

Memo

To: Council
From: Victoria Steele, Director of Legislative Services
Date: May 12, 2025
Re: Strong Mayor Powers

Background

On April 9, 2025 the Province of Ontario announced the extension of Strong Mayor Powers to 169 additional municipalities, including the Town of Grimsby (**Appendix A**). A letter from the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing was received on May 1, 2025, confirming the expansion of strong mayor powers.

The Province states the goal of these changes is to help deliver on Provincial Priorities as outlined in [O. Reg. 580/22](#). As of the date of this report, the prescribed Provincial Priorities are as follows:

1. Building new residential units by December 31, 2031
2. Constructing and maintaining infrastructure to support housing including;
 - i. transit,
 - ii. roads,
 - iii. utilities, and
 - iv. servicing.

In the Ontario Municipal Councillor's Guide, created by the Province, section 10 includes an overview of strong mayor powers and duties (**Appendix C**). This resource provides explanations and considerations regarding strong mayor powers.

The legislation relating to these powers are outlined in Part VI.1 of the *Municipal Act, 2001*, which were introduced through Bill 3, the *Strong Mayors, Building Homes Act, 2022*, and regulations under [O.Reg 580/22](#) (Provincial Priorities) and [O.Reg 530.22](#) (pertaining specifically to Part VI.1 of the *Municipal Act, 2001*).

In the past, strong mayor powers were tied to housing targets and there was a choice to opt-in or opt-out of receiving the powers. There are no longer opt-out provisions, and as of May 1, 2025, along with 216 other Ontario municipalities, the Town of Grimsby operates under the strong mayor powers.

Mayoral Decisions and Directions in Writing

Any decisions or directions made under the Act must be made in writing to the Clerk. The public posting of Mayoral decisions and directions will be available on the Town's website: <https://www.grimsby.ca/town-hall/mayor-and-council/mayoral-powers-decisions-directions/>. When decisions or directions are posted, the Clerk's Office will send an email to Council, similar to when Council and Committee agendas are published.

Strong Mayor Powers and Duties

As outlined in the Act, Strong mayor powers and duties include:

- Choosing to appoint the municipality's chief administrative officer.
- Hiring certain municipal department heads and establishing and re-organizing departments. This excludes hiring or firing statutory positions.
- Creating Committees of Council, assigning their functions and appointing the chairs and vice-chairs of Committees of Council.
- Proposing certain municipal by-laws if the mayor is of the opinion that the proposed by-law could potentially advance a Provincial Priority identified in regulation. Must have more than one-third of all Council members vote in favour.
- Vetoing certain by-laws if the Head of Council is of the opinion that all or part of the by-law could potentially interfere with a Provincial Priority.
- Direct staff
- Proposing the municipal budget by February 1st, which would be subject to Council amendments and a separate Head of Council veto and Council override process.
- In-year budget amendments
- Bringing forward matters for Council consideration if the Head of Council is of the opinion that considering the matter could potentially advance a Provincial Priority.
 - Must consider if there is respect to notice of public consultation that may apply (i.e. public meetings, advertising).

Vetoing and Overriding a Veto

Under section 284.11 of the *Municipal Act, 2001* the Mayor has the authority to veto all or parts of a By-law passed under the Municipal Act, Planning Act, or section 2 of the Development Charges Act if, in the Mayor's opinion, it could interfere with a Provincial Priority. To ensure accountability and transparency, a process has been developed:

- The Head of Council must provide written notice to Council of their intent to consider vetoing a By-law on or before two days after Council voted in favour of the By-law.
- If the Head of Council decides to use their veto within 14 days after the day Council voted in favour, the Head of Council must provide a written veto document that includes reasoning to the Clerk. The Clerk must then share the written document with each member of Council by the next business day and make the written document available to the public.
- If the Head of Council uses their veto power, Council has the ability to override the veto within 21 days of the Clerk providing the written document. This required a two-thirds vote of all Council members. During this process, the Head of Council remains a member of Council for the decision-making with one vote.

A decision as to whether the Mayor will veto or not veto any By-laws will be posted on the Town's website.

Annual Budget

Under section 284.16 of the *Municipal Act, 2001* the Mayor must present a proposed budget to Council by February 1st each year. An overview of the process is as follows:

- Mayor prepares and submits the budget to Council for review by February 1.
- Council reviews and suggests amendments (30 days).
- Council has 30 days to pass resolutions proposing changes to the Mayor's budget.
- Mayor has 10 days to veto any of Council's changes. A written explanation must be provided to the Clerk and Council.
- Council has 15 days after the veto period to override the veto with a two-thirds vote.

A detailed report with budget timelines will be presented to Council at a later date.

Conclusion

As the Town navigates the introduction of strong mayor powers in Grimsby, it is essential to approach this change with a commitment to good governance. Fostering open dialogue between Council members, the Mayor, and staff will ensure decisions continue to be made to meet the needs and values of the Grimsby community. Staff remain committed to supporting Council through this transition and will provide updates and guidance as the legislation evolves. This memo is being provided to Council to receive as information.

Respectfully submitted by,



Victoria Steele
Director of Legislative Services / Clerk

Respectfully approved by,



Sarah Kim
Chief Administrative Officer

Attachments

- **Appendix A** – MMAH April 9 2025
- **Appendix B** – MMAH May 1 2025
- **Appendix C** – Strong Mayor Powers and Duties – The Ontario Municipal Councillor Guide