



Attn: Honourable Mayor and Members of Council
Town of Golden

July 5th, 2018

RE: Critical Labour Shortages in Golden

Dear Mayor Oszust,

The Kicking Horse Country Chamber of Commerce is a membership-driven organization that works to support, grow and promote the business community of Golden and Area A. A strong and prosperous small business sector is the backbone of our community.

Golden businesses are experiencing a critical shortage of labour. Despite a very strong recruitment process (e.g, reaching out to seniors and high school students, offering free staff accommodation, signing bonuses, etc.) our member businesses are unable to operate at full capacity, impacting revenue generation. Where businesses remain operational, we have seen management burnout, contributing to further loss of staff. As a result, and in trying to sustain their business, business owners are overextending themselves, which negatively impacts both their physical and mental health.

We have concerns for the local small business community and ask that you support the problem at hand by writing to the Honourable Patty Hajdu, Minister of Employment Workforce Development and Labour, Honourable Ahmed Hussen, Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, and Honourable Harry Bains, Minister of Labour requesting an immediate review of the Temporary Foreign Workers Program and Provincial Nominee Program, whilst highlighting the following points:

- A review of the Temporary Foreign Workers Program with a focus on application costs and processing time. The costs associated with applying to the program is out of reach for the majority of small businesses. In addition to this, at least one business owner reports loss of staff, thus loss of revenue, due to lengthily application processing times. It is imperative that when reviewing the provincial nominee scheme for processing immigration applications that there is a focus on fast tracking immigration into British Columbia.



- Expand the provincial nominee scheme for immigration to attract non-skilled and seasonal workers. As a tourism based/seasonal community, Golden simply does not have the population to support the demand for a non-skilled, seasonal workforce.
- A review of the existing scheme and perhaps creating a new scheme to broaden the scope of those who want to come to British Columbia to fill the jobs that need to be filled. Businesses owners need these people to fill positions so that they can operate at capacity and do not overextend themselves in hopes to sustain their business. This does not just impact tourism based businesses but all industries. If there's not enough people to fill the seasonal jobs, businesses could forced to close and families forced to move and/or prospects are discouraged about doing business in Golden and locate elsewhere. The ripple effect being that our population declines and we no longer have enough people to support a vibrant small business community.

As tourism continues to grow the demand for unskilled, seasonal workers has reached a point of exceeding supply. We strongly believe that a review of the Temporary Foreign Workers Program and Provincial Nominee Program as mentioned in the above points will help to rebuild lost economic opportunity in Golden and Area A from unfilled jobs.

Sincerely,

Shelly Wadden

Shelly Wadden | Executive Director
Kicking Horse Country Chamber of Commerce
manager@goldenchamber.bc.ca
(250) 344-7125 | 344-0546