

Did You Know? Provincial Funding Is Awarded Through Established Programs And Not Through Connections.

Over the past few weeks, I have heard from residents asking me to explain how provincial funding works and whether funding or projects would cease if there were a change in Mayor or Council following October's election.

The simple answer is **no**.

Municipal funding in Ontario is not based on who occupies the Mayor's chair or serves on Council. Funding programs are established by the Province with specific eligibility criteria, application requirements, and accountability measures. Municipalities receive funding because they qualify for programs—not because of the political affiliation or personal relationships of an individual elected official.

How Provincial Funding Actually Works

Provincial grants are awarded through established programs such as the Ontario Community Infrastructure Fund (OCIF), the House-Enabling Fund Corporation (NOHFC) programs, the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP), ministry-specific infrastructure programs, and economic development initiatives.

Each program has published guidelines, eligibility requirements, application processes, reporting obligations, and evaluation criteria.

Many funding allocations-- such as OCIF—are formula-based and distributed according to objective factors established by the Province.

Other programs require municipalities to submit competitive applications demonstrating community need, project readiness, sound financial planning, and value for public investment.

It is also important to understand that funding applications are typically developed by municipal staff under the direction of Council. Depending on the program, applications often involve finance staff, engineers, planners, economic development professionals, and senior administration working together to prepare technical studies, budgets, business cases, and supporting documentation. The Mayor plays an important leadership and advocacy role by helping establish priorities, building relationships with other levels of government, and promoting the municipality's interests, but successful applications are ultimately the result of a collaborative team effort between Council, municipal staff, and community partners.

Municipal Success Is a Team Effort

Successful municipalities build strong relationships with provincial ministries, federal departments, local Members of Provincial Parliament (MPPs), Members of Parliament (MPs), funding agencies, municipal associations such as AMO and FONOM, Indigenous communities, neighbouring municipalities, local businesses, and community partners.

These relations belong to the municipality—not to any one elected official.

Experienced municipal administrations work with these organizations every day, regardless of who the Mayor is or which political party forms the provincial or federal government.

Professional Relationships Continue

Ontario's public servants, ministry staff, and funding agencies work with municipalities across the province regardless of local election results.

If funding depended solely on one elected official's personal contacts, municipalities across Ontario would face unnecessary uncertainty after every election. This is simply not how Ontario's municipal funding system operates.

Experience Matters

There is no question that experience, preparation, and strong professional relationships can help a municipality submit stronger funding applications and identify more funding opportunities.

This is one of the strengths that I would bring to the Mayor's office.

Over a municipal career spanning more than 25 years, I have served as a Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), Treasurer, and Municipal Clerk, working with municipalities and councils of various sizes across the province.

I have successfully prepared and overseen funding applications, managed multi-million-dollar municipal budgets, administered infrastructure projects, negotiated with senior government officials, and ensured municipalities met the accountability requirements associated with provincial and federal funding.

During those 25-plus years, I have developed professional working relationships with:

- Ontario ministries and senior public servants;
- Members of Provincial Parliament (MPPs) representing different political parties;
- Members of Parliamentary (MPs) from various federal governments;
- Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation (NOHFC);
- FedNor and other federal funding agencies;
- Infrastructure Ontario;
- Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO);
- Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities (FONOM); and
- Municipal leaders, Chief Administrative Officers, Treasurers, Clerks, engineers, planners, and economic development professionals throughout Ontario.

These relationships have been built through professionalism, integrity, collaboration, and delivering results.

Although experience does not guarantee funding, experienced municipal leaders and senior staff understand where opportunities exist, how to prepare competitive applications, how government funding programs operate, and how to advocate effectively on behalf of their communities.

That knowledge, combined with long-established professional relationships, can help position Iroquois Falls to compete successfully for every funding opportunity available.

Putting Our Community First

Residents should have confidence that Iroquois Falls will continue working with the Province, the Federal Government, funding agencies, and community partners regardless of the outcome of any election.

Projects that have already been approved and are underway will continue to move forward subject to applicable funding agreements, legislative requirements, and Council decisions. Projects that have been discussed but not yet approved or commenced will be reviewed by the newly elected Council to ensure members are fully informed and prepared to make decisions in the best interests of the municipality.

Future projects funded through provincial or federal programs, together with those identified through the municipal budget process, will continue to be evaluated and approved by Council based on community priorities, financial capacity, and available funding.

Good governance is about building lasting relationships that serve our community—not relationships that depend on one individual.

The strongest municipalities are those that combine experienced leadership, professional administration, sound financial management, thoughtful long-term planning, and respectful relationships with governments of every political stripe.

With more than 25 years of municipal leadership experience, together with the extensive provincial, federal, municipal, and community relationships that I have built throughout my career, I will be ready to advocate effectively for Iroquois Falls **from day one**.

At the same time, I firmly believe that the results are achieved when the Mayor, Council, municipal staff, community organizations, businesses, and residents work together toward a common goal. Successful municipalities recognize that securing funding is never the work of one individual. It is the result of strong leadership, an informed Council, professional municipal staff, sound financial planning, well-prepared applications, and collaborative partnerships with other levels of government.

Putting Our Community First *means working together to pursue every opportunity available to strengthen Iroquois Falls. By combining experience, professionalism, collaboration, and accountability, we can position our municipality for continued success—not just for today, but for future generations.*

#michelle4mayor#experienced#collaborative#communityfirst