

Humans of CED In the East Kootenays

Robyn Peel

Community Economic Development
Coordinator

Community Futures East Kootenay



What are you involved in that contributes to CED?

As well as being the Community Economic Development Coordinator (CED) with Community Futures East Kootenay (CFEK), I also am on the Board of Wildsight Elk Valley, am a passionate contributor and supporter of the Local store in Fernie and I have helped run the Fernie Mountain Film Festival for five years. These are the ways I help to contribute to the amazing Fernie community that I'm proud to call home.

How does your work enhance your community?

My role with CFEK supports regional capacity building by facilitating support and collaboration for CED projects happening within communities across the East Kootenays. This hopefully helps those communities be more livable, resilient, vibrant places for people to live.

For my work with Wildsight Elk Valley and Local, it allows more people to access great local food year round, and supports food security work in the area. And the Film Festival brings locals and tourists together for two nights each year to celebrate local and global films that remind us why we love living in the mountains.

What do you love about where you live?

Fernie has amazing outdoor adventures at my doorstep, an engaged and friendly community, great local businesses to support and non-profit organizations that both support people within the community and enhance my life (including great trails, swim training, and access to great local food).

Fernie has all the things I love – good people, good food, and all the beautiful scenery and nature one could ask for.



Theresa Wood

Columbia Valley Chamber of Commerce



role in helping business owners build something they are passionate about; when they are successful the whole community wins. We are in a time of great change with expectations surrounding corporate responsibility, societal expectations, and climate adaptation. We can help businesses work through challenges and opportunities together to build an overall stronger community.

What do you love about where you live?

You will never find a more amazing group of people than residents of the Columbia Valley. People who have done and are doing incredible things. Sometimes it is in their own humble way, and other times they are building a name for themselves nationally and internationally. We have people doing incredible things in construction, food production, manufacturing, the arts, and so much more. It is always amazing to see the creativity and innovation that comes out of such a small population in our rural region .

Tell us about your involvement in CED in your community.

I work in CED through the Columbia Valley Chamber of Commerce who currently holds the contract for Columbia Valley Economic Development.

How does this enhance your community?

The supports and initiatives offered through the Columbia Valley Economic Development help elevate the Columbia Valley as place to start and grow your business. Whether it is our workforce attraction, entrepreneurial immigration programs, or assisting businesses navigate government programs, we meet businesses where they are at help them reach their goals.

Why are you passionate about CED?

I am passionate about CED because it helps form the future of our region. We play an active

Shannon Grey Duncan

Healthy Kimberley Food Recovery Depot



How did you get involved?

I worked as a market farmer, then for the Cranbrook Food Action Committee coordinating local food sustainability projects. After having my 2nd child, I transitioned out of that position to focus on motherhood and my small tea making business. When the position of Food Recovery Coordinator came up with Healthy Kimberley, I couldn't resist applying. It aligns perfectly with my values and skill set - creative adaptability, resourcefulness, community building, and empowering people with access to food and building food literacy skills. I'm also drawn to projects in the seed form - forging new ground lights my fire :)

How does this initiative enhance your community?

We reduce the burden on our local landfill by diverting food waste - now over 300,000 lbs since the Food Recovery opened 4 years ago. The majority of that food was deemed edible in our sorting process and directly addresses food security through distribution to vulnerable community members. The way that happens effectively is through developing strong relationships. That is at the heart of how I feel this initiative enhances our community - as these relationships develop, with partner agencies, within our volunteer community, with donors, and the greater public - we are part of building a stronger community. Food connects people and I come back to this time and time

again as a valuable tool to create healthier, stronger communities.

Ideally, recovered food becomes a vehicle for increasing food literacy skills and encouraging people to connect creatively with food, regardless of income or demographic. Since the development of our frozen meal program, we've been able to transform food that is close to end-of-life into a much more value-added and useful product for our vulnerable community members, taking away the pressure to use it quickly and helping to lessen the burden on making another meal.

What do you love about where you live?

We are nestled in the mountains, surrounded by forest that is accessible in almost every direction. Mark Creek flows through the middle of town and is a living example of the power to heal. When I grew up, that creek was orange & you didn't even think of going near it. Through the dedication of community members working collaboratively to encourage and enhance corporate efforts, the fish have come back and there are swimming holes all through town. That kind of collaboration and working together, finding middle ground where different views can meet and work together - that's the kind of community Kimberley is. I've always known it to be a down-to-earth and unassuming mountain town. The kind of place that really shows itself jewels when you stop and take the time to listen.

