



Dear Ms. McRae,

My name is Amanda Plantinga, and I am a small business owner operating The Spa on Wilson within the Ancaster Business Improvement Area (BIA). I am submitting this delegation regarding the proposed discontinuation of City-provided recycling collection for commercial properties as part of the 2026 City of Hamilton budget.

Under Ontario's Blue Box program, businesses are not eligible for provincial recycling collection. For years, the City of Hamilton has recognized this gap and has provided recycling pickup to many commercial properties, including those within the Ancaster BIA. This service is scheduled to end on March 31, 2026, and the current budget recommendation is not to continue it.

For small businesses, this decision cannot be viewed in isolation.

Local businesses are already facing significant and ongoing financial pressures, including increasing business and property taxes, increasing employment taxes, increasing rents, rising licensing and regulatory fees, higher utilities, insurance costs, and inflation-driven supply and labour expenses. These cumulative increases are putting small, independent businesses at a breaking point. The proposed removal of commercial recycling services represents yet another cost being downloaded onto businesses that are already struggling to remain viable.

Most BIA businesses are not large commercial operations with the bargaining power or margins to absorb additional private waste and recycling contracts. Many operate in older, mixed-use buildings with limited storage space, making private collection both expensive and impractical. Without City-supported recycling, recyclable materials will inevitably be diverted to landfill, undermining Hamilton's environmental goals while further penalizing businesses that want to operate responsibly.

Small businesses are repeatedly told they are the backbone of Hamilton's local economy, yet decisions like this send the opposite message. If the City continues to increase taxes and fees while simultaneously removing core services, the long-term result will be vacant storefronts, reduced foot traffic, and weakened neighbourhood business districts like Ancaster Village.

I strongly urge Council to reconsider the recommendation to discontinue commercial recycling collection and to recognize it as an essential service that supports environmental responsibility, economic sustainability, and fairness for small businesses. At minimum, Council should explore alternative models, cost-sharing approaches, or phased solutions rather than a complete elimination of the service.



Thank you for the opportunity to provide input as part of the 2026 budget process. I appreciate your consideration of the real and cumulative impacts these decisions have on the small business community within the Ancaster BIA.

Sincerely,

Amanda Plantinga

The Spa on Wilson | Founder

Ancaster BIA

Hamilton, Ontario