



**CANADIAN FEDERATION
OF INDEPENDENT BUSINESS**

In business for your business™

CFIB's 2026 Ontario Small Business Municipal Platform

***11 Things Ontario Municipalities
Should Do for Small Businesses***

Small business owners will have a strong voice in the upcoming Ontario municipal elections, as 88% told us they will vote on October 26!

Municipal governments play an important role in the ever-evolving lives of small businesses that bring jobs and contribute to communities across the province. The fiscally prudent recommendations in this document would help Ontario's 444 urban and rural municipalities create the right climate to attract and keep small businesses, in both good and bad economic times.

Reduce Red Tape

- **Establish a Red Tape Reduction Commissioner and Red Tape Reduction Office and designate existing staff to these responsibilities.**
- **Count all municipal by-laws, policies, and forms (e.g., for permits and licensing) to establish a regulatory burden baseline, and carefully review them to identify unnecessary, excessive, and duplicative requirements.**
- **Create a Red Tape Feedback Portal where businesses and citizens can report regulatory challenges directly to their municipality.**

*In a recent CFIB survey, Ontario small business owners were asked which municipal small business measures candidates should embrace on the campaign trail. Topping the list by leaps and bounds is **reducing municipal red tape** for such requirements as building and renovation permits, business licensing, and sign permits.*

Sign our petition [here](#) to make municipal red tape reduction a priority now!

Create a Construction Mitigation Policy Toolkit

- **Designate a Business Liaison Officer with decision-making power to act as the eyes and ears on the ground for businesses affected by lengthy, disruptive municipal construction projects.**
- **Create a municipal construction webpage that includes regular project updates, temporary parking and signage plans, ongoing business feedback and consultation opportunities, and an interactive, up-to-date map showing areas affected by major construction.**
- **Defer property taxes or waive penalties and interest on unpaid property taxes for businesses affected by lengthy, disruptive municipal construction projects.**

Offer Tariff Relief Through Fee Holidays

- Waive fees for business licences, sign permits, and on-street commercial parking (to incentivize local shopping) for small businesses directly affected by U.S. tariffs and Canadian counter-tariffs.

Make Business Property Taxes Affordable

- Improve property tax fairness, so business owners don't pay more than their fair share.
- Take the Ontario government up on their offer to create a small business property tax subclass with business tax savings of up to 35% that are matched by the Ontario government.
(Note: Only Toronto and Ottawa have adopted a small business property tax subclass to date.)

Protect Business Tax Dollars

- Find municipal savings by conducting value-for-money audits of all departments annually as part of the budget process.
- Limit annual spending to population growth and cap it at the inflation rate.

The Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB) is Canada's largest association of small- and medium-sized businesses with 103,000 members across every industry and region, including 40,000 in Ontario. CFIB is dedicated to increasing business owners' chances of success by driving policy change at all levels of government, providing expert advice and tools, and negotiating exclusive savings. Learn more at cfib.ca.

For more information on this small business platform, please contact:

Julie Kwiecinski, Director of Provincial Affairs, Ontario
julie.kwiecinski@cfib.ca

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