

**THE
CALGARY
PARTY**

BUSINESS ACCESS

The background of the image features a grayscale photograph of the historic Calgary clock tower, a prominent landmark with a large clock face. To the right, a modern glass-walled building is visible. The entire image is overlaid with large, diagonal blue shapes that create a dynamic, geometric design. The text 'THE CALGARY PARTY' is in the top left, and 'BUSINESS ACCESS' is centered in large white letters.



Calgary businesses need a City Hall that works as well as they do

From entrepreneurs starting out with a food truck to builders launching major developments, every business in Calgary interacts with City Hall. But too often, those interactions are slow, unclear, and frustrating. Endless forms. Delayed responses. Confusing processes.

Calgary needs to stop being a place where red tape slows things down and start being a place where good ideas get built fast.

The Calgary Party believes City Hall should be a partner in business, not a barrier. This toolkit outlines five bold steps to make City Hall faster, simpler, and more accountable to the businesses that drive our economy.





MODERNIZE BUSINESS LICENSING & PERMITTING

It's time to bring permitting into the 21st century

Right now, businesses must navigate a patchwork of outdated systems to apply for licenses and permits. Many forms can't be completed online. Status updates are hard to track. Small errors can delay approvals by weeks or even months.

We will implement:

- Online permitting and licensing portals with smart forms, pre-filled data, and error-checking
- Live application dashboards so businesses can track progress in real time
- Automatic notifications and digital approvals to reduce paperwork and in-person visits
- Use of artificial intelligence to speed up the review and approval process

This model is already working in cities like Henderson, Nevada; Mesa, Arizona, and Edmonton to reduce wait times, simplify processes, and boost user satisfaction.

Let's make it easy to say yes.

Time is money. City Hall needs an efficiency reboot.

Delays cost small businesses time and money. Every week a permit sits waiting for review is a week lost on construction, hiring, or opening.

The Calgary Party will introduce strict permitting timelines through our 3-3-3-1 framework:

- 3 days for simple renovations or accessibility upgrades
- 3 weeks for single-family homes and townhouses within existing zoning
- 3 months for mid-rise and multi-family projects with zoning in place
- 1 year for complex land use changes or large-scale projects

If City Hall misses these deadlines, approvals will be granted by default.

This automatic approval approach ensures accountability and prevents bureaucratic stalling. It's a bold move and one that puts power back in the hands of applicants.



MEET DEADLINES OR AUTOMATICALLY APPROVE



BUSINESS CONCIERGE SERVICE

City processes are complex.

There is no debate. But businesses shouldn't need a lawyer just to open a patio.

We will launch a Business Concierge Service to provide:

- A single point of contact at City Hall for business owners
- Step-by-step guidance through permitting, zoning, and inspections
- Help navigating applications, deadlines, and follow-ups

Cities like Vancouver and Chicago have already seen success with concierge models, especially for small business and restaurant licensing.

When businesses need help, City Hall should pick up the phone, not pass the buck.

Meeting businesses where they are at.

City Hall is confusing. Departments are siloed. And in-person support is often limited.

We will establish a dedicated Business Desk at City Hall and satellite pop-up offices in commercial areas, offering:

- Walk-in support from trained business navigators
- Access to printed guides and checklists
- Referrals to permitting staff and inspectors

Some cities have even launched mobile business teams that visit BIA districts weekly, helping solve problems on the ground.

Let's bring City Hall to the business community instead of making them chase us.

HIGH VISIBILITY ONE-STOP BUSINESS DESK





REGULATORY REVIEW TASK FORCE

A step toward modernization

Many regulations in Calgary were written decades ago for a different economy. Some are duplicated across departments. Others are outdated or no longer enforced but still block business growth.

We will establish a Regulatory Review Task Force to:

- Identify and eliminate redundant, outdated, or overly complex rules
- Streamline common permitting categories (signs, pop-ups, patios, etc.)
- Report publicly every six months on progress and reforms

Cities like Boston and Denver have slashed red tape using similar models, freeing up thousands of staff hours and reducing application volumes.

This is about modernizing government and respecting business owners' time.

The Calgary Party vision

Business owners don't need special treatment. They need fair, fast, and transparent service.

The Calgary Party will:

- Cut red tape
- Enforce clear timelines
- Make it easier to get a license, open a business, or expand operations
- Build trust by delivering real results, not excuses

Let's build a City Hall that understands business and moves at the speed of Calgary's ambition.

thecalgaryparty.ca