

Operating Plan

FY 2008-2009

**This plan has been approved and submitted
by the Board for**

COMMUNITY FUTURES HIGHWOOD

101, 120 4TH Ave SW
Box 5429
High River, AB T1V 1M5
(403)652-3700

On behalf of the Board

_____ Signature*	_____ Date
_____ Ron Chase Name	_____ Chair Title

On behalf of the CF Management

_____ Signature*	_____ Date
_____ John Lockhart Name	_____ General Manager Title

Date Plan Submitted to WD: _____

Board Motions - Attached

INDEX

1.0	BASIC “CFH” INFORMATION	
1.1	Name & Address	3
1.2	Staff	3
1.3	Board of Directors	4
2.0	ORGANIZATION	
2.1	Structure & Operations	5
2.2	Policies	8
2.3	Service Area / Demographics / SWOT	8
2.4	Community Accountability	12
3.0	VISION	
3.1	Mission Statement	13
3.2	5-year Strategic Goals	13
4.0	2007 – 08 ACCOMPLISHMENTS	
4.1	Quantitative	17
4.2	Variance Analysis	17
4.3	Other Activities	19
4.4	Core Service Results	19
5.0	2008 - 2009 CORE SERVICES	
	Strategies	33
6.0	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	
6.1	Targets	47
6.2	CED Projects	48
6.3	Minimum Performance Standards	51
7.0	FINANCIAL	
7.1	Budget/Cash Flow	52
7.2	BOARD MOTIONS	52
	INTEREST TRANSFER REQUEST	
	History	53
	Request	55

INTRODUCTION

ORGANIZATION

Community Futures Highwood (CF Highwood / CFH)

1.0 BASIC INFORMATION (Annual)

1.1 Basic information:

#101, 120 4th Avenue SW, Box 5429, High River Alberta T1V 1M5

(403)652-3700

fax (403)652-7022

#35 Riverside Drive, Box 1599, Okotoks, Alberta T1S 1B5

(403)995-4151

fax (403)995-3760

info@cfhighwood.net - general office

john@cfhighwood.net - General Manager

Mr. Ron Chase, Chair

(403)931-3797

ronchasemd31@aol.com

www.cfhighwood.net

1.2 List of Staff

NAME	POSITION	PHONE #	CORE FUNDING
John Lockhart	General Manager	(403)652-3700	100%
Monique LeBlanc	CED Coordinator	(403)995-4151	100%
TBA	Administrator	(403)652-3700	100%
Stacie Symington	Business Advisor	(403)995-4151	100%
TBA	SE Training Coordinator	(403)652-3700	0%
Valerie Young	Customer Service Officer	(403)995-4151	0%
Lyne Brown	Customer Service Officer	(403)652-3700	0%
Bonnie Smith	Senior Employment Advisor	(403)652-3700	0%
Reg Berg	Employment Advisor	(403)995-4151	0%
TBA	Career Project Advisor	(403)652-3700	0%

1.3 Board of Directors

BOARD MEMBER (tenure)	POSITION	REPRESENTATION
Ron Chase (9 yrs/1 mos)	Chair	M.D. Foothills (Councillor)
Bill McAlpine (9 yrs/3 mos)	Vice Chair	Okotoks (Mayor)
Rolly Magee (9 yrs/11 mos)	Secretary	Black Diamond (Mayor)
Ian Donovan (12 yrs/3 mos)	Director	Vulcan County (Reeve)
John Blake (10 yrs/5mos)	Director	Nanton (Mayor)
Barry Williamson (3 yrs/3 mos)	Director	Turner Valley (Councillor)
Evan Berger (2 yrs/10 mos)	Director	M.D. Willow Creek (Reeve)
Al Gillis (0 yrs/3 mos)	Director	High River (Councillor)
Rick Howard (0 yrs/3 mos)	Director	Vulcan (Councillor)
Jamie Tiessen (0 yrs/2 mos)	Director	Kananaskis I.P. (Councillor)
Ken Curle (6 yrs/1 mos)	Chair IRC	Nanton (Retired Business Owner)
Robert Thompson (1 yr/1 mos)	Vice Chair IRC	High River (Retired Banker)
Charlene Shearer (1 yr/1 mos)	Treasurer IRC	Vulcan (Retired Farmer)
Davis Edels (12 yrs/4 mos)	Director/IRC	Okotoks (Car Dealership Owner)
Don McRae (10 yrs/9 mos)	Director/IRC	M.D. Willow Creek (Rancher/Farmer)
George Nielsen (8 yrs/9 mos)	Director/IRC	Black Diamond (Bakery Owner)
Ken Black (5 yrs/7 mos)	Director/IRC	M.D. Foothills (Oil/Gas Consultant)
Mark Klaudt (1 yr/1 mos)	Director/IRC	Turner Valley (Restaurant Owner)
Darryl McDonald (0 yrs/4 mos)	Director/IRC	Vulcan County (Realtor/Farmer)

IRC = Investment review Committee

The second Committee is the Management and Finance Committee which is made up of 6 board and the 3 IRC officers

2.0 DESCRIPTION OF ORGANIZATION

2.1 STRUCTURE and OPERATIONS

- CF Highwood is registered as a **Non-Profit Company** in Alberta with the effective date of name change being April 27, 2007 (from Highwood Business Development Corporation to Community Futures Highwood);
- CFH has a membership of **10 shareholder communities** representing **26 towns, villages and hamlets**;
 - CFH Board of Directors consists of **10 Municipality appointed elected officials and 9 municipality appointed community volunteers (for the most part business owners/managers)**
 - Each Shareholder Community has the power to appoint up to **2 board members** (1 elected and 1 business representative – exception is that Kananaskis Improvement District only appoints a Council member);
 - The Board operates from a specific set of Board Governance Principles, Job Definition Document, and Code of Ethics;
 - Board Members are accountable for two-way communication processes between their respective communities and the CFH boardroom which includes identifying collective community needs, economic priorities, and business targets which CFH programs may assist as well as communicating an awareness of CFH's programs and services to their constituents;
 - Through our active memberships and partnerships with each shareholder community's Chambers of Commerce, Economic Development Committee, Municipal Administration and Council the CFH is provided a strong linkage to assess regional needs both in the urban centres as well as in the agricultural / ranching regions;
 - The Board authorizes its Chair to represent it at community and government meetings, voting on key elements as required. The Chair with the support of the Board's Management and Finance Review Committee (MRC) oversees the General Manager position who in turn manages the daily operations and manages the staff resources as required;
 - The full Board **meets 6 times** a year (4th Thursday evening of January, March, April, September, and November and the 1st or 2nd weekend of July as per their AGM/Corporate Audit Report;
 - The Board has **2 sub committees** – the MRC (Management and Finance) and the IRC (Investment Review Committee - Loans);
 - The MRC consists of **6 members** – the 3 Board Officers and the 3 IRC Officers – and meets as required to review contracts, approve budgets, evaluate Manager performance, and approve Manager plans;

- The IRC consists of **9 members** – shareholder community business reps – the IRC usually meets 10 times each year (exception is December and July unless volumes dictate a meeting) to adjudicate loan applications, review the Loan portfolio status, and issue or approve policy recommendations;
- The CFH Board is very active in participating in the Community Futures Board training program - normally we book 3 to 6 sessions. At present we have:
 - ◇ 1 Board Member with all 11 modules, 1 with 10, 1 with 9, 1 with 8, 1 with 7, 2 with 6, 2 with 5, and the rest with between 1 and 4 modules completed
 - ◇ The Board Members actively use the annual Alberta CF Symposium/Conference for PD training and attend such conferences as BRIE, Economic Development Alberta, etc.
- The CFH has two offices – Main office is in High River (established there in early 1986 when the program was a “LEAD’ organization before being made a CFDC in December 1986) and an office opened in Okotoks, November 25, 2005;
 - There are 4 staff in High River and 4 staff in Okotoks with the General Manager floating between the two
 - CFH Staff are active with Pan West staff training offered through the CF Associations as well as Economic Development Alberta workshops and local Chamber of Commerce workshops/seminars. Funding is made available for staff as above and or for relative diploma and certification programs at post secondary institutions
 - CFH utilizes its close relationship with the municipalities to access various local meeting sites when hosting itinerant services in Vulcan; Vulcan County Turner Valley; Black Diamond; and Nanton
- CFH offers a variety of self help programs and services that include:
 - Business (SME) Services
 - Alternative business loan program
 - Business plan assistance
 - Entrepreneurial training workshops
 - Video conferencing business seminars
 - Community Economic Development Services
 - Municipality advisor and facilitation services
 - Non-profit organization advisory and facilitation services
 - Municipality support and representation on Regional Economic Development Alliances (REDA) – Calgary Regional Partnership and SouthGrow
 - Municipality and regional economic project support
 - Employment and Job Search Services
 - One on one counselling – Career plans and resume writing

- Workshops - Career Decision Making, Resume Writing, Job Search
- In-house client computers assistance – Resume Development, Job Search, ‘EI’ applications
- Skill Development and Workplace training subsidies
- Youth Services and Programs
 - One on one counselling – Career plans and resume writing
 - Workshops - Career Decision Making, Resume Writing, Job Search
 - In-school presentations covering resumes, work place skills, career planning, and self employment
 - Youth camp sponsor and leader
 - Funding assistance for skills/educational development
- Regional Partnerships
 - Calgary Regional Partnership (REDA) and SouthGrow (REDA),

Community and Government Partners

Community	Provincial	Federal
CFH is community owned (10 Community Shareholders)	Alberta Employment, Industry, and Immigration – 3 Contracts	Western Economic Diversification
19 Member Board (Mayors/ Councillors / Business Leaders)	3 CFDC’s - Business Directory Project	Business Development Bank of Canada
Member of the 5 regional Chambers of Commerce	Alberta Community Development – facilitation partner within communities	The Business Link- The Canada Business Service Centre
Local Economic Development Committees	Economic Developers of Alberta	Rural Secretariat
4 Regional EDOs	13 CFDCs and Alberta 4H - Alberta Youth Entrepreneurship Program	
Regular business visitation and council visitations to individual communities	Alberta Financial Services Corporation	
3 Interagency groups	5 CFDC’s Self Start Program (on-line business development training program)	
2 Regional RCED Projects	Calgary Regional Partnership (REDA)	
3 Education Plus schools – student career planning and resumes	SouthGrow (REDA)	
2 Regional school boards – career fair	ELC member with all Alta CFDCs	
1 Associate ELC Member – Vulcan Business Development Society	CFNA	
5 regional newspapers and 3 regional radio stations (project and marketing based)	Alberta Economic Development Authority (project based)	

Funding Partners

Federal	Provincial	Other
WED – CF Program	AEII – 3 Contracts – Career and Employment, Work Place Training, Self Employment	CFNA – 2 RCED Grants

2.2 CF Policies:

- Investment Fund Management - provided in 2006
- Conflict of Interest – provided in 2006
- Board of Directors – provided in 2006 & updated in this document – Page 4

2.3 CF Service Area

- **Demographics**

- The regional office is located in High River with a second fully staffed office in Okotoks
 - From High River the furthest point east is **Carmangay** at **105 kms**, west is **Kananaskis** at **183 kms**, south is **Stavelly** at **120 kms**, and north is **the City of Calgary** at **60 kms**;
 - The region has a diverse economy:
 - Ranching and agriculture prominent , oil and gas, light manufacturing, transportation, large retail
 - Good industrial, manufacturing and commercial land availability
 - Located on the major Alberta north south corridor – Highway 2 - and its close proximity to Calgary and its employment market and transportation links compliment its potential growth

- **Shareholder Communities include:**

Shareholder	Population	Additional Communities
Municipal District Foothills	20,036	Priddis, Davisburg, De Winton, Millarville, Red Deer Lake, Longview, Aldersyde, Cayley, Blackie
1/3 rd M. D. of Willow Creek	2,903	Parkland, Stavelly
Vulcan County	4,974	Mossleigh, Arrowwood, Milo, Carmangay, Champion, Brant, Lomond, Queenstown, Shouldice
Kananaskis Improvement District	462	
Town of Turner Valley	1,900	
Town of Black Diamond	1,986	
Town of Okotoks	17,145	

Town of High River	12,646	
Town of Nanton	2,055	
Town of Vulcan	1,940	
TOTALS	66,047	

REGIONAL SWOT

<p><u>STRENGTHS:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administration: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Stable, Qualified, ○ On-going professionally developed ○ Connected to community • Board: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Conscientious, committed, diverse, stable, tenure ○ Balanced representation – men, women, young, mature, business, elected, ○ Every shareholder region represented • Availability of funds – operational and loan fund • Prudent operational practices • Strong contributions to community betterment • Located in region with thriving, vibrant growth and economy • Technologically up to date • Strong relationships/partnerships with stakeholders 	<p><u>WEAKNESSES:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equal geographic delivery of services • Competition between communities – impacts regional perspective • Non-usage of “Success” Stories • Evaluation of our programs/services • Lack of collaboration with communities • Lack of internal and external communication • Available dedicated time of some Board Members • Accountability to each other as a board • Sustainability (self vs. government)
<p><u>OPPORTUNITIES:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Economy Agenda: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Bring awareness to communities ○ Teach/educate • Provide tools to board to assist in creating an awareness of CFH in their communities • Growth through permanent presence in an Okotoks office • Expand our loan program deliverables • ‘Seniorpreneurship’ market • Community outreach field presence on an as-needed basis • Targeted community facilitation services • Market our services • Provide the link to other business services 	<p><u>THREATS:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainability – loss or reduction of provincial funding • Changes in Federal support • Recession - economic downturn • Staff and board succession planning • Staff/Wages: non-competitive • Shortage of loan funds • Loss of support from communities • Bad loans • Technology replacement costly • Loss of computer data storage • Complexity of organization – trying to be everything to everyone

ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

<p><u>ECONOMY</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Population shifts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ urbanites moving into region ○ senior population growths • Economically strong /corridor/region (recession proof) • Resource based economy (reduction in manufacturing) • Increase in corporate farming • Increase in oil and gas exploration • Opportunities for value added production – Bio Fuels • Opportunities for Alternative energy source – Wind Generation • Ag industry land uses at risk • Competition for land use as population grows and becomes more affluent 	<p><u>TECHNOLOGY</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Risks due to virus / hackers ▪ Reduction in human interaction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Hinders networking possibilities ○ Creates barriers for gathering information ○ Reduces community relationships ○ Takes communications outside the community • Limited rural internet accessibility vs. urban • Opportunities exist for growth in home based technology workers • Increased expectation for speedy responses to inquires and communications • Impact on local shopping/economy by global on-line shopping and resources
<p><u>SOCIAL</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased pressure for municipalities to provide infrastructure/recreational facilities • Concern for decrease in social skills and interaction – technology age • Opportunities to increase and enhance social activities • Demands for senior housing / services • Issues for seniors who have little financial resources • Concerns for the family break-down • Youth out migration • Business succession a strong need in rural regions – Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB) indicates that 75% of it’s members will be retiring in the next 10 years 	<p><u>ENVIRONMENT</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water concerns <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Volume, treatment, disposal, quality • Land concerns <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Utilization ○ Intensive population growth in the ‘fringe urban’ areas ○ Demand for services in non-traditional rural areas • Infrastructure demands • Increased regulations
<p><u>POLITICAL</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impacts resulting from environmental concerns • Voting pattern changes from shifting population will impact greatly on rural representations at the government tables 	<p><u>POLITICAL (con’t)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regionalization for the consolidation of services and infrastructure • Alberta/Federal political issues

Regional SWOT Analysis

- The Highwood region is seeing growth in all areas with the heaviest concentration in the North part of the region – High River, Okotoks and MD Foothills. With growth comes demand for products, services, jobs;
- The Municipalities are creating positive projects and partnerships to address the need for environmentally friendly commercial/light industrial growth opportunities – jobs;
- The “big boxes” are moving in and this poses both a positive opportunity and a negative threat. Jobs will be created and more, smaller complimentary services will be needed however some small businesses will need help to survive and change;
- The agricultural sector is experiencing increased pressure for alternative land uses. From wind generated power projects to bio fuel plants to oil and gas exploration to residential development. Vulcan County is an excellent example where at one time it was 99% agricultural tax based now it is about 33% agriculture and 52% being oil and gas tax based. Diversification, but at a cost as we lose valuable Agricultural product;
- A boost to agricultural land might be the emerging Bio Fuel industry with a large group over 4 Municipal regions looking at developing a Bio Fuel Plant using a lot of the local agricultural product;
- Demand for our Community Development services has never been higher however we have seen a one year drop in Business Loan needs. The Loan activity has been replaced by the need for Business Plan assistance as projects become larger and more complicated;
- As the “big box” era slows down and before the next push we have begun to see a return of demand for our small business loans as those wishing to take the risk for smaller, more focused businesses emerge;
- Impacts such as the high paying jobs in many of the resource sectors has put a burden on keeping young people in school and in local jobs, severely pressuring the local labour force. No local business has been exempt including the CF office which has seen many of its well trained staff leaving for the higher paying jobs in Calgary. Even Governments have joined the competition for rural jobs, indirectly of course, where their tendering process rewards the bigger infrastructure city based organizations with rural contracts when these businesses have no interest in permanently locating to the rural regions and thus causing many rural residents to lose their jobs including local contractors who benefit from these locally based government contracts;
- There are many opportunities for Community Futures programs and services to develop or expand and we anticipate a vigorous 3 to 5 years ahead where communities such as Black Diamond, Turner Valley, Nanton and Vulcan begin to grow because of the Calgary migration of people just as Okotoks and High River have in the past. These communities, along with Okotoks and High River have

excellent on-going projects in place that will attract new and diverse production and industry opportunities.

2.4 Community Accountability

- To date CF Highwood has operated with the following public openness policy:
 - i. All Board Meeting minutes and projects are reported in an open forum back at the shareholder Council meetings following each Board meeting
 - ii. All community leadership, key partners, service providers, Economic Committees, MP, MLAs, and Chambers of Commerce are invited to our AGM which is rotated around the region
 - iii. All key accountability documents as outlined by the Government of Canada including CFH's Operational Plan are posted on the CFH web site
- The Board of Directors Does not now provide a directed Board Meeting that is published as a Public Invited Open Forum however beginning in 2008 and on-going annually they will organize such an event.
- We post on our web site the following public information:
 - i. annual audited financial and annual report, in it's entirety
 - ii. A current listing of our organization's Board of Director names
 - iii. A copy of our By Laws, in its entirety, including our organization's corporate policy with respect to the appointment and/or election of members to its Board
- The General Manager and other staff make regular presentations on CFH programs and services, results YTD and over the past 21 years to Councils, Economic Development Committees, and Chambers of Commerce on both an offer and requested basis.

3.0 VISION

3.1 Mission, Vision, and Strategic goals

COMMUNITY FUTURES HIGHWOOD will be a leader and facilitator of programs and services that contribute to the economic and social health of our shareholder community and regional partners.

5-YEAR GOALS and STRATEGIES

COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- **Provide effective and timely economic development support to all regional shareholder municipalities**
 - Take a leadership role in educating and communicating effective economic development tools to municipal Councils and administrations;
 - Assist municipalities in increasing capacity through use of effective Economic Development practices and tools;
 - Offer Municipalities support services including:
 - ◇ Feasibility studies
 - ◇ Grant proposal writing
 - ◇ Government links and contracts
 - ◇ Research support
 - ◇ Centralized asset inventory linkages
 - ◇ Gap analysis
 - ◇ Investment readiness analysis
 - ◇ Bylaw development
 - ◇ Municipality committee facilitation in such areas as governance, structure, roles and responsibilities, and planning
 - Ensure local CFDC Programs and services are supportive of key community stakeholder economic development initiatives;
 - Keep municipality administration updated on known project funding opportunities offered by the federal and provincial government ministries and agencies;
 - Keep municipal Councils and administrations aware of and updated on the CFH's Board role and program potential as well as outcomes;
 - Offer project collaboration and partnership opportunities to municipalities;
 - Work with municipalities to find ways to make the best use of funding programs such as RCED – develop appropriate terms of reference to ensure appropriate understanding and effective development of projects.

CLIENT SERVICES

- **Provide professional, effective and high quality client service against contract deliverables throughout the CFH region**
 - Grow loan portfolio relative to the regions annual % population growth
 - Increase awareness with bankers, accountants, lawyers, and other professionals
 - Implement on-going adjustments to contract delivery to ensure the health and retention of the Employment Services and Self Employment contracts
 - Aggressively promote all programs and services to the Okotoks, Diamond Valley and MD Foothills north markets
 - Develop more partnerships within the shareholder communities and with additional federal and provincial ministries ensuring full capability service to all shareholder citizens
 - Maintain professional development of all staff to ensure quality client service
 - Manage staff performance levels ensuring creative and innovative client service and delivery outcomes
 - Create and implement strategies to improve the overall functioning of the 2-office concept, focusing on improved logistics and communication

COMMUNICATIONS and MARKETING

- **Design and implement timely and effective promotion and two way communications tools**
 - Market new name and expanded services;
 - Develop a 5 minute video highlighting CFH's programs, services and success stories;
 - Better utilization of web site in communicating and educating including linkages to municipal sites;
 - Open and aggressively market the services and programs in the new Okotoks office;
 - Develop new effective marketing literature around our programs and services in conjunction with new name and logo;
 - Utilize client profiles and success stories in our marketing and web site activities;
 - Bring more awareness to the programs and services through presentations to Chambers, Service Clubs and Community organizations;
 - Keep Shareholder Municipal Councils more aware of the outcomes and potential of the program;

- Keep the MP and MLAs updated on success stories, activities and outcomes of the program on an at least semi annual basis;
- Schedule regular annual meetings with Shareholder Councils, MLAs and MP;
- Ensure all literature, signage, and ads reflect appropriate funder (government) recognition.

SOCIAL ECONOMY

- **CFH will be a leader in educating and delivering social economy activities**
 - Provide the regional municipal Councils, leaders, and key community groups with appropriate education sessions on what is the social economy/diversity and how we can jointly make it work for each community
 - Education includes teaching themes on:
 - ◇ Awareness, patience, tools available, business plan development, partnership development, proposal writing, sustainability, cash flow management, budgeting
 - Work closely with WED and other government groups to :
 - Effect necessary changes in policy and mind sets, develop critical funding opportunities, develop critical partnerships

CFH BOARD ROLE and RESPONSIBILITIES

- **Will fulfill the mandate of Board role in areas of meeting attendance, code of conduct, providing leadership in organization direction and planning, participating in board education, and in marketing and communicating the organization's programs**
 - Maintain existing board make-up, tenure and process;
 - Clarify by-law defining Board membership eligibility
 - Must be an Incorporated Municipality of 1000+ population
 - Existing members must vote 80% to accept new member application for seat at the voting table
 - Through business roles and contacts in respective communities market CFH's programs and services at every opportunity;
 - Will implement an on-going communication and awareness program of the Organization's programs, services, success stories and partnerships within each respective community;
 - Effective communication to shareholder municipal Councils and Chambers;
 - Assist staff in development of a workable tool to enhance communication efforts
 - As a minimum should include success stories, best practices, program/service definitions, organization news stories
 - Ensure municipal web sites are hot linked to CFH's web site;

- Take every opportunity to learn the basics of CFH's programs and services;
- Take every opportunity to connect CFH's programs and services with municipal planning exercises and policy development;
- Ensure CFH's policies are in line with municipal policies as appropriate;
- Be forward, pro active thinkers in leading and directing CFH's future;
- Establish operational bench marks for key outcomes;
- Work toward a sustainable future for CFH and its shareholder communities.

SUSTAINABILITY

- **Implement strategies and activities that will lead the organization toward a sustainable future**
 - Through on-going studies and negotiations lead the organization in a direction where it will own its own building against further rentals;
 - Aggressively grow loan portfolio in line with the board's benchmarks;
 - Be proactive with products and services especially in meeting or exceeding all contract deliverables;
 - Increase public awareness through on-going, aggressive marketing, promotional activities and speaking engagements;
 - Research and negotiate opportunities that may allow the CFH to become a Deposit agency for financial institution;
 - Increase funding through private partnerships and fee for service deliverables to private industry ensuring that such opportunities do not place the organization into a competitive possession in regard to local private service providers;
 - Increase Ottawa awareness through MP and other connections ensuring the local MPs and MLAs become knowledgeable enough to offer on-going public support for the retention of the Community Futures Program;
 - Encourage more pro active measures with Ottawa through Pan West and Pan Canadian;
 - Become less reliant on WED through private and other contract opportunities;
 - Increased loan activity and portfolio growth resulting in increased loan interest potential.

4.0 ACCOMPLISHMENTS FOR PREVIOUS FISCAL YEAR 2007 - 08

4.1 QUANTITATIVE

Service or Item	Planned 2007/2008	9 Month Actual Result	Projected 07/08 Result
Volunteer Hours	500	648	750
# Volunteers	19	19	19
# Projects/activities improving leadership/expertise	6	10	14
# Instances facilitating community involvement	10	11	15
# Partnerships developed/maintained	6	27	30
# Instances of increased community stability	4	7	10
# Instances of increased capacity in community organizations	10	16	18
# Enhanced community services or facilities	2	12	14
# Advisory services provided to clients	100	48	78
# Training sessions delivered	25	62	70
# Clients trained	60	86	100
# Loans Approved	25	14	20
\$ Loans Approved	\$1,000,000	\$619,699	\$820,000
\$ Loans Booked	\$750,000	\$373,300	\$600,000
# Actual Jobs created/maintained/expanded	50	34.5	45
\$ Leveraged Business Services	\$1,500,000	\$1,568,533	\$1,750,000
Net Cash to Assets	15%	38.5%	33%
Bad Debt Expense	\$50,000	\$0	\$0

4.2 VARIANCE ANALYSIS

Negative

- # Loans – projected 25 will do 20. Banks & Credit Unions are doing more approvals in this region than previous due primarily to the strong economy and strength of applications. No trained Business Analyst (BA) for 6 months of the operating year. No BA because of Compensation & Benefit package competition in the area. Banks offer a minimum of 25% higher than our budgets can pay. Lost ten (10) year trained staff member to Bank for 24% more plus better benefits and more vacation time. Lost 2nd and 3rd hired replacements for same reasons – bought back by departing private sector employers.
- Advisory Services planned at 100 for the year but we will only realize upon approximately 75 to 80. This is due in part to working on larger entities and dealing with shortage of staff resources for about 40% of the year
- Loan Dollars Approved / Loan Dollars Booked will both fall sort of projection. Projected \$1,000,000 approved but will do only \$820,000 while loans booked were projected at \$750,000 we will only realize about \$600,000. These shortfalls can only be accredited to the strong regional economy; relaxed policies of the traditional lenders; and having no BA for 6 months.

- The # of loans approved will fall short from 25 to 20 – see \$ approved above
- # of jobs created will be slightly off by 5 with 45 projected against a plan of 50 – the slight lower number of loans combined with high payouts and number booked are contributing factors
- Net Cash to Assets – projected a 15% but will be between 33% and 38% - In 2007 we had over \$651,000 in loan balances (\$917,000 booked value) paid out due to the strong Alberta & regional economy. All 14 except for 1 are still active – 60% paid cash and are on-going while 20% changed hands and 20% got traditional financing

Positive

- Volunteer Hours – projected 500 Board volunteer hours of service but will top 700 hours due to the commitment and dedication of CFH Board Members in attending meetings; conferences; board training and community activities
- All six (6) CED deliverables over achieved – high demand for facilitation & project leadership services throughout the region. Many communities are reorganizing their Economic Strategies and planning future growth projects to capitalize on the strong Alberta Economy
- Training sessions in 2007 – 08 will be over achieved. We projected 25 and in fact we will provide close to 70. This large number is attributed to the Lunch Time Video Conference Program offered in partnership with ELC & Business Link which is offered 2 to 4 times a week. While we did not participate in all of them many were accessed
- Clients trained – see above rationale under training sessions why we provided training to 100 versus the 40 projected
- In 2007 we had over \$651,000 in loan balances paid out due to the strong Alberta & regional economy. All 14 except for 1 are still active – 60% paid cash and are on-going while 20% changed hands and 20% got traditional financing
- \$ Leveraged total Business Services – projected \$1,500,000 but will reach \$1,750,000 – due basically to the higher cost of leaseholds; equipment & property in the area combined with new entrepreneurs having more to invest
- 3 referrals to BDC & 1 to AFCS (all over \$1,000,000) both with strong relationships with the CFDC program.
- Bad Debt Expense was planned at \$50,000 – We are not anticipating any new Bad Debt Expense this year. Two (2) Doubtful Accounts were collected in the year totalling \$85,410 and 1 additional Doubtful Account is expected to be paid out in the amount of \$68,423. These payouts along with 4 Doubtful Accounts that are being reduced monthly will reduce our Allowance for Doubtful by approximately \$134,964 year over year. However we anticipate placing one account into Doubtful in the amount of \$100,000 this year. That still leaves a net reduction in our Doubtful Account of \$34,964.

4.3 OTHER ACTIVITIES/ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- The Chair of the CFH served as Vice Chair of the CFNA and sat on the RCED adjudication Committee
- The Vice Chair of CFH serves as a Committee Head on the Alberta Premiers Economic Development Authority – Rural & Aboriginal Development
- The organization partnered with the Calgary Regional Partnership to manage an RCED funding project on “Investment Attraction”
- CFH continued its involvement with four other CF’s in the Self Start Training Program
- Four (4) Board and two (2) staff attended and supported the annual CF conference and gala events including Board and Staff Development sessions
- Visitations to all communities and Councils over the course of the year
- Continued delivery of the Self Employment; Work Place Training; Skills Development: Youth Connections: and Employment Services programs in the region obtained under a competitive bidding process through the Alberta Employment; Immigration; & Industry Ministry
- On the topic of Community Futures Board Professional Development CFH Board Members have achieved a high level of completion. Of 10 modules of offered by the Pan West Community Futures Program we have 1 Board Member with all 11 modules, 1 with 10, 1 with 9, 1 with 8, 1 with 7, 2 with 6, 2 with 5, and the rest with between 1 and 4 modules completed
- The CFH General Manager sits as Alberta’s representative to the Pan West Community Futures Board Training Curriculum Committee
- The General Manager of CFH along with the CFH Board Chair delivered Policy; Governance; Loan Portfolio Management and By Law information sessions to two (2) Alberta CF Organization Boards
- The CFH General manager chaired the annual Alberta CF Symposium Golf Tournament
- CFH through the CED Coordinator is an active participant on the Economic Development Forum of Calgary Regional Partnership and a member of the Marketing and Investment Opportunity Identification Committee
- CFH is an active member of 5 local Chambers of Commerce and Alberta Economic Development Association

4.4 CORE SERVICE OUTCOMES

Community Economic Development

Objective 1 Strategic alliances and partnership building

Strategic Goal: Build partnership framework and strong relationships with shareholder communities and partners to enable planning and implementation of regionally-beneficial

Outcome: Community partnerships: closely with municipal Councils and staff to encourage regional approach to economic development as a tool to attracting investment into the Highwood region

- Fifteen multi-jurisdictional projects were managed through the CF Highwood CED program
- Nine new project partnerships were established and maintained
- REDA partnerships: Participated regularly in Calgary Regional Partnership and South Grow REDA regional initiatives including investment opportunities study and marketing plan development committee meetings. Assisted in gathering regional foundational data.
- Business partnerships: Strengthened existing partnerships between Community Futures Highwood and business stakeholders by actively participating in various Chamber of Commerce and business development events including:
 - Attendance at meetings, networking sessions
 - Under the direction of Alberta Employment, Immigration and Industry, assistance was provided in coordinating employee retention workshops, held in Okotoks and High River (offered to area communities including Black Diamond, Turner Valley, Longview, Nanton, Vulcan, M.D. of Foothills). Approximately 80 business owners attended.
 - Small Business Week Networking Event: hosted an estimated 80 business clients, professionals, municipal reps, board members and suppliers at a business networking event.
- a. Renewed 2007 membership in Economic Developers of Alberta; attended fall symposium

Performance Measurements / Indicators

- a. Number of participating communities and organizations per project were tracked and monitored: **total number of projects: 42**

Community Futures Highwood: CED Project Tracking, 2007 - 2008

Project Name	Outputs	Outcomes	Community / Organization	\$ cash leveraged
Board Information Presentations	a	a	CFH	
Turner Valley Downtown Design Guidelines and Bylaw Development	a	a	TV	
Turner Valley Municipal Open House	a	a	TV BD	
High Country Parent Link	b	a	BD TV MDF	2,500
Turner Valley Legion Community Centre	b	a	TV BD	150,000
Vulcan Chamber of Commerce - Vulcan Downtown Renewal	b	a		

CF: Highwood
 Fiscal Year: 2008/2009
 OPERATIONAL PLAN

Vulcan Business Development Society - ELC business training marketing	e	a	V CV	
Diamond Valley Chamber of Commerce Business Forum Strategic Planning	a	b	BD TV MDF	
Division 6 Residents Association	a	b	MDF	
Drillers Athletic Association	a	b	BD TV MDF	
E.P.O.H. House Group Home	a	b	MDF	
Foothills Fetal Alcohol Society	a	b	OK HR MDF BD TV N	
Foothills Special Needs Association for Parents and Siblings	a	b	OK HR MDF BD TV N	
Friends of the Turner Valley Pool	a	b	TV BD	
High River Art Incubator	a	b	HR	
Literacy for Life Organizational Review	a	b	OK HR MDF BD TV N	
Oilfields High School Recreation Project	a	b	BD TV MDF	
Vulcan Regional Victims Services	a	b	V	
High River FCSS Strategic Plan	b	b	HR	
High River Vision and Growth Plan	b	b	HR	
Boys and Girls Club of Diamond Valley	c	b	BD TV MDF	
Employee Retention Workshop: High River	c	b	HR	
Employee Retention Workshop: Okotoks	c	b	OK	
Geothermal Energy Grant Research	a	c	OK	
VBDS Ethanol Plant Project	b	c	V VC	
CRP-EDF Investment Opportunities Identification Committee	c	c	CRP	
Foothills Regional Co-location Rural Industrial Development Project	c	c	OK HR MDF BD TV	
Rural Community Economic Development - Regional Business Investment Attraction Strategy	c	c	OK HR MDF BD TV	12,500
CRP - EDF Marketing Strategy	e	e	CRP	
High River United Way	a	d	HR	
Nanton Elevator Project	a	d	N	
Nanton Industrial Park Development	a	d	N	
Turner Valley Seniors Housing Development Research	a	d	TV	
High Country Child Care Needs Assessment Study	b	d	BD TV MDF	2,500

High Country Family Resource Centre	b	d	BD TV MDF	
Nanton Skateboard and BMX Park	b	d	N	
High River Immigrant Settlement Study	c	d	HR MDF	
Literacy for Life Strategic Plan	a	e	OK HR MDF BD TV N	
Beneath the Arch Concert Society	c	e	TV	
SouthGrow Regional Economic Development Alliance	c	e	V CV	
CF Highwood - Marketing Strategy Development	e	f	CFH	
Small Business Week	e	f	OK HR MDF BD TV N KID V VC MDWC	
Total \$ leveraged				\$ 167,500
Total active CED projects, April 1 - March 31, 2008				42

BD – Black Diamond HR – High River MDF – M.D. of Foothills
 OK – Okotoks N – Nanton TV – Turner Valley
 V – Vulcan VC – Vulcan County
 KID -Kananaskis Improvement District
 CRP – Calgary Regional Partnership
 CFH – Community Futures Highwood

CED Project Outputs	# totals	2007-2008 targets
a. Project or activities improving leadership and/or expertise	20	6
b. Community planning	9	10
c. Partnerships developed/ maintained	9	6
d. \$ amount leveraged from CED project		\$167,500
e. Marketing activities	4	2

Outcomes	# totals	2007-2008 targets
a. # Instances of facilitating community involvement	7	n/a
b. # Instances of increased capacity in community organizations	16	10
c. # Instances of development of economic stimuli	6	n/a
d. # Enhanced community services or facilities	7	2
e. # Instances of increased community stability	4	4
f. # Instances of increased CFDC organizational capacity	2	n/a

b. Project commitment: amount of financial and in-kind contributions dedicated to regional projects

Community/organization	Project	Cash	In -kind contribution (*)
M.D. of Foothills	RCED – Regional Business Attraction	2,500	2,500
Town of Black Diamond	RCED – Regional Business Attraction	1,000	500
Town of High River	RCED – Regional Business Attraction	4,000	4,000
Town of Okotoks	RCED – Regional Business Attraction	4,000	4,000
Town of Turner Valley	RCED – Regional Business Attraction	1,000	2,000
Turner Valley Legion	Joint community and cultural centre	100,000	
Foothills Lions	Joint community and cultural centre	50,000	
Town of Turner Valley	Joint community and cultural centre		300,000
Turner Valley FCSS/Parent Link Project	Child care needs assessment study	5,000	5,000
Totals:		\$ 167,500	\$ 318,000

Note: based on actual amounts committed in 2007 – 2008

- c. Alignment of regional economic development goals with municipal and WED goals.
- All project goals were evaluated to assure congruency with municipal mandates and objectives sourced from municipal development plans,
 - Municipal business plans, REDA vision statements and key community project documentation.

Objective 2 Rural Community Revitalization

Strategic Goal: Assist economic revitalization of rural communities by supporting and developing initiatives that undertake community renewal, build community capacity, encourage downtown redevelopment and foster economic development

Outcome:

- Facilitated 10 community planning sessions to assist stakeholders in developing strategies to address identified needs

- Provided leadership and consultation in 20 municipal and non-profit organization projects
- Developed 14 community business plans
- Researched and prepared five joint-municipal project proposals and funding applications

Community Futures Highwood assumed a lead role in assisting shareholder communities and their respective organizations develop strategic plans to effectively manage changes. Project examples:

High River Vision and Growth Strategy: facilitated development of a long term growth plan and vision for the Town of High River to be incorporated into municipal planning documents and serve as a guide in planning and development activities.

Regional Business Investment Attraction Strategy and Site Location Guide Project: (Rural Community Economic Development Fund – RCED)

Planned and managed multi-community partnership to produce regional business relocation guide and business investment strategy. Communities included High River, Okotoks, M.D. of Foothills, Black Diamond and Turner Valley.

Community Investment Support Program: successfully applied for CISP grant funds to assist with international marketing efforts involved in the Regional Business Investment Attraction Strategy Project.

Nanton Community Facility Partnership

Facilitated process to assist the Town of Nanton and local service organizations create a plan to construct a skateboard and BMX park.

Vulcan Regional Victims Services Strategic Plan

Facilitation of strategic planning process and business plan development involving six community organizations and the municipality, aimed at sustaining and growing existing operations.

- Number of meetings held with community leaders, volunteer groups, municipal staff and related organizations

Number of meetings attended/facilitated	Estimated hours contributed by community volunteers	Value of community volunteer hours at \$ 15 / hour
42 projects x 3 meetings (average)= 126	1,890	\$ 28,350

Objective 3 Sustainable investment attraction and business growth strategy

Strategic Goal: Helping rural communities identify and capitalize on new sources of economic growth and employment

Business development and attraction is a collective priority objective in the region as communities work toward increasing the non-residential portion of their tax base in order to help balance the costs of infrastructure needs as a result of rapid growth.

Outcome:

Retention, diversification and expansion of rural economic base

- Assisted in development of needs assessment tools (studies, surveys and community input meetings) in five stakeholder communities
- Developed sub-regional marketing strategy for business investment strategy: Okotoks, High River, M.D. of Foothills, Black Diamond, Turner Valley
- Successfully applied for \$ 50,000 in RCED funds and \$12,500 in CISP funding for regional business investment attraction strategy project
- Managed RCED Site Location Guide and Regional Business Attraction Strategy Project; a five-community partnership working together on a regional community profile and business expansion and attraction plan
- Researched and compiled existing business and community profile information through AlbertaFirst database to determine accuracy of information, for use in regional projects

Objective 4 Marketing and Communications of Regional Projects

Strategic Goal: to promote regional projects to identified markets, shareholders and partner organizations

Outcome:

- RCED Project: developed project terms of reference; negotiated consultant agreement
- Established priority targeted markets for regional site selection activities
- Provided regular communications and project presentations to municipal Councils, administrations, economic development partners and organizations
- Prepared, produced and distributed project updates and related information to shareholders by way of public presentations, report submissions to Council, and where appropriate, the media. Acknowledgement of funding and project partners was clearly communicated.

Investment Fund Services

Objective 1 Grow Loan Portfolio

Strategic Goal: New Loans \$1,000,000 / Net Growth a minimum of \$500,000

Outcome: We are projecting \$600,000 new and a net growth loss in outstanding Loan balances due to over \$500,000 in successful business venture payouts. CFH operated without a dedicated Business Loan support person for 6 months from May through November and then only with an untrained staff member being trained on the job. While this is a contributing factor there were 3 other factors. The high economic growth of the Province generated many high paying jobs and many people opted to work rather than start their own business; businesses that needed cash to grow needed more than the \$150,000 limits CFH provides while the traditional lenders became more generous with SME loans; and finally the high cost and uncertainty of completed real estate development scared many off.

Objective 2 Net Cash to Assets

Strategic Goal: Ensure Net Cash to Assets lower than 15%

Outcome: Net Cash to Assets will be between 33% and 38% - In 2007 we had over \$651,000 in loan balances (\$917,000 booked value) paid out due to the strong Alberta & regional economy. All 14 except for 1 are still active – 60% paid cash and are on-going while 20% changed hands and 20% got traditional financing

Objective 3 Risk Management Program

Strategic Goal: Maintain a strong risk management program with a minimum of two client visits per year (more for weaker accounts) and early identification of red flags resulting in appropriate follow-up and documentation

Outcome: While the 2 visits per client was not met due to staff shortages we were able to collect on almost \$135,000 in bad debt and regularize another \$85,000 in accounts in arrears which are now current. Only one (1) loan remains in serious arrears and action is being taken on that account.

Objective 4 Client Visits

Strategic Goal: Must visit the location of every loan client business site and take appropriate pictures of business and any assets being or having been taken as security

Outcome: Beginning in 2008 this will be a must activity of the new BA.

Objective 5 Strategic alliances and partnership building

Strategic Goal: Ensure the minimum of a quarterly call back program to bankers is maintained with diligence

Strategic Goal: Increase awareness with Bankers; Accountants; Lawyers; and other professionals through inclusion in SE & other entrepreneurial training as well as through semi annual receptions with professionals & clients

Outcome: This goal slipped. To repeat a growing trend it was due to staff resources however relationships with BDC; AFSC and two or three traditional lenders was maintained by the GM and several other traditional referral agents attended the CFH Small Business Reception held in Okotoks in October. Eighty-five (85) SE & Loan Clients along with Bankers; Accountants; and other professionals from the region attended this reception.

Objective 7 Community Awareness Program

Strategic Goal: Utilize small business week; CFDC week and other key community opportunities to bring awareness of our CFH programs & services

Outcome: Reception held in conjunction with Small Business week with 85 of 250 invitees in attendance. 12 Chamber meetings attended and over forty-two (42) community projects were facilitated or participated in.

Objective 8 Marketing and Communications

Strategic Goal: Ensure all Loan clients are aware of training and recognition programs that may benefit them

Outcome: Throughout the year loan clients and self employment trainees were sent promotional information in relation to training opportunities and events that may benefit them

BUSINESS SERVICES

Objective 1 Business Development Services

Strategic Goal: Aggressively promote Business Plan Advisory & Development Services as a major program of CFH

Outcome: On-going; In 2007 we utilized new marketing brochure distribution where they were placed on displayed in Chamber Offices; Municipal Offices; EDO offices; and Public Libraries while others were provided to Banks; Law Firms; Accountant Offices; Community Organizations; and Partner groups.

Objective 2 Business Link

Strategic Goal: Aggressively promote our partnership with the Business Link and their services to our clients

Outcome: Through presentations to our Self Employment Program Trainees; Video Conference Training Sessions; new Loan Clients and to Chambers in their newsletters we promote the research; resource; Call-in and training programs of the Business Link

Objective 3 Self Start

Strategic Goal: Expand the Self-Start e-training project to provide "Service Excellence" for all Loan clients and existing community business operators

Outcome: CFH now chairs this program and have been working on updating all the material and the access rules to the web based training sight so that all CFs cabn use it to assist entrepreneurs in their region.

Objective 4 Strategic alliances and partnership building

Effectively promote and offer:

Business Link web; speaker; literature; information and video conferencing services (especially 'Brown Bag Lunch' program)

Outcome: WE continue to promote these excellent services and as we move to the Feb renewal of the VC series we will be prominently participating. IN 2007 we pulled back from the December series due to staff shortages and facilities that needed to be addressed. These items have now been corrected.

Objective 4 Strategic alliances and partnership building

Strategic Goal: Offer the development of partnerships in bringing quality business speaker educational programs to the region

Make appropriate offers at presentations to various community organizations such as – Chambers; Rotarians; Lions; etc

Outcome: All Chambers participated in publishing our VC series and business training seminars in their newsletters and email communication. We have been booked to speak at three chambers in early 2008 and are sending information that promotes our speaker series to others in early 2008

Objective 5 Self Employment Program

Strategic Goal: Manage and maintain a high level of success on deliverables dictated by the awarding of a new Self Employment training contract with the Provincial Government

Outcome: In May of 2007 we were successful in tendering a new two (2) year with a one (1) extension year contract with the Alberta Government. While early results are disappointing due to the 2007 high economic boom in Alberta we are experiencing a larger demand in late 2007 and early 2008 for this program.

Client Services

Objectives

Continue to provide budget and opportunity for professional development to all staff to ensure quality client service

Outcome: 3 staff have actively used Professional Development dollars made available to take post secondary and certificate courses in 2007. We also ensure CF Staff Training is made available to all pertinent staff as well as any conferences, workshops; seminars, etc

Maintain strong and visible management leadership in a two office concept by ensuring our Client Service and Contract Deliverables are maintained and succeeded at the highest level of success

Outcome: The General Manager ensures visible service to both operations and schedules weekly rotating team and staff meetings to guarantee good communication and deliverable updates so that appropriate and timely training can take place.

Maintain on-going adjustments to contract delivery to ensure the health and retention of the ES & SE Contracts

Outcome: The SE contract was renewed for another 2 plus years in May 2007 and on January 4, 2008 we tendered for a new 3 year ES provincial government contract. In August 2007 we completely readjusted our delivery of both programs and while

the SE enrolment has been slow getting going the ES results are the best in many years. Our revenues have now exceeded projections and we are showing success rates that are 15% higher than government expectations. The new SE coordinator re wrote almost all the material and aids for the SE program resulting in very high quality materials.

Develop more partnerships within the shareholder Communities and with additional Federal & Provincial ministries ensuring full capability service to all shareholder citizens

Outcome: The focus in 2007 was to gradually increase our project partnerships within our shareholder municipal governments and this has been very successful. We have managed well over 40 new and potential partnership opportunities

Marketing & Visibility

Objectives

- Develop a 5 minute video highlighting CFH's programs; services & success stories

Outcome: Pending

- Update and improve web site to meet the mandate of the new CF branding and to ensure ease of navigation for visitors & users of our site

Outcome: Branding implemented and web site has an on-going update and maintenance program

- Develop new effective marketing literature around our new branding; programs & services

Outcome: Initial marketing strategy developed and many new initiatives going forward as funding allows

- Utilize approved Client profiles & success stories in our marketing and web site activities

Outcome: Pending

- Bring more awareness to the programs & services through presentations to Chambers; Service Clubs and Community organizations

Outcome: Continuous offers; bookings along with memberships and attendance at community meetings as an advisor

- Keep the MP and five MLAs updated on success stories; activities and outcomes of the program on an at least semi annual basis

Outcome: Copies of Ops Plan & 1/4ly Report being sent to them – 1 MP & 5 MLAs (3 of whom are presently Ministers)

- Ensure all literature; signage; & ads bear appropriate government recognition

Outcome: Always

- Ensure Canadian flags are prominently displayed in our offices

Outcome: Always

Administration & Management

Objectives

- Maintain a quality Board Accountability Model

Outcome: In line with Government of Canada regulations and guidelines and with strong Municipal Government participation accountability is well monitored

- Maintain a strong New Board Orientation program as well as semi annual offering of the certified Pan West CF Board Training modules

Outcome: All new board members are offered a one on one verbal orientation and provided a three ring binder with CFH policies; by laws; board roles & responsibilities; meeting schedule; definitions; and immediate Operational Plan with up to date financials. Board Members are also encouraged to attend CF Board Professional development Module Training

- The Board operates from a specific Board Governance Model and Code of Ethics which is reviewed every 18 to 24 months

Outcome: on-going

- Board accountability includes approving operations plan; reviewing 1/4ly reports & obtaining an annual Independent Corporate Audit

Outcome: Board meets 6 times a year and always approves financials and at appropriate meeting dates is provided a copy of the most recent 1/4ly report. In September the Board receives a semi annual status presentations on results against Operational Plan & Budget. In April the Board receives a presentation on all committed contracts; deliverables; and risks

- The Operation of the Organization is guided by a full set of Policies & Procedures which are reviewed and approved by the full Board

Outcome: Reviewed against any in Board motions during the year and a complete review done at the 24 to 30 month Strategic Planning sessions held

- The CFH adheres to the reporting conditions outlined in its Operating Contract with WED

Outcome: on-going

- Office bookkeeping/accounting/payroll done by local CA & his staff.

Outcome: On-going and supported by a second independent contracted Chartered Accounting firm who completes an annual audit of the minute book; files; and financials

- Client records; loan management and office management tracked through “TEA” with strict adherence to “FOIP” and “PIPA”

Outcome: On-going

- The full Board meets 6 times per year (with invites to WED) in a timely fashion to approve business/operation plans; budgets; corporate audit; and to deal with internal governance items and organizational issues & reports

Outcome: On-going every year and the Board Members; Shareholders; and WED are provided with a copy of the annual meeting schedule in January of each year. Met 5 times so far this Operating year with one more scheduled in March.

- The CFH Board’s Loan Review sub-committee (IRC) meets 9 to 11 times per year to adjudicate loans and review loan portfolio as well as lending policies

Outcome: On-going every year and the Committee Members along with the rest of the Board Members; Shareholders; and WED are provided with a copy of the annual meeting schedule in January of each year. Met 7 times so far in 2007 with 2 more meetings scheduled

- The CFH Board’s Management Review sub-committee (MRC) meets a minimum of 2 times per year to review operational & financial items; review new contracts and review General Manager’s Performance

Outcome: Met 3 times this Operational Year.

- The Board plans a Strategic Planning Retreat every 24 to 30 months (last held Oct 2005)

Outcome: Next one scheduled for 2008

- Work toward a sustainable future for CFH and its shareholder communities

Outcome: On-going with funds placed in Reserve as available

- Enhance customer service to our shareholders, clients, board, staff and related organizations through improved administrative efficiencies.

Outcome: 2007 saw staff shortages as well trained CF staff moved on to take advantage of the low labour market and the high paying opportunities not available in the CF budgets.

Inclusivity

Objective: Assurances of inclusivity

- CF Highwood region hosts a diversified population. Strong growth and rapid expansion of businesses within the region has provided employment opportunities for people from other provinces, countries, various cultural backgrounds and several minority groups. CF Highwood, for over 20 years, continuously strives to include potentially marginalized groups through its

- programming and organizational philosophy. Services are available to the Aboriginal people, women, youth, entrepreneurs with disabilities, francophones and the unemployed.
- We never differentiate clients by gender or orientation as sustainability and community business health has no such differentiation
 - Our board make-up is by application & appointment through our shareholder municipalities ensuring good regional representation. Staff works closely with municipal administration, chambers and the business community as a whole, on an informal succession planning program, identifying key community citizens who might have the interest, passion, ability and time to volunteer & make application to serve – ensuring we have a good balance of youth; experience; gender mix; and industry sector representation. Again we operate on the basis of “Inclusivity” not “Exclusivity” thus keeping the board an open forum welcome to all who possess the desire to serve on behalf of their community. This policy ensures we do not force membership to meet hidden quotas of representation but have the ‘right’ people on the board to lead and maintain a high level of service to our region and our rural communities...
 - We are satisfied we have the most effective formula and the necessary open access to all our citizens

Outcome: CFH manages three (3) Provincial Government Career & Employment Assistance Contracts along with the Self Employment Contract. In 2007 we worked with over 2500 job seekers the majority of whom were women along with many youth; some aboriginal and several peoples who had a handi-cap. These same serves are freely and professionally offered for business Development clients as well. Our Board is made of ranchers; farmers; retailers; automobile dealer; restaurant owner; baker; oil & gas consultant; marketing specialist; retired banker; realtor; community leaders; and volunteers. We have not been without female representation nor youth. Our Municipal Shareholders appoint their representatives.

Social Economy

Social Economy Development Projects – Community Diversification Strategies

Strategic Goal: to support, develop and promote community diversification projects that assist in building capacity, opportunity and partnerships in rural municipalities

Outcome:

- Facilitated 16 community organization strategic planning process to build capacity
- Researched and consulted on 10 projects requiring funding assistance
- Provided assistance in developing 9 new partnerships and working relationships between organizations
- Supported seven community facility projects aimed at creating partnerships to maximize resources and lower costs
- Research of best practices to cite as examples of community and corporate cooperation

5.0 CORE SERVICES, OBJECTIVES, PRIORITIES and ACTIVITIES FOR THE NEXT FISCAL YEAR (Annual plan)

5.1 Objectives, Priorities, Strategies/Activities, Targets, and Performance Measurements

COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Provide effective and timely economic development support to all regional shareholder municipalities

Provide resources and support to the shareholder municipalities aimed at expanding economic opportunities

Building effective community economic development services and programs to meet the needs of shareholder municipalities in cooperation with partner organizations.

OBJECTIVE 1: Strategic Collaboration Initiatives: Building effective regional partnerships

Strategic Goal: Sustain and strengthen partnerships between Community Futures Highwood and shareholder municipalities and economic development partners

Long term goal: To assist in the creation of seamless service delivery between all levels of government to ensure programs meet the changing needs of clients and are delivered in a consistently effective, efficient and professional manner.

Targets, activities and indicators

- Continue to work closely with ten municipal board members, municipal Councils and staff to identify and develop regional economic development projects as a tool to attracting investment into the Highwood region;
- Conduct research to clearly define needs, confirm economic assumptions and establish baseline data to measure effectiveness of programs;
- Strengthen alliances with regional economic development partners including:
 - Western Economic Diversification
 - Alberta Employment, Immigration and Industry
 - Calgary Regional Partnership
 - SouthGrow Regional Economic Development Alliance

Strategies employed to strengthen partnerships:

- a. encouraging and leading cooperative approach to regional economic development, and,
- b. developing a comprehensive understanding of each stakeholders economic objectives, and,
- c. aligning Community Futures Highwood's strategies with those of the funding and regional partners.

Targeted actions

1. Regional project development

Coordination of meetings, planning initiatives and research to assess

- a. community economic development priorities
- b. regional projects opportunity analysis
- c. regional industry cluster development assessment: identification of key industry targets, possible projects, areas of responsibilities, terms of reference and funding options

2. Increased involvement in regional alliance initiatives

- a. strengthen partnership framework with shareholder stakeholder communities and economic development partners to enable planning and implementation of regionally-beneficial projects.

Partners include:

- ten Community Futures Highwood municipal shareholders
- five Chambers of Commerce
- two regional economic development alliances, Calgary Regional Partnership, SouthGrow Regional Initiative
- related programs and services: Economic Developers Association of Alberta, Calgary Regional Partnership Economic Development Forum, AlbertaFirst, Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural, Alberta Employment, Immigration and Industry labour services

Performance Measurements

- a. Pre and post-project assessment measuring:
 - Number of participating communities and organizations involved in projects
 - Alignment of project goals and results with those of partner agencies: Western Economic Diversification (WED), Community Futures Network of Alberta (CFNA), Calgary Regional Partnership and SouthGrow (REDAs)
 - Provision of rural diversification research and cluster options
 - Increasing economic activity through business development
 - Assessment of rate of increase in partnerships: number of rural municipal projects involving two or more communities
- b. Project commitment levels: amount of financial and in-kind contributions dedicated to regional projects
- c. Regular review of project goals to ensure alignment with municipal and WED objectives

OBJECTIVE 2 Rural Community Economic Development Programming: Diversification and Innovation

Strategic goal: to enhance long-term economic sustainability and diversification in rural shareholder communities

Targets, activities and indicators

- Encourage sustainable economic growth and development through facilitation of business retention, attraction and expansion initiatives;
- Provide economic development training opportunities to build capacity in shareholder communities;
- Develop framework to identify regional priorities and provide leadership to encourage projects aimed at contributing to rural diversification;
- Assist communities to identify and prepare for business investment;
- Explore opportunities to develop regional economic development planning initiatives;

Targeted actions

- d. Assist in coordinating the delivery of economic development training and information session opportunities for shareholder communities in the areas of investment attraction, AlbertaFirst business profile database and community profile updates, agricultural diversification options, programs and funding information;
- e. Develop and implement community investment readiness programs for CFH region municipalities;
- f. Assist communities to develop economic development and business opportunity plans;
- g. Work collaboratively with business organizations and municipalities to provide business training, link with resources offered through Alberta Employment, Immigration and Industry (AEII), the Business Link, Service Canada and related organizations;
- Assess tourism marketing potential and opportunities with regional stakeholders, develop strategies to achieve regional goals;
- h. Partner with AEII to develop regional labour market needs and options;
- i. Assist in development of key industry clusters to encourage complementary business pods and incubators.

Performance Measurements

- Development of detailed work plan and results tracking system;
- Establish framework to support community economic development organizations and efforts in shareholder communities;
- Develop, distribute, compile and assess community planning surveys to define investment readiness levels and build strategies to address needs;
- Provision of economic development training opportunities: develop partnerships with related agencies to provide municipal economic development boards and municipal staff economic development training;

- Assist stakeholders in achieving their goals by developing implementation strategies;
- Encourage economic development training for municipal economic development boards, staff and related volunteers. Enlist assistance from partners to provide economic development and labour market information tools to communities, Economic Developers of Alberta, SouthGrow and Calgary Regional Partnership, Alberta Employment, Immigration and Industry;
- Regular review of project goals to ensure alignment with municipal and WED objectives.

OBJECTIVE 3 Regional Economic Development Project Development and Management

Strategic Goal: to identify regional economic opportunities, develop partnership structures to undertake joint projects and communicate and promote regional initiatives

- Research and prioritize community economic development needs and opportunities;
- Determine potential and priority projects which align with community and partner objectives;
- Develop rural business networking and learning opportunities, provision of business training through video conferencing activities such as The Business Link Brown Bag Learn at Lunch sessions and Self-Employment (AEII) entrepreneurial training;
- Clearly communicate partnership initiatives to municipal Councils, administrations, economic development partners and organizations;
- Develop marketing strategy to include cross promotion of regional initiatives;
- Create digital regional site selection guide to promote business opportunities;
- Modify web site to include updates on economic development programs, regional profiling and site selection guide;
- Partner with existing initiatives to ensure maximization of financial and human resources, and avoidance duplication of services or programs;

Target stakeholders

- Highwood region municipal shareholders
- CF Highwood Board of Directors
- Regional Alliances: Calgary Partnership, SouthGrow
- Business groups and industry associations
- Non-profit economic and social community organizations
- Related provincial and federal government departments

Performance indicators used in assessment:

- a. Building community capacity, track number of projects resulting from activity, monitor non-residential land sales and subsequent business development activity;
- b. Provide business development training opportunities: encourage opportunities for shareholder communities to economic development knowledge;
- c. Creating long term economic impacts;
- d. Building partnerships and strong relationships with Western Economic Development, REDAs within the region, rural development stakeholders and other related organizations;
- e. Identification and reporting of best practices.

CLIENT SERVICES

- **Provide professional, effective and high quality client service against contract deliverables throughout the CFH region**

INVESTMENT FUND SERVICES

Objective 1 Grow and diversify the loan portfolio

Strategic Goal: Grow Loan's Outstanding by 30% in the 2008-09 operating year

Target, Activities and Indicators:

- Encourage and support, through the organization's CED activities, regional asset attraction and expansion projects that will create new and diverse business ventures;
- Encourage a strong referral program from the region's financial organizations, law and accounting firms, and business groups;
- Develop a marketing plan aimed at increasing awareness of Community Futures Highwood and the lending programs and services;
- Support and utilize the established referral and lending partnership with the Business Development Bank and Alberta Financial Service Corp to market and develop more diverse business ventures particularly in the environmental and emerging energy sectors;
- Business program will encourage long-term economic sustainability and diversification in the CFH rural region.

Actions:

- Create a living database of current and potential small business influencers within the region;
- Implement a comprehensive marketing plan;

- Support the CED goals with input and assistance to the community economic development practitioners that are developing funding applications to develop and implement strong asset investment, attraction and expansion projects;
- Work with municipalities to development programs that encourage retention and expansion of businesses that meet the diversification criteria;
- Assist communities and their business sector by providing main street and other downtown improvement loan programs;
- Implement a visitation program to nurture our relationship with banks and professional firms that may provide loan referrals;
- Work collaboratively with the Business Development Bank and Alberta Financial Service Corporation to market and bring awareness of the larger partner loan potential through our services;
- Sustain, utilize and improve partnership with the Business Link;
- Work with Chambers of Commerce to partner and deliver business information and education seminars.

Performance Measures:

- Approve at least 18 new loans and book 15 of these over the year
- Average loan to exceed \$40,000
- Overall Loan portfolio to exceed \$3,500,000
- 2 visits made to each of at least 20 potential referral agencies in the region during this operating year
- Develop a new and updated loan policy section targeted to support downtown redevelopment and sustainability plans
- Monitor and assess source and quality of referrals
- Evaluate the results of proposed marketing activities
- Overall loan outcomes reflect a balanced and diverse economy with all industry sectors, regions, and genders represented in our portfolio

Objective 2 Maintain a strong risk management program

Strategic Goal: Implement strong risk management activities to secure our loan assets

Target, Activities and Indicators:

- Review policies to ensure they provide guidelines that dictate a clear and strong audit and monitoring process in preparing a client file from start to finish;
- Review policies to ensure they clearly allow for staff to follow & implement flexible and positive actions to shore-up, assist and improve potentially weak loans;
- Develop and implement a strong client visitation program;
- Maintain a standard set of loan terms and conditions for all loan clients that support potential recovery of portfolio assets.

Actions:

- Conduct a minimum of 2 client visits per year (more for weaker accounts) and early identification of red flags resulting in appropriate follow-up and documentation;
- Staff must visit the location of every loan client business site before the first advance and to take appropriate pictures of business and any assets being or having been taken as security;
- No loan is advanced until all terms and conditions are met – no exceptions;
- Security is registered as appropriate with well documented renewal dates diarized;
- A strict quarterly reporting program is maintained with Equifax
- Update policy to define those specific items that must form all standard loan terms and condition.

Performance Measures:

- Maintain a less than 10% loan write-off/allowance for doubtful outcome
- Each loan file contains a photograph of the client and their store front/home
- Each loan file contains a photograph of our registered security
- At least 60% of the loan files will contains the results of at least two on-site client visits spaced throughout this operating year
- Each and every weak loan will contain a ‘Portfolio Concern’ document which demonstrates that it was elevated to the IRC in a timely manner

Objective 3 Strategic alliances and partnership building

Strategic Goal: Develop a strong network of resources and referral agents throughout the region

Target, Activities and Indicators:

- Develop a plan to create effective business partnerships;
- Develop and implement guidelines to effect consistent and effective partner information visits;
- Increase awareness with bankers, accountants, lawyers, and other professionals through inviting them to attend SE and other entrepreneurial training sessions as a speaker, expert resource or facilitator as well as through a semi annual reception program;
- Utilize small business week, CFDC week and other key community opportunities to bring awareness of CFH programs and services;
- Develop and deliver a consistent community message through presentations to Chambers and business groups;
- Ensure all Loan clients are aware of valuable training opportunities that may benefit them;

- Collaborate and coordinate with other Community Futures organizations in Alberta to identify best practices and streamline the delivery of common services and programs;
- Partner with shareholder municipalities to identify how CFH can assist with attracting economically diversified businesses to the region;
- Sustain and improve partnership with the Business Link and ELC;
- Explore opportunities to align programs and services with those of existing partners;
- Leverage the Provincial Government's Work Place Training and Skills Development programs to assist small business owners with their business financial needs.

Actions:

- Develop a referral visitation check list and information package
- Develop a list of strongest referral sources that should be visited over the coming year
- A minimum of 2 visits are conducted with at least 15 potential referral sources in the region
- A minimum of 6 community presentations will be made to various community business groups
- Work to expand the ELC program into Okotoks and Diamond Valley as new Associate sites
- Develop an information message that can go to all employers who make use of CFH's job posting, employer services, work place training, and skills development programs

Business Services

1. Strategic Goal: Business Training

a. Strategy

- Provide responsive and proactive business training opportunities that meet the current and anticipated future learning needs of small business owners and entrepreneurs in the Community Futures Highwood region.

b. Supporting Activities

- Continue to leverage CF business programs to foster a strong and rewarding relationship with AEII;
- Deliver a high quality and successful Self Employment Training Program;
- Conduct research to clearly define needs, confirm assumptions and establish baseline data of small business owners and entrepreneurs in the region;
- Foster partnership with the Business Link and strategically market and deliver the business training videoconference program;

- Coordinate and provide seminars and learning opportunities with featured guest speakers who are recognized to be leaders in their industry or experts in the subject matter;
- Offer regular seminars on business plan development;
- Support the Self-Start Partnership and its endeavour to update and improve the on-line product;
- Develop and deliver a small business / self employment training program targeted to rural small business start-ups;
- Develop and implement training opportunities and seminars that address productivity enhancement;
- Provide business advisory services to targeted groups.

c. Targets/Indicators

- Continue to enjoy successful tendering of contracts with AEII;
- Meet or exceed all deliverables identified in the Self Employment training contract;
- Based on research completed, Community Futures Highwood will achieve an understanding of business training needs among the region's small business owners and entrepreneurs;
- Utilization of the Self Start on-line program for business training opportunities;
- Videoconference training opportunities marketed and delivered;
- Guest-speaker led seminars coordinated and executed;
- Business seminars coordinated and executed;

d. Evaluation/Measurement

- AEII contracts
- Primary research
- Malatest surveys
- Attendance numbers and evaluations at the 'brown bag' lunch sessions
- Attendance numbers at guest-speaker led seminars;
- Attendance & indicated interest levels at business plan seminars;
- Results of participant surveys/evaluations
- Revenue generated through the Self Start Program
- Internal tracking and reporting

e. Target Groups

- Alberta Government AEII ministry
- Established small business owners
- Past and present loan clients and Self Employment trainees
- Prospective entrepreneurs
- Start-up entrepreneurs

- Members and executive of Chambers of Commerce
- Business associations
- Entrepreneurs with disabilities
- Youth entrepreneurs

2. Strategic Goal: Rural Business Resource Centre

a. Strategy

- Develop Community Futures Highwood into a full-service business resource centre or “stopping place” for small business owners and entrepreneurs in both a physical and virtual capacity.

b. Supporting Activities

- Conduct research to clearly define needs, confirm assumptions and establish baseline data of small business owners and entrepreneurs in the region;
- Develop and prioritize results of research to implement;
- Develop new or identify reputable existing helpful business resources for electronic distribution and/or referral;
- Provide responsive and personalized information for client inquiries in how to start a business;
- Promote usage of business centre library and other entrepreneurial resources;
- Reinforce Community Futures Highwood as a credible and knowledgeable source of rural small and start-up business information;
- Promote the services of Community Futures Highwood to and through local media in the region;

c. Targets/Indicators

- Achieve an understanding of the actual business resource needs among the region’s small business owners and entrepreneurs;
- Meet client needs by providing them with responsive business resources;
- Increase usage of the library system;
- Increase awareness as a business resource within the media industry.

d. Evaluation/Measurement

- Client surveys/evaluation that report on effectiveness of programs in meeting their needs
- Develop and track references to Community Futures Highwood in media

e. Target Groups

- Established small business owners
- Past and present loan clients and Self Employment trainees
- Prospective entrepreneurs
- Start-up entrepreneurs

- Members and executive of Chambers of Commerce
- Business associations
- Entrepreneurs with disabilities
- Youth entrepreneurs

MARKETING and VISIBILITY

- **Design and implement timely and effective promotion and communications tools**

Strategic Goal:

- Develop a consistent and strong Marketing Strategy for CFH that crosses all contracts, deliverables, and programs;
- Continue to improve web site to meet the mandate of the new CF branding, improve access to information and tools available and to ensure ease of navigation for visitors and users of our site;
- Utilize approved Client profiles and success stories in our marketing and web site activities;
- Bring more awareness to the programs and services through presentations to Chambers, Service Clubs and Community organizations;
- Keep the MP and five MLAs updated on success stories, activities and outcomes of the program on an at least semi annual basis;
- Ensure all literature, signage, and ads bear appropriate government recognition;
- Ensure Canadian flags are prominently displayed in our offices;

ADMINISTRATION and MANAGEMENT

Strategic Goal: Maintain a quality Board Accountability Model.

- Maintain a strong New Board Orientation program as well as semi annual offering of the certified Pan West CF Board Training modules;
- The Board operates from a specific Board Governance Model and Code of Ethics which is reviewed every 18 to 24 months;
- Board accountability includes approving operations plan, reviewing ¼ly reports and obtaining an annual Independent Corporate Audit;
- The operation of the organization is guided by a full set of Policies and Procedures which are reviewed and approved by the full board;
- The CFH adheres to the reporting conditions outlined in its Operating Contract with WED;
- Office bookkeeping/accounting/payroll done by local CA firm and his staff;
- Client records, loan management and office management tracked through “TEA” with strict adherence to “FOIP” and “PIPA”;

- The full Board meets 6 times per year (with invites to WED) in a timely fashion to approve business/operation plans, budgets, corporate audit, and to deal with internal governance items and organizational issues and reports;
- The CFH Board's Loan Review sub-committee (IRC) meets 9 to 11 times per year to adjudicate loans and review loan portfolio as well as lending policies;
- The CFH Board's Management Review sub-committee (MRC) meets a minimum of 2 times per year to review operational and financial items, review new contracts and review General Manager's Performance;
- The Board plans a Strategic Planning Retreat every 24 to 30 months (Next Retreat – fall 2008).

Strategic Goal: Enhance customer service to our shareholders, clients, board, staff and related organizations through improved administrative efficiencies.

- Update all client handout material (pamphlets, books, information sheets) that is given to clients and stakeholders.

5.2 INCLUSIVITY

Strategic Goal: Provide policies and practices that respect assurances of inclusivity

- CF Highwood region hosts a diversified population. Strong growth and rapid expansion of businesses within the region has provided employment opportunities for people from other provinces, countries, various cultural backgrounds and several minority groups. CF Highwood, for over 21 years, continuously strives to include potentially marginalized groups through its programming and organizational philosophy. Services are available to the Aboriginal people, women, youth, entrepreneurs with disabilities, francophone and the unemployed;
- We never differentiate clients by gender or orientation as sustainability and community business health has no such differentiation;
- Our board make-up is by application and appointment through our shareholder municipalities ensuring good regional representation. Staff works closely with municipal administration, chambers and the business community as a whole, on an informal succession planning program, identifying key community citizens who might have the interest, passion, ability and time to volunteer and make application to serve – ensuring we have a good balance of youth, experience, gender mix, and industry sector representation. Again we operate on the basis of "Inclusivity" not "Exclusivity" thus ensuring the board maintains an open forum welcome to all who possess the desire to serve on behalf of their community. This policy ensures we do not force membership to meet hidden quotas of representation but have the 'right' people on the board to lead and maintain a high level of service to our region and our rural communities...The Community through their elected councils make the decisions of who serves;

- We are satisfied we have the most effective formula and the necessary open access to all our citizens.

5.3 SOCIAL ECONOMY AND SOCIAL ECONOMY ENTERPRISES.

Strategic Goal: to support, develop and promote community diversification projects that assist in building capacity, opportunity and partnerships in rural municipalities

Targets and Activities

- Take a leadership role in assisting communities and social agencies develop functional partnerships;
- Provide consultative services in areas of strategic planning, funding options research and operations assessment;
- Strengthen marginal cultural group involvement in the social economy by offering assistance in the areas of planning and partnership building;
- Explore and develop, where feasible, cultural, recreational and community resource opportunities to enhance quality of life and services in rural communities within CFH;
- Partner with existing initiatives to ensure maximization of financial and human resources, and avoidance duplication of services or programs.

Target stakeholders

- Highwood region municipal shareholders
- Municipal social service agencies (Parent Link Centres, Family and Community Support Services, recreation boards)
- Businesses with similar goals and experiencing issues of labour shortages, barriers to employment or attracting employees
- Non-profit economic and social community organizations

Measurement:

- Community Futures Highwood (CFH) will reach out to the municipal shareholders and area social service agencies to determine scope of need, priorities and available program options by:
 - Take a lead role to host meetings with primary stakeholders
 - Assist with collecting and analyzing information
 - Work with stakeholders to develop options and strategies
 - Research prospective funding options and support relevant applications for funding

Performance indicators will include:

- number of meetings held with community social agency leaders, municipal staff and related organizations

- implementation of proposed projects – ability of community to move projects from planning to implementation stage
- identification of financial support options, support for applications
- volunteer hours and value: demonstration of community capacity and in-kind contributions
- number of community and regional partnerships developed and maintained over the course of the project
- assembly of best practices information to develop regional community diversification strategies

6.0 PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (Annual)

6.1 Performance target/budget information:

# Activities improving leadership and/or expertise	<u>7</u>
# Instances facilitating community involvement	<u>10</u>
#Partnerships developed/maintained	<u>10</u>
# Advisory services provided to clients	<u>90</u>
# Training sessions delivered	<u>20</u>
# Clients trained	<u>40</u>
# Total volunteers	<u>19</u>
# Total hours committed by volunteers	<u>500</u>
# Loans Approved	<u>16</u>
\$ Loans Approved	<u>\$670,000</u>
# EDP Loans Approved	<u>2</u>
# \$ EDP Loans Approved	<u>\$60,000</u>
Instances of increased community stability	<u>5</u>
# Instances of increased capacity in community organizations	<u>11</u>
# Jobs created/maintained/expanded	<u>36</u>
# Enhanced community services or facilities	<u>4</u>

Assumptions

- o Our planned numbers in the CED performance targets above appear lower than past years however with the trend to larger project delivery and with a new focus of Diversity; Value added; and matching priorities with those economic development initiatives of our Municipal shareholders we see envision our projects to be more lengthy requiring longer resource time and thus less time on the many smaller community one on one projects we have been doing
- o While we envision our number of training sessions will far exceed the 20 projected we are looking at the 20 to be larger more focused offerings through out our region while many more will be the 1, 2, or 4 attended Video Conferencing sessions held two and three days each and every week. This same rationale falls true for the number being trained as well
- o With a new untrained BA now being trained and with this region still facing the “Big Box migration in we anticipate most of 2008 to be impacted with limited small business openings in the region. We do however see many that will require our Business Plan assistance and referral to our partner banks along with BDC and AFSC

6.2 Community Economic Development:

PROJECTS

Community Futures Highwood will take a lead role in developing and managing a number of regional projects aimed at meeting economic development objectives:

Project A: Regional business investment attraction strategy

Business development and attraction is a collective priority objective in the region as communities work toward increasing the non-residential portion of their tax base in order to help balance the costs of infrastructure needs as a result of rapid growth. The project will weave local information into a comprehensive regional profile for use as a tool for site selectors and emerging businesses.

Project partners

Shareholder municipalities of

Towns of Black Diamond, High River, Okotoks, Turner Valley, Vulcan

M.D. of Foothills, County of Vulcan, M.D. of Willow Creek, Kananaskis Improvement District

SouthGrow Economic Alliance

Alberta Employment, Immigration and Industry

AlbertaFirst

Project overview

The Regional Business Investment Attraction Investment Strategy is an expansion of a sub-regional project undertaken in 2007 focusing on joint marketing initiatives. This next stage will encompass all ten municipal shareholders within the Community Futures Highwood Region and will provide each member with updated economic development marketing tools to promote their communities on their own and as a regional alliance.

Its goal is to maximize resources and marketing impact by working together to develop and promote rural economic development opportunities. While the project is aimed at increasing industrial and commercial activity, it does so with a solid respect for local community values.

Project Objectives

Expand the non-residential tax base in rural communities in the Highwood region. Commercial, industrial and institutional development must increase in order to balance municipal tax assessment.

Strengthen regional economic partnerships. The municipalities have similar core community values as they relate to business attraction strategies and community development. Working together will maximize limited financial and human resources, while at the same time, expand the reach and marketing impact of the project.

Increase and diversify economic opportunities. Regional partnerships will strengthen the economic viability of all communities within the partnership and provide new opportunities for investment.

Project implementation – activities

Project stage	Related activities
1. Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collection, compilation, analysis and update of existing community information
2. Establish goals and develop regional planning strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify critical economic issues and opportunities Identify key market development areas Develop marketing plan Define key industry sectors
3. Obtain regional input	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact key stakeholders to discuss findings and confirm project direction
4. Regional marketing plan development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop marketing plan and common vision
5. Produce on-line regional community profile and site selection guide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research available funding to create project Compile information for web-based use Develop and implement project
6. Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess and measure performance of marketing piece, develop “best practices” recommendations Insert sustainability measures

Long term goal: Development of economic clusters: Key to marketing success is to focus on economic clusters which have a high location quotient (are export-oriented) and do not grow in concert with population growth such as in retail, real estate, finance and insurance and construction industries.

Initial research indicates regional opportunities in the following areas:

Targeted industry	Values	Business types
Agricultural: value added goods, processing	Grow local, eat local	Organic foods and processing, horticulture (flower bulbs, berry crops, nurseries, specialty crops and processing), alternative energies (bio-fuels), food processing, food production

Targeted industry	Values	Business types
Advanced technology	Home-based telecommute focus Clean, low-pollution, aided by decentralization trend enabled by internet and information networks	Computer and network-based consulting, telecommuting, software and applications development, e-commerce

Tourism	Supports protection and low-impact use of physical and cultural assets. Requires a target (Calgary day-tripper for example)	Arts, culture, entertainment, green tours, outdoor adventure, spas, ag-tourism bed and breakfast experience, “atmospheric”
Alternative energy	Leverages Alberta’s reputation and expertise as an energy leader. Sectors, solar, wind, geo-thermal, bio-fuels	Manufacturing, research and development, installation
Environmental products and services	Building the business of environment, for example, developing technologies in the areas of water, waste, wastewater, recycling, energy efficiency, land remediation, green building products	Manufacturing, consulting, engineering, research and development

Project B: Highwood region labour force needs assessment and sourcing

Project description: Unprecedented growth in the Calgary Region has created extreme labour shortages for businesses in all sectors of the Highwood economy. Municipalities are limited in their capacity to attract, retain and expand local businesses as a result of the labour pressures. Community Futures Highwood can provide a valuable service to businesses by identifying the primary labour gaps and developing strategies to assist businesses in meeting labour needs.

Project research: to assess and prioritize business labour needs in the region
Project implementation: working with industry partners, Community Futures Highwood will develop programs and provide services in the areas of labour retention and attraction and foreign worker employment initiatives.

Project partners

Community Futures Highwood shareholder municipalities
 Alberta Employment, Immigration and Industry
 Related employment programs including High River Immigrant Settlement Program, Cargill Foreign Worker Settlement Program

Project methodology: Community Futures Highwood currently delivers employment services and programs on behalf of Alberta Employment, Immigration and Industry. CED will work with Employment Services to research, plan and deliver a labour market strategy aimed at providing businesses with information and resources to meet their employment challenges.

6.3 Minimum Performance Standards:

Minimum Performance Standards

Area	Performance Indicator	Standard	
		Greater of Columns (1) or (2)	
		(1)	(2)
<i>Lending Services</i>			
	Number of Loans	Minimum of 6	18
	Dollar Value of Loans	Minimum of \$200,000	720,000
<i>Business Advisory Services</i>			
	Combination of # of Advisory Services and Clients Trained	Minimum of 116	130
<i>Community Economic Development</i>			
	Number of CED Projects that are fully reported to WD	Minimum of 2	2
	Number of Community Plans (Initiating, leading or participating in a community plan <i>or</i> public participation in a Community Futures plan)	Minimum of 1	2

* Negotiated with WD Business Officer

7.0 FINANCIAL

7.1 BUDGET FORECAST and CASH FLOW (WD CORE FUNDING) REQUIREMENTS

Operations Budget (Total Operations) 2008/2009

	1ST Quarter Apr- Jun	2nd Quarter Jul- Sep	3rd Quarter Oct- Dec	4th Quarter Jan- Mar	TOTAL
CASH RECEIPTS - REVENUES					
Total WD Contribution**	72,579	72,200	72,200	72,200	289,179
Other Federal Funds					0
Other Provincial Funds SE	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	80,000
Other Revenue - Generated	2,600	2,600	2,600	2,600	10,400
Other Revenue					0
Interest Transferred from Non- Repayable Investment Funds	0	0	0	35,000	35,000
Interest Transferred from Investment Funds Specify Fund					0
Interest Transferred from Investment Funds Specify Fund					0
Interest Transferred from Investment Funds Specify Fund					0
Interest Transferred from					0
Total Revenues	\$95,179	\$94,800	\$94,800	\$129,800	\$414,579
CASH DISBURSEMENTS - EXPENDITURES					
Wages and Benefits	62,165	62,165	62,165	62,165	248,660
Administration	28,000	28,000	28,000	28,000	112,000
Travel, Meals and Accommodations	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	24,000
Office Equipment/ Computers	3,000	3,000	3,000	2,919	11,919
Other (Board PD)	3,000		3,000		6,000
Other (Corporate Audit)				12,000	12,000
Other (specify)					0
Total Expenditures	\$102,165	\$99,165	\$102,165	\$111,084	414,579
RECONCILIATION					
Surplus or Deficit	-\$6,986	-\$4,365	-\$7,365	\$18,716	0

*Revenue and expenditure sub-totals should agree with Operational Estimates, above.

**Total WD Contribution breakdown should agree with Cash-Flow Requirements, above.

7.2 BOARD MOTIONS

Moved by **Ken Black** and **Seconded** by **Rick Howard** that the 2008 – 09 CFH operational plan be approved as presented and be dispatched to WED

CARRIED

Moved by **Barry Williamson** and **Seconded** by **Davis Edels** that the 2008 – 09 CFH Operational Plan Budget and Cash Flow be approved as presented and be dispatched to WED

CARRIED

Moved by **Barry Williamson** and **Seconded** by **Robert Thompson** that the 2008 – 09 CFH Operational Plan Request for Transfer of Loan Interest to Operations be approved as presented and dispatched to WED

CARRIED

HISTORY OF INTEREST TRANSFERS

Fiscal Year	Fund Specify	Amount Proposed To Be Transferred	Amount Actually Transferred 2007-2008	Proposed Activities Which Will Utilize These Transfers	Activities That Were Achieved Using The Transferred Interest for 2007-2008
2007/08	Non-Repayable	\$35,000	Projected \$18,000	Branding	New Signage, New Marketing Materials, New Business Cards, New Letterhead
				Small Business Week	Targeted Community Receptions for Chambers Members, Community leaders, Professionals Offices, Bankers, Loan Clients, - 86 attended/utilized a clients restaurant for the event
					General Manager and Business Analyst attended Youth Camp for 1 week as Team Leaders – Travel and other costs associated with this activity
					CF AGM Costs – AGM held in Nanton at the newly renovated curling rink and catered by a new CFH loan client and attended by community leaders, municipal administration, board members and spouses, staff and spouses, contract funders, chamber representatives
2008/09	Non-Repayable	\$35,000		Small Business Week Reception Activity	
				Youth Camp costs for 2 staff to spend 1 week at camp – travel and incidental costs	

CF: Highwood
 Fiscal Year: 2008/2009
 OPERATIONAL PLAN

				Costs to deliver 3 CF Board Training Modules in 2008. With the demand on salaries to keep good staff wages are now at 56% of our WED budget leaving less and less for PD/Conferences/overhead	
				Assist, as required, for a 2008 Board Strategic Planning Retreat	

