

15 April 2025

Honourable Rob Flack  
Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing  
777 Bay Street, 17<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Toronto, ON M7A 2J3

Dear Minister Flack,

RE: Proposed Expansion of Strong Mayor Powers

I am writing in response to your letter of April 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025 in which you outline your government's proposed expansion of "Strong Mayor" powers to additional municipalities, including Perth.

At my request, our Council met this morning to discuss this and unanimously passed a motion affirming our opposition of the Town of Perth being considered, and asking to be removed from the list of municipalities being granted "Strong Mayor" powers.

I am proud of the progress my Council and municipality have made this term in many areas, with housing growth being one of the most significant. Since the start of this term of Council alone, we have seen substantial housing numbers for a community of 7,000 people. These include:

- An approval of 120 affordable housing unit starts
- Donation of municipally owned land to a non-profit to build an additional 15 units of affordable and rent geared to income housing
- A general population increase of 800 residents (representing an 11% growth rate over the last three years)
- An approved subdivision expansion of 100 homes, commencing in 2025
- Reviewing an additional proposed subdivision of 1,000 homes.

Because of the commitment of our Council to creating housing in support of the Province's housing goals, our community is expected to grow from 6,000 people in 2015 to 10,500 by 2035. To support this our Council has:

- Committed funding to expanding our wastewater treatment lagoon starting in 2025 to increase our capacity from 8,500 residents to 10,500
- Committed funding to constructing a new water tower starting in 2027
- Made supporting growth and development a key pillar in our Strategic Plan

- Aligned our Official Plan and Zoning By-Law to support further intensification and infill
- Worked with Lanark Transportation to commence a trial transit project to provide seniors and low income residents with increased access to services and healthcare
- Increased municipal support of local hospital funding to \$100,000 annually to expand services
- Expanded water and sewer infrastructure across our municipal boundary to support the construction of a new Long Term Care home in our neighbouring municipality
- Worked with a local group of doctors and provided nearly \$100,000 in financial support to construct a new medical and healthcare clinic
- Promoting and working with developers on the expansion of our Industrial Park and development of commercial zones to support additional jobs for new homes.

Our Council has worked incredibly hard to implement the housing and growth that we have. The imposition of “strong mayor” powers in our municipality is not needed in Perth to support housing, will serve to introduce operational, policy, and structural challenges to a local government here that already functions well, and more importantly, will interrupt the fastest period of growth the Town of Perth has experienced in 200 years; facilitated by this term of Council. We have worked together as elected officials to make this happen in our community in support of the Province’s housing targets.

The support that we *do* need from the Province to achieve our housing targets is infrastructure funding. With the support of our MPP John Jordan, we recently received a HEWSF grant of \$2.9 million which will allow us to expand our wastewater treatment lagoon to accommodate the growth. We continue to seek your government’s support of our second water tower, the construction of an arterial road connecting with Highway 7, and the replacement and expansion of our regional pool and arena facilities. *These* are the most pressing road blocks we face for growth and for housing.

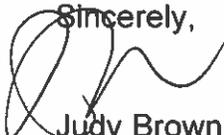
During our Council meeting on Monday morning, Council voiced strong opposition to Perth being included in the list. Below are some, but not all, of the reasons:

- All members of Council were elected to represent the varied interests and needs of our community, not just the Head of Council. Council debates ideas and proposals, benefitting from a variety of perspectives, then supports the will of the majority.
- The proposed legislation contributes to continued erosion of trust in public institutions and elected officials by reducing the opportunity for public consultation and input.

- That the legislation does not reflect the will of our residents or community. This is witnessed through numerous public comments and feedback we have received since the announcement was made objecting to the changes.
- Concern that a Head of Council cannot be a subject matter expert in all areas of the legislation and benefits from the input, advice, and votes of other members of Council and impartial public servants.
- Blurs the boundaries between elected officials and administration, adding to confusion for Council members, staff, and more importantly our constituents.
- Our Council has a demonstrated history of working well collaboratively to advance the needs of our community and well as Provincial priorities, including housing. "Strong Mayor" powers have the potential to cause large disruption to our community, and in all likelihood, may serve to distract from Perth's commitment to continued housing growth.

For all these reasons, and as per the unanimous resolution passed by our Council this morning, we ask your Ministry to remove the Town of Perth from the list of municipalities being considering May 1 for the expansion of "Strong Mayor" powers so that we may continue to advance local and provincial priorities.

Sincerely,



Judy Brown  
Mayor

cc: Hon. Doug Ford, Premier  
John Jordan, MPP, Lanark-Frontenac-Kingston  
Robin Jones, President, Association of Municipalities of Ontario  
Christa Lowry, Chair, Rural Ontario Municipal Association

The following motion was passed at the Town of Perth's Special Council meeting held on April 14, 2025:

**Strong Mayors, Building Homes Act, 2022 - Proposed Amendment to O. Reg 530/22 - Strong Mayor Power Expansion**

**Motion #25-033-02**

Be it resolved that the Council of the Town of Perth:

- (i) provide comments to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing related to the proposed amendment to O.Reg. 530/22 to expand the Strong Mayor Powers, and,
- (ii) direct staff to send a letter to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing requesting that the Town of Perth be removed from the proposed list of municipalities being granted strong mayor powers, as presented in Report-2025-COUNCIL-5.1.

**Carried - Unanimous**

For more information:

Amanda Noel

Director of Legislative Services/Clerk

[anoel@perth.ca](mailto:anoel@perth.ca)