



SDG Counties Economic Development Newsletter - March 28, 2024

Ontario minimum wage to increase Oct. 1 to \$17.20 an hour



The Ontario government is increasing the minimum wage from \$16.55 per hour to \$17.20, effective October 1, 2024. This 3.9 per cent annualized wage increase is based on the Ontario Consumer Price Index (CPI) and brings Ontario's minimum wage to the second highest in Canada.

A worker making the general minimum wage and working 40 hours per week will see an annual pay increase of up to \$1,355. There were 935,600 workers earning at or below \$17.20 per hour in 2023. This minimum wage increase builds on the government's **Working for Workers Four Act, 2024**, which provides ground-breaking protections for millions of workers in Ontario, including strengthening wage protections for restaurant, hospitality and service workers by clarifying that employers can never deduct an employee's wages in the event of a dine and dash, supporting injured workers and banning requirements for Canadian work experience in job postings – a first in Canada.

Digital Modernization and Adoption Plan (DMAP)

This is a Government of Ontario initiative led by the Ontario Centre of Innovation

The Digital Modernization and Adoption Plan (DMAP) program supports Ontario SMEs to better understand their organization's technology needs, guide their digital transformation decision-making, and optimize their technology investments. Through this program, SMEs work with a Digital Adoption Consultant to generate a Digital Modernization and Adoption Plan tailored specifically to their organization's digital needs.

BEST SUITED FOR:

- SMEs looking to understand their digital needs and adopt and implement digital technologies to grow their company
- Ontario-based for-profit SMEs with between 1-499 employees

Technology Demonstration Program

The Technology Demonstration Program supports Ontario SMEs that have completed a DMAP project to adopt and implement the digital technology identified in their DMAP, accelerating growth of the SME, while supporting the commercialization of Made-in-Ontario digital technologies.

BEST SUITED FOR:

- SMEs who have completed a DMAP project and are looking to adopt and implement the digital technology laid out in the DMAP
- Ontario-based for-profit SMEs with between 1-499 employees
- SMEs with at least \$500,000 of annual revenue in one of the last three tax years

[Visit our Website](#)

New mentor development program for women in the

Canadian Apprenticeship Forum (CAF-FCA) launches new program for women in the skilled trades

The National Mentor Development Program for Women in the Skilled Trades to offer online programming to develop and enhance mentorship skills for women and gender diverse individuals in the trades. This virtual, 4-month program is facilitated by subject matter experts in collaboration with tradeswomen coaches from the manufacturing and construction sectors. The program will be offered free of charge to participants from across Canada.

Tradeswomen identified the need for a program of this type. At its inaugural Supporting Women in Trades Conference in 2018 and its subsequent conferences in 2019 and 2022, CAF-FCA consulted with over 300 tradeswomen to identify their specific needs. As outlined in the Road Map to Supporting Women in the Trades, tradeswomen identified mentorship as one of their top priorities. They recommended “establish and maintain mentoring programs for women in the trades where experienced tradeswomen mentor and guide those just starting out.” Research also supports the creation of this program due to the retention barriers women experience in the trades. The rate of program completion is significantly higher for male apprentices in most of the Red Seal trades, with Heavy Duty Equipment Technician reporting the largest gender gap (29 per cent) followed by Industrial Mechanic (Millwright) (27 per cent) and Plumber (26 per cent). According to the National Apprenticeship Survey, women are more likely than men to identify discrimination as the reason why they left an employer.

By creating this program, CAF-FCA is directly addressing a top priority for tradeswomen. Through research and extensive consultations with tradeswomen, CAF-FCA and its partners, the Office to Advance Women Apprentices and Excellence in Manufacturing Consortium, understand training best practices and have created a program shaped to meet apprentice needs, therefore increasing the chances of successful program implementation.

Those who are interested in applying to be a participant or a coach can apply at: leadership.caf-fca.org

For more information on the National Mentor Development Program contact Program Manager, Stephanie Shrum, at: stephanie@caf-fca.org

[Learn more about CAF-FCA](#)

**Eastern Ontario Training Board:
Update on local employment rates**

Big changes for temporary foreign workers - coming May 1, 2024

On March 21, the federal government announced that some time-limited measures under the Temporary Foreign Worker Program Workforce Solutions Road Map will not be renewed and will end, earlier than planned, this spring.

Effective May 1, 2024:

- New Labour Market Impact Assessments (LMIAs) will be valid for 6 months (a decrease from 12 months)
- All employers identified in the 2022 Workforce Solutions Road Map will have a reduction from 30% to 20% of their total workforce that can come in through the Temporary Foreign Worker Program, under the low wage stream, with an exception for construction and health care sectors
- Employers will need to explore every option before applying for an LMIA – including recruiting asylum seekers with valid work permits here in Canada.

As of January 1st, 2024, employers are additionally required to annually review the wages of temporary foreign workers to ensure they reflect increases to prevailing wage rates for their given occupation and region of work.

Community Economic Development 101



Community Economic Development 101 is a FREE, half-day workshop, being presented by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural

Affairs (OMAFRA).

The event is sponsored by the Township of North Stormont and the United Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry and will take place at North Stormont Place (16299 Fairview Drive, Avonmore, ON, K0C 1C0), on Thursday, May 23rd, 2024 from 8:30 am to 12:30 pm.

Workshop Topics:

- What is Community Economic Development and why it's vital for your community;
- The value of planning in your community;
- Collaborative roles of individuals and organizations;
- Tools and resources to assist you

Who Should Attend:

- Elected officials and municipal staff, including economic development officers
- Board members, Committee representatives and Chamber of Commerce reps.
- Community leaders and volunteers interested in affecting change in their community.

Snacks and refreshments will be served during a mid-morning break.

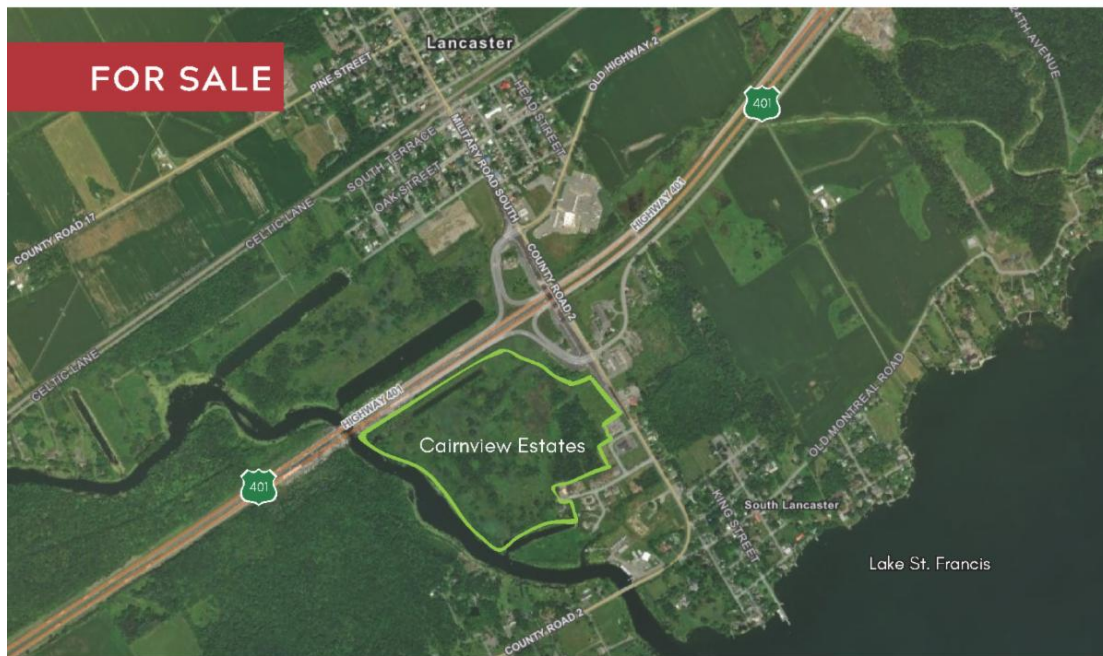
[Register for FREE here](#)

Investment Opportunity in Lancaster, ON

DEVELOPMENT LAND

DRAFT PLAN APPROVED SUBDIVISION

**SOUTH
GLENGARRY**



CAIRNVIEW ESTATES

69.17 ACRES, LANCASTER, ONTARIO

Municipal approvals for 184 lots +
4 developable blocks

A unique opportunity to purchase a Municipally draft plan approved subdivison, including premium waterfront lots with access to Lake St. Francis, and an 18-hole golf course around the corner.

- ✓ AT HWY 401 INTERCHANGE
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- ✓ WATERFRONT LOTS
- ✓ HIGH HOUSING DEMAND AREA
- ✓ MUNICIPAL PARK PLANNED

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69.7 acres available for sale at "Cairnview Estates" in Lancaster, ON. A unique opportunity to purchase a Municipally draft plan approved subdivison, including premium waterfront lots with access to Lake St. Francis, and an 18-hole golf course around the corner.

[Learn more at www.investsdg.ca](http://www.investsdg.ca)

Apply now for the Grow Ontario Market Initiative



Learn how to apply for funding to grow your agri-food business through marketing analysis and planning, new product development and marketing activities.

The Governments of Canada and Ontario are investing up to \$12 million in market development efforts under the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership (Sustainable CAP) to help eligible agri-food businesses and industry organizations expand into domestic and foreign markets.

The **Grow Ontario Market Initiative** is a new, cost-share initiative that helps food and beverage processors, farm businesses and agri-food sector organizations take actions to reach new markets. Examples of eligible projects could include:

- Market analysis and planning
- Product development activities
- New market-entry promotional efforts to expand opportunities for Ontario food products

Under the **Grow Ontario Market Initiative**, applicants can receive up to 50 percent cost share for eligible costs, to a maximum of \$60,000 per business for producers and food and beverage processors, and up to \$125,000 for sector organizations. Eligible businesses can apply for support through this program that opened on May 19, 2023.

Grow Ontario Market Initiative Guidelines

Save on Energy: Strategic Energy Management Program

Save on Energy launched a new program for industrial, commercial, and institutional organizations in Ontario. This **Strategic Energy Management (SEM) Program** places organizations within a cohort of peers to receive coaching, training, peer support, and financial incentives to help meet their energy reduction goals. **Applications are being accepted now!**

Given the importance of the food and beverage sector in Ontario, the program plans to build a dedicated Food & Beverage Cohort to address specific energy challenges and opportunities in the sector and support

efforts to reduce utility costs and improve sustainability. We encourage you to join your peers and take part.

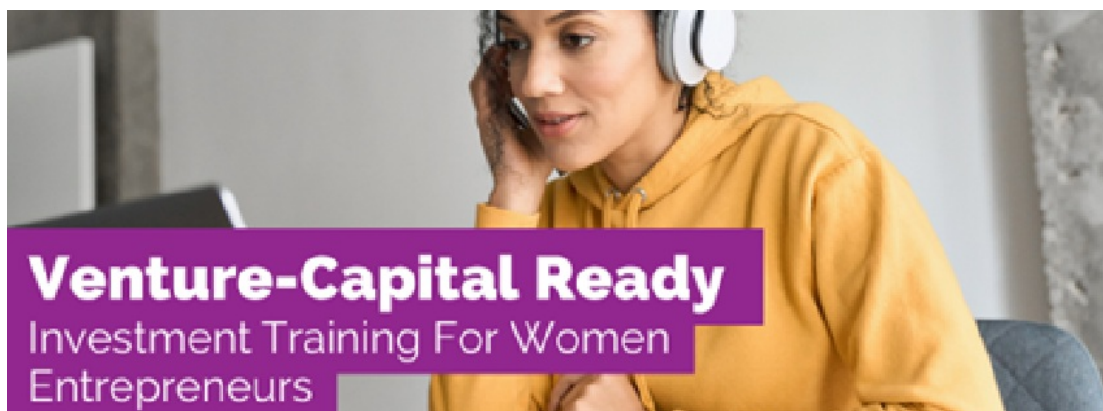
Program Highlights:

- Earn up to \$5,000 towards energy management tools
- Earn up to \$100,000 in performance incentives per year (at \$0.02 per kWh saved)
- Participate in facilitated activities to identify energy-saving opportunities at your facility and identify gaps in your energy management practices
- Work with experts to develop a facility baseline model to monitor energy performance

To connect directly with the SEM Program team, [schedule a 15 minute zoom call with an SEM Coach.](#)

[Click on the link to download the application form](#)

SSFPA Launches Venture-Capital Ready: Investment Training For Women Entrepreneurs



Empower your agri-food or beverage business with the Venture-Capital Ready Program! This program is being offered by the Small Scale Food Processors Association (SSFPA).

Designed for women entrepreneurs, this initiative offers participants coaching and expert feedback to enhance their investor interactions. With pitching practice and use of the Investor Pipeline, get your company in front of interested investors and create strong opportunities.

Join in on the training to elevate your business and secure the funding you need for growth!

[Click here to learn more about the Venture-Capital](#)

Tourism Workforce Sustainability Program

Tourism Mentor Match

This month the Tourism Industry Alliance of Ontario (TIAO) is launching Tourism Mentor Match. This program connects new tourism employees with industry professionals who share more than career aspirations; they might share culture, religion, lifestyle, or personal challenges & opportunities. Interested in becoming a tourism mentor? Contact Leni Brem at lbrem@tiaontario.ca



Click to
learn
more

Employment Supports



Main Street businesses could be eligible for a grant of up to \$20,000

My Main Street is being delivered by the Canadian Urban Institute offering two streams that open for applications on February 22, 2024.

The Business Sustainability stream provides up to \$20,000 directly to businesses for productivity enhancements. Funding will be made available to businesses that employ between 1 and 50 staff, have demonstrated revenue growth, and provide a business case on how the funding will strengthen their existing capacity and support their growth.

The Business Sustainability stream is open for applications between February 22 and March 31, 2024.

The Community Activator stream funds up to \$250,000 for high-impact community placemaking projects.

Thinking about applying? Join a My Main Street virtual information session on February 29 or March 1, 4 or 5 and find out how to apply.

Learn more or register for an info session at

www.mymainstreet.ca

[Download the Business Sustainability Applicant Guide here:](#)

Mark your calendar for the **2024 Cornwall and Area Job Fair- Featuring Skills Ontario**

Wednesday, April 2024, at the Cornwall Civic Complex
Sessions run from 1 pm - 3 pm and from 6 pm - 7 pm

Employers can still reserve a booth!!!

[Contact Carilyne Hebert to book your booth!](#)

Cornwall and Area Lifestyle Expo happening April 26-28

Hosted by the Cornwall & Area Chamber of Commerce: Location: Benson Centre, 800 Seventh Street, in Cornwall.

Expo Hours: April 26 (4 pm - 9 pm); April 27 (10 am - 6 pm); April 28 (10 am - 4 pm). General admission: \$5. Free entry for seniors (65+) and children (under 12).



[Visit our Website](#)

SDG Counties is dedicated to supporting our residents and businesses. Subscribe to our free newsletter to stay informed about grants, supports and news impacting our community.

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**Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry
Department of Economic
Development**

Tara Kirkpatrick, Manager of Economic
Development

tkirkpatrick@sdgcounties.ca

www.madeinsdg.ca

T. 613-932-1515 ext. 1227

United Counties of SDG | 26 Pitt Street, Cornwall, K6J 3P2 Canada

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