



COMMUNITY FUTURES ESSEX COUNTY

The UNconventional Lender

DÉVELOPPEMENT DES COLLECTIVITÉS COMTÉ D'ESSEX

Le créancier distinct

SNAPSHOT 2024-25

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Amy Kendall, Chair

Nelson Silveira, Vice Chair

Zach Dorland, Treasurer

Wolfgang Weber, Secretary

Tracy Pringle, Director

Karolyn Hart, Director

Ian Chalmers, Director

Dr. Ali Houmed, Director



Our Team (left to right):

Lindsay Larocque, Bilingual Administrative Coordinator

Lee McGrath, Business Lending Advisor

Charlene Houle, Business Development Advisor

Diane Malenfant, General Manager

A Community Futures Development Corporation

Community Futures Development Corporations (CFDCs) are federally funded organizations across Canada who support community economic development by assisting rural communities strengthen and diversify their economies. The Community Futures Program has been serving rural communities for 40 years. Rural has a variety of definitions but for the Community Futures organization its communities with a population under 100,000. In Essex County we have 7 rural municipalities, all of which contribute significantly to the success of the Windsor-Essex region.

Essex Community Futures Development Corporation, operating as Community Futures Essex County, is a not-for-profit corporation incorporated in 1995. We are one of 60 Community Futures Development Corporations (CFDCs) across Ontario. We are dedicated to providing business financing and counseling to entrepreneurs in rural Essex County and are supported by a nine-member volunteer Board of Directors as well as numerous community partners. Our service area includes the rural communities of: Amherstburg, Essex, Kingsville, Leamington, Lakeshore, LaSalle, Pelee Island and Tecumseh (excluding Windsor).

Services are available in both official languages and are provided by our Team of friendly professionals.

The UNconventional Lender

Our Services Include:

- Access to capital for small and medium sized businesses and social enterprises
- Business Services
- Strategic community planning and socio-economic development
- Support for community-based projects

We strive to be Compassionate, Client Oriented, Collaborative, and Committed.

Year in Review

Fiscal Year 2024/25 was a strong and productive year for Community Futures Essex County (CFEC). We exceeded our targets, allowing us to invest more dollars directly into the communities we serve. This growth can be attributed in part to increased awareness of our programs. In 2024/25, we launched an outreach plan that significantly enhanced recognition of the CFEC brand throughout the region. Our ongoing partnership with the Small Business and Entrepreneurship Centre (SBEC)—particularly through the Booster Loan program—resulted in a notable increase in both referrals and loan activity. Additionally, the 62 businesses we supported through RRRF loans during the pandemic helped expand awareness of our services, leading to both repeat and new business.

While some businesses continued to navigate the lingering effects of the pandemic, others began to thrive. However, rising input costs and the imposition of tariffs with our largest trading partner introduced new challenges this year. CFEC participated in a regional task force established to monitor these evolving trade conditions, which continue to impact our local economy. We remain committed to staying informed and working closely with our clients to ensure they receive the support they need.

Throughout the year, we met with community partners and the municipalities we serve to gather insights into their strategic direction and priorities. These conversations informed the development of our 2025–2030 Strategic Plan.

CFEC operates with a dedicated team of professionals under the leadership of a volunteer Board of Directors. In May of 2024 we experienced the sudden and heartbreaking loss of one of our valued team members, Bruce Campbell. Bruce's absence has been deeply felt by our staff, Board, and the many clients he supported during his five years with CFEC. His contributions and dedication will be long remembered.

Our organization is a member of Community Futures Western Ontario (CFWO) <https://cfwesternontario.ca/>. This is an association of 21 CFDC's in Western Ontario. This association administers the SOFII (Southern Ontario Fund for Investment in Innovation) program www.SOFII.ca

We are also a member of Community Futures Ontario (CFO) <https://www.cfontario.ca/>. CFO represents 60 Community Futures Development Corporations - 36 in southern Ontario and 24 in the north.

Funded by:
Federal Economic Development
Agency for Southern Ontario

Financé par :
Agence fédérale de développement
économique pour le Sud de l'Ontario

Canada 

Celebrating Success:

Business Services: CFDCs understand small businesses and the local market and they provide important services to businesses, entrepreneurs and social enterprises including:

- Business advice, counselling, information and referrals
- Guidance with business plans
- Entrepreneurial training
- Information on relevant federal, provincial and local programs and services

Business Services Impact

In-depth Interviews	101
Businesses Assisted	56

Access to Capital: CFDCs also administer local investment funds to help finance new or existing small businesses for start-up, expansion or stabilization plans that help maintain or create jobs. All CFDC financing decisions are made at the community level by the organization's Board of Directors. Our Board of Directors consists of nine individuals who work and/or live in Essex County and are invested in the future of our communities.

We offer:

- Loans up to \$150,000 (up to \$300,000 in exceptional circumstances)
- Customized financing options – Flexible repayment terms
- No penalty fees for partial or full repayment at any time
- Interest rates based on traditional bank prime lending rates plus 2% to 5%
- Financing partnerships when traditional financing is insufficient
- More flexible terms than traditional financial institutions

Access to Capital Impact

Financial Highlights Investment Fund	2024/25	Since Inception
Total Funds/ Loans Disbursed	\$1,184,330	\$15,539,067
Number of Business Loans	15	247
Funds Leveraged (Equity & 3rd Party)	\$4,168,000	\$32,029,312
Jobs Created/Maintained	166	2,551

TOTAL LOAN PORTFOLIO at March 31, 2025

LOAN PORTFOLIO	# OF LOANS	\$ VALUE OF LOANS
CFP Traditional Loans	42	\$3,907,864
RRRF Loans	9	\$393,266