


**MISCELLANEOUS PLANNING ITEM
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT REPORT TO COUNCIL
REQUEST TO JOIN ALBERTA ENTREPRENEUR PROGRAM
April 29, 2026**

REQUEST FOR MOTION FROM COUNCIL	TO JOIN ALBERTA GOVERNMENT RURAL RENEWAL PROGRAM – ENTREPRENEUR STREAM
The following Councillors can vote on this item: All	
	<p>PROPOSAL: Staff seek permission from Council to join the Alberta Government’s Rural Renewal Program – Entrepreneur Stream.</p>
PREPARED BY: Economic Development	

PURPOSE OF REQUEST:

Staff is seeking Council’s approval to join the Alberta Government’s Rural Renewal Program – Entrepreneur stream. This program allows qualified immigrant entrepreneurs to start or buy a business in Foothills County.

BACKGROUND:

In 2022, the Alberta Government introduced the AAIP (Alberta Advantage Immigration Program), primarily to attract new immigrants to rural Alberta. There are approximately 60 rural communities that are part of this program. The overall program has eight streams (which includes the Entrepreneur Stream). The Rural Entrepreneur Stream is an economic immigration program for Entrepreneurs who want to start a business or buy an existing business in rural Alberta. For a community to apply, they must not be part of the Calgary or Edmonton Census Metropolitan Area (note: this is a downloaded program, no funds are provided by the Province to administer it). There is no cost to join this program.

Immigrant Entrepreneurs must meet several eligibility requirements to participate in this program such as, work experience, education, language requirements, net worth, business investment amount, job creation and a community support letter.

REASON FOR INITIATION

At the February 2026 Economic Development meeting, the committee unanimously supported joining the Provincial Government’s Rural Renewal program – Entrepreneur Stream. Joining the program will allow Immigrant Entrepreneurs to start or buy a business in Foothills County. The program will allow the County to increase its business base and/or provide existing business owners with an exit opportunity. Staff is not expecting the program to provide a large increase in the business base.

At this stage, staff are only seeking permission to apply to the program as it requires a Council motion and signature from the Reeve as part of the application process.

RECOMMENDED MOTION

Staff suggests the following be considered by the members of Council:

Council directs Administration to proceed with the application to join the Rural Renewal program – Entrepreneur Stream.