



Western Economic
Diversification Canada

Diversification de l'économie
de l'Ouest Canada

Working with the West



Canada

A stronger West A stronger Canada



WESTERN ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION CANADA

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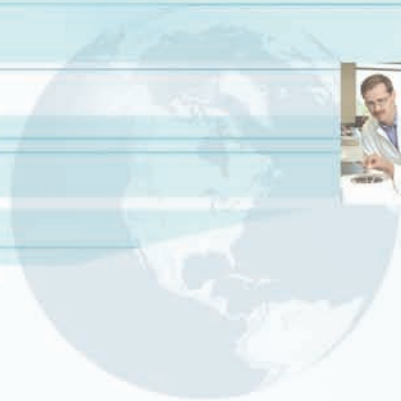
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BUILDING A STRONGER WEST

The West is well positioned to achieve its full economic potential within Canada and in the global marketplace. Its people, natural resources, scientific and technological innovation, and capacity for small business development ensure success in the 21st century economy.

On behalf of the Government of Canada and Prime Minister Stephen Harper, my focus as the Minister of Western Economic Diversification will be to build on the strengths of our regional development policy. An effective policy must continue to evolve to meet the needs of the West and its people. This will ensure a productive and competitive economy for today - and for the future. We will do this with full financial accountability for the investment that we make in the West.

We will do this by maintaining strong partnerships with provincial governments, municipalities, universities, and local business and community organizations, by balancing our commitments in the social and market economies, and by continuing to support three strategic priorities—innovation, entrepreneurship and sustainable communities.

As you will read in the following pages, this approach enables us to be involved in both small community based projects and major leading-edge initiatives that contribute to the economic productivity of the West and the quality of life of western Canadians. At the same time, Western Canada is uniquely positioned to contribute to the national agenda in ways that will benefit all Canadians.

The Canadian Light Source (CLS) at the University of Saskatchewan demonstrates how WD works to strengthen Western Canada's innovation performance. Synchrotron light allows matter to be seen at the atomic scale, which makes it an essential tool in developing new technologies and applications. This facility has the potential to attract \$35 million a year in commercial research and development from universities, the private sector and abroad.



***The Honourable Carol Skelton, P.C., M.P.
Minister of National Revenue and
Minister of Western Economic
Diversification***

In the area of entrepreneurship, direct services for small businesses are delivered through WD's Western Canada Business Service Network. In a typical year, these business service partners have provided more than \$52 million in loans, which leveraged an additional \$71.3 million from other sources. WD also delivers special programs for entrepreneurs with disabilities so that everyone has equal opportunity to realize their entrepreneurial potential.

By the end of 2008, Western Economic Partnership Agreements (WEPAs), cost-shared by the four western provincial governments and the Government of Canada, will have invested \$360 million to foster increased economic activity and improve the quality of life in communities across Western Canada. These Agreements are expected to attract over a billion dollars in private sector investment and create about 270 new business ventures that will generate nearly 3,000 full-time jobs.

WD helps build and maintain sustainable communities through infrastructure agreements with each of the western provinces. WD has invested over \$550 million for 1,638 projects under the Infrastructure Canada Program. The Department also delivers the Municipal Rural Infrastructure Program, which will invest another \$278 million in western communities over the next five years. Funding will respond to locally-identified priorities and build the foundation for sustained long-term economic growth.

By building a stronger West, we are building a stronger Canada.

I invite you to read further to find out more.

The Honourable Carol Skelton
Minister of National Revenue and
Minister of Western Economic Diversification



ACHIEVING RESULTS FOR THE WEST

PAN-WESTERN

In March 2004, Western Economic Diversification Canada and the four western provinces contributed \$10 million to the Tourism Alliance for Western Canada, enabling them to respond to the crisis situation facing the western tourism industry as a result of the previous years' forest fires, flooding, BSE and lingering concerns about SARS and the West Nile Virus. By the end of November 2004, the resulting pan-western marketing campaign had contributed to a 21.5% increase in overseas visitors.

In January 2005, WD delivered a report on the western environmental technologies sector to Prime Minister Paul Martin. The report contains concrete, actionable policy initiatives, recommended by industry, for the Government of Canada to promote the development and adoption of environmental technologies, and enhance the West's growing strengths in the field.

WD released *Western Canada's Cost Advantage: The Best Place to do Business!* in January 2005 to promote the advantages of doing business in the West. Based on the 2004 KPMG *Competitive Alternatives* international business cost study, the brochure highlights the lower cost of doing business in six western Canadian cities compared with cities in the western U.S. The brochure has been distributed broadly to stakeholders in the West and to Canadian consulates in the U.S. to assist with promotion and outreach.



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MANITOBA

The Manitoba Division of the Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters received \$1.84 million through the Canada-Manitoba Economic Partnership Agreement in February 2005. The funds supported the Advanced Manufacturing Initiative Rapid Response (AMI), which is already making a difference in the province's plants and factories. The AMI's Lean Training Program, for example, has produced 24 graduates and 35 shop floor leaders. To date, 75 companies have taken part in lean events.

Phase two of a joint marketing and business development initiative by the Manitoba Audio Recording Industry Association and the Manitoba Motion Picture Industry Association received \$2.4 million under the Canada-Manitoba Economic Partnership Agreement in November 2004. Phase one more than doubled Manitoba's film production revenues from \$51 million to an estimated \$106 million in 2004, and increased jobs by 71%.

The Composites Innovation Centre (CIC) in Winnipeg received \$2 million through the Canada-Manitoba Economic Partnership Agreement in May 2004. The CIC helps companies develop commercially viable products from composites - reinforcing fibres embedded in a plastic material to make products lighter and stronger. For example, Avanti Polymers used the CIC's facilities to develop "green" tabletops for school desks from a unique blend of urethane resin and hemp fibres. The company, located in the rural community of Gretna, has already received an order for 100,000 units, and expects to hire five new full-time employees once the desk top moves into the commercialization phase in Fall 2005.

SASKATCHEWAN

The Vaccine and Infectious Disease Organization (VIDO) at the University of Saskatchewan received \$1.1 million from WD in January 2004, bringing WD's total investment in the facility to more than \$5.6 million. VIDO has achieved five world firsts in vaccine development and been awarded over 60 patents, with

more than 30 pending. They are currently testing vaccines for some of the greatest threats to human health, including the SARS virus and avian influenza.

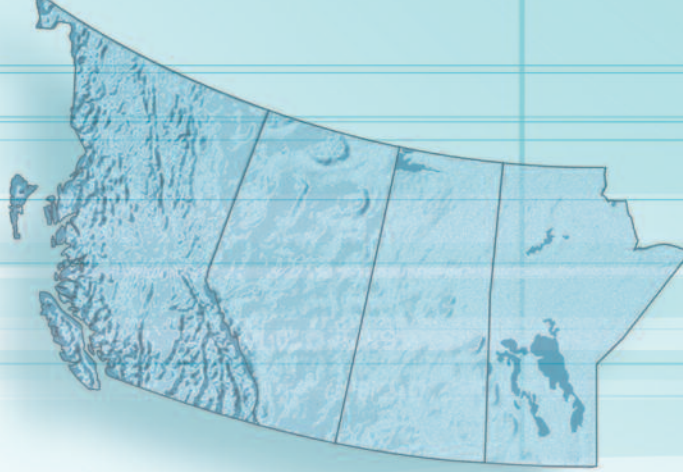
The Petroleum Technology Research Centre (PTRC) in Regina received \$1 million from WD in March 2004 to develop and improve enhanced oil recovery methods so producers can get more oil out of the province's reserves. PTRC's Weyburn CO₂ Monitoring and Storage project, which uses gas injection to increase the amount of oil that can be recovered, is classed as the most successful pilot research project in the world. WD has invested \$4.8 million in the facility to date.

Regina Exhibition Park opened its new \$12 million Multi-Purpose Facility in June 2005. The building provides 90,000 square feet of recreational space that will be used by 4,000 youth and adults for indoor soccer each year. In addition, the flexibility of the facility for trade and convention use will create new opportunities to attract major events, like the 2006 Tim Horton's Brier, to the province. WD provided \$5 million through the Canada Strategic Infrastructure Fund for the project.

ALBERTA

The Calgary-based Network for Emerging Wireless Technologies (NEWT) received \$2 million in March 2004, bringing the total WD investment to \$3.5 million. This new investment allows NEWT to enhance the commercialization of wireless devices and applications in areas such as health care, agriculture, education and commerce. For example, software developer NE2 Corporation launched its e-Cryption™ software in March 2005. The product, developed using NEWT's test facility and technical development advice, addresses a major barrier to the adoption of wireless technologies by enhancing the security of information exchanged on networks. Early adopters include Bell Canada, Westcan Wireless and Talisman Energy.

In January 2005, WD provided almost \$455,000 to the Faculty Saint-Jean in Edmonton to enhance distance



learning opportunities in French across the West. As the only degree-granting Francophone post-secondary institution west of Winnipeg, the Faculty Saint-Jean plays a unique role in serving the needs of the West's widely-dispersed Francophone community. The project will also help meet the increased demand for immersion and second language teachers in Alberta, created by the province's new mandatory requirement for the study of a second language beginning in grade four.

The Caritas Health Group received nearly \$1 million from WD in January 2005 to establish a biomedical engineering laboratory at the Misericordia Community Hospital in Edmonton. The laboratory will allow Caritas to expand a pilot that used rapid prototyping to build 82 three-dimensional models for head and neck reconstructive surgery. The pilot has resulted in improved pre- and post-operative planning, reduced operating time and improved surgical outcomes.

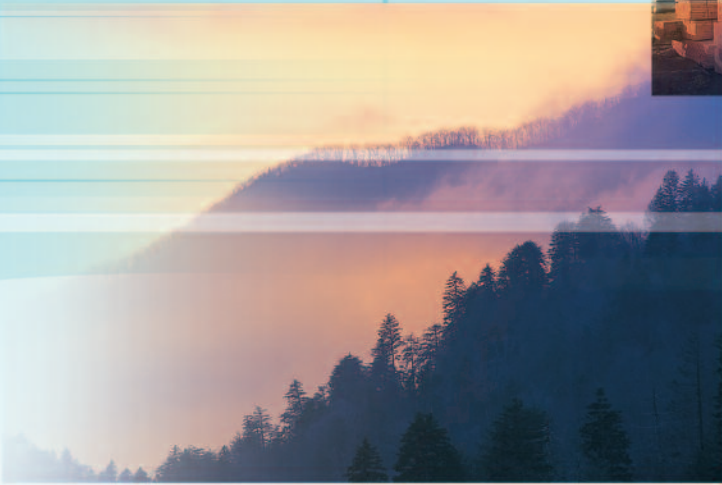
BRITISH COLUMBIA

Genome British Columbia received \$2.5 million from WD in April 2004 to advance genomics research and create marketable technologies for global consumers. In 2005 for example, they completed the sequencing and annotation of the genome of *Rhodococcus*, a soil bacterium. The project not only improved understanding of the bacterium's ability to break down PCBs and other toxic wastes, but also created ideas on how to cut costs in the production of antibiotics and other important pharmaceuticals.

The University of Victoria's Institute for Integrated Energy Systems (IESVic) received \$522,000 from WD in May 2004 to purchase specialized equipment for research and development of commercial applications of hydrogen and fuel cells technology. The project has significantly increased the Institute's research capacity, helping to attract six new faculty members, engage 14 graduate students and attract over \$1 million in R&D expenditures from industrial partners.

In 2004, WD provided more than \$65,000 to support the Social Purchasing Portal in Vancouver, which helps find jobs for former drug addicts, youth at risk, single mothers and others who lack work experience. The online portal facilitates transactions between purchasers and suppliers that hire training-program graduates. With about 115 businesses in the buyers' group and 60 suppliers, the portal has been so successful it has now been launched in Winnipeg and Toronto.

- 1 ***Manitoba: The Composites Innovation Centre is poised to help local industries prepare for the competitive challenges that lie ahead in the global marketplace.***
- 2 ***Saskatchewan: Postdoctoral fellow Dr. Ursula Fernando and Dr. Alexander Zakhartchouk test samples at the Vaccine and Infectious Disease Organization. With WD's funding, VIDO is creating life-saving vaccines that can save newborns and protect Canadians from emerging diseases such as SARs, avian influenza and the West Nile virus.***
- 3 ***Alberta: A centennial capital legacy project, the new Mavericks Gallery at Calgary's Glenbow Museum, will commemorate those people and groups who have contributed to key moments in Alberta's past and have helped shape the course of history in the province.***
- 4 ***Manitoba: Louis Paquin speaks on behalf of board members of the Manitoba Motion Picture Industry Association.***
- 5 ***British Columbia: A British Columbia fuel cells bus is being readied for a cross Europe and Asia tour to promote and showcase Canada's fuel cells industry.***



ENSURING SUSTAINABLE WESTERN COMMUNITIES

“A growing economy creates both opportunities and challenges. Growth provides opportunity for companies and individuals to work and generate income and expands the tax base. Growth also brings many challenges – such as environmental risks and social equity issues – which need to be addressed and managed.”

*- Toward a Bright Future:
Recommendations for Addressing Skills Shortages in Western Canada,
Canada West Foundation, January 2005*

Eighty per cent of western Canadians live in urban communities today, and the rate of urbanization continues to accelerate. This rapid growth is putting increased pressure on core infrastructure, services and quality of life within the West’s largest cities. Rural communities face significant challenges as well. The gradual erosion of their population and services, combined in many cases with devastating natural events or trade actions, has left many rural areas without the economic opportunities required to support a high quality of life for their residents.

These dynamics illustrate the need to approach economic development within the overall context of sustainability, taking into account the social and environmental factors that affect the ability of communities to access and take advantage of opportunities for sustainable growth.

Western Economic Diversification Canada (WD) contributes to building sustainable communities, large and small, with initiatives that respond to specific challenges that hinder competitiveness and quality of life, paying economic, social and environmental rewards long into the future.

BUILDING STRONGER COMMUNITIES

In many of Western Canada's larger cities, rapid growth has contributed to an increase in complex socio-economic problems, such as drug addiction, HIV infection, crime, lack of adequate housing and unemployment. WD plays a key role in addressing these issues in the West by forging partnerships between the federal government, the four western provincial governments, municipalities, academic institutions, industry and other stakeholders. These partnerships combine strengths and resources to create collaborative solutions and build a future that is sustainable not only economically, but environmentally and socially as well.

For example, in 2004 WD signed a new five-year urban development agreement with the City of Winnipeg and the Province of Manitoba. The Winnipeg Partnership Agreement builds on the success of previous tri-partite agreements which, to date, have invested \$271 million in Manitoba's capital city, and leveraged \$726 million in additional public and private investment. The new agreement is designed to enhance Aboriginal participation in economic and community life, build sustainable neighbourhoods, revitalize the downtown area and expand Winnipeg's competitiveness through innovation and technology.

INNOVATIONS IN THE FORESTRY INDUSTRY

The pine beetle infestation of B.C.'s softwood forests has created new challenges for communities already struggling with the impact of softwood lumber tariffs. Thousands of hectares of infested lumber, which contain blue stains where the insects have burrowed through the wood, will become unusable unless it can be harvested and processed within two years of infestation. But with the help of the Softwood Industry Community Economic Adjustment Initiative (SICEAI), communities across B.C. are using local ingenuity to create global opportunities. From opening new markets to producing new value-added products, or even creating entirely new industries, they are finding innovative ways to create a new, more sustainable prosperity for their communities.



WD's Community Futures Development Corporations are having a positive impact on economic development in the West's rural communities. A study of 24 active projects, many of which were still in the early stages of implementation and had only started to generate impact, found the projects had already created 710 jobs, developed 46 businesses, increased revenues by \$4 million, and attracted \$2.2 million in investment. Each dollar contributed, excluding loans capital, leveraged \$88.35 in public and private sector project funding.

-FERENCE WEICKER & COMPANY, 2002

In Vanderhoof, for example, local employer Premium Pellet Ltd. used SICEAI funding to install a new, proprietary technology to permit 100% utilization of wood fiber in manufacturing wood pellets, a fuel produced from waste by-products like sawdust and wood shavings. There is an enormous demand for wood pellets in Europe, a result of their objective to increase the share of renewable energy sources to meet Kyoto targets. The expansion of Premium Pellet Ltd. makes it the largest wood pellet plant in the world, positioning Canada as a world leader in the production of high quality, renewable energy. The plant will maintain 42 jobs and create 43 additional jobs in the area, and offers the prospect of developing an entirely new growth industry in northern B.C.'s forest sector.

The Softwood Industry Community Economic Adjustment Initiative was designed to encourage long-term, sustainable economic development in communities previously dependent on the forestry industry. Many of those most affected live in small, remote and Aboriginal communities where there are few other economic options. The program, administered in the West by WD, in partnership with Community Futures Development Corporations, uses locally identified and driven initiatives to create positive long term economic benefits. In all, the Softwood Initiative has committed \$50 million to implement 146 projects in more than 140 western communities. That funding has leveraged another \$97 million from other sources, creating or maintaining 2,500 jobs in communities most affected by the Canada-United States softwood lumber trade dispute.

Late in 2003, WD signed renewed Western Economic Partnership Agreements (WEPAs) with each of the four western provincial governments. By March 31, 2005 the four year \$200 million cost-shared agreements, aimed at increasing economic activity and improving quality of life in western communities, had directed over \$90 million to 79 priority projects throughout the West. Previous WEPAs invested \$160 million in projects that attracted an additional \$458 million in private sector investment, resulted in an estimated 120 new business ventures and created more than 1,300 full-time jobs.



EXPANDING ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY AND INVESTMENT

Despite strong overall economic performance, not all parts of the western region are prospering. Many rural, remote, Aboriginal and northern communities remain disproportionately dependent on vulnerable primary resource sectors, and declining populations are reducing the services and opportunities available to residents.

WD supports a number of initiatives that increase prosperity and quality of life in disadvantaged communities throughout the West. For example, the Canada-Saskatchewan Northern Development Agreement – a five-year, \$20 million agreement between the governments of Canada and Saskatchewan – will help northern Canadians improve regional economic infrastructure, employment prospects, educational and business expertise. It will also increase research and industry innovation, and improve the region's ability to attract business investment.

More than \$6.97 million has been committed, to date, for 19 projects under the Northern Development Agreement. These projects will improve transportation, create training opportunities, provide access to high-speed Internet and support local economic development in Northern Saskatchewan communities.

IMPROVING CONDITIONS FOR URBAN ABORIGINAL PEOPLE

Canada's Aboriginal population is no exception to the global trend of urbanization. Half of our nation's Aboriginal peoples now live in urban areas, where they frequently face far more severe conditions than their non-Aboriginal counterparts. This is a particularly serious problem in the West, where approximately 63% of Aboriginal peoples live.

The Urban Aboriginal Strategy (UAS), administered by WD in B.C., Alberta and Manitoba, brings nine Government of Canada departments together with provincial and municipal governments, local Aboriginal organizations, non-government organizations and the private sector in a coordinated effort to develop innovative solutions to address the serious socio-economic needs of urban Aboriginal people.

Pilot projects in Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton, Saskatoon, Regina and Winnipeg are designed to address locally-identified priorities. For example, in Regina, the initial focus is on housing improvement, crime reduction and employment, while in Winnipeg, the UAS will address education, housing, poverty and economic development.

In Edmonton, an innovative initiative aims to improve the educational success of Aboriginal students. Achieving Individual Success Through Cultural Pride, a partnership between WD, the Government of Alberta and Edmonton Public Schools, integrates Aboriginal culture into the curriculum of seven inner city schools to make Aboriginal culture an integral part of the classroom experience for all students. Project partners hope to develop a new educational model for use by other urban school districts in Alberta and across Canada.

Regardless of the specific local focus, the UAS is providing more effective solutions by aligning federal programs with both provincial programs and other efforts to respond to local priorities. By testing innovative policy and programming ideas, the pilot projects will provide a better understanding of what works, what does not and why – and, ultimately, improve the socio-economic conditions of urban Aboriginal people.

In 2005, the UAS will be launched in four additional western communities: Prince George, British Columbia, Lethbridge, Alberta, Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, and Thompson, Manitoba.



Construction workers in Saskatchewan install sensor equipment to test noise reduction capabilities of asphalt rubber used in road paving. This innovative paving technique has the ability to reduce noise levels in residential areas. Using waste rubber in asphalt also extends the lifespan of landfills and creates new industry.

STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY

Dramatic shifts in population density have made sustainable development a priority in all of Canada's major cities. In Regina, an innovative partnership is helping that city face the challenges of urbanization and plan for the future by identifying innovative ways to reduce costs and increase efficiency.

The Communities of Tomorrow (CT) partnership brings all three levels of government together with research institutes and educational institutions to develop, demonstrate and commercialize technologies and management practices for sustainable communities. The five-year \$30 million investment includes the new National Research Council Centre for Sustainable Infrastructure Research that will build on local capacity to strengthen the city's emerging technology cluster. The CT partnership will position Regina as a recognized leader in sustainable municipal development, helping to establish spin-off firms and attract new industries.

In November 2004, the first projects funded under the CT partnership were announced. From energy efficient homes to water treatment systems, the projects have a local focus on long-term community sustainability that can be applied across the country and around the world, turning western Canadian research into tangible economic benefits.

All of Canada will be celebrating with Saskatchewan and Alberta residents as the two provinces mark 100 years in Confederation in 2005. To commemorate the important anniversaries, WD is investing \$55.2 million in capital legacy projects that will have a significant, lasting impact on quality of life. In Alberta, projects include the Royal Alberta Museum, Edmonton Art Gallery, Heritage Park, the new Healing Gardens -Alberta Children's Hospital and the Glenbow Museum 2005 Legacy Project. In Saskatchewan, communities were asked to identify priority projects that will provide a legacy for future generations. As of September 2005, \$22 million had been committed to projects in 660 municipalities, including upgrades to a sports ground at Little Pine First Nation, improvements to the Sports Hall of Fame and Museum in North Battleford and a cross-country ski and walking trail in the northern hamlet of Weyakwin.

IMPROVING INFRASTRUCTURE

Aging infrastructure threatens the sustainability of many Canadian cities, and their ability to accommodate continued growth. Since 2000, the Government of Canada has partnered with provinces and municipalities to build infrastructure that addresses community sustainability needs through the Infrastructure Canada Program (ICP). WD delivers the western portion of the ICP, a \$557 million federal investment in the West, which levers matching funds through partnerships with provincial and municipal governments.

The ICP improves municipal infrastructure by supporting projects that protect the environment and support long-term economic growth, such as water and wastewater systems, solid waste management and recycling, and improve the energy efficiency of municipal buildings and facilities.

To July 2005, WD had approved over \$550 million in funding for 1,638 projects under the Infrastructure Canada Program. In 2005, WD also began approving

Tourism generates visitor spending of about \$17 billion in the West each year, about one-third of the Canadian total. WD is proud to work with the western provinces and the Tourism Alliance for Western Canada Inc. to support this essential industry, which represents 375,000 jobs and 26,250 businesses across the West. Since 1995, WD has provided \$19 million toward pan-western tourism marketing, including \$5 million in March 2004 to respond to the crisis situation impacting tourism in the summer of 2003.

In addition to support for tourism marketing WD has provided \$50 million to more than 250 other tourism-related projects since 2000. For example, WD supported the development of the Canadian Museum for Human Rights in Winnipeg by providing \$3 million for planning and development. The museum, to be located at The Forks, will be a world-class museum dedicated to human rights issues in Canada and around the world. It will be a significant tourism generator for Winnipeg, Manitoba and Canada.

projects through the Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund (MRIF), which will invest another \$278 million in western communities over the next five years. Like ICP, the new fund responds to locally-identified infrastructure priorities and builds the foundation for sustained long-term economic growth.

In July 2005, the MRIF committed \$10 million, cost-shared between the three levels of government, to build a state-of-the-art Industrial Wastewater Treatment Facility (IWWTF) in Dauphin, Manitoba. As the first water treatment facility to meet stringent new provincial environmental standards, the IWWTF will protect and restore Manitoba's lakes and rivers from the excess nutrients in commercial and residential wastewater. The facility will also provide the infrastructure required to develop the Rancher's Choice beef processing facility, which will expand slaughter capacity to allow Manitoba cattle producers to ship processed beef to other provinces and the U.S. Removing this obstacle for the Manitoba beef industry is expected to create economic benefits province-wide.

By increasing and improving the stock of core public infrastructure, the Government of Canada's infrastructure programs are creating vibrant, healthy and productive communities across the West.

Vancouver provides international model of sustainable urbanization

Since 1950, the percentage of the world's population living in urban areas has increased from 30% to nearly 50%. By 2030, that number is expected to reach 60%. This dramatic shift in population density has created a range of serious issues that threaten the health and well-being of many urban residents.

Vancouver's historic Downtown Eastside provides one Canadian example. The once-proud inner-city community has experienced an influx of problems – such as drug addiction, prostitution, crime, lack of

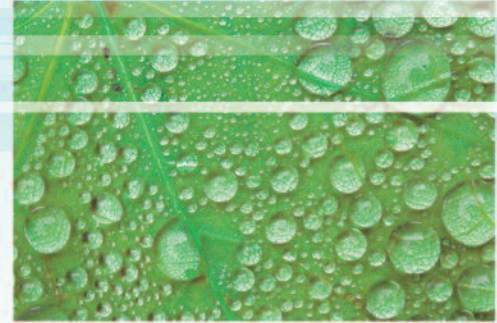
adequate housing and high unemployment – and now ranks as one of Canada's poorest neighbourhoods.

But Vancouver is working to turn adversity into opportunity through an innovative agreement that coordinates the efforts and resources of all three levels of government to avoid duplication and maximize impact. The Vancouver Agreement, signed in 2000 and renewed for a second five-year term in 2005, has undertaken a wide range of initiatives that are achieving long term, sustainable improvements in economic development, health and public safety. WD alone has funded about 50 projects worth \$9.5 million under the agreement.

The Vancouver Agreement is having a significant impact. Since 1999, violent and property crime rates have fallen by 30%, and 108 new business licenses have been issued in the community. The Agreement received international recognition when it received the top United Nations Public Service Award in the category Improving Transparency, Accountability and Responsiveness in June 2005.

Vancouver's successful model also contributed to the city's selection as host city for the United Nations World Urban Forum 2006. Held every two years, the Forum invites governments, local authorities, non-governmental organizations and other experts to discuss the challenges of urbanization and contribute to the development of models that can help address these issues in cities around the world.

WD played a key role in securing the Forum for Canada, and is chair of the Vancouver Working Group, which is preparing for the major event. World Urban Forum 2006 will put Vancouver's – and Canada's – leadership in sustainability issues into the international spotlight.



STRENGTHENING INNOVATION IN WESTERN CANADA

“Countries that demonstrate more innovation are wealthier and experience faster growth than less innovative countries.”

– The Conference Board of Canada

Western Canada has full representation in Canada’s prosperity, and its economic power is increasing. With 30% of Canada’s geographic area and about 30% of our population, the West represents 32% of the nation’s Gross Domestic Product. Recent real economic growth in the four western provinces has exceeded the Canadian average, and strengths - such as a well-educated workforce, solid infrastructure, excellent research and educational institutions, and a population that has eagerly embraced technological change - position the region well for further success.

However, to remain internationally competitive, the region must improve its innovation performance. Western Canada performs poorly compared to the rest of Canada, the northwest U.S., Australia and Finland on key innovation performance measures such as research and development as a percentage of GDP, number of degrees in science and engineering, and venture capital as a percentage of GDP.

Western Economic Diversification Canada (WD) strengthens Western Canada’s innovation performance by focusing its support on critical points in the innovation process. These investments are helping the region compete in the global knowledge-based economy, creating a stronger economic base and higher-paying jobs for western Canadians.



Every dollar invested by WD on innovation levers \$2.66 from a variety of partners, including western provincial governments, other federal departments, educational institutions, municipalities, industry and associations.

IMPROVING KNOWLEDGE INFRASTRUCTURE

WD's investments in knowledge infrastructure increase the capacity of western Canadian organizations to undertake research that leads to new technologies, products or processes, attracts new resources and skilled personnel, creates new opportunities for commercialization and develops technology clusters. Technology clusters occur when universities, companies, skilled labour, capital and governments come together to create a competitive advantage. In the West, these clusters – including fuel cells in BC, nanotechnology in Alberta, nutraceuticals in Saskatchewan and new media in Manitoba – are broadening the economic landscape, creating more highly paid jobs for Western Canadians and paving the way for breakthroughs that will improve the quality of life in Canada and around the world.

For example, WD supported the establishment of the Canadian Light Source (CLS) at the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon. The facility, which opened in October 2004, is Canada's largest research and development facility, and the only synchrotron light source in the nation. Synchrotron light, millions of times brighter than the sun, allows matter to be seen at the atomic scale, making it an essential tool in developing new technologies and applications.

One of only a handful of "third generation" synchrotrons in the world, the CLS places a unique emphasis on private-public partnerships. With a 25% industrial usage target – more than double the average – the facility will not only accelerate the discovery of new knowledge, it will play a much larger role in extracting the benefits of that knowledge through

commercialization. The CLS will make it possible to develop a tremendous range of new and better products, including faster microchips, more effective medicines, improved food products, better solar cells and new ways to clean up the environment.

An independent study estimated that CLS could attract \$35 million a year in commercial research and development spending from universities, the private sector, and abroad.

ACCELERATING TECHNOLOGY COMMERCIALIZATION

Research provides the essential foundation for a new, knowledge-based western economy, but it is only through commercialization that the economic and social benefits of innovation can be extracted. WD supports the commercialization of innovative ideas with initiatives that help organizations develop, transfer or adopt innovative technologies, including support for technology commercialization offices at universities and research institutes, and assistance to incubators.

WD's investments in technology commercialization not only lead to new industries and economic opportunities, they can also save lives. For example, the Alberta Cancer Diagnostic Consortium – which combines the research expertise of the Alberta Cancer Board and the Universities of Alberta and Calgary – is developing a new diagnostic device for cancer. The miniaturized testing tool will allow patients to walk into their doctor's office, give a few drops of blood and get a diagnosis within minutes. Armed with information about the genetic properties of the specific cancer, physicians can begin the most effective treatment right away, improving the end result for patients. The device is expected to be available to health practitioners within three to five years.

BUILDING MORE INNOVATIVE COMMUNITIES

Innovation is more than just groundbreaking new technologies like genomics and biotechnology, which tend to be centred in major urban areas. It also includes adding value to traditional industries, like forestry and agriculture, to benefit rural communities. As a result, innovation needs to be addressed at the community level to take advantage of unique local strengths that can create opportunities for economic development.

Across the West, WD works with a wide range of partners to help communities develop and implement innovation strategies. In B.C., for example, the Okanagan Regional Innovation Forum brought together business, government, and academic stakeholders to define challenges and opportunities within the region. The Forum led to the development of the Okanagan Competitiveness Strategy, which

“The assistance provided by WD has been key in encouraging additional investments in innovation; strengthening research capabilities; strengthening linkages between industry, government and the research infrastructure and increasing access to skilled workers.”

- Ference Weicker & Company

identified seven clusters of competitive strength in the sectors of tourism, life sciences, forestry products, wine, knowledge services, value-added agriculture and aviation.

In June 2004, an implementation plan was launched. Developed by industry leaders, the plan presented strategies to strengthen each cluster, as well as eight flagship initiatives – including expanding broadband internet access, a partnership with First Nations and a regional airport plan – that will affect the success of all clusters. Together, these initiatives are creating new opportunities and improving global competitiveness throughout the Okanagan region.

ADVANCING ENVIRONMENTAL TECHNOLOGIES IN THE WEST

From the industrial revolution in Britain to the digital revolution in the Silicon Valley, centres of innovation have driven regional economic development. Today, Western Canada stands on the brink of just such an opportunity – environmental technologies. With an estimated global market between \$750 billion and \$1 trillion, environmental technologies represent not only a tremendous source of new, longer-term prosperity, but also a way to reduce the impact of human activities on the global environment.

WD advances the development and adoption of environmental technologies by investing in research and development – like alternative energy in BC, wastewater management in Alberta, greenhouse gas management in Saskatchewan and green building practices in Manitoba – and by facilitating partnerships between industry leaders, research institutes, academia and governments. Since 2003, WD has been working with these partners to grow the western environmental technologies sector.

The Western Canadian Environmental Technology Forum, in December 2003, brought together more than 120 of Western Canada’s most influential environmental technology leaders. At the event, Paul Martin invited participants to recommend three concrete, actionable policy initiatives the Government of Canada could undertake to support the sector. After a lengthy consultation process, WD delivered

the industry’s response, which recommended the Government:

- support a series of demonstration projects to showcase environmental technologies and the expertise available in Western Canada, and promote their early adoption at home and abroad;
- develop regulatory regimes that promote the development and early adoption of environmental technologies and sustainability solutions across Western Canada; and
- introduce fiscal and other funding measures to promote capital investment in innovative environmental and clean technologies.

A report entitled Industry Report on the Western Canada Environmental Technology Sector, prepared by the Globe Foundation of Canada on behalf of WD, expands on these recommendations.

Industry stakeholders also encouraged the federal government to adopt green procurement policies promoting the use of environmentally sound and energy efficient products.

WD will continue to work with its partners to support initiatives that strengthen western expertise in environmental technologies. By becoming world leaders in the development and commercialization of environmental technologies, the West will help not only itself, but all Canadians and people in other nations around the world.



IMPROVING BUSINESS COMPETITIVENESS IN THE WEST

“International trade has been, and continues to be, a key source of economic growth. It stands at the centre of our long-term economic prosperity and our ability to maintain our way of life. We must, therefore, constantly seek new markets and improve our competitiveness; standing still in the global market means being left behind.”

- Canada West Foundation

As a region, the West has enjoyed strong economic performance in recent years, posting average real GDP growth of 3.4% in 2004, compared with 1.6% in the rest of Canada. Small businesses are a major contributor to that success. There are 50% more small businesses per capita in the West, and they account for 80% of all new jobs. In the 2004 CIBC Small Business Outlook Poll, more than 90% of western small business owners were optimistic about their profit outlook and chances for success over the next year, and over 83% said their company was currently profitable. Both these figures outweigh the national average.

The benefits of this success, however, do not extend to all segments of the population or to all areas. Specific groups – such as Aboriginal people and those with disabilities – remain underrepresented in the mainstream economy, and limited opportunities in many rural and remote areas hamper growth and productivity.

Western Economic Diversification Canada (WD) helps to build a more competitive and inclusive business sector throughout the West with initiatives that address the underlying barriers to full economic participation of disadvantaged communities and ensure businesses have the skills and resources required to succeed.

STRENGTHENING BUSINESS MANAGEMENT SKILLS

Entrepreneurial success requires skills in a wide range of areas, including business planning, marketing, management, administration and finance. To help strengthen these skills, WD supports the Western Canada Business Service Network, a unique partnership of several integrated organizations that offer the products and services needed to establish a business or make it grow. With more than 100 locations across the West, the Network provides a comprehensive source of information, advice and financing for western Canadian entrepreneurs.

The network's targeted services help increase the economic participation of specific segments of the population, making small business ownership achievable for more western Canadians. Last year, the network partners – Canada Business Service Centres, Community Futures Development Corporations, Women's Enterprise Initiative, and Francophone Economic Development Organizations – responded to over 473,645 requests for information, provided 138,236 advisory services and trained 43,604 clients.

Last year, WD's partners in the Western Canada Business Service Network provided more than \$52 million in loans to small businesses in the West, leveraging an additional \$71.3 million from other sources.

IMPROVING ACCESS TO FINANCING

Lack of access to capital is one of the most significant barriers for entrepreneurs seeking to start a new business or grow an existing one. Many ventures, because of their size or risk level, do not qualify for conventional sources of financing. WD helps improve access to capital for small western businesses with a series of specialized loan programs, which target specific industry sectors and segments of the population. The loan funds, offered in partnership with various financial institutions, extend patient, flexible debt capital on terms especially suited to the unique needs and cash flow requirements of smaller businesses.

"In the West, Western Economic Diversification has significantly contributed to the upgrading of the business environment through the provision of services and advice."

- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

SOCIAL ECONOMY HELPS COMMUNITIES HELP THEMSELVES

Thousands of Canadians apply their entrepreneurial skills, not for profit but to enhance social and environmental conditions in their communities. From combating homelessness to addressing poverty, cleaning up the environment to preventing crime, the "social economy" is a new approach to community development that harnesses the power of the voluntary sector and not-for-profit organizations to improve quality of life.

In 2004, the Government of Canada pledged to support this sector's growing contribution to the vitality of Canadian communities by widening the scope of programs currently available to small businesses to include social enterprises.

WD is responsible for implementing these initiatives in the West and has been actively soliciting the views of western social economy stakeholders to ensure their needs are met in national program design efforts. In 2005 and beyond, WD will work to increase the financing and programs available to social enterprises, and to encourage new models and partnerships to better serve this crucial sector.

As of June 30, 2005, 2,619 loans totalling \$199 million had been approved through WD's Loan Investment Fund Program. A 2002 evaluation estimated that \$95 million in other financing had been indirectly leveraged and 5,400 jobs created. In addition, these businesses increased revenues by \$678 million, and exports by \$135 million.

INCREASING INTERNATIONAL COMPETITIVENESS

Canada relies on trade for growth and jobs more than any other industrialized country. Exports account for almost 45% of GDP, the highest percentage among G-8 countries. Exports are growing at twice the rate of the economy as a whole, and one out of every three jobs depends on international trade. However, the lower participation of

small businesses in export markets, R & D and training means that promoting new investment into Western Canada and increasing the presence of western businesses in domestic and global markets will be key to improving the region's competitiveness.

WD is one of eight federal departments directly involved in the Enhanced Representation Initiative (ERI). The ERI is substantially enhancing the Canadian presence in the United States by expanding existing consular offices and establishing new offices, particularly in the western states. Strengthening Canada's profile south of the border will provide additional opportunities for Canadian firms to develop relationships with U.S. firms, gain access to new markets and encourage additional foreign direct investment.

For example, in October 2004, WD organized the Western Canada Technology Capabilities Study Tour. Trade commissioners and business development officers from Canadian posts in the U.S visited key innovation projects in four western cities, developing a better understanding of western technologies and how to effectively promote these technologies in the U.S.

As a direct result of the Study Tour, WD is undertaking 14 ERI projects in 2005-06. The projects are being implemented in close collaboration with the Canadian Posts in the United States and WD's federal and provincial partners. Specific priority sectors include: ocean technologies, wireless, petroleum technologies, composites, biodiagnostics, genomics/proteomics and stem cell research. The projects support research collaborations for western researchers and universities, venture financing opportunities for western companies, enhanced market opportunities for western manufacturers and focused international business development planning.

The Asia-Pacific economic explosion opens the door wide for major new trade and investment opportunities for Canada. British Columbia, with its strategic west coast location and longstanding business and cultural ties to the Asia-Pacific region is recognized as the natural gateway to launch a new era of prosperity for the West and for Canada as an Asia-Pacific nation.

Since December 2004, WD and Transport Canada have jointly played the lead coordinating role for the Government of Canada in developing the Canada Pacific Gateway Strategy with the western provinces. The strategy aims to forge strong links with the rapidly growing economies of key Asian nations and includes exploring tourism opportunities generated by the 2006

World Urban Forum and the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games. To date, all levels of government have committed over \$3.6 billion, including \$900 million from the Government of Canada for transportation infrastructure in B.C. This will help build rail, port and border capacity at key international gateways and connectors to ensure that goods move efficiently there and across Western Canada. Canada's Pacific Gateway Strategy will strengthen western economic prosperity in ways that will benefit all of Canada.

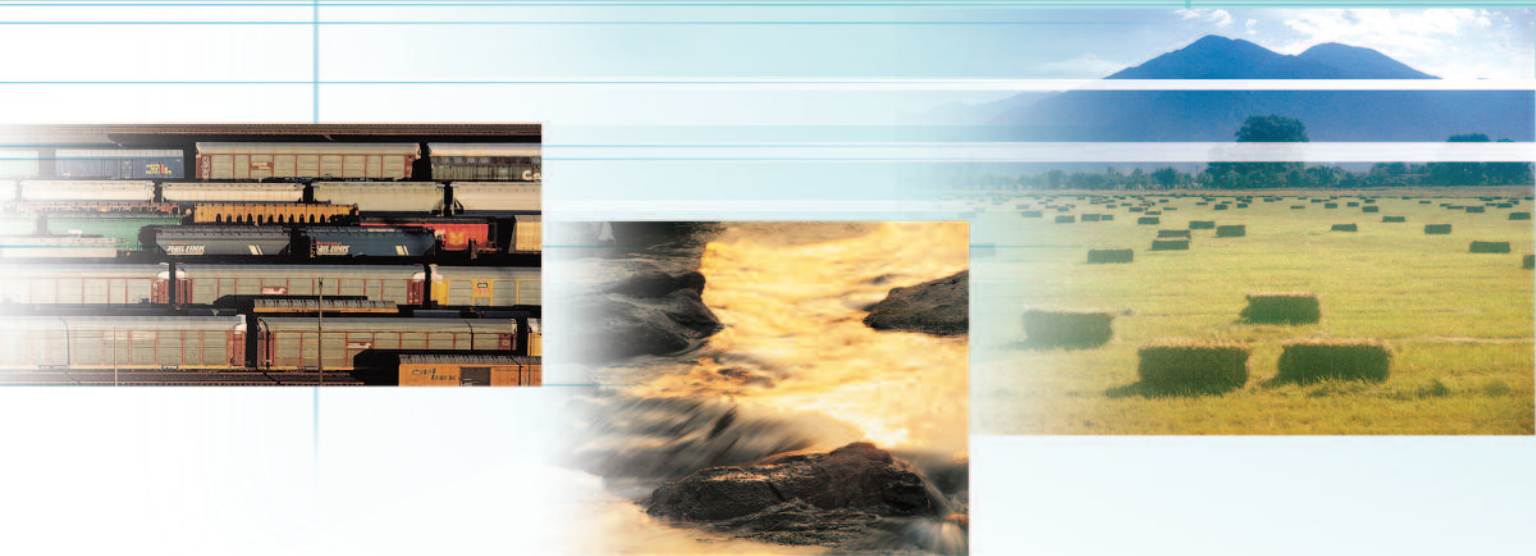
GAMES WILL "BRING HOME THE GOLD" FOR WESTERN COMPANIES

On February 12, 2010, Canada and its athletes will be in the global spotlight when the Winter Olympics Opening Ceremonies kick off 17 days of competition in 15 sports. But it isn't just athletes who will have an opportunity to compete for gold. The increased activity related to the Games is expected to create numerous opportunities for Canadian companies, beginning long before 2010 and extending long after.

The greatest long term benefits will be in construction and tourism. Vancouver's successful Olympic bid has already resulted in a 34% increase in convention activity, and the benefits will extend well beyond the Vancouver region and into other sectors as well. In the coming years, WD will play a key role in ensuring firms throughout the West have an opportunity to bid on opportunities related to the Games.

For example, the 2010 Games will incorporate the principles of sustainability into all aspects of planning and preparation. This will provide western businesses with a myriad of opportunities to develop environmentally sustainable technologies to serve the Olympic community.

From hockey pucks to shovels, garbage cans to napkins, procurement related to the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Games will provide a major catalyst for economic development. With an estimated gross economic impact of up to \$4.6 billion, the Games will generate as many as 106,000 jobs, creating opportunities in communities throughout the West.



SUPPORTING THE WESTERN ADVANTAGE

“Better national policy results from better input. The West has a strong tradition of public policy innovation, but needs the support of allies within the Government of Canada – like WD – to ensure that the Western perspective on national policy issues is heard and understood.”

- Saskatchewan Institute of Public Policy

Canada’s economic landscape is as diverse as its geography. In order to succeed, the unique challenges and opportunities that exist from coast to coast must be recognized and reflected in the national decision-making process, allowing every region to reach its potential and contribute to Canada’s strength as a nation.

Western Economic Diversification Canada (WD) ensures the West’s voice is heard on the national stage. As an advocate for western interests, WD links the region’s priorities with national resources and makes sure federal policies and programs meet the needs and aspirations of western Canadians. By coordinating programs between departments of the Government of Canada and with other economic development partners, WD maximizes the benefit received by the West.

WD brings people, ideas, communities and resources together in a collaborative effort to develop and diversify the western economy, and to achieve the West’s goals of more sustainable communities, enhanced innovation performance and strengthened business competitiveness.

“WD’s ability to bring stakeholders together, both directly and through funding research partnerships and conferences on western issues, is an essential ingredient in affecting meaningful changes in policies impacting the region.”

-Canada West Foundation

PARTNERING FOR RESULTS

Western Canada’s growing success is the result of contributions by numerous organizations – federal departments, western provincial governments, municipalities, academic and research institutions and community organizations – and countless individuals whose efforts enhance economic performance and quality of life in communities across the West. WD plays an essential role in bringing these diverse economic development stakeholders together to create pan-western perspectives and responses to emerging issues and opportunities.

Through these partnerships, WD matches national resources and strategies with regional needs and issues, leveraging those resources to derive maximize benefits for western Canadians.

In Alberta, for example, WD provided funding to help the Edmonton Economic Development Corporation develop the Greater Edmonton Competitiveness Strategy. The Strategy identified ten industry clusters that are creating a next-generation, knowledge-based economy in the region. In the Fall of 2004, one of these clusters, Microsystems and Nanotechnology, hosted a leading international conference to help drive the development of the industry. The 9th Annual Conference on the Commercialization of Micro and Nano Systems, sponsored by WD, generated a \$1.2 million economic impact and four new business connections that resulted in \$1 million in new projects.

Since 1997, through its Canada Foundation for Innovation Support Program (CFI), WD has helped Western Canadian academic institutions receive \$232.9 million in funding. The 72 awards to western institutions represent 27.6% of all CFI awards and 50.2% of CFI awards for national projects.

CHAMPIONING WESTERN INTERESTS

Western Canada is a distinct region, with its own unique issues and priorities. WD plays an important role in ensuring western Canadian needs are taken into account in national policy decisions, influencing the decisions that impact western Canadian economic performance and quality of life.

Promoting the interests of Western Canada and western Canadians improves understanding and awareness of regional issues and opportunities, leads to action that helps achieve a more effective approach to western Canadian priorities and results in a greater share of federal program activity and procurement in Western Canada.

Examples include WD’s work in assisting the establishment of the National Institute for Nanotechnology at the University of Alberta and the Canadian Light Source at the University of Saskatchewan; engaging western Canadian stakeholders on the development and implementation of national priorities such as the New Deal for Cities and Communities and environmental technologies; and ensuring Western Canada’s interests are promoted abroad through Government of Canada trade and investment activities such as the U.S. Enhanced Representation Initiative.

UNDERSTANDING THE WEST

An understanding of the unique western reality is essential for the success of any venture in Western Canada. This is true for businesses, as well as for governments that create and implement policies and programs designed to impact the West’s economic, social and environmental landscape.



A prototype lab-on-a-chip device developed by the Alberta Cancer Diagnostic Consortium combines a number of complex laboratory procedures allowing for faster and less expensive testing to be performed at the point of care. The first cancer-screening test being developed for the handheld tool aims to improve treatment for a rare form of childhood cancer.

Each year, WD supports a number of research projects and initiatives that lead to a better understanding of western trends, issues and opportunities. Recent examples include:

Western Canada's Cost Advantage: The Best Place to do Business! was developed by WD with International Trade Canada, Canadian Posts in the United States and the western provinces. Based on the 2004 KPMG *Competitive Alternatives* international business cost study, the brochure compares six Western Canadian cities with cities in the western U.S., demonstrating that Western Canada is a low-cost leader. *January 2005.*

Western Canada's Small Business Markets: A Survey of Selling was compiled by the University of Alberta's Western Centre for Economic Research. The report presents new findings on export markets served by western Canadian small businesses in the technology, manufacturing and business services sectors. *December 2004.*

From Mind to Market: Case Studies of Successful Environmental Technology Companies in Western Canada was produced by WD in response to a request by participants in the December 2003 Environmental Technology Forum. The study profiles four western environmental technology companies that have taken a concept through commercialization to realize sustained revenue. *November 2004.*

Biodiesel in British Columbia is a feasibility study produced by Eco-Literacy Canada and WISE Energy Co-op. The report provides an in-depth analysis of the activities needed to establish commercial biodiesel entities in B.C., including an examination of standards and regulatory issues; technology availability; cost and

In 2004, WD established a three-year agreement to support the National Research Council's highly successful Industrial Research Assistance Program (IRAP) in the West. Through the agreement, WD is providing \$9 million to help small western firms develop new products, processes and services by working one-on-one with highly-skilled engineers and scientists. These investments are helping firms develop new products and services and market them domestically and globally. IRAP is putting the tools for success into the hands of Western Canada's entrepreneurs, building global competitiveness one community and one business at a time.

processing analysis; potential markets and distribution channels; and environmental impact comparisons. *May 2004.*

A Primer on Western Canadian Entrepreneurship is a study conducted by the Western Centre for Economic Research. The *Primer* looks at various models describing the process of creating a new venture, considers the lessons provided by successful firms, and identifies some of the support structures available to start-ups in Western Canada. *April 2004.*

WORKING IN YOUR COMMUNITY

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#2 - 345 3rd Avenue South
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Toll Free: 1-800-667-4374

Canada-Manitoba Business Service Centre
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Phone: (204) 984-2272
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The Aboriginal Business Service Network
www.cbcs.org/absn/

In Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba, contact your local Canada Business Service Centre for referral to the nearest Aboriginal resource office, or explore the link above.

All British Columbia enquiries can be directed to ABSN:

355 Burrard Street, Suite 880
Vancouver, BC V6C 2G8
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www.firstbusiness.ca

COMMUNITY FUTURES DEVELOPMENT CORPORATIONS

www.communityfutures.ca

Community Futures Development Association of B.C.
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Toll Free: 1-800-203-2343
www.wecm.ca

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<http://www.sdecb.com>

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www.lacea.ab.ca

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