



Legal and Legislative Services

June 24, 2025

The Honourable Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario
Queen's Park
Toronto, ON M7A 1A1
premier@ontario.ca

Honourable and Dear Sir:

Re: The Corporation of the Township of Rideau Lakes Resolution – Strong Mayor Powers

Please be advised the Municipal Council of the Town of Fort Erie at its meeting of June 23, 2025, received and supported correspondence from Township of Rideau Lakes dated May 22, 2025, calling upon 444 municipalities to collect and coordinate action and seek legal and constitutional expert to challenge the Strong Mayor Powers.

Attached please find a copy of Township of Rideau Lakes correspondence dated May 22, 2025.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Kind regards,

Ashlea Carter,
Acting Manager, Legislative Services/Town Clerk
acarter@forterie.ca
AC:dlk
Encl.

c.c.: The Honourable Rob Flack, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing; minister.mah@ontario.ca
MPP's jburch-qp@ndp.on.ca; wgates-qp@ndp.on.ca; sam.oosterhoff@pc.ola.org; jstevens-qp@ndp.on.ca
AMO; amo@amo.on.ca
Rideau Lakes: mtruelove@rideaulakes.ca, councillorpbanks@rideaulakes.ca
Municipalities of Ontario

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**TOWNSHIP OF RIDEAU LAKES
Special Council Meeting**

RESOLUTION 129-2025

Title: Councillor P. Banks: Proposed Motion re: Strong Mayor Power Legal Challenge to Province

Date: Thursday, May 22, 2025

Moved by Councillor P. Banks

Seconded by Councillor Dunfield

WHEREAS the Province of Ontario has unilaterally imposed “Strong Mayor Powers” on numerous municipalities without democratic consultation or local consent, overriding the will of almost 50 municipal councils and communities;

WHEREAS these powers centralize authority in the office of the mayor, undermining the longstanding principles of democratic, council-based decision-making and the equal voice of ward councillors who represent diverse and distinct communities within a municipality;

WHEREAS the imposition of Strong Mayor Powers has particularly harmful implications for rural municipalities, which often have part-time mayors who may now feel there is neither the need nor the financial capacity to hire and retain full-time, independent, and professionally qualified Chief Administrative Officers (CAOs), undermining the critical role of senior staff in providing non-partisan, expert advice and ensuring stable, accountable local administration;

WHEREAS in such municipalities, these powers threaten to erode the role and independence of professional administrative staff, including CAOs, whose accountability to the full council is essential for transparent, well-managed local government, raising concerns that a single elected official may unilaterally direct, override, or dismiss senior staff without the benefit of full council oversight;

WHEREAS the Township of Rideau Lakes, representing a small rural community, has taken a leadership role by committing financially toward a collective advocacy, legal, and communications effort to defend local democracy and resist the imposed governance framework;

WHEREAS over 50 municipalities across Ontario have already expressed formal opposition to Strong Mayor Powers, and growing support from across regions—including Newmarket and other urban and rural communities—demonstrates the broad, nonpartisan resistance to this undemocratic model;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

1. Council formally reaffirms its opposition to the imposition of Strong Mayor Powers and requests to opt out of this governance model, reaffirming our commitment to democratic, council-based governance and equal representation for all residents.

2. Council highlights the unique risks and negative consequences for municipalities, where part-time elected officials and resource-constrained administrations are especially vulnerable to disruptions in effective and accountable governance.
3. Council directs that a copy of their resolutions be included in the publicly documented list of municipalities that oppose Strong Mayor Powers.
4. Council further directs that this resolution be sent to all 444 municipalities in Ontario as a strong call to collective, coordinated action against this top-down provincial policy.
5. Council commits to contributing financial support to the shared effort initiated by the Township of Rideau Lakes, recognizing the importance of standing together to protect democratic local governance in every municipality, large or small.
6. Once a coordinated effort is established among all 444 municipalities, we, as a collective, should seek out a legal and constitutional expert to challenge the Ford government's 'strong mayor' powers. These powers undermine the democratic rights of councillors and may violate constitutional principles of local governance and representation.

Carried