

# Canada's top cities for entrepreneurship: Whitehorse, Winkler and Victoriaville lead the way

**Toronto, April 3, 2019** – Whitehorse (YT), Winkler (MB) and Victoriaville (QC) were named the top three communities in Canada for entrepreneurship in 2018 by the Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB)'s latest Entrepreneurial Communities report. Rounding out the top five were two more Quebec communities – Rimouski and Rivière-du-Loup.

“Small businesses are the backbone of the Canadian economy, bringing jobs, new products and a sense of identity to their communities,” said CFIB vice-president and chief economist Ted Mallett.

“We want to celebrate that and congratulate the cities that have landed on the top of our list this year by embracing entrepreneurial values and understanding the needs of small business owners.”

Now in its 10th edition, the CFIB *Entrepreneurial Communities report* evaluated Canada's 125 most populous communities against 13 key indicators that identified the current state of entrepreneurship in each community. The indicators included various demographic measures, earnings levels, optimism, growth plans and local tax policy.

## 2018 Top Communities:

### Overall

1	Whitehorse, Yukon Territory
2	Winkler, Manitoba
3	Victoriaville, Quebec
4	Rimouski, Quebec
5	Rivière-du-Loup, Quebec
6	Collingwood, Ontario*
6	Grande Prairie, Alberta*
8	Saint-Georges, Quebec
9	Val-d'Or, Quebec
10	Squamish, British Columbia

\*Collingwood and Grande Prairie had the same score of 67.0.

Canada's largest urban communities tended to rank somewhat farther down the list because their small businesses may face more competition and higher costs.

**2018 Top Large Cities (Census Metropolitan Areas):**

16	Kelowna, British Columbia
19	Sherbrooke, Quebec
20	Trois-Rivières, Quebec
22	Montreal periphery, Quebec
28	Gatineau, Quebec
33	Toronto periphery, Ontario
35	Saskatoon, Saskatchewan
37	Regina, Saskatchewan
40	Kitchener-Cambridge-Waterloo, Ontario
43	Edmonton periphery, Alberta

**Property taxes are a major pain point for small firms**

One of the factors used to determine the rankings was the ratio between commercial and residential property taxes in each municipality. Nearly all local governments tax commercial properties at much higher rates than residential properties, placing a major constraint on local businesses. Commercial property rates can be up to 4.5 times higher than residential rates in some jurisdictions.

“What the top communities have in common is strong policy that supports small business owners and fosters entrepreneurship, namely close ratios between residential and commercial property taxes,” added Mallett. “Businesses don’t use municipal services as heavily as residents, so ideally, we would see a more equal distribution of the property tax burden between them. Instituting more business-friendly commercial property tax rates is something that every community can do to make it easier on its citizens to start and run a small business.”

The report also took into account provincial property tax ratios. Provincial property taxes are usually applied towards the education system. Some jurisdictions, like Quebec, have perfect one-to-one balances between commercial and residential taxes, but the ratio for commercial properties balloons up to a 7.9 ratio in many cities in Ontario.

Due to changes in the way the rankings are calculated this year, the results may not be comparable to previous *Entrepreneurial Communities reports*.

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**About CFIB**

The Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB) is Canada's largest association of small and medium-sized businesses with 110,000 members across every industry and region. 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](http://cfib.ca).

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