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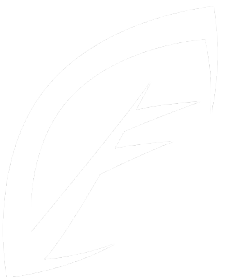
# The “Future” in our Community Futures

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**community futures**  
NETWORK OF CANADA



**réseau de développement**  
DES COLLECTIVITES DU CANADA



# Troy Dungate - Volunteer

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Chair – CF Fraser Fort George

Chair – CFBC

Chair – CF Pan West

Chair/President – CF National

75% of my time being a Lawyer

75% of my other time volunteering with CF

# 4 Topics

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- How we perceive ourselves effects how others perceive us
- Advocacy - Tactical Battlefield for our Ops Ask, What we are doing and what we are going to do.
- Our RDA as our Champions
- To the Future and beyond

**community futures**  
NETWORK OF CANADA



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# How we perceive ourselves is how others perceive us

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- Before we get to advocacy, we have to have the right mind set and understand who we are
- This means we better have an amazing understanding of how cool we really are!!

# How we perceive ourselves effects how others perceive us

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We are individual CF offices..... but you are not alone!!

- 60 Offices in Ontario
- 90 Western Canada, 41 Atlantic, 67 Quebec, 8 Northern
- 267 offices!!!
  - located rurally, remotely coast to coast to coast

# 267 Offices – Rural and Remotely located

## THE COMMUNITY FUTURES NETWORK ACROSS CANADA



# How we perceive ourselves effects how others perceive us

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Together we are a massive entity with massive momentum

- RRRF Added \$540 million in loans to our balance sheets  
....and we get to keep it! (no other government partner got to)  
- our loan loss rate is unbelievable.....
- Our RDA's somehow put the "non"-repayable....in the repayable line!  
No other government delivery partner got to keep it - not BDC, not the banks etc.
- Now its up to us to leverage the sh%t out of this opportunity

# Perception.....How huge are we?

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Last year nationally:

5,000 loans disbursed

\$325 million dollars

Leveraging three-quarters of a billion (\$725 million) in funding from other sources.

Collectively we manage:

\$2 billion in federally provided funds.



Perception = Advocacy.....keep it positive!

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Let's practise positive statements together:

"My friends and I manage 2 billion community assets for the federal government.....and what do you do?"

"Our RDA's let us keep the Covid emergency loan money.....not sure what your group did wrong but that a miss for you"

# Perception.....How many CF siblings do you have?

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Nationally:

- 1,270 staff members
- 2,945 committed volunteer board members.
- TOTAL 4,215

Lets practise another positive statement together:

“It may look like I have a staff of 3 but I have 4,215 siblings that are an email away who can also help or avenge us”

Volunteer as a  
director with  
us!!

Come work for  
us!!

Nationally:

1,270 staff members

2,945 committed volunteer  
board members.

TOTAL 4,215



We need a national, unifying slogan

Community Futures is:

**Canada's largest  
Community Economic Development  
Network**

# Advocacy – What we have done, what we are doing and what we are going to do

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- Advocacy for operational dollars -
- Tactical Battlefield
- What we are doing and going to do.
- Train each other and build on it year over year.....do not get discouraged.
- The hunt for operational dollars is a war and not one battle.

# Advocacy – Tactical Battlefield

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- Ridiculously complex
- Goal: Arm you with as much info as possible to help and continue
- Funding for the Community Futures program is delivered by 7 different Regional Development Agencies (RDA) who are directed by six different Cabinet Ministers.

# Advocacy – Complex tactical battlefield

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- Two RDA in this room – FedNor / FedDev – 5 more out there – 2 in the West, Quebec, Atlantic, Northern Canada
- A decision to increase funding support has to have the backing of all of those Ministers and the departmental delivery staff from the 7 agencies

# Advocacy – Complex tactical battlefield

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- The RDA delivery staff are our **biggest champions**
  - If they can sneak money or change items in our favour they are doing it.....and it's not easy for them
    - RRRF – Non repayable



# Advocacy – Complex tactical battlefield

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- Most of the Program's money comes from central allocation from Treasury Board to the RDAs,
- Then the agencies top up the central allocation with money from their own departmental budgets.
- The money is not allocated proportional to the number of CFs, but by population, which leads to regional disparities.
- Example PrairiesCan / PacifiCan provides about 25% of our funding from their departmental budget to get us to the average of about \$300,000 each.

# Advocacy – Complex tactical battlefield

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- In the past, RDAs were more likely to act individually with respect to CF funding, in recent years they have committed to work together more closely and make more joint decisions with respect to the program's funding.
- Our advocacy focus has shifted away from regional advocacy with the individual RDAs and towards collective national advocacy.

# Advocacy – Complex tactical battlefield

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- **National Team** meets once a month – 22 Provincial Chairs and ED's zoom in to collaborate on anything and everything – very strong team! Al, Diana Suzanne
- **National advocacy committee** that meets with Summa Strategies (our government relations consultants) every two weeks to share information from across the country, get intel from Summa regarding developments in Ottawa, and plan out advocacy work.
- Allan Simm and Diana Jedig, CF Ontario and Troy Dungate (CF Pan West Chair/National President) sit on that committee

# Advocacy – Complex tactical battlefield

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Our advocacy schedule is based around the Budget cycle. Some of the key dates and activities were:

- **August:** briefs to the Finance Committee for its pre-Budget consultation process. This brief was submitted and forwarded to our various RDA contacts to make them aware of our request, and follow-up meetings were held to try to gain their support.
- **November:** Departments required to submit their Budget request letters. Meetings were held in October with key Ministers, RDA CF contacts, and the RDA presidents to press our request and try to have it included in those letters.
- **Late February/Early March:** Budget is released. Prior to that, we have asked our CFs (using the Advocacy Kits that Summa developed) to meet with their local MPs during the House break in January to build support for our ask, and in the case of the West, build on our connections with Opposition MPs to prepare for a government change in 2025. At the national level, we are seeking further meetings with influential Ministers that we feel can help our cause and with key staff from the Finance Minister's office.
- **Post Budget:** It takes roughly 6 weeks for departments to have a clear understanding of what is and what isn't in the Budget. Once we know what we are or aren't getting, we meet with the RDAs to discuss anything that was announced and press for inclusion in the coming year of anything that we didn't get. And it starts anew.

# Advocacy – Complex tactical battlefield

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Key decision makers:

- Prime Minister
- Finance Minister

Key decision for budget are not:

- RDA program officers, managers, directors, director generals, ADM's or Presidents but they are asked to constantly verify we are worth it.

# Advocacy – Complex tactical battlefield

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We also seek meetings throughout the year with anyone that could help our cause (national partners, politicians, etc.) when opportunities present themselves.

Informal rule at the national table and throughout CF can be summed up by a quote from my 4 year old niece:

“I sit with you”

We are literally asking to sit with anyone anywhere and everywhere

\*\*Very happy to report we sat with every RDA minister, every President of every RDA and we have never been able to do that before

# Advocacy – Complex tactical battlefield

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With government change looming, we have also started to ramp up efforts to build a relationship with the Conservatives. We've requested meetings with key staff in the Opposition Leader's Office (as they will likely become PMO staff after the election) and have also asked to meet with MP Adam Chambers, who will be drafting the Conservatives' policy platform for the election.

Key documents you should already have and be using:

- MP Took Kit
- The submission to the Finance Committee from August, updated to include 22-23 stats.
- The background document that we used for the meetings that we had while in Ottawa in October. It shows who we met with and is a good example of the kind of work that Summa Strategies does for us.

# The RDA's as our Champions

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- Truly every RDA employee is and has been our Champion, if they can kick us a quarter on the floor – they are doing it.
- They are in a difficult position as well and might see job cuts in this next budget
- The level of collaboration between the RDA and us is at an all time high and is only getting better and better.



# What does an RDA see if they want to learn about CF

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## 1.0 CONTEXT

Community Futures (CF) is a program that supports community economic development (CED) and builds the capacity of communities to realize their full sustainable potential.

The purpose of the CF Program is to help communities develop and implement *local solutions to local problems*. The program provides financial support to CF Organizations that, in collaboration with other partners and stakeholders, can assess their situation and develop strategies to meet their needs to provide support to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and Social Enterprises and to undertake appropriate community economic development initiatives.

# Future – is ours to define together

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I am not here to tell you what our future is BUT

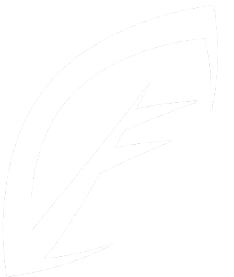
If you have noticed all provincial associations and regional associations are getting our A\$\$'s in gear to define our future so it won't be defined for us.

- Various strategic planning with results driven by all of you

# RRRF Challenge – How creative can we use the funds to solve items?

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- Audits – can we fix them, start our own audit firm?
- CF Credit Union / bank – \$200,000 units x 267?
- Cooperate – build capacity together!!
- Sharing and collaborating to end



# The Future and beyond.....

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Being starved of operational dollars is brutal and demoralizing.  
.....but the silver lining is we are lean and mean and forced to cooperate and fix areas that need fixing! So lets do that!

“Gooood” – Navy Seal Jacko

Good

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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IdTMD>

[pizis8](#)

# The Future and beyond....Flex points

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1. Non-Financial Asks with the current contracts
2. Contract Renewals 2 years out!!
  - Game time – we need to start crafting our position on what we want to look like in 5 years
  - Needs to be done a year before the contract renewal occur to present it properly to the RDA's
3. National Level Partnerships – BDC – loan partnership
4. Our loan funds – unharnessed engine rooms – cash everywhere!! (share better get it working better)
  - Capacity builds capacity – so lets build more of it!!

## Future and Beyond –

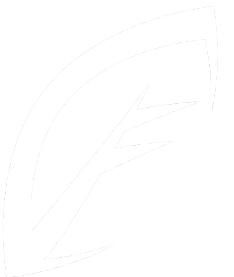
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Capacity Builds Capacity!! - Keep building

Training – Your Staff, Your Directors.....Train the RRRF

How creative can we get with the RRRF funds?

Use them to solve and build – Share with the network?



## Future and Beyond

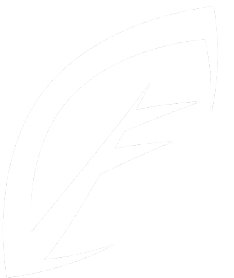
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Thank you to all of you.....you are all inspiring.....I love hearing your “why’s”

You are all passionate, hard-working “freaks” and we are very lucky to have you all as colleagues

We are doing 5x more now than ever and are quite the complex, little-big 267 individual but together organizations.

Big thank you to all of what you do – inspiring to represent you!





# One last positive statements together:

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“My friends and I manage 2 billion in community assets for the federal government....and what do you do?”