

July 30, 2009



## CITY COUNCIL REPORT

**TO: Planning & Property Committee**

**FR: Jennifer Findlay, Economic Development Officer**

**RE: Northwestern Ontario Immigration Web Portal Project**

**BACKGROUND:**

- The City of Thunder Bay has received funding from the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration to develop a Northwestern Ontario Immigration web portal in partnership with the municipalities in the northwest.
- The portal will provide newcomers to Northwestern Ontario with one stop information and links by community on such topics as:
  1. Housing / real estate
  2. Education
  3. Employment
  4. Social Services
  5. Recreation
  6. Health Care
  7. Religion
  8. Organizations, associations and groups
  9. Maps
  10. Transportation
  11. Population
  12. Immigration specific services eg. English as a Second Language., Settlement Services
  13. Community characteristics that would appeal to newcomers

Resolutions of support from 20 communities in Northwestern Ontario have been received to date.

The end users for the portal will include, but are not limited to immigrants coming to Canada, immigrants residing in Northwestern Ontario, immigrants residing in Canada who are considering a move to Northwestern Ontario, foreign students, aboriginals considering moving into Northwestern Ontario, residents, visitors, and tourists, provincial, federal and international service providers and internal personnel.

**Although immigration is not a priority within the City of Kenora's Economic Development Plan (2009), attracting new residents to the community is a major priority. Therefore, participation in this project is recommended as the project will develop an information site for newcomers to the community with project funding from the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship & Immigration.**

A resolution of support for this project commits the City to participating in working group meetings in Thunder Bay and a minimum of two meetings in Kenora. The anticipated project completion date is March 2010.

**BUDGET:** \$0 - The Immigration Web Portal project budget provides travel, accommodation and meals for staff participation in the project.

**Communications:**

Staff will report to the Business Attraction Committee and the Lake of the Woods Development Commission as well as to the CAO.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

THAT the City of Kenora support the Northwestern Ontario immigration web portal project being led by the City of Thunder Bay  
AND THAT the Economic Development Officer participates in the project working group; and  
THAT the Mayor and Clerk be authorized to enter into any required agreement.