

# THE VOICE OF NORTHERN BUSINESS



## Re: Request for Council Resolution: Support a Set-Aside for Northern Ontario within the OINP

On July 25<sup>th</sup>, 2024, over 40 organizations from across Northern Ontario came together to formally support an initiative to increase provincially led immigration to Northern Ontario communities. Northern Ontario Chambers of Commerce, Municipalities, Economic Development Agencies, Community Futures Development Corporations, Local Immigration Partnerships, Réseau du Nord, and more are working together to advocate for a Northern Ontario "set-aside" within the Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program (OINP).

**As the Government of Ontario has full authority to set the parameters and allocations for the OINP. We are requesting 3,000 nominations, annually, be specifically set aside for immigrants coming to Northern Ontario to fill labour shortages.** These 3,000 immigrants would help our communities maintain their current standard of living. Meaning there would be enough people to support vital services in our communities, pay taxes, and keep businesses open.

Currently, Northern Ontario is only receiving between 1-3% of all allocations through the OINP (approximately 100-200 nominees per year for the past 14 years). Meanwhile, the GTA receives approximately 90% of ALL immigration to Ontario. OINP has 21,500 total spots to allocate in 2024, up from 9,000 spots just three years ago. That means there is plenty of room to make a set-aside for Northern Ontario work without detracting from the GTA and other Ontario communities.

**We need your help ASAP.** To put pressure on the provincial government, **we are requesting your Council pass a resolution formally supporting a 3,000-nomination set-aside within the OINP for Northern Ontario communities.**

The allocation of these 3,000 spots would be spread among communities, ensuring that the benefits of immigration are extended beyond the largest cities in Northern Ontario. Importantly, the set-aside would **work alongside existing programs**, like the federal Rural and Northern Immigration Pilot (and future iterations of it). Also, in-need occupations would be identified specifically for Northern Ontario communities to help address our unique labour shortages.

The federal Rural and Northern Immigration Pilot has brought over 4,000 immigrants to Northern Ontario since its inception five years ago. Targeted, community-level immigration works for Northern Ontario. Help us keep the momentum going.

For questions or more information, please contact:

Charla Robinson, President, Thunder Bay Chamber of Commerce at [charla@tbchamber.ca](mailto:charla@tbchamber.ca)

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**Table: Proposed Allocations for Northern Ontario OINP “Set-Aside”**

OINP Proposed Northern Ontario Allotments, CMA/CAs and CDs (Rural)		
Geography	Geographic Level	Allocations
Greater Sudbury	CMA	689
Timmins	CA	166
Sault Ste. Marie	CA	310
Thunder Bay	CMA	498
North Bay	CA	290
Kenora	CA	60
Nipissing	District**	52
Manitoulin	District	56
Sudbury	District	72
Greater Sudbury*	District**	0
Timiskaming	District	127
Cochrane	District**	149
Algoma	District**	150
Thunder Bay	District**	95
Rainy River	District	79
Kenora	District**	206

**Source: Northern Policy Institute.**

Definitions: A census metropolitan area (CMA) must have a total population of at least 100,000. A census agglomeration (CA) must have a core population of at least 10,000. Census divisions (CDs) are intermediate geographic areas between the province/territory level and the municipality.

Note: \*The Greater Sudbury CMA overlaps completely with the Greater Sudbury CD. Thus, for simplicity, all the allocations are included under the Greater Sudbury CMA.

\*\*Districts represent the CD population minus the CMA/CA population (if there is a CMA/CA present within the CD). This allows there to be a specific allotment for rural areas

**Source: Author's calculations. Based on an allotment of 3,000 spots for Northern Ontario divided amongst regions based on population share. Data obtained from 2021 Census of the Population.**

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## Sample Motion

**WHEREAS** employers across Northern Ontario are experiencing a critical shortage of **skilled** workers, contributing to a shrinking labour market with an estimated 50,000 newcomers needed by 2041 to sustain current Northern Ontario population levels; and

**WHEREAS**, the labour shortage is causing significant economic hardship for Northern Ontario communities, including reduced productivity and business closures; and

**WHEREAS** population and migration trends to 2021 suggest that Northern Ontario needs **100,000 newcomers by 2041** to sustain current population; and

**WHEREAS** the success of the federal Rural and Northern Immigration Pilot (RNIP) demonstrates the effectiveness of allocating nomination spots to address regional labour shortages in attracting newcomers to Northern Ontario; and

**WHEREAS**, the Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program has been expanded from 9,750 nominees in 2022 to a goal of 21,500 nominees in 2024;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY (town / city) COUNCIL (insert municipality name) to:**

**Urges the Government of Ontario to address the critical market shortage of skilled labour in Northern Ontario by allocating 3,000 Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program spots to support the region's economic growth and development.**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT:**

Copies of this resolution be forwarded to: the Ontario Minister of Labour, Immigration, Training & Skills Development; local Members of Provincial Parliament; the Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities; and the Thunder Bay Chamber of Commerce