



STAFF REPORT

Title: Alberta Advantage Immigration Program - Community Designation for the Rural Renewal Stream

Meeting Date: June 21, 2022

Executive Summary:

Administration is reaching out to Provincial staff, an immigration firm working for local businesses and neighbouring communities to gain a clearer picture of what immigration programs can be instituted in the City of Cold Lake, whether municipal resources would be required to support any of these programs, and the application process for designation under the programs.

Administration is requesting that the committee refer this item to the next Corporate Priorities Committee meeting, which is scheduled for August 16, 2022, for further discussion.

Background:

At Council's regular meeting held May 24, 2022, Council motioned (*Resolution No. CRM20220524.1015*) to refer this item to the June 21, 2022 Corporate Priorities Committee meeting for further discussion.

It has been suggested by members of the business community that the City of Cold Lake consider applying for designation under the Rural Renewal Stream of the Province's Alberta Advantage Immigration Program (formerly the Alberta Immigrant Nominee Program).

The Rural Renewal Stream is a pilot project that, to date, no community has been designated under, although administration understands that the Town of Bonnyville is working towards designation under this stream. In order to achieve designation, the Province states that a community must: Have a population under 100,000; have at least one (1) employer in the community with full-time, non-seasonal work available; the community must have the capacity to assist the individual with their settlement.

Once designation is achieved, a candidate's application must be accompanied by a formal endorsement of the community's elected officials, their application must be signed and submitted by an economic development organization whose primary function is economic development, and they must be formally endorsed by a "settlement providing" organization.



The Alberta Advantage Immigration Program has three (3) streams available through which workers can access the program. There are additional streams for entrepreneurs and farmers.

The three (3) streams for workers are:

1. Alberta Opportunity Stream: This allows temporary foreign workers currently in Canada to working full time to take a full-time job offer from an employer in Alberta. The offer must be for an eligible position and must be supported by a Labour Market Impact Assessment (LMIA).
2. Alberta Express Entry Stream: This allows Alberta to nominate a limited number of qualified candidates from the Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada's Express Entry System. It is geared towards candidates with special skills that support the government's economic objectives, individuals with strong ties to Alberta, and international graduates from Canadian post-secondary institutions.
3. Rural Renewal Stream: This stream allows rural communities to achieve a designation that then allows a community to recruit and retain foreign nationals to live, work and settle in their community.

No direct funding comes from the government for this program, but grants were available to assist communities in building the capacity required for the program's implementation. The deadlines for these grants passed in 2021.

It is highly recommended that Council familiarize itself with the program which can be found at the following link:

<https://www.alberta.ca/alberta-advantage-immigration-program.aspx>

Alternatives:

- The committee may pass a motion directing administration to seek designation under the Rural Renewal Stream of the Province's Alberta Advantage Immigration Program.
- The committee may decline to seek designation under the Rural Renewal Stream of the Province's Alberta Advantage Immigration Program at this time.
- The committee may pass a motion deferring the item for discussion at the September 20, 2022 Corporate Priorities Committee meeting.



Recommended Action:

Administration recommends that the Corporate Priorities Committee pass a motion deferring the item for discussion to the September 20, 2022 Corporate Priorities Committee meeting.

Budget Implications (Yes or No):

No

Submitted by:

Kevin Nagoya, Chief Administrative Officer