



# SIoux LOOKOUT

## Hub of the North

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Municipality of Sioux Lookout  
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## MEDIA RELEASE

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~ FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE ~

### **The Municipality of Sioux Lookout Advocates for Continued Immigration Support**

*Sioux Lookout, ON* – The Municipality of Sioux Lookout has experienced significant growth over the past several years, thanks in part to a successful collaboration with the Thunder Bay Community Economic Development Commission (CEDC). Since 2019, the CEDC has administered the Rural and Northern Immigration Pilot (RNIP) on behalf of many Northwestern Ontario communities, connecting local businesses with skilled newcomers. This initiative has been pivotal in bringing diverse talent to Sioux Lookout, enriching our community and supporting local economic development.

As the RNIP program draws to a close, the federal government has announced the introduction of the Rural Community Immigration Pilot (RCIP), set to begin in the fall of this year. Applications for this new program are open until July 2, 2024, from eligible community-based economic development organizations such as Chambers of Commerce, Community Futures, or independent non-profit economic development organizations. Unfortunately, municipalities are not eligible to apply. Applicants must demonstrate a successful track record in implementing multi-year projects with dedicated full-time staff.

In light of these requirements, the Municipality of Sioux Lookout is proud to support the Lake of the Woods Business Incentive Corporation (LOWBIC) in their application for the RCIP. On June 13<sup>th</sup>, our community hosted a regional economic development meeting where a dozen regional economic leaders discussed the best path forward for our region. The group collectively identified LOWBIC as the most suitable lead applicant for communities west of Thunder Bay. We are hopeful that Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) will recognize the critical importance of these immigration pilots for Sioux Lookout and the broader Northwestern Ontario region.

Additionally, we are collaborating with our regional partners to advocate for more slots in the Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program (OINP) and for the reduction of existing barriers. Currently, the OINP supports employers outside the Greater Toronto Area with gross revenues exceeding \$500,000 annually, a criterion that excludes some of our smaller businesses in need of labor to scale operations. Our advocacy efforts aim to make the program more accessible, particularly in the absence of regional pilots like RNIP and the forthcoming RCIP.

We understand the vital role these programs play in addressing skilled labor shortages in our community. The Municipality of Sioux Lookout remains committed to exploring all avenues to ensure continued access to these essential resources.

For more information about these immigration programs, please visit their respective websites:

RCIP: <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/immigrate-canada/rural-northern-immigration-pilot/community-interest.html>

OINP: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/ontario-immigrant-nominee-program-oinp>

About Sioux Lookout:

The Municipality of Sioux Lookout is a vibrant community nestled in the heart of Northwestern Ontario. Renowned for its natural beauty and rich cultural heritage, Sioux Lookout serves as a hub for commerce, recreation, and wellness, offering an unparalleled quality of life for residents and visitors alike.

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**For more information, please contact:**

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