



ANNUAL REPORT

APRIL 1, 2008 - MARCH 31, 2009

Community Futures Triple R Corporation
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CHAIRPERSON'S MESSAGE

Community Futures Triple R Corporation celebrated its 15th anniversary in 2008-2009. This event was marked with a gala evening in Altona in October, which annually recognizes community volunteers and entrepreneurs, but this year also brought together several previous Board members.

Triple R continued to be an active supporter of the small business community, with loan commitments to March 31, 2009 of 153 loans equaling \$5.95 million. These loans levered over \$9 million from private, government, and institutional sources, and created an overall job impact of 612 jobs since the organization's inception.

The past year also saw Triple R's continued support of our local communities as they strengthened their capacity for initiating community and business development activities. We participated in facilitation and planning with 7 projects and groups.

It has been a tremendous year, with the highest number of loans issued, plus total monies being lent to entrepreneurs. The office was short one position for most of the year but staff was able to maintain a high level of service to the area and continue to be strong in their service delivery. Each year, we take on more clients while still monitoring past clients, thus increasing the demands on all the office staff. They must be congratulated for their continuously high-volume and high-quality work. Staff also have made a commitment to continued learning and have successfully completed several courses throughout the year. Staff continues to seek partnerships with other government departments at all levels to provide the best possible service to its clients. We rely heavily on the support of our existing partner agencies to maintain smooth operations. These partners include Western Economic Diversification, Manitoba Education and Training, and Community Futures Partners of Manitoba (CFPM), which continued to be an active voice for all CFDC's in Manitoba.

The coming year promises to be full of new challenges and opportunities for Triple R to foster the creation and development of employment and community initiatives. Cheryl Thiessen, Business Development Manager will be away on maternity leave for the new year, and though we wish her all the best, she will certainly be missed having been the staffing stability since the beginning. With the ongoing cooperation of the Board of Directors and commitment displayed by our staff, we will see Triple R continue to increase our role in assisting the growth of the communities of the Triple R region. We will continue to pursue our goals with confidence and the work ethic we have seen year after year.

Respectfully yours,



John Falk
Chairperson

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INTRODUCTION

Community Futures Triple R Corporation works to meet our goals through our commitment to an integrated approach, which links community-generated strategies with community-controlled action. As part of this commitment, we work to facilitate the processes involved in all aspects of community economic development: job creation, community decision-making, organizational development, and long-term viability and prosperity.

In fulfilling this commitment, Triple R recognizes that a number of regional needs must be addressed. These include:

- ◆ Availability of supportive financial assistance for leveraging further investment in community development and business development projects;
- ◆ Technical assistance for business start-ups and expansions;
- ◆ Programs to assist in entrepreneurial skills development;
- ◆ Provision of a reliable and comprehensive information base for decision-making at both community and individual levels;
- ◆ Improved communication between regional development groups, community groups, etc.;
- ◆ Continued improvement in visibility of the program within the region;
- ◆ Varying levels of planning advisory / service.

Services of the Corporation intended to address these needs are developed along three main themes: **Business Counselling, Business Financing, and Community Economic Development Planning.**

HISTORY

Triple R Community Futures Development Corporation was formally established in August 1993. Fiscal year 2008-2009 represented year fifteen of operations.

Triple R's region is located in Southeastern Manitoba. It is roughly L-shaped, extending south along the course of the Red River to the U.S. border, then extending eastward following the courses of the Rat and Roseau Rivers to the eastern border of the Rural Municipality of Piney. It is from the linkage of the communities along these three rivers that the name *Triple R* is derived.

The Triple R region has since been expanded to directly serve 17 local government areas that are home to approximately 46,980 people. These areas include the Rural Municipalities of Macdonald, Ritchot, Morris, De Salaberry, Montcalm, Franklin, Piney, Stuartburn, Rhineland, and Hanover; the Towns of

Niverville, Altona, Morris, Emerson, Gretna and Plum Coulee,; and the Village of St. Pierre-Jolys. Triple R also provides business development services on a limited basis to several communities in and around the Triple R region who are not presently part of a CF region. These include the Rural Municipalities of La Broquerie, Ste. Anne, and Tache; and the communities of Ste. Anne, and Steinbach. Therefore, Triple R serves a total of 22 local government areas with a population of approximately 80,000 persons, covering an area of approximately 11,635 square kilometers.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Community Futures Triple R - Board of Directors for April 1/08 – March 31/09

John Falk - Chairperson / RM of Rhineland
Greg Fehr - Vice-Chairperson/ Town of Niverville
Gavin van der Linde - Secretary-Treasurer / Town of Morris
Luc Nadeau - Village of St. Pierre-Jolys
Dan Bodz - RM of Stuartburn
Louis Roy - RM of Montcalm
Rodney Burns – RM of MacDonald
Robert Stefaniuk – RM of Ritchot
Dennis Loewen - Town of Gretna

Hern Martens - RM of Morris
Larry Chubey - RM of Franklin
Wayne Arseny - Town of Emerson
Bruno Hebert - RM of De Salaberry
Alana Schoenbach – RM of Piney
Terry Wiebe - Town of Altona
Maira Porte – Town of Plum Coulee
Sonny Peters – RM of Hanover

Finance Committee / Personnel Committee / Business Investment Review Committee

Chief Executive Officer / Community Development Coordinator

Business Development Manager

CD/BD Coordinator

Office Manager

GENERAL INFORMATION

Community Futures Triple R Corporation is run on a day-to-day basis by four full-time permanent staff members who work under the guidance of a volunteer Board of Directors representing each of the 17 communities and Rural Municipalities in the Triple R region.

For Triple R to most efficiently deliver its services, the people of the region must know who we are and what services we offer. To that end, a number of mediums were used to raise awareness of the community and business development services we have available.

A web site has continued to be maintained online at www.cftripler.ca. It offers space for member communities to submit community profiles or advertisements. The web pages provide on-line exposure beyond the geographic boundaries of the Triple R region, which is an invaluable resource for marketing and tourism.

Between April 1st, 2008 and March 31st, 2009 Triple R's web site had 4855 visitors who viewed 12,005 pages for 150 hours of information. The majority of visitors have been from Canada primarily but we have also had visitors from the United Kingdom, the US, Japan, Australia, Russia, South Africa, Malaysia, Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Brazil, China, France, Spain, Argentina, Greece, Belgium, Germany, Israel, India, Czech Republic, Guyana, Peru, Sri Lanka, Hungary, Ghana, Norway and Mexico.

A presence was also maintained throughout the region in feature stories in local newspapers, dealing with community and business development issues. Contact and awareness on a more provincial and national level was maintained through contact with MPs / MLAs relevant to the region.

Triple R was also afforded the opportunity to participate in a number of radio interviews on relevant projects and development topics throughout the year. Clearly these efforts to raise awareness of our services was effective, as our existing staff often had a challenge in keeping up to the number and types of inquiries for service that we received.

BUSINESS COUNSELLING

Community Futures Triple R provides technical assistance to entrepreneurs interested in starting or expanding a business and to existing businesses. The types of assistance delivered involve all aspects of starting and running a business; including business planning, marketing, bookkeeping, financial statement analysis, etc. During the 2008-2009 fiscal year, we had **812** contacts with individuals, providing general information services, technical assistance, monitoring and training.

One Hundred Nine new clients were provided one-on-one business development counseling between April 1, 2008 and March 31, 2009. Triple R staff worked with an average of **30** clients a month of which **10** on average were new clients. Many clients had numerous contacts with Triple R staff during their counseling as they worked to evaluate, develop or implement their ideas.

While the majority of business development services are provided in one-on-one counseling sessions, staff are also willing to deliver seminars on topics of identified need, as time and resources allow.

Triple R is contracted by Manitoba Competitiveness, Training and Trade - Employment Manitoba (Steinbach and Morden offices) to assess the business proposals of **Self Employment Benefit** program participants in the region. The Self-Employment Benefit program provides support to *Employment Insurance* (E.I.) eligible persons who wish to start their own business. If approved, clients are able to continue collecting E.I. benefits while working to start their businesses. In the past year, Triple R worked with 5 such clients referred by Employment Manitoba offices. For more information, contact a local Employment Centre office or Triple R.

Triple R staff continue to serve as an information and path finding resource for clients and during the year have partnered with Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth (Young Entrepreneurs Program), Manitoba Agriculture Food and Rural Initiatives, Business Development Bank of Canada, Vocational Rehabilitation Program, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (Opportunities Program) and Rural Entrepreneurs with Disabilities Program to access services and funding for a number of our clients.

We continue to develop partnerships with Chambers of Commerce and Community Development Corporations in the region.

LOAN FUND DEVELOPMENT

Triple R provides financing to businesses in the region that have difficulty acquiring financing for start-up or expansion on a "last resort" or "supplementary" basis. Triple R offers loans, loan guarantees and equity participation to eligible, viable businesses that cannot access any or all of their financing from conventional sources.

During the 2008-2009 fiscal year 13 new loans totaling \$941,480 were approved.

As of March 31, 2009, Triple R has committed \$5,945,975 in repayable financial assistance to businesses in the region since its inception. A summary of these activities, can be viewed in the following table:

Total Historical Triple R Investment Commitments at 3/31/09	\$5,945,975
Total Funds Levered From Other Sources:	\$9,034,176
Funds Levered Per \$1,000 Triple R Investment:	\$1,520
Average Financial Assistance Amount:	\$38,862
Total Full-time Equivalent Jobs (new/maintained):	612.5
Cost Per Job for Triple R CFDC:	\$9,707

COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

The purpose of Triple R's CED Planning work is to assist in the development and implementation of community round tables, strategic planning and the capacity building process in communities. We have worked with local organizations to ensure implementation of plans from past round table and strategic planning processes and community involvement in future processes. In the past year, Triple R has been directly and indirectly involved in a variety of community improvement projects. Through existing Community Development Corporations in the region, Triple R has assisted with funding proposals, the development of marketing materials, as well as facilitating strategic planning sessions to set goals for the coming year.

INTER-AGENCY LIAISON

The following is a listing (not necessarily absolutely exhaustive) of the organizations and groups that Triple R had dealings and/or communications with between April 1/08 and March 31/09.

- Creating A Future
- Western Economic Diversification Canada
- Pembina Valley Development Corporation
- Regional Health Authorities
- Society for Manitobans with Disabilities
- Eastman Regional Development Corp
- Manitoba Competitive Training and Trade
- White Plains Recreation District
- Red River Foundation
- Morris Community Development Corporation
- Community Futures Partners of Manitoba
- South East Angle Community Corporation
- MP's and MLA's in the region – Vic Toews MP, Cliff Graydon, Mavis Taillieu, MLA, Ron Lemieux MLA, Candace Hoepfner, MP
- East Borderland Housing
- Eastman Immigrant Services
- Business Development Bank of Canada
- Eastern Manitoba Tourism Association
- Sunbelt Development Corporation
- Canada-Manitoba Business Service Centre
- MB. Agriculture Food & Rural Initiatives
- Economic Developers Assoc. of MB
- Solidarite Rurale du Quebec
- Borderland School Division, Red River Valley School Division
- Chaboille Community Development Corporation
- Member Communities
- Chambers of Commerce in the region –

- Economic Development Council for Manitoba Bilingual Municipalities
- Regional Banks
- Regional Credit Unions
- Regional Caisse Populaires

PROMOTIONAL/PUBLIC RELATIONS ACTIVITIES

For Triple R to most efficiently deliver its services, the people of the region must know who we are and what services we offer. To that end, we undertook a number of activities in various mediums in the past year to raise awareness of our community and business development services.

Promotion through traditional media included a listing in the yellow pages, signage and a reader board outside of our offices located on PTH #75, several print and radio interviews on local economic development issues and advertisements in local newspapers regarding our business development services, special events and youth survey. We also updated and redesigned our general services brochures and printed brochures promoting the Self-Employment Program in our region.

This past year we also continue to expand the services available through our web site at www.cftripler.ca. The site offers access to a variety of business, community planning, marketing, and tourism resources and information as well as links to other helpful sites, links to our member communities' web sites and/or community profiles and notices of upcoming Triple R and member community events.

Significant assistance was also received through the promotion of the Community Futures Program in general by our partner agencies. These include our partners in the Western Canada Business Service Network, including Western Economic Diversification Canada, the Canada/Manitoba Business Service Centre, and other federal and provincial organizations. However, our chief wide-range promoter remained Community Futures Partners of Manitoba (CFPM), the umbrella agency representing Manitoba's 16 CFs, which produced posters, brochures and a quarterly newsletter trumpeting CF accomplishments.

Perhaps our most successful promotional activities have been our public events which included the annual Entrepreneur Volunteer Appreciation Evening in October along with an Open House in August.

Clearly these efforts to raise awareness of our services were effective, as our staff remained very busy keeping up to the number and types of inquiries for service that we received.

STAFF MEMBERS

Debbi Fortier – CEO / Community Development Coordinator

Debbi is responsible for the day-to-day overall operation of the Corporation. With assistance from the other staff, she deals with community development issues, assists communities and groups in the region with a variety of on-going community projects and acts as a resource person for both community groups, acts as Corporation spokesperson, and directs Corporation business. The annual budget preparations and required submissions are also the responsibility of Debbi, with contributions from other staff.

Cheryl Thiessen - Business Development Manager

Coordinates and oversees business development for the Triple R region. Ensure the mandate of business counseling, planning assistance and financing is executed with the highest level of client services. Helping business obtain start up assistance and existing business expansions obtain the resources they need to succeed.

Shelley Zilkie – Office Manager

Shelley acts as the organization's first point of contact, provides administrative support to staff, and assists clients with informational requests. She also coordinates our annual Entrepreneur and Volunteer Appreciation Evening, provides administration assistance to the CEO and is responsible for our accounting reporting and TEA maintenance.

Mark Ratzlaff - BD/CD Coordinator

Mark is responsible for managing community economic development initiatives undertaken by the Corporation, providing research and planning assistance to community groups on community projects, helping community groups to identify and access government programs and services, and facilitating regional meetings and strategic planning exercises. This position also assists the Business Development Manager in the delivery of the loans program, business counseling services and liaison with partner organizations in our communities.

ATTACHMENT

Audited Financial Statements for 2008-09.