

Caledon Council calls on Government of Ontario to amend Bill 100

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A motion introduced by Councillor Dave Sheen at the April 21 Planning and Development meeting called for Caledon Council to call on the Government of Ontario to amend Bill 100, otherwise known as the Better Regional Governance Act, 2026.

The Better Regional Governance Act, 2026 was introduced by the Ontario Government, which would allow the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing the power to appoint upper-tier Council Chairs in Regions such as Peel, and give these upper-tier Council members 'Strong Chair' powers, which mirror 'Strong Mayor' powers.

In Sheen's motion, he states that Caledon 'already operates under a Strong Mayor framework that is expressly tied to advancing prescribed provincial priorities, and Bill 100 would extend a similar provincially aligned model to the regional level above Caledon.'

The motion also states that with planning and roads responsibilities downloaded to the Town, 'key structural levers that influence Caledon's long-term growth, including a provincially appointed regional chair, provincially regulated water and wastewater servicing, and a provincially approved Official Plan, remain outside the direct control of future Caledon Councils.'

At the meeting, Sheen said instead of concentrating powers in the hands of those functionally aligned with the Province, 'we should be working harder to align provincial and local priorities through normal democratic processes.'

He added that 'Strong Mayor' and 'Strong Chair' powers are small steps that normalize concentrating power into fewer hands, and move decisions further away from the people they affect.

Councillor Mario Russo added that as Regional Councillor, he's seen the 'absolutely great work' that Regional Staff does at that level, and that he's happy to support the motion as it shows staff at the Region they are supportive of them, both at the Town and Regional table.

With the passing of the motion, Council will state its opposition to Bill 100 in its current form and call upon the Government of Ontario to amend Bill 100 to 'protect municipal and regional autonomy, maintain the authority of locally elected councils over their own governance structures, and safeguard a non-partisan municipal public service.'

Also, the motion urges the Government of Ontario to reconsider the model of provincially appointed 'Strong Regional Chairs' with 'Strong Mayor-style powers', and 'instead ensure that regional leadership remains selected by and accountable to their councils.'

The motion also urges the Government of Ontario to 'undertake meaningful consultation' with municipalities and residents, including through the Association of Municipalities of Ontario and with affected municipalities such as the Town of Caledon and the Region of Peel, before 'implementing changes to municipal governance and related servicing structures.'