary, Central Kootenay, and East Kootenay regions of the province – are part of a network of 34 Community Futures organizations in British Columbia and 269 across Canada. Each organization is governed by a volunteer board of directors drawn from a cross section of the community.

Since it was launched in 1985, Community Futures has become best known as a small business development agency. And rightly so. Community Futures offers a variety of services and tools designed to help entrepreneurs and small business owners achieve their goals, including business support services, business planning advice, loans and self employment assistance. And the incredible results that the Community Futures network has achieved in helping entrepreneurs to start and grow successful businesses is simply amazing.

But Community Futures is involved in a whole lot more than small business development. Depending on local needs and, building upon local and regional strategic planning processes, the Community Futures organizations serving the Kootenay, Columbia and Boundary regions are all involved in a wide range of community economic development (CED) and workforce development initiatives. From projects that are focused on sector development and cultivating youth entrepreneurship to assisting local stakeholders in achieving their development plans, Community Futures has served as a valuable resource in helping bring people together to build strong and sustainable economies.

As you read the brief stories highlighted in this report, keep in mind that they represent only a few of the many initiatives that the Kootenay, Boundary and Columbia Community Futures organizations have been busy with over the past year. They are just a glimpse of what Community Futures offices have been helping their regions accomplish for the past 31 years.

Community Futures-assisted firms outperformed a comparable group of non-assisted firms in terms of employment growth, survival rate and revenue.

Between 2005 and 2010, CF-assisted firms had an average employment growth rate of 9.5% compared to 4.2% for non-assisted firms.

CF-assisted firms had a survival rate of 76% five years after start-up compared to 60% for non-assisted firms, as well as a revenue growth rate of 13.8% compared to 6.1% for non-assisted firms.

2014 Independent Evaluation for Western Economic Diversification



COMMUNITY FUTURES BOUNDARY

Boundary Economic Development Committee

Since 2008, Community Futures Boundary has partnered with the Regional District of Kootenay Boundary and the Boundary Economic Development Committee (BEDC) to deliver a broad range of economic development services for the region.

“Our mandate is community development,” said Wendy McCulloch, General Manger for Community Futures Boundary. “It’s an area we’re already involved in so it makes sense for us to combine our efforts with the regional district rather than duplicate them. Our local communities still drive their own initiatives, but we provide them with the support they need to be successful.”

Population served	12,000
Number of loans	7
Total value of loans	\$ 771,640
Amount leveraged	\$ 268,000
Self Employment clients	14
Jobs created and maintained	26.5
Number of CED projects	20
Number of CED partners	25
Amount leveraged for CED	\$ 1,200,000



Top photo - CF Boundary Staff: (L to R):
 Holly Hume; Sandy Elzinga; Lori Wakefield; Val Alekson; Doreen Cavill; Jay Alblas; Wendy McCulloch, General Manager; Dylan Zorn; Anna Lactin; Lena Holmes; Susan Green; Andrea Zibin; Frances Turcotte; and Caroline Todoruk.



Bottom photo - CF Boundary Board (L to R):
 Dave Turner; Joe Sioga; Alan Peterson; Duane Eek; Alan Cooper; Joan Thomas; Mark Olson; Leigh Starchuk; Dave Marshall; and Lyle Burt, Board Chair.

“Community Futures makes substantial contributions to our local businesses and provides much support in our small rural communities.”

*Grace McGregor
 Chair, Regional District
 Kootenay Boundary*

Community Futures Boundary sees itself primarily as a resource to help organizations in the Boundary move projects forward. Most recently, they helped bring together various stakeholders to discuss proposed upgrades to the Kettle River Heritage Trail, a 17 km corridor linking Grand Forks to Christina Lake and a popular tourism draw.

The BEDC and CF Boundary have collaborated on a number of other economic diversification initiatives, including the opening of visitor centres in Rock Creek and Christina Lake; the creation of the Boundary Country Regional Chamber of Commerce; participation in Imagine Kootenay, a regional website that promotes the region as a great place to invest, work and live; and Venture Connect, a program that helps business owners prepare their businesses for sale.

“We don’t do any of this alone,” said Wendy. “We do it with the community. We need to build capacity in rural areas or our communities won’t survive. If there are stakeholders around, I want them at the table, and I will support them through thick and thin.”



Community Futures Boundary has long recognized that work-force development plays an essential role in developing a strong and sustainable economy. As such, it has been delivering

employment services to people in the region since 1992. In 2012, it received designation as a WorkBC Employment Services Centre, which has allowed Community Futures Boundary to deliver a wide range of services to people who are either unemployed or under-employed.

One of the programs it offers is the Job Creation Partnership which funds community-based projects that increase employability and provide work experience and skill enhancement opportunities to job seekers. As part of the program, Community Futures Boundary actively engages with local employers and non-profit organizations to identify projects that will benefit the community and local economy as well as participants.

Last year, Community Futures Boundary worked with the Grand Forks ATV Club on a proposal that was successful in accessing more than \$153,000 in funding through WorkBC. Thanks to the Job Creation Partnership, four people were hired to build nine new campsites at the Bluejoint Creek provincial recreation site.

The Grand Forks ATV Club supervised the trainees who honed their carpentry skills by installing picnic tables and building a variety of facilities, including washrooms, an information kiosk and a sheltered common area. The workers also built, cleared and enhanced the network of hiking trails in Granby Provincial Park.

“Our organization has the expertise and capacity to deliver these services locally,” said Wendy McCulloch, General Manager for Community Futures Boundary. “If we hadn’t gone after the WorkBC contract, those services could have been delivered by agencies outside the region, and the jobs of delivering those services would not have gone to people in our communities, people who are extremely well qualified and are an asset to the Boundary region.”

Other successful projects under the Job Creation Partnerships include the restoration of a heritage building in Greenwood and the development of a website and marketing tools for Christina Lake.

In addition to the Job Creation Partnership projects, Community Futures Boundary delivers several other employment services through WorkBC which have produced the following results:

- Employed: 111
- Workshop participants: 697
- Short term occupational certificates: 35
- Training: 13
- Self Employment Program: 14
- Job development: 5
- Customized employment: 15
- Unpaid work experience: 2
- Wage subsidies: 8
- Bridging Program for Women: 6 participants



The Grand Forks ATV Club received \$153,000 through a **Job Creation Partnership**. Pictured above: Grand Forks ATV Club supervisor and the program participants.

“Grand Forks Community Futures helped us secure workers, resolve participant concerns and supported our funding application. This project was a great success for not only the participants but the Grand Forks ATV Club and the community.”

*Doug Zorn, Vice-president
Grand Forks ATV Club*

COMMUNITY FUTURES CENTRAL KOOTENAY

Imagine Kootenay

This past January, Invest Kootenay, a program delivered by Community Futures Central Kootenay, joined forces with Work West Kootenay, a program developed by the Lower Columbia Community Development Team and the Lower Columbia Initiatives Corporation, to create a dynamic new platform to showcase the Kootenays as a great place to invest, work and live. The new website, Imagine Kootenay, brings together two separate portals – Invest Kootenay and Work West Kootenay – under a single umbrella designed to attract investment as well as a diversified workforce to the region.

Population served	60,000
Number of loans	33
Total value of loans	\$ 1,219,777
Amount leveraged	\$ 2,600,400
Self Employment clients	50
Jobs created and maintained	159
Number of CED projects	10
Number of CED partners	25
Amount leveraged for CED	\$ 500,000



Top photo - CF Central Kootenay Staff. Back row, from left: Blue Netherclift; Barb Williams; Val Radcliffe; Don McCulloch; Pamela Clausen; Wade Sather; Gord Jefferson. Front row, from left: Andrea Wilkey, Executive Director; Tammy Jackman; Janeen Mather; Lisa Cannady; Carmen Harrison; and Sam Van Schie. Not Pictured: Alison Bjorkman; Jessica Fairhart; Lynn Lock; and Marilyn Rivers.

Bottom photo - CF Central Kootenay Board & Committee members. From left: Dan Salekin; Charlotte Ferreux; Francis Swan; Deanne Monroe; and Chris Bell, Board Chair. Not Pictured: Brian Carmichael; Alec Dergousoff; Jon Exley; Ulli Mueller; Bob Nuyens; Ron Ross; and Rob Schwieger.

The partnership expands on the Invest Kootenay initiative, which was established in 2004 as a hub for online listings of businesses for sale and other investment opportunities, and has since grown to include 12 partners: Boundary Country, Castlegar, Nelson, Nakusp, Kootenay Lake, Trail, Rossland and Area, Golden, Revelstoke, Columbia Valley, Kimberley, Sparwood and Fernie.

“The objectives of both programs were so closely linked that joining forces made a lot of sense.”

*Terry Van Horn,
Economic Development
Officer, Lower Columbia
Initiatives Corporation*

Work West Kootenay was created in 2013 by the Lower Columbia Initiatives Corporation as a workforce recruitment initiative to attract and retain skilled labour to the Trail, Rossland and Fruitvale area. By pooling their resources, the two organizations have been able to create a central website or portal that offers a broader range of services for people looking for investment, employment and lifestyle opportunities.

“We brought the two programs together to share resources and build on each other’s strengths,” says Andrea Wilkey, Executive Director for Community Futures Central Kootenay.

“The objectives of both programs were so closely linked that joining forces made a lot of sense,” said Terry Van Horn, Economic Development Officer for the Lower Columbia Initiatives Corporation. “Imagine Kootenay can now leverage the combined knowledge, momentum and networks of both previous programs to best promote the opportunities to invest, work and live in the Kootenays.”

Youth Mean Business

A pilot project aimed at giving youth in the Central Kootenays a head start in business has been so successful that Community Futures Central Kootenay has renewed it for another three years. Youth Mean Business is an entrepreneurial skills training program delivered by Community Futures Central Kootenay, with funding from Kootenay Career Development Society. It provides training and financial support for young people aged 18 to 29 in Castlegar, Kaslo, Nelson, Salmo, Slocan and the surrounding area. It is an extension of the successful Self Employment Program that helps people make the transition from unemployment to self-employment. What's unique is that participants go through the program with other young entrepreneurs their own age.

"This program gives us an opportunity to create new entrepreneurs," said Andrea Wilkey, Executive Director of Community Futures Central Kootenay. "We're always looking for ways to retain youth in our communities as well as to energize our business community. These young entrepreneurs are high energy, full of enthusiasm and creativity."

Youth Mean Business is a 10-week program that provides financial support up to \$3,500 and training to help participants launch their own business. The program's coordinator, Blue Netherclift, is an experienced entrepreneur who works with participants to guide them through the business planning and launch phases of their new business.

In the first phase, participants learn how to write a business plan and are taken through all aspects of running a business, including marketing, budgeting, bookkeeping and human resources. Once they've completed their planning, they are ready to move into the launch phase.

So far, 12 youth have completed the business planning phase and seven have already launched their new business ventures. Community Futures Central Kootenay has partnered with Kootenay Career Development Society to offer the program.



Graduates of CF Central Kootenay's Youth Mean Business program in Nelson.

WorkBC Employment Services Centre



Kootenay Career Development Society
Nelson | Castlegar

"We're thrilled to be working with Community Futures Central Kootenay to offer youth a chance to learn new skills and fulfill their dreams of starting a business. This gives youth a head start on their careers."

*Jocelyn Carver,
Executive Director
Kootenay Career
Development Society*

imaginekootenay
Your better life

Learn more at
imaginekootenay.com

Imagine Kootenay is a dynamic new platform designed to showcase the Kootenay, Boundary and Columbia Valley region as a great place to invest, work and live.

COMMUNITY FUTURES EAST KOOTENAY

Basin Business Advisors Program

A unique partnership with Columbia Basin Trust has allowed Community Futures in the Basin to expand on the range of services it offers to businesses in the Kootenays.

The Basin Business Advisors (BBA) program provides free, one-on-one counseling and assessment services to small and medium-sized businesses throughout the Columbia Basin.

“Community Futures is primarily in the lending business,” said Sean Campbell, General Manager for Community Futures East Kootenay in Cranbrook. “Our counseling services are limited to providing advice to loan clients around starting, expanding or purchasing a business. Through the Basin Business Advisors Program, we can now offer dedicated support to more businesses in the region, not just our clients. It increases our bench strength and ability to help businesses across a range of issues.”

Population served	62,000
Number of loans	24
Total value of loans	\$ 758,000
Amount leveraged	\$ 590,000
Jobs created and maintained	25
Number of CED projects	9
Number of CED partners	33
Amount leveraged for CED	\$ 220,162



CF East Kootenay Staff. From left: Jamee Churchill; Keri Sanderman; Sean Campbell; Shawna Elliott; Will Nixon (BBA); Barb Warman; and Bob Bougie (BBA). **CF East Kootenay Board** (not pictured): Janice Alpine, Terry Anonson; Jill Bain; Kelly Beriault; Michael Delich; Mike Guarnerly; Andre Labine; Diana J. Scott, and Isabelle Simard.

“Community Futures is a well-known, well-respected organization which has a presence throughout the region. They understand the issues facing businesses, and have a proven track record of previous collaborations.”

*Lisa Kilpatrick,
Senior manager
Delivery of Benefits
Columbia Basin Trust*

The BBA was established in 2000 as part of Columbia Basin Trust’s mandate to build economic capacity in Columbia Basin communities. In 2013, the five Community Futures offices in the region – CF Central Kootenay, East Kootenay, Fraser Fort George, Greater Trail, and Revelstoke – collaborated on a proposal to deliver the program throughout the region, expanding from two advisors to five, and broadening the scope of services to include social enterprises.

“We’re a pretty unique program in that we’re able to provide one on one consulting to a greater depth,” says Will Nixon, BBA Program Manager. “We can spend more time with a business client, and we can also bring in more specialized advisors if we feel a client needs it.”

Funded by Columbia Basin Trust, the BBA Program is administered and managed by Community Futures Central Kootenay, with delivery of the program done in partnership with Community Futures in the Basin, including Community Futures East Kootenay, Greater Trail, Revelstoke and Fraser Fort George.



4-H Youth Loans Program

For the past six years, Community Futures East Kootenay has been helping youth develop their entrepreneurial skills while learning more about the agriculture business.

Working with three 4-H Clubs in its service area, CFEK has established a special fund to provide interest free loans of up to \$1,500 to 4-H members to purchase marketable livestock – beef, swine, or sheep.

It's designed to enhance the 4-H Animal Projects program, which provides young people with a hands-on opportunity to learn about livestock production and management practices.

Recipients of the loans must develop a business plan with a detailed budget for raising their animals, including costs such as feed, vet bills, and halters. They must feed and care for their animals, keep records on food, equipment and animal health, and learn to make good decisions regarding the care of their livestock. They also learn grooming and showmanship skills to exhibit their animals at an annual show and auction in the spring. When the animals are sold, the loans are then repaid.

Steve Thibeault, 15, has been a 4-H member since he was eight years old. "When I was old enough to raise my own steer, I got a loan from Community Futures to buy and feed my animal," he says. "I learned budgeting and marketing, and it also gave me a good credit rating if I want to borrow money from a bank when I am older."

Since the program launched in the fall of 2010, CFEK has helped 4-H youth purchase 98 animals for a total of \$101,170 in repayable loans, including 13 loans this past year.



Madison Adams and Elmo, her Black Angus steer. Madison joined 4-H three years ago. Thanks to the Community Futures 4-H Loan Fund, this is Madison's third year of learning to raise a steer.

Regional Chambers of Commerce

Community Futures East Kootenay has taken a unique approach to community economic development by partnering with an existing business network to strengthen economic capacity throughout the region.

"We have such a large territory that we couldn't really serve everybody adequately if we'd simply hired a CED coordinator," said Sean Campbell, General Manager for CF East Kootenay. So he and his local Community Futures group decided to collaborate with their Chambers of Commerce and other government agencies – there are eight Chambers of Commerce in the region – to promote economic and business development activities in their communities. Community Futures East Kootenay provides funding for each organization to organize a business development event for the public, such as bringing in a guest speaker, hosting a business awards night or trade show, or organizing a workshop. For example, the Cranbrook Chamber of Commerce brought in author and BC Business magazine publisher Peter Legge for a two part seminar during Small Business Week last October.

"Chambers of Commerce are great partners because they are business-minded organizations, and it's very easy for them to reach out to the business community as a whole," said Sean. "The Chambers also understand their local community needs and challenges, so we let them decide how they want to get involved. They have the local knowledge."

"The Community Futures 4-H Youth Loans fund is a great experience for kids. It gives them a chance to see how a loan works. Without Community Futures support, many kids would not be able to participate in the livestock program."

Cranbrook 4-H Multi Club

COMMUNITY FUTURES OF GREATER TRAIL

MIDAS

For the past year, Community Futures of Greater Trail has played a key roll in building a new research facility that will open up new opportunities for entrepreneurs in the technology sector. The Metallurgical Industrial Development Acceleration and Studies (MIDAS) project is an applied research, commercialization and digital fabrication training facility focused on the metallurgical sector surrounding Teck Metals smelter in Trail. The new facility will be housed in the former Community Futures business incubator in Trail.

Population served	19,250
Number of loans	20
Total value of loans	\$ 1,309,103
Amount leveraged	\$ 97,000
Self Employment clients	8
Jobs created and maintained	261
Number of CED projects	31
Number of CED partners	28
Amount leveraged for CED	\$ 116,795



CF Greater Trail Board and Staff. From left: Sara Stuart; Carla Plotnikoff, Board Chair; Don Freschi, General Manager; Ron Perepolkin; Gerald Klassen; Tamara Rotach; Kristine Service; Nicole Pipes; Chris DeLuca; Ken LeRose; Mary Austin. Not pictured: John Reed and Frank Marino.

“This collaborative project will bring all sorts of people together – business people, students and researchers – to increase expertise and innovation in our region. The potential for meaningful economic impact is exciting.”

*Johnny Strilaeff,
Vice-President and Chief
Operating Officer for
Columbia Basin Trust*

“The biggest industry in our area is Teck Metals,” said Don Freschi, General Manager for Community Futures of Greater Trail. “We wanted to create a business incubator that will help scientists and entrepreneurs take advantage of Teck’s byproducts and create new, value added opportunities that will help stimulate the economy.”

The MIDAS project is led by the Kootenay Association of Science and Technology (KAST) in partnership with Fenix Advanced Materials, which produces high-purity metals for the semiconductor market. Community Futures of Greater Trail contributed \$310,000 to the project, which helped leverage additional funding from Western Economic Diversification, Columbia Basin Trust, and the BC Innovation Council.

Other partners include Selkirk College’s Rural Development Institute, University of BC Okanagan, Mitacs, Southern Interior Development Initiative Trust, the Lower Columbia Community Development Team Society and the Lower Columbia Initiatives Corporation.

“This is a significant economic development initiative for our region,” said Don. “For this project to succeed, it was essential that we get all the stakeholders involved.”

The MIDAS facility will include the first MIT certified digital fabrication laboratory or “Fab Lab” in western Canada. Fab Labs is a global network of locally based research labs that provide access to digital fabricators allowing anyone to make almost anything. They are the educational outreach component of MIT’s Centre for Bits and Atoms.

The new facility is currently under construction and scheduled to be open in September 2016.

Junior Dragons Den

Since 2014, Community Futures of Greater Trail has been introducing high school students to the world of entrepreneurship through a business competition program that teaches participants key business skills in a fun and challenging environment.

Modelled after CBC's "The Dragons' Den," where qualifying entrepreneurs pitch their business idea to a group of potential investors, Junior Dragons Den invites students to submit a written business concept and short video (one-and-a-half to two minutes) explaining their idea. Submissions are evaluated according to finances, marketability, the product or service itself, and the overall plan being presented. Students are shortlisted and matched with a mentor to further refine their business plan and video pitch for presentation at a live show in front of a panel of local business owners serving as judges.

The annual competition, which started off with two categories – Juniors (grades 8-10) and Seniors (grade 10-12) – has now added a third category for college/university students. And the program has become so successful that this year it expanded to include communities throughout the Kootenay Columbia Boundary area with regional competitions in Trail, Cranbrook and Revelstoke. The winners of the regional competitions will then compete at a grand finale in Trail.

"Our goal is helping entrepreneurs achieve their dreams," said Don Freschi, General Manager for Community Futures of Greater Trail. "If we want to build a strong business community, we have to start with the kids. They're the future."

Don said that the program would not have succeeded without buy-in from the local schools. "It was critical to get the teachers and principal involved," he said. "That took a couple of years, but now we have four or five schools participating, and we've gone from 15 applicants in the first year to more than 100 applications this year."

Junior Dragons Den has already proved to be a career launch pad. "A classic example is Jordan Strobel and Tim Baldwin and their success with Ebon Supply Company," said John Reed, Youth Initiatives Coordinator for Community Futures of Greater Trail. "They had expansion plans that they submitted, and they won the senior category in the first competition."

Junior Dragon's Den is a regional partnership between Community Futures of Greater Trail, Boundary, Central Kootenay, East Kootenay and Revelstoke.



Regional **Junior Dragons Den** finalists compete at a grand finale in front of a live audience in Trail.

COMMUNITY FUTURES REVELSTOKE

Living Wage Survey

For the past few years, Community Futures Revelstoke has been working with the City of Revelstoke on a poverty reduction strategy to help build a strong and resilient community. One of the challenges facing the community is the growing gap between the rising cost of living and employers' ability to pay a "living wage" – the amount a typical family needs to cover basic expenses. Living wage calculations are based on a two parent family with two children, with each parent working full time. In 2015, the living wage for Revelstoke was calculated at \$18.87/hr, the third highest living wage in the province after Vancouver (\$20.10/hr) and Victoria (\$18.93/hr).

Population served	8,000
Number of loans	21
Total value of loans	\$ 1,345,540
Amount leveraged	\$ 3,183,662
Self Employment clients	4
Jobs created and maintained	122
Number of CED projects	19
Number of CED partners	24
Amount leveraged for CED	\$ 1,187,000



CF Revelstoke Board and Staff. From left: John Simms, Board Chair; Debra Wozniak; Cindy Maloney; Carol Paladino; Kevin Dorrius, General Manager; Karilyn Kempton; Brooke Burke; and Cathy Burke. Not pictured: Chris Bostock; Rob Buchanan; and Jim Maitre.

“Community Futures was instrumental in moving the Living Wage project forward. The research provides a critical framework for the kinds of discussions the community needs to have”.

*Mike Evans
UBC Okanagan*

“That was a real eye opener for us,” said Kevin Dorrius, General Manager for Community Futures Revelstoke and a member of the Poverty Reduction Coalition. “But before we could move forward on implementing a community-wide living wage program, we needed to understand what that meant – not just for our community but our economy too.”

They found that there wasn't a lot of hard information on what the impact of a living wage would be. “A lot of the information was anecdotal,” said Kevin. “We knew that a living wage would help more people out of poverty, but we didn't know how it would effect employers.”

Working with a research team from UBC Okanagan, CF Revelstoke set out to measure the impact that a living wage policy would have on local businesses. The groundbreaking research identified key economic sectors most likely to be impacted, and included a community-wide survey to obtain data on business activities, workforce characteristics and the anticipated impacts of implementing a living wage.

“The research will give us a “made in Revelstoke” approach to helping the business community understand the benefits and challenges of paying a living wage, and some tools that could potentially offset those challenges,” said Kevin.

Business Retention and Expansion

In addition to the Living Wage Survey, CF Revelstoke partnered with the City of Revelstoke, the Revelstoke Chamber of Commerce, and Columbia Basin Trust on a Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) survey to better understand the issues facing local businesses.

Community Futures hired Mark Rossi, a co-op student from UBC Okanagan, to carry out the survey. Columbia Basin Trust's Rural Development Institute (RDI) at Selkirk College provided training and support throughout the project, including access to an online data management tool and assistance with data analysis and report-writing. It's part of the RDI's mandate to work with communities on establishing ongoing business retention and expansion (BRE) programs throughout the region.

A series of surveys and interviews were conducted with 135 local businesses to determine the current health of their business, identify any barriers to growth and expansion, and explore ways of improving the local business environment. The interviews were conducted over an eight month period between January and August 2015.

"One of the reasons the BRE project is so effective is that it not only supports long range planning but it also yields some immediate results," said Kevin Dorrius, General Manager of Community Futures Revelstoke. "One of the biggest things we learned is that our business community is somewhat younger than others. Where other communities are focusing on succession planning, we've got businesses that are grappling with growth."

The survey results revealed that 56 per cent of businesses are in a growth cycle while 48 per cent were planning to expand within the next three years.

The BRE report provides a wealth of information and recommendations that will help Community Futures Revelstoke address specific issues raised during the interview and survey process.



UBC Okanagan co-op student and BRE research coordinator **Mark Rossi**.

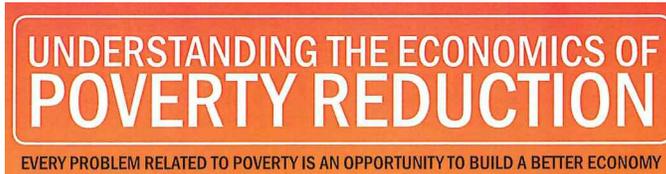
"The collaboration between Community Futures Revelstoke, the Chamber of Commerce and the City of Revelstoke was crucial to the success of the BRE project. Without their involvement, we would not have been able to undertake the project."

*Dr. Terri MacDonald,
Regional Innovation Chair in
Rural Economic Development
Columbia Basin Trust*

Annual Kootenay Columbia Boundary Regional CED Forum

On May 18th and 19th, 2016 Community Futures Revelstoke hosted the 12th annual Community Economic Development Forum, bringing together some 60 community leaders and CED practitioners from across the Columbia Kootenay Boundary region. The five Community Futures

organizations in the region have been taking turns hosting the annual forum since 2004 with the host community choosing the topic. This year's theme was "Understanding the Economics of Poverty Reduction."



"One of the biggest challenges in our region is affordability," said Kevin Dorrius, General Manager for Community Futures Revelstoke. "It's been getting tougher and tougher to get by as a working family because of the high cost of living, especially the increasing price of houses and fuel. And that becomes an issue for employers trying to attract people to live here, whether it's teachers or nurses or skilled trades-people."

Topics included the socio-economic benefits of poverty reduction by Mark Holmgren, Director of Vibrant Communities Canada for the Tamarack Institute for Community Engagement; the role of social investment and entrepreneurship by Brian Smith, executive director of Community Futures Sunshine Coast; a presentation from

Vancity Credit Union on becoming a living wage employer; and a panel of local business owners on developing effective human resource strategies as a good investment for both businesses and employees.

The purpose of the annual forum is to bring together community partners from a cross section of organizations to collaborate on community economic development issues.

"We all want good communities to live in and an economy that works for everyone," said Kevin.

Previous CED forum themes have included:

- The Economics of Tourism
- Leveraging Broadband to Drive Community Economic Development
- Innovative Solutions for Rural Communities
- Water and Our Way of Life
- The Boomers Are Retiring - Are You Ready?
- Business Development in Action
- Growing Communities One Idea at a Time
- Projects in Progress

SUMMARY OF LOAN ACTIVITY

Community Futures is a non-profit, community-based organization that provides access to capital as well as support for entrepreneurs who want to start or expand their businesses but may have difficulty getting financing. Collectively, the five Community Futures groups in the Kootenay Columbia Boundary region have loaned more than \$6.7 million to over 100 small businesses in the past year, resulting in the creation and maintenance of more than 590 jobs.

Name of CF	Population served	Staff	Volunteers	Number of loans	Value of loans	Amount leveraged	Self Employment clients	Number of jobs
Boundary	12,000	15	17	7	\$ 771,640	\$ 268,000	6	26.5
Central Kootenay	60,000	22	14	33	\$ 1,219,777	\$ 2,600,400	50	159
East Kootenay	62,000	5	9	24	\$ 758,000	\$ 590,000	N/A	25
Greater Trail	19,250	6	13	20	\$ 1,309,103	\$ 97,000	8	261
Revelstoke	8,000	4	24	21	\$ 1,345,540	\$ 3,183,662	4	122
TOTALS:	161,250	52	73	105	\$ 5,404,060	\$ 4,138,662	68	593.5

SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

In addition to loans and business development, Community Futures also has a mandate to provide community economic development services to create local economic opportunities and improve the quality of life in their communities. By using local knowledge and resources, CED identifies and capitalizes on opportunities to stimulate economic growth and employment, and help communities achieve their full economic potential.

Name of CF	CED projects	CED partners	CED leveraged
Boundary	20	25	\$ 1,200,000
Central Kootenay	10	25	\$ 500,000
East Kootenay	9	33	\$ 220,162
Greater Trail	31	28	\$ 116,795
Revelstoke	19	24	\$ 1,187,000
TOTALS:	89	162	\$ 2,023,957

Community Futures



Kootenay Columbia Boundary Region

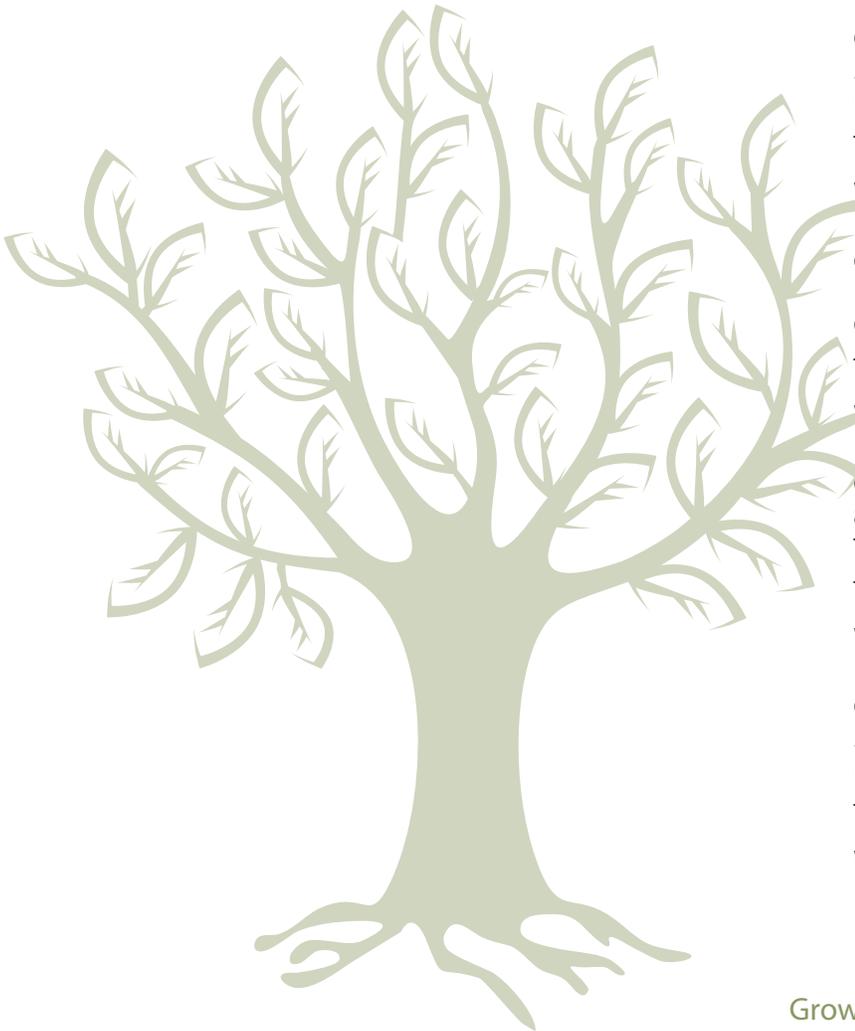
Community Futures Boundary
1647 Central Avenue
Grand Forks, BC V0H 1H0
Tel. (250) 443-2722
Toll free: 1-877-267-9399
www.boundarycf.com

Community Futures Central Kootenay
514 Vernon Street, #201
Nelson, BC V1L 4E7
Tel. (250) 352-1933
www.futures.bc.ca

Community Futures East Kootenay
110 Slater Rd NW, Suite A
Cranbrook, BC V1C 5C8
Tel. (250) 489-4356
www.cfek.ca

Community Futures Greater Trail
825 Spokane Street
Trail, BC V1R 3W4
Tel. (250) 364-2595
www.communityfutures.com

Community Futures Revelstoke
301 Victoria Road, Suite D
Revelstoke, BC V0E 2S0
Tel. (250) 837-5345
www.communityfuturesrevelstoke.com



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