



Merritt Information Item

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To: Sean Smith, Chief Administrative Officer

From: Will George, Economic Development, Communication, & Tourism Manager

Date: January 19, 2021

Subject: City of Merritt BC PNP Committee 2020 Fourth Quarterly Report

This is provided as information, and no resolution is required. Council may make a motion to direct staff to take particular action if they wish.

In January 2019, the Province launched the two-year BC Provincial Nominee Program Entrepreneur Immigration Regional Pilot (BC PNP) to attract foreign entrepreneurs to establish new businesses in BC.

At the April 9th, 2019 Regular Council Meeting, Council approved the creation of a City of Merritt B.C. PNP Entrepreneur Immigration Pilot Committee. The purpose of the BC PNP Committee is to review and make referrals to the Province regarding the applications of entrepreneurs seeking to immigrate to Canada and establish businesses in Merritt as part of the BC PNP Entrepreneur Immigration Pilot. This committee consists of: one member of Council, one member from Nicola Valley Community Futures, and one member from the Merritt and District Chamber of Commerce.

The BC PNP Committee Terms of Reference states “The Committee shall report the following information to Council, once quarterly:

- The number of applications received.
- The number of applications for which referrals were provided.
- A summary of the businesses proposed by applicants for which referrals were provided.”

As of December 31st, 2020, the City of Merritt has received 298 inquiries from foreign entrepreneurs/immigration consulting companies looking to open a business in Merritt since the program opened on March 14th, 2019. Since last quarter, the City of Merritt has received 14 business inquiries through this program. As of December 31st, 2020, the City of Merritt has hosted 20 exploratory community visits with foreign business entrepreneurs through the BC PNP program. There are currently 18 foreign entrepreneurs who have submitted the required documents and have their exploratory trips to Merritt planned once COVID-19 allows for international travel.

To-date the City of Merritt, via the BC PNP Committee, has provided 14 letters of referral to foreign entrepreneurs as outlined below:

- Miscellaneous Retail (7)
- Truck Transportation (7)
- Warehousing and Storage – (0)

At the November 24th Regular Council Meeting, Council passed the motion “*THAT the Committee recommend to Council that Community Futures Nicola Valley be named the lead contact for the BC PNP program, effective immediately.*” City staff have talked with the BC PNP Entrepreneur Immigration Regional Pilot staff in December and January, who are currently reviewing this request and changes to the overall program for 2021 forward.

Attachments:

- BC PNP Application Flowchart

Respectfully submitted,

Will George
Economic Development, Communication and Tourism Manager