



2025 Strong Mayor Powers

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www.petawawa.ca

Orientation to Strong Mayor Powers Legislation in Ontario

- The Town of Petawawa was granted Strong Mayor Powers, as part of Bill 3, the Strong Mayors, Building Homes Act, 2022 effective May 1, 2025
- This legislation and associated regulations [O. Reg. 530/22 and O. Reg. 580/22], provide the Mayor with additional powers beyond those previously set out in the Municipal Act, 2001
- Some strong mayor powers are related to prescribed provincial priorities that are identified in Ontario Regulation 580/22:
 - Building 1.5 million new residential units by December 31, 2031
 - Constructing and maintaining infrastructure to support housing including:
 - Transit
 - Roads
 - Utilities
 - Servicing



Under Part VI.1 of the Municipal Act, 2001, the Mayor has the following special powers and duties as the head of Council:

- Appointing and dismissing the Chief Administrative Officer*
 - Hiring and dismissing certain municipal department heads, and establishing and reorganizing departments*
 - (does not include statutory positions such as Clerk, Deputy Clerk, Treasurer, Deputy Treasurer, Integrity Commissioner, Chief Building Official, Fire Chief etc.)
 - Creating committees of Council, assigning their functions, and appointing the Chairs and Vice Chairs*
 - (this only applies to committees that are solely made up of members of Council, i.e. Committee of Adjustment, Property Standards)
- *The Mayor may choose to delegate these specific powers and duties to the CAO and Council
- Strong Mayor Powers cannot be delegated to the Deputy Mayor; in the case of a vacancy or absence, Strong Mayor Powers do not transfer to an interim/acting mayor, a by-election must be conducted



- Proposing the Town's budget, which would be subject to Council amendments, a Mayoral veto, and a Council override process
 - The Strong Mayor Budget shall be prepared on or before February 1st; if not, Council shall prepare and adopt the budget
- Vetoing certain by-laws, if the Mayor is of the opinion that all or part of a by-law could potentially interfere with a provincial priority
- Bringing forward matters for Council consideration, if the Mayor is of the opinion that considering the matter could potentially advance a provincial priority
- Directing municipal staff in writing to undertake research, provide advice, or carry out duties related to the Strong Mayor powers



Mayoral Directives (MDI)

- For the purposes of exercising powers or performing duties under Part VI.1, the head of council may, in writing, exercise the powers of the municipality to direct municipal employees
- MDIs must be:
 - In writing
 - Communicated to Council
 - Posted (website)



Mayoral Decisions/Delegations (MDE)

- Subject to the prescribed limitations, if any, the head of council may delegate their powers and duties under the following sections:
 - 284.5 Chief Administrative Officer
 - 284.6 Organizational Structure
 - 284.8 Committees
- MDEs must be:
 - In writing
 - Communicated to Council
 - Posted (website)



Meetings (284.10)

- Despite any procedure by-law passed by the municipality under subsection 238 (2), if the head of council is of the opinion that considering a particular matter could potentially advance a prescribed provincial priority, the head of council may require the council to consider the matter at a meeting
- This includes a by-law



Veto (284.11)

- This section applies with respect to by-laws under,
 - This Act (Municipal Act) and the regulations, other than any prescribed section; and
 - The Planning Act and its regulations, other than any prescribed sections; and
 - Any other prescribed Act or regulation or prescribed section of an Act or regulation (includes section 2 of the *Development Charges Act*, 1997)
- By-law for consideration – despite any procedure by-law passed by the municipality under subsection 238 (2) and subject to subsection (3) of this section, if the head of council is of the opinion that all or part of a by-law that is subject to this section could potentially interfere with a prescribed provincial priority, the head of council may provide written notice to the council of the intent to consider vetoing the by-law



Veto (284.11) – Practical Application

- Two-day window for mayor to provide “notice” of their intention to veto
- Fourteen-day window to veto by-law
- Veto document must be provided to the Clerk which includes veto and the “reasons for the veto”
 - In writing
 - Communicated to Council
 - Be posted (website)
- Override Veto – Twenty-one-day window (from veto date) for Council to override veto with 2/3 vote of Council (mayor may vote in this override vote)



Budget (284.16)

- In accordance with this section and subject to the regulations, the powers and duties of a municipality with respect to proposing and adopting a budget are assigned to the head of council of the municipality
- Proposed budget – the head of council shall, in accordance with the regulations, prepare a proposed budget for the municipality and provide the proposed budget to the council for the council's consideration



- Mayor is required to propose a budget by February 1st each year, if not it falls to council
- Mayor may direct staff to prepare and present a budget for consideration
- Council can adopt or amend (thirty-day review period) budget by resolution
- If Council amends, the Mayor may exercise veto powers (ten-day window from amendment)
- Council may utilize override procedure for veto with 2/3 vote (fifteen-day window from veto)
- Mayor can vote in override vote



What if Our Mayor Wants to Decline the Powers and Duties?

- At its meeting of April 28, 2025 Council adopted a motion opposing the Strong Mayor Powers for the Town of Petawawa and communicated this decision to the Premier and the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing
- The Mayor's powers to advance or protect provincial priorities cannot be surrendered; the Mayor can only promise not to use them, and that promise is not binding
- The Mayor cannot delegate budget duty, can only forfeit it after February 1st



- The Mayor will have to issue a mayoral decision to delegate the following powers:
 - Power to appoint a CAO – to Council
 - Power to appoint certain municipal department heads – to the CAO or Council
 - Power to determine the organizational structure – to the CAO or Council
 - Power to establish, determine functions and appoint chairs and vice chairs of committees – to Council



- In order to avoid unnecessary delays in the enactment dates of Town of Petawawa by-laws caused by potential strong mayoral power vetoes and subsequent council override procedures, staff is suggesting that a procedural routine is established wherein the Mayor gives unencumbered approval for by-laws, in writing at the bottom of each individual by-law for the Town of Petawawa, with the following wording:

“By signing this by-law on MMM DD, YYYY, Mayor Gary Serviss agrees not to exercise the strong mayor power to veto this by-law, and therefore, this by-law will be deemed passed on the date indicated.”



- This presentation has been provided to Council for information purposes only.
- There is no resolution to be considered by Council, nor any decisions to be made, nor any votes to be taken by Council.
- This presentation is an initiative brought forth by the Mayor in consultation with the CAO and the Clerk to ensure that the democratic integrity of the Council of the Corporation of the Town of Petawawa is maintained.



Questions?

- Recommended resources:
 - The Ontario municipal councillor's guide ([section 10. Strong mayor powers and duties](#))
 - [Ontario Regulation 530/22](#): Part VI.1 of the Act
 - [Ontario Regulation 580/22](#): Provincial Priorities
 - [Comparing AMCTO's Request for Strong Mayor Implementation Clarification to Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing \(MMAH\) Responses](#)
 - [Part VI.1 Special Powers and Duties of the Head of Council](#) of the Municipal Act, 2001, S.O. 2001. c. 25, as amended

