



TOWN OF PETAWAWA

1111 Victoria Street, Petawawa, Ontario K8H 2E6

☎ (613) 687-5536

✉ gserviss@petawawa.ca

🌐 petawawa.ca

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

DELIVERED ELECTRONICALLY

Honorable Rob Flack
Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing
777 Bay Street, 17th floor
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 2J3

April 29, 2025

RE: Proposed Amendments to O. Reg. 530/22 to Expand Strong Mayor Powers and Duties to Additional Municipalities

Dear Minister Flack,

Thank you for your letter dated April 9, 2025, regarding the expansion of Strong Mayor Powers and Duties to the Town of Petawawa. Our Council discussed this issue in an open forum at our council meeting on April 23rd and are firmly of the belief that this effort undermines the value of collaboration between the Mayor, Councillors, and Staff. Increasing the powers of the Mayor to push forward Provincial Priorities would eliminate shared decision making, create divisiveness at the council table, and blur the lines between administrative and political roles. Our council believes that this would result in an erosion of the democratic process at the Municipal level, especially in a small city like Petawawa.

Although we don't always agree unanimously on all matters, our council works as a cohesive unit, firmly focused on the goals of advancing and encouraging growth and making our community a wonderful place in which to live and invest. Each of member of council brings their own set of skills, knowledge, values and perspectives to achieve these goals, and has worked extremely well together.

Since it was sworn in, our Council has been collectively focused on advancing provincial priorities by delivering much needed housing, building infrastructure that supports community growth and the construction of new homes, including housing-enabling infrastructure such as water and wastewater. The largest community in Renfrew County, Petawawa has grown significantly over the last decade (roughly 25%) and added a large amount of new housing to meet market demands. In 2024, Petawawa increased the size of its planning department to

reduce permit processing times, 120 new dwellings (Single Family Detached/Row Housing/Multi-family) were constructed, and there are many more dwellings underway:

Structure type	In Pre-Consultation or going through Planning Approvals	Planning Approvals Complete (under construction)
Single Family Detached	533	61
Row Housing	24	96
Apartment	348	60
Additional Residential Unit	0	44
Total Units	905	261

Further to this, Garrison Petawawa and Canadian Nuclear laboratories are reporting that they will need to house 1100 individuals and their families as they expand operations. Based on this need and other factors, our municipality is working with private sector and nonprofit developers to meet the demand for both market and affordable housing. To be forthright, where the municipality needs help the most to support housing development and foster densification is access to additional funding to extend utilities, such as water and wastewater services, to developable lands to meet future growth needs. Petawawa has faced a significant reduction in Payment In Lieu of Taxes (PILT) over the past two fiscal years (\$2.3 million over 2024 and 2025) due to the Business Education Tax discount as well as an annual reduction in Ontario Municipal Partnership Funding over the past decade which has hampered our ability to extend necessary water and wastewater infrastructure vital to delivering new homes. The community's Ontario Community Infrastructure Funding was reduced in 2025 as well.

In closing, our Council requests that the Ontario Government excludes the Town of Petawawa from its proposed amendments to O. Reg. 530/22 to Expand Strong Mayor Powers and Duties to Additional Municipalities, and work with the municipality to identify funding to support expansion of its storm, water and wastewater treatment systems to support future residential and commercial growth. Thank you for your attention to this matter. Please feel free to contact me through our offices if you wish to discuss this further.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in grey ink, appearing to read 'GS' with a stylized flourish.

Gary Serviss
Mayor of Petawawa

Copied: Doug Ford, Premier
Billy Denault, MPP, Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke

Enc. Resolution – Opposition to Strong Mayor Designation for the Town of Petawawa



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April 28, 2025

Delivered Electronically

Attn: The Honourable Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario

Re: Resolution - Opposition to Strong Mayor Designation for the Town of Petawawa

At its Council-In-Committee meeting on **April 28, 2025**, Petawawa Town Council passed a **Resolution** in response to the Province's recent proposal to designate Petawawa as a "**Strong Mayor**" municipality, effective May 1, 2025.

WHEREAS the Province of Ontario has proposed to designate the Town of Petawawa as a "Strong Mayor" community, granting enhanced powers to the Mayor effective May 1, 2025; and,

WHEREAS the Strong Mayor powers significantly alter the balance of governance at the municipal level, undermining the role of Council in decision-making and weakening the fundamental democratic principle of majority rule; and,

WHEREAS the Town of Petawawa has a long history of collaborative, transparent, and accountable local governance built upon a foundation of Council-debate and shared decision-making; and,

WHEREAS many municipally elected officials across the province and members of the public have expressed significant concern regarding the imposition of these powers; and,

WHEREAS the Town of Petawawa did not formally request or express a desire to be designated under the Strong Mayor framework; and,

WHEREAS a growing number of municipalities and elected officials across Ontario are questioning the appropriateness of the Strong Mayor system and are calling for its reconsideration or repeal;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Petawawa Town Council formally request that the Premier of Ontario and the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing immediately remove the Town of Petawawa from the list of municipalities designated under the Strong Mayor legislation;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be sent to the Premier of Ontario, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, all regional Members of Provincial

Parliament, all Ontario municipalities, and the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) for their awareness and support.

We thank you for your attention to this matter and urge you to respect the democratic wishes of our Council and community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'G. Serviss', with a small 'ss' written below the signature.

Gary Serviss
Mayor, Town of Petawawa
(613) 687-5536
gserviss@petawawa.ca
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CC:
The Honourable Rob Flack (Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing)
Regional Members of Provincial Parliament
All Ontario Municipalities
The Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO)