

Performance Results for 2022-23 Community Futures Lesser Slave Lake Region

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	2022-23
<i>Strong rural community strategic planning and implementation</i>	
1. Total number of community-based projects (new & on-going)	28
2. Total number of local and regionally-based community strategic plans developed and/or updated	5
<i>Rural access to business development services</i>	
3. Total number of business training session participants	983
4. Total number of business advisory services	1129
<i>Rural access to capital and leveraged capital</i>	
5. Dollar value of loans	\$363,433
6. Total number of loans	12
7. Number of jobs created/maintained/expanded through lending ¹	47
Provide additional information (e.g. Success stories, Links to priorities, leveraging work, communication events, etc...)	
<p>Community Futures Lesser Slave Lake Region has been dedicated to the growth of our region. Faced with many challenges such as the endemic of Covid along with annual wildfire issues we continued to support our region. In the area of loans, CFLSLR has found a decrease in applications which is affecting our total approved loans. CFLSLR is digging into why this is and speculates that the economic uncertainty of this time may have something to do with it. CFLSLR hired a consultant to review its loan products and procedures. The results will help us develop better products and more efficient systems to help us achieve our lending goals.</p> <p>In light the lower loan inquiries, CFLSLR put its energy into supporting the existing and future entrepreneurs of our region. We did this through developing more programs and events for education, advice, and training. Our stats for this area reflect our efforts and prove are hard work paid off.</p> <p>Here are some of the projects and initiatives we've worked on:</p> <p>CFLSL has launched the Capitol Growth Initiative loan program. This program offers loans to women who wish to start, grow, or expand their businesses. The loan includes interest-only payments for the first six</p>	

¹ Estimated at the time of lending

months, low-interest rates, and a 25% forgivable portion if 75% of the principal is paid within the term of the loan. We were over-subscribed to this program. We completed six loans for a total of \$110,000.00.

Beautification Loans, a partnership project with the TOSL, County of Big Lakes, MD of Opportunity and CF, are moving along. This program has been launched and is currently being marketed in all three communities.

Digital Service Squad (the 1-1 support service we offer to businesses looking to improve their digital footprint) is being utilized by our region well. We've served 120 businesses surpassing March 2023 goals. The program is extremely valuable to the businesses we serve and our region as it helps develop more awareness of our products and services throughout the region. CFLSL is the office that has reached out to the most clients per capita for the entire province and continues to be the top-performing office in the program. CFLSLR has been approved to continue the program for an additional 12 months to March 2024.

Headstart in Business – our entrepreneur training program in school. The free program offers the opportunity for youth to build entrepreneurial skills and critical thinking, strategy, artistry, and math skills. The program was very successful helping over 400 participants in this fiscal year.

Adulting 101 – We provided our Adulting 101 course to young adults in the local schools and indigenous communities we serve. The course is fantastic for youth wanting to learn about credit, interview skills, budgeting and more.

BACE – Our customer service training program is almost done being built. All the training materials and videos have been curated. The program is now in internal testing. This program will provide the Slave Lake Region with a low-cost and easy-to-implement customer service training program that can be catered to different industries. We are aiming to have the product in Beta testing by June 2023.

Hyper-Drive Women in Business Summit – CFLSL, in partnership with CF Grande Prairie and three other CF offices, launched a Women in Business Summit for March 2023. The event went very well with attendees saying they would like to come again. Over 100 women entrepreneurs attended the event.

Slave Lake Trade Show – We are just in the infancy of planning the Slave Lake Tradeshow for May. Marketing for the event is found on the SLDCC website.

Live Local Love Local – This project is more than just an online directory. We've been working in Wabasca, High Prairie, and Slave Lake communities to market and promote all businesses that sign up for the directory. We've also completed outreach to 48 of those who sign up to see how we can further support each business.

Spark the North – CFLSLR Hosted an Labour attraction and Retention event in partnership with the County of Big Lakes, and Alberta Labour and Immigration. The event offered incite and solutions to the current labour market challenges. Over 60 participants came and many more attended online.

CF Business Week – CFLSLR offered a series of lunch and learn seminars geared towards supporting our business community during the business week (October 16-22). The workshops were free to attend and will also be available live online.

Mini-Monster Halloween – We managed the Mini-Monster event this Halloween in Slave Lake. The program encourages parents to take their kids to local businesses to do their trick-or-treating. This encourages both kids and adults to get to know the businesses in the region while also providing opportunities for the businesses to market and sell themselves. We had over 42 businesses signed up for this year.