
March 25, 2024

email: clerks@burlington.ca

Office of the City Clerk
City of Burlington
426 Brant St., P.O. Box 5013
Burlington, ON., L7R 3Z6

Re: Motion memo Improving Local Democracy by Strengthening City Decision-Making (ADM-05-24)

Council Members;

Thank you to Councillors Nisan, Galbraith and Stolte for developing and presenting the proposed motion.

At the time the Strong Mayor Powers was being legislated by the province of Ontario was the time the mayor and all councillors representing the City and Region should have spoken up and stated that the legislation was not and is not a democratic process that most Canadians, Ontarians and the residents of our communities would have expected. We trust our mayors and councillors to 'take the lead', speak up and represent our democratic rights. Surely a strong statement against the Strong Mayor Powers, from the CoB, would have demonstrated that Burlington is a "leading city" in democratic processes and not just a top of the charts 'livable community".

Please note the article published by CBC, "4 Ontario municipalities turn down strong mayor powers" by respected reporter Allison Jones from the Canadian Press mentioning the Cities that turned down the Strong Mayor powers. The article was published across many media outlets, another being CHCH news.

In an Insauga article By Lucy Mazzucco published November 24, 2022, "*Burlington mayor says municipalities need 'strong city powers' ,,, I've never asked for strong mayor powers, nor do I need them," said Meed Ward in an Instagram interview. That is my strongest message,*" concluded Meed Ward in the interview.

I ask you to consider a unanimous “yes” vote for the proposed motion. There should not be much further debate. We know some of the negative repercussions of not doing so in our province these days when democratic rights, “hard won” previously, are chipped away and ultimately eroded. A Strong Mayor is one who respects and engages the council, and represents all people in their community. Strong Mayor Power is not democratic representation and as stated by others is a “gross violation of democratic principles”.

Regards,



Fran Fendeleit

Resident, [REDACTED]

Notes:

Strong Mayor Power <https://www.ontario.ca/document/ontario-municipal-councillors-guide/10-strong-mayor-powers-and-duties>

“4 Ontario municipalities turn down strong mayor powers”

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/ontario-strong-mayor-powers-reject-1.7025142>

CHCH NEWS - Four Ontario municipalities turn down strong mayor powers (November 10, 2023) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OvH5IRyHN6Y>

<https://www.burlington.ca/en/council-and-city-administration/mayoral-decisions.aspx>

As stated in IRPP “... *Bill 39, approved by the Ontario legislature in December, pushes the envelope by proposing to give mayors the power to do something that no governing executive can do in any western democracy: pass bills with only one-third support of the legislature.* ”

(<https://policyoptions.irpp.org/magazines/december-2022/strong-mayor-powers-in-ontario-are-a-gross-violation-of-democratic-principles/>)

We don’t need strong mayors, we need strong cities.”

(<https://www.insauga.com/burlington-mayor-says-municipalities-need-strong-city-powers/>)