

# Report

**City of Merritt**  
**REGULAR Council Meeting**  
**December 17, 2019**

**File Number: 0570**

**To:** Scott Hildebrand, Chief Administrative Officer

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

**Date:** December 11, 2019

**Subject:** City of Merritt B.C. Provincial Nominee Program Entrepreneur Immigration Pilot Committee Quarterly Report

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

**THAT Council accept for information the B.C. PNP Entrepreneur Immigration Pilot Quarterly Report.**

**Background:**

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

At the April 9, 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 state “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 11, 2019, the City of Merritt has received 250 inquiries from foreign entrepreneurs/immigration consulting companies looking to open a business in Merritt since the program opened on March 14<sup>th</sup>, 2019. The City of Merritt, along with community partners, have hosted 18 community exploratory visits. Furthermore, there are 19 foreign entrepreneurs who have submitted the required documents and have their exploratory trips planned during 2019.

During the monthly call in meetings with the Province of BC and other communities participating in the BC PNP Program, the City of Merritt is within the top 10% of communities for the overall number of inquiries and BC PNP letter of referrals provided. This increased interest in Merritt from foreign entrepreneurs has also led to increased interest from Canadian residents looking to open a business.

To-date the City of Merritt, via the BC PNP Committee, has provided 8 letters of referral to foreign entrepreneurs as outlined below:

- Miscellaneous Retail (5)
  - Gift Shop
  - Office Supplies and Stationery Store
  - Retail - Sewing Machine Business
  - Retail – Specialized Products
  - Retail - Specialized Products
- Trucking (3)
- Warehousing and Storage - 0

### **Options / discussion**

N/A

### **Financial / Risk Implications:**

N/A

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Will George**  
**Economic Development, Communication and Tourism Manager**