

Performance Results for 2022-23 Community Futures Highwood

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)	50
2. Total number of local and regionally based community strategic plans developed and/or updated	1
<i>Rural access to business development services</i>	
3. Total number of business training session participants	545
4. Total number of business advisory services	668
<i>Rural access to capital and leveraged capital</i>	
5. Dollar value of loans	\$425,048
6. Total number of loans	12
7. Number of jobs created/maintained/expanded through lending ¹	25
<p>CFH underwent a significant internal change during this fiscal year, rewriting both our Memorandum and Articles of Association and changing our board size and composition. In addition to updating the governance documents to be in line with current practices, we collaborated with our shareholder regions to give up their shares in the corporation and to thereby remove the appointment of directors. With this change in place the board is now able to self-recruit. Board size was reduced from max. 24 to max. 9 directors and all new directors also sit on the committee that adjudicates the loans.</p> <p>We were honoured to award four outstanding citizens in our service region with the Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee Medals: Judy McMillan-Evans (High River), Orvella Small (High River), Pamela Morgan (Okotoks), Verna Staples (Diamond Valley).</p> <p>Programming:</p> <p>CFH continued to run the Digital Service Squad program (part of the Digital Economy Program initiated and financed by the Province of Alberta) and served 109 clients since program start. Through this program CFH provides free digital assessments and coaching to entrepreneurs wanting to increase or optimize their digital presence. We once again ran the SMARTstart business incubator program and were able to recruit participants from the following regions: Foothills County, High River, Nanton, Okotoks and Vulcan. It was exciting to see the Rotary Youth Entrepreneurship Camp start up once again and we sent 6 youths to it this year.</p> <p>We saw a huge uptake in our Entrepreneurs with Disabilities program. This past fiscal year we applied for and received approval for more clients than in the previous 3 years combined.</p>	

¹ Estimated at the time of lending