



## CORPORATE REPORT

The Corporation of the Town of Wasaga Beach  
Meeting Date: 5/15/2025

**DATE:** 4/22/2025

**SUBJECT:** Strong Mayor Legislation

**CONTACT:** Nicole Rubli, GM of Legislative & Development Services/Clerk

**REPORT NUMBER:** 2025/05/15-33

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### RECOMMENDATION:

1. **THAT** the report titled: Strong Mayor Legislation, to the Council meeting of May 15, 2025, be received for information.

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

- **Strong Mayor Legislation was introduced in Ontario in 2022.**
- **The Ontario government has granted strong mayor powers to an additional 169 municipalities as of May 1<sup>st</sup>, which includes the Town of Wasaga Beach**
- **The report provides an overview of the Strong Mayor legislation**

### BACKGROUND:

In August 2022, the Ontario government introduced the Strong Mayors, Building Home Act. The bill received Royal Assent on September 8, 2022. The strong mayor powers is a tool provided to the heads of council to reduce red tape and allow municipalities to quickly support municipal and provincial priorities. The municipal-provincial priorities are identified in Ontario Regulation 580/22 of the Municipal Act and are designed to assist the province in meeting their housing target to get 1.5 million homes built by 2031. The municipal-provincial priorities include constructing and maintaining infrastructure to support housing, including:

- i. transit,
- ii. roads,
- iii. utilities, and
- iv. servicing (Ontario Regulation 580/22: Provincial Priorities)

All new powers afforded to the head of Council with the legislation change are outlined in Part VI.1, Special Powers and Duties of the Head of Council in the Municipal Act. In addition, to advancing provincial priorities, the new legislation provides additional powers to the head of Council which are outlined in S. 284 of the Act.

When announced the new legislation was intended for Ottawa and Toronto, it was then expanded to fifty communities across Ontario. To be eligible the designated communities had to commit to increasing the housing supply in Ontario by committing to their assigned target through a housing pledge.

On April 9, 2025 the Province announced that they were proposing to expand strong mayor powers to heads of Council to an additional 169 municipalities including the Town of Wasaga Beach effective May 1, 2025.

## DISCUSSION:

Strong Mayor powers for the additional 169 municipalities came into effect May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025. The chart below provides a high level summary of the strong mayor powers found in Sections 284.2 to 284.17 of the Municipal Act, as well as some rules surrounding the use of the powers:

<b>Strong Mayor Power</b>	<b>Specific Powers</b>	<b>Notes</b>
S. 284.3 - Direction to Municipal Staff	Direct Staff to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undertake research</li> <li>• Provide advice to Mayor and Council on municipal policies and programs</li> <li>• Carry out duties related to Mayoral decisions related to the powers under the Act</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Written record of direction must be provided to the Clerk and Chief Administrative Office by the next business day.</li> <li>• Direction must be circulated to all of Council</li> <li>• Direction to staff that is not confidential must be posted on municipal website</li> </ul>
S. 284.5 – Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appoint CAO</li> <li>• Assign duties to the CAO</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This power may be delegated to Council</li> </ul>
S. 284.6 – Organizational Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determine the municipal organizational structure</li> <li>• Hire or dismiss the head of any division or the head of any other part of the organizational structure, with the exception of the following officials, which must be appointed by Council:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clerk or deputy clerk.</li> <li>• Treasurer or deputy treasurer.</li> <li>• Integrity Commissioner.</li> <li>• Ombudsman.</li> <li>• Auditor General.</li> <li>• Registrar.</li> <li>• Chief Building Official</li> <li>• Chief of Police</li> <li>• Fire Chief</li> <li>• Medical Officer of Health</li> <li>• Other Officers or Heads of Divisions required to be appointed under this or any other Act</li> <li>• Any other prescribed persons.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determining the organizational structure and the hiring/dismissal of division's heads or head of any part of the organizational structure may be delegated to Council or the CAO.</li> <li>• Delegation of these items may be done on a situational basis</li> <li>• All delegations of these powers are required to be completed in writing and posted on the municipal website.</li> </ul>

<b>Strong Mayor Power</b>	<b>Specific Powers</b>	<b>Notes</b>
S. 284.7 & S. 284.8 Local Boards and Committees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appoint chairs and vice-chairs of local boards</li> <li>• Establish or dissolve a committee</li> <li>• Appoint chairs and vice-chairs of committees</li> <li>• Assign functions to committees</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Powers may be delegated to Council. Delegation must be in writing and posted on the municipal website.</li> </ul>
S. 284.11 Veto Powers/Veto By-laws (Advance and/or Prevent Interference with Provincial Priorities)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applies to by-laws associated with the Municipal Act, Planning Act and Section 2 of the Development Charges Act</li> <li>• Veto a by-law if Mayor is of opinion the by-law interferes with provincial priority</li> <li>• May propose certain by-laws that would advance provincial priorities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Powers cannot be delegated.</li> <li>• Veto does not allow Mayor to introduce amendments or new by-laws, may only nullify Council decision.</li> <li>• Written veto document must be provided to Clerk with reasons for veto. Clerk must provide written veto document to Council and make it available to public next business day.</li> <li>• Copy of veto decisions must be posted on municipal website</li> <li>• Council will have 21 days to possibly override the head of council's veto with a two-thirds council vote</li> <li>• By-law proposed by head of Council can be enacted by a vote of one-third plus one member of a municipal council</li> </ul>
S. 284.16 Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare and propose budget to Council for consideration before February 1</li> <li>• Veto amendments to budget made by Council within 10 days after the period for Council to pass amendments</li> <li>• Mayor may shorten the 10 day veto period</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Powers cannot be delegated.</li> <li>• Power to prepare and present budget reverts to Council if Mayor fails to present by February 1.</li> <li>• Council has 30 days to amend the budget after presented, if no amendments, Mayor's proposed budget is adopted. Council may vote to shorten this period.</li> <li>• Council may override Mayor's veto with two-thirds of Council voting to override the veto</li> </ul>

There are additional requirements within the legislation relating to strong mayor powers that prescribes that a by-election must be held if there is a vacancy, to fill the office of mayor. In municipalities that do not have strong mayor powers, they may fill the head of council vacancy by appointment or by-election. Deputy Mayors are not permitted to exercise strong mayor powers when filling the role.

The Clerk's Division will be responsible to provide public notice in accordance with the legislative requirements and a webpage on the Town's website has been dedicated to the legislation. The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) has indicated that they will offer province-wide technical briefings for municipal staff and elected officials. The briefings will be virtual and are expected to take place within the next few weeks, Council will be made aware of when these sessions will be held. Guidance on the strong mayor framework is also available to Council via the MMAH's [Ontario's Councillor's Guide](#).

### **CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS:**

#### Financial Implications:

There are no financial impacts associated with this report.

### **CONCLUSION:**

This report is provided to Council for information.

Authored by:

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