



2021-2022

Annual Report





PACE

PATRICIA AREA COMMUNITY ENDEAVOURS

VALUES

PACE believes in:

- Conducting business with integrity in an open-minded approachable environment.
- Being innovative and receptive to changes.
- Acting in the best interest of organizations, small businesses, and communities.
- Making decisions based on regional community organizations and business issues and needs.

MISSION STATEMENT

PACE works with businesses and communities to improve economic growth by providing expertise and creating solutions.

VISION STATEMENT

Brighter Futures for Business and Community



Patricia Area Community Endeavours
A Community Futures Development Corporation



2021-2022 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Michelle Price, Chair

Representing the City of Dryden
A Member of the Board since 2019

Don Yurkiw, Vice Chair

Member at Large
A Member of the Board since 2016

Roger Gould, Secretary

Member at Large
A Member of the Board since 2019

John Bath, Treasurer

Representing the Municipality of Sioux Lookout
A Member of the Board since 2011

Debbie Hart, Director

Representing the Municipality of Ignace
A Member of the Board since 2019

Dennis Peterson, Director

Representing the Municipality of Machin
A Member of the Board since 2021

COMPANY PROFILE

Patricia Area Community Endeavours Inc. (PACE) is a Community Futures Development Corporation committed to helping communities develop and implement local solutions to local problems by providing financial support to organizations that, in collaboration with others, support small and medium-sized enterprises and Social Enterprises and to undertake appropriate community economic development initiatives.

We can foster economic stability, growth, and job creation; create diversified and competitive local rural economies; and build economically sustainable communities through offering the following services:

- *Business advice, counselling, support, and information*
- *Access to capital for small and medium-sized enterprises and social enterprises*
- *Strategic community planning and development*
- *Community economic development*

Our services are made possible through a contribution from the Government of Canada through Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario /Government of Canada.

2021-2022 STAFF

Shannon Wogenstahl

Noreen Cox

Sandra Ostman

Kristi Darrah

Executive Director

Business Development Coordinator

Program Coordinator

Administrative Assistant

REPORT FROM THE CHAIR

This past fiscal year ending September 30, 2022, represents the second year of the five (5) year contract of our funding support from Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario (Fednor).

As we reflect over the past year, businesses in the area remained in recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic and started to resemble a sense of normalcy. With the ongoing vaccine mandates required at the border, the tourism industry continued to struggle with many US residents not returning for the 2022 season. The hope is that the 2023 season will make a comeback now that the mandates have ended.

The federal government extended the deadline for repayment on the Regional Relief and Recovery Fund (RRRF) and the Canadian Emergency Business Account (CEBA) loans to December 31, 2023, giving businesses an additional year to repay and recuperate from the lockdowns and health guideline restrictions. While some businesses were fortunate enough to pay these funds back, many continue to struggle with the added debt, which may lead to some of these loans being amortized on monthly repayment schedules. The good news is that PACE also provided lending from the Investment Fund to a few new businesses within the catchment area which shows growth and promise that new businesses continue to develop and expand.

PACE continues to work diligently to support our communities and businesses. The Mentorship, Incubator and Remote Access to Technology project has been very successful when it fully launched in 2022. We have a full compliment of incubator tenants residing in the PACE building operating their businesses both full and part time. We have also established a collection of mentees and mentors for the mentorship program which continues to grow and develop.

I would like to recognize Brent Lundy from Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario (Fednor) who was promoted from our local Initiatives Officer to Regional Manager. We thank him for his support over the past few years and look forward to our ongoing relationship with his replacement Heather McKeown.

I would also like to acknowledge all our Partners within the region we work with and continue to support. The Municipal Communities, First Nation Communities, Business Communities, and the volunteer organizations within our region. PACE continues to encourage these relationships in making our region a stronger and more vibrant place to live and do business.

Thank you to the Board of Directors and the Staff for their hard work and dedication to the organization. The future is bright, and we are optimistic about what is on the horizon as PACE continues to support our communities and businesses within the catchment area.

Respectfully,

Michelle Price, Board Chair

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

As I reflect on the past year, I am grateful for the support I have received from fellow staff and the board of directors of PACE. I continue to learn, adapt, and look for opportunities in which the organization can assist our businesses and communities as they continue to recover from these last few very challenging years.

With some restrictions still in place at the beginning of the fiscal year PACE looked for creative ways to deliver our core programming. We promoted online seminars available to the business community which increased participation due to the convenience of virtual delivery.

Early in the year, meetings were held with various partners in the region. PARO Center for Women's Enterprise, the Economic Development Officers from our communities, Northwest Employment Works, Ministry of Northern Development along with Mayors in the catchment area. This allowed me to introduce myself and discuss opportunities related to the business needs in the various communities. Attending the quarterly Community Futures Development Corporation network meetings also provided the opportunity to collaborate with fellow Executive Directors in the Northwest region and understand how our role benefits the businesses in our catchments.

Fednor supported the development of our Mentorship pilot under the Northern Ontario Development Program with PACE for a three-year term. Mentorship, Incubation and Remote Access to Technology (MIRA) launched in 2020 but was in full swing early this fiscal year. With changes in the program coordinator position, delivery of each component experienced temporary delays. The Remote Access to Technology budget was fully utilized by April 2022 allowing several small businesses the means to improve technology during the pandemic. The incubation element started in April 2022 which welcomed four small businesses into the PACE office building. It has been a great benefit to these businesses and the fulfillment for this component exceeded the mandate in the program. The mentorship portion of the program continues to develop and grow the number of mentors available for anyone needing business advice and guidance. The program coordinator continues to recruit mentors into the program to share their knowledge and experience to anyone starting out in business.

Our investment fund saw both large and small investments in the catchment area this year with significant loans disbursed in various communities. PACE was pleased to be part of these start ups and expansions that contributed to helping with food insecurity, health benefits and small business entrepreneurship. PACE and the board are eager to assist more businesses in the area increasing economic development and new business opportunities.

My sincere thanks to Michelle Price, the PACE board chair for regular check ins before board meetings while I transitioned into my new role. Your support and encouragement are always appreciated. The office staff who continue to work together to roll out programs, webinars and provide valuable advice to business clients, remain focused on delivering the best service we can offer.

As the organization moves into the new year, I am excited to see the continued progress through the strategic plan, reflect on and acknowledge what has been accomplished, and anticipate the remaining goals to achieve that support businesses and promote community economic development in our area.

Sincerely,

Shannon Wogenstahl



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

While there is no funding available for Community Economic Development through Fednor, PACE offers in kind supports to assist community organizations and projects within the catchment. Partnering on events, sharing advertising, and promoting business related endeavours helps increase community economic development. This past year PACE did provide direct funding to one community project. The Dryden Saddle Club benefited from a small contribution within the PACE operating budget towards the purchase of a trailer that allowed them to securely store their equipment as their existing facility was no longer safe or secure. The surrounding communities support this club making this a regional contribution including Sioux Lookout, Red Lake, Ignace, and Machin.

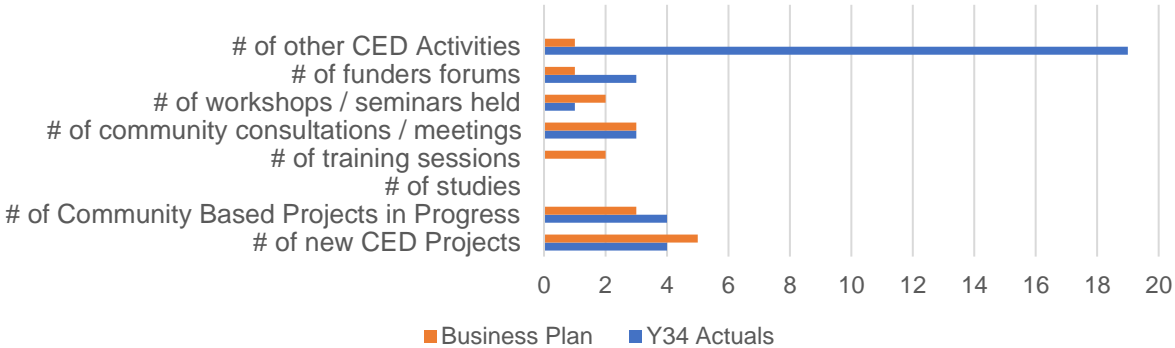
PACE partnered with Northwest Training and Adjustment Board (NTAB), the Dryden District Chamber of Commerce and Northwest Employment Works to host a job fair in April. This event was held to assist with the labour shortage issues businesses in the local communities have experienced since the pandemic. Over 35 businesses were in attendance from around our region, and individuals looking for work took part bringing along resumes to apply for positions on the spot. The feedback from the employers was all positive, some having successfully interviewed and hired individuals that day. The job fair is poised to become an annual event with not a lot of change in the labour shortages seen through the end of the fiscal year.

PACE continues to partner with other organizations in the region such as PARO Center for Women’s Enterprise, Contact North, Sioux Hudson Employment Agency and Ignace Crossroads Employment Services. The collaboration of fellow CFDCs to deliver financial literacy information sessions, marketing, social media, and bookkeeping webinars, also assisted in Community Economic Development. The virtual element to deliver these business topics increased the participation drawing from all over the region.

The Executive Director attends the Sioux Lookout Chamber of Commerce meetings, the Ignace Area Working Group for Nuclear Waste Management and participated in the Kenora District Services Board Housing strategy. Northwestern Ontario Innovation Center held a regional competition called Pitch It! PACE staff participated in the planning, promoting and outreach of the contest.

PACE annually participates with the Kenora District Camp Owner Association, volunteers at the Dryden Food Bank weekly and is a member of their Board of Directors. Funders Forums continue to be a vital component to promote the programs PACE offers which are held in different communities in the catchment area. The Regional Economic Development Officer (REDO) meetings are also hosted by PACE on a quarterly basis.

Community Economic Development



INVESTMENT FUND

PACE provides the tools required to encourage job creation and small business ownership through Small Business Loans, micro loans, loan guarantees and equity investments.

With the COVID-19 pandemic behind us, businesses have finally opened fully and have been in recovery from the past two years. While it is encouraging to see increased traffic supporting small businesses in person, we cannot help but notice how the pandemic affected operations. Staffing shortages, working from home, shorter business hours and supply chain issues have all contributed to how businesses operate post COVID.

The direct investments that PACE makes in businesses help to support many economic

chains. These investments help to create and maintain jobs, boost the economy, and allow a potential business to start up or an existing business the ability to expand.

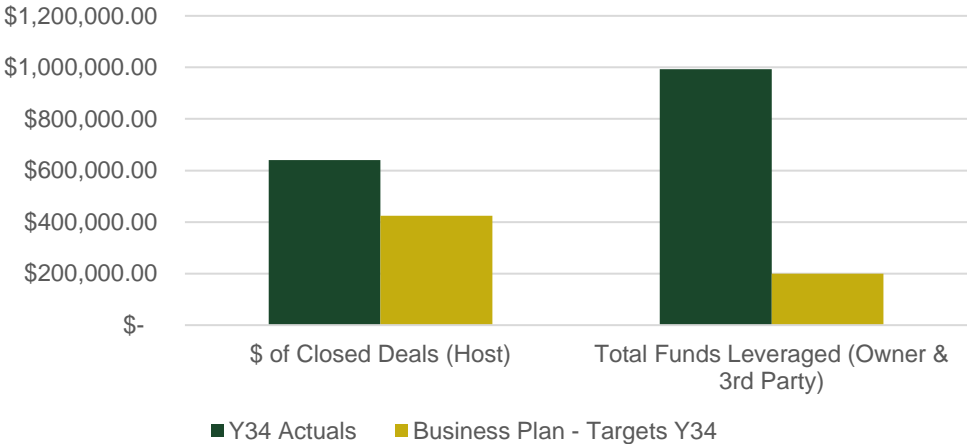
New investments help to stimulate growth, however prior investments can continue to provide a positive benefit to the community. Once investment funds are repaid, a business can continue to grow adding employees, moving to a larger space, or expanding to an online platform. The repayment of existing loans continually increases the investment fund allowing more businesses the opportunity to apply for funding.

The fiscal year started off slow with no investments in the first quarter. However, the second quarter saw a sizeable

investment in one community which included a large sum of leveraged funds pushing that goal above the business plan target. Throughout the remaining fiscal year, 4 more investments were made in 3 different communities within the catchment. These 5 closed loan deals created or maintained 14 full and part time jobs with the potential to create additional jobs in the coming years.

As the area's economy continues to recover, PACE is positioned to assist businesses through counselling, mentoring and various program support from our partners. The Investment Fund continues to be available for expansions and startups for new and existing businesses.

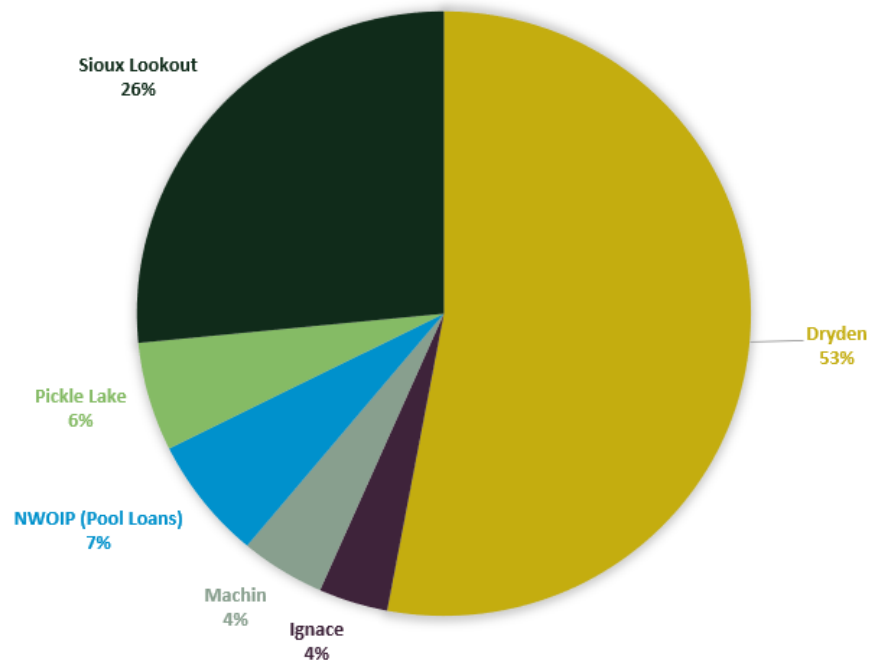
Investment Fund



AMOUNT INVESTED BY COMMUNITY

Community	Amount Invested
Dryden	\$941,171.38
Ignace	\$64,842.98
Machin	\$79,252.97
Sioux Lookout	\$ 471,732.11
Pickle Lake	\$ 103,324.74
NWOIP (pool loans)	\$ 116,666.67
Total	\$ 1,776,990.65

AMOUNT INVESTED



REGIONAL RELIEF AND RECOVERY FUND RRRF

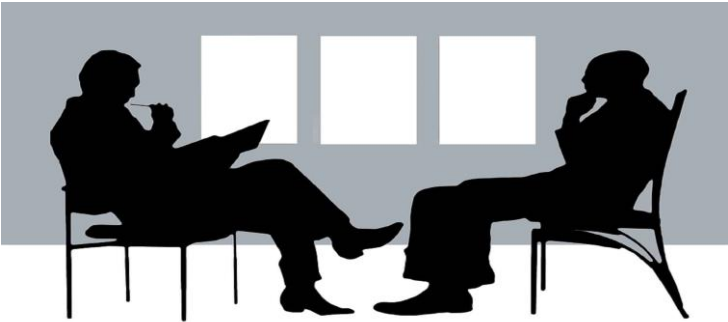
The Regional Relief and Recovery Fund introduced in 2020 for businesses during the pandemic saw PACE assist 33 businesses in the catchment area. Since then, the government extended the repayment terms allowing these businesses an additional year of no principal or interest payments due to the ongoing lockdowns. December 31, 2023 is the deadline for repayment of the principal amount to receive the forgivable portion of these loans. This fiscal year PACE had one business repay half of the principal amount, and three businesses completely repay the RRRF loan. If funds are not repaid by the end of December 2023, these loans will be amortized until the end of 2025 with monthly principal and interest payments.

BUSINESS COUNSELLING

Through business counselling, PACE offers advice on different business topics, including business planning, budgeting, government remittances, and any other inquiries related to starting up, maintaining, expanding, or purchasing a business. We offer this service through one-on-one meetings, email, by phone or virtual meets. With the COVID-19 pandemic overlapping into early 2022, there continued to be an increase in the number of in-depth counselling once again. With the lockdowns beginning to ease, and restrictions lessening, more businesses were poised to begin recovery on loan relief repayments, where PACE was able to assist with inquiries, and help navigate them through these processes. Although there were not as many jobs created, a

greater number were maintained through business counselling, which shows the resiliency of small businesses in the area and the extra work they have had to tack on to an already challenging lifestyle. It has, however, been more encouraging towards the end of the fiscal year seeing local businesses begin to bounce back from two years of lockdowns. PACE has seen several potential clients considering opening a business and has had new clients this year take the plunge and successfully open. While the pandemic is now over, businesses will continue to struggle with the new normal tackling employee shortages, more online presence and adjusting to changing supply chain issues. There is hope for the area with new important

projects emerging stimulating economic development, creating jobs, and encouraging residents to shop locally more than ever before. The highly affected tourism industry was also able to operate to a better degree with some border restrictions being lifted in 2022. Now that the remaining mandates have been dropped, the 2023 season should see back to normal revenues and increased cross border traffic once again. PACE will continue to foster relationships with the business community and increase our presence in the catchment area through funder forums, attending seminars, and visiting the businesses supported by the investment fund.



WEBINARS

As part of our business counselling segment of the Strategic Plan PACE developed and launched a new business workshop series hosting webinars for the small business sector and helped provide the training and skill development for our participants of the Incubator program. The Program Coordinator took into consideration specific topics the incubator participants were interested in for their business needs and topics that would reach a wider audience.

To date the Insurance Information for your Business, Social Media Marketing and Bookkeeping webinars were launched. To create an even bigger profile and capture a greater audience we partnered with Chukuni CFDC in Red Lake. All available marketing strategies were used to promote these webinars and PACE recently created its own YouTube Channel where our webinars can be viewed and stored. The registration rate has been encouraging and the

response and feedback to these webinars has been positive. The intention is to continue hosting business related topics in these webinars to help support the small business community going into 2023.



MIRA ~ MENTORSHIP

In the spring of 2022 Sandra Ostman accepted the position of Program Coordinator for the Mentorship, Incubation and Remote Access program for PACE. The business Mentorship program directly supports entrepreneurs and small business owners by sharing their knowledge and experience, providing support, and assisting participants as they network and build their business.

PACE launched the Mentorship program in December of 2021, which runs alongside the Incubator program. PACE took the opportunity to present the

Mentorship program to the Incubator participants and everyone entered the program with specific strengths and knowledge of being a small business owner. This dynamic created a natural mentorship and pairing of participants helping to resolve certain hurdles that the business owners were struggling with. After settling into their new workspaces, they were able to establish a natural mentoring sequence where the participants helped each other with specific issues, ideas or simply advice from experience on a certain area. The results have been successful for each of these

business owners, and they have benefited from having this network within the incubator program.

With 5 mentor and mentee pairs so far, the outcome of this program has been successful. PACE continues accepting applicants for the Mentorship program and has dedicated a newly designed webpage to execute the recruitment effort through our social media outlet, newsletter, and radio. The Mentorship program is due to wrap up in November of 2023.

INCUBATOR

PACE re-launched the Small Business Incubator program in the second quarter of the fiscal year, filling the spare offices in the building on Keith Avenue. The commitment to support Entrepreneurs in the area successfully brought four small business owners to the PACE facility and into the Incubator program between March and May

2022. The program aims to provide affordable workspace alongside an opportunity for on-site skill development, business training, and access to the full complement of business counselling services.

The participants are now six months into the Incubator Program and are well established in their businesses. They have established themselves as members of the Dryden community, which has helped to validate their company and given them a professional space to work from. PACE has provided critical administrative support and mentorship to all the incubator participants. The Program Coordinator has been proactive in providing exposure of the participant's business profiles and has set a standard



for their individual signage on the front of the building. PACE provided simple marketing strategies on social media and the quarterly newsletters to boost the program and introduce each business.

The program's success can be measured when engaged in conversation with any of the four incubator participants. Each business owner has indicated that they have met and surpassed their goals, and that being in this location has exposed them to new clients, meeting opportunities, and general ease of business start up. The mentorship aspect has given them the knowledge to investigate access to new funding, the possibility of hiring an intern, applying for, and obtaining grants from funding partners for things such as new computer equipment and website designs. The participants are all pleased with the program and all that it has offered. It is easy to see that this opportunity to start and grow their business without all the added expenses and high rent costs, has set them up for success. At the end of the 12 months, these businesses will decide if they will continue operating in the PACE building.

REMOTE ACCESS

The MIRA Program was FedNor's Regional Economic Growth project through the Innovation component and was launched in December of 2020. PACE rolled out a Remote Access program during the COVID pandemic, which gave businesses access to funding to adapt new technology to their businesses. During this time, shopping and ordering of products, goods and

services changed because of the pandemic and businesses were working remotely to stay viable. PACE subsidized the costs for remote communication services and assisted businesses requiring other available technology to operate their businesses in new, innovative ways. PACE was successful in rolling out all the funding granted for this piece of the

program and the program closed in April of 2022.

For Y34 PACE supported 14 businesses.

\$12,294.00 was dispersed.

Breakdown in catchment area

Dryden – 10

Machin -2

WLON -1

Sioux Lookout – 1

STRATEGIC PLAN

The Board of Directors approved a new two-year Strategic Plan in November 2022. Some of the highlighted areas included

- Support clients and non-clients to aid them in post-pandemic recovery by hosting funders forums in the communities on an annual basis to connect the businesses with the financial sector.
- Supporting initiatives seeking to assist tourism recovery
- Through the Community Economic Development section PACE identified that businesses within the communities struggle to have a full staff complement
- Our stakeholders have a clear understanding of the role that we play in Community Development with the region.
- Businesses within our catchment are confident and successful when completing grant applications
- Pace has an active and robust Board that represents the needs of our stakeholders
- The Board engages in long-term planning



OUTLOOK 2022-2023

The next fiscal PACE moves into the third of the five-year agreement with Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario (FedNor). Moving forward, we will review the progress within the strategic plan and ensure ongoing goals are achieved.

We remain optimistic that we will see the businesses in our region continue to recover. Labor shortages, supply chain interruptions and high inflation rates will create ongoing challenges for businesses. As the cost-of-living increases, employees need more money to keep a roof over their heads and put food on the table. The businesses could be challenged to adjust wage rates to reflect this, and as such may continue to be understaffed or may have to adjust the pricing for goods and services.

PACE will continue to deliver seminars throughout the area on a wide variety of topics including Human Resources, Succession Planning, and funding opportunities for non-for-profit organizations. As the pandemic affected businesses in many ways we will work with the stakeholders and partners to gain more insight into the struggles and look for opportunities to provide support.

We will continue to work with the Northwest Business Centre to promote entrepreneurship, planning and training throughout the region.

As we welcome four new directors to the PACE board, a diverse and community represented group will strengthen the talent pool sitting around the table. With a member from each community we serve, PACE will have a pulse on the challenges and opportunities in the region.

The PACE Board and staff are looking forward to the busy year ahead!





Patricia Area Community Endeavors

Get In Touch

- 66 Keith Ave., Unit 2,
Dryden, Ontario
- 807-221-3293
- reception@pace-cf.on.ca

On Social



