
For Information

REPORT TITLE: Bill 100 “Better Regional Governance Act, 2026”

**FROM: Patricia Caza, B.A., LL.B., Regional Solicitor and Commissioner of
Legislative Services**

OBJECTIVE

This report summarizes the key changes impacting Peel Region as proposed under *Bill 100, Better Regional Governance Act, 2026*, specifically, the ability of the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing to appoint regional chairs, the granting of “strong chair” powers, and the Minister’s ability to implement weighted voting.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- *Bill 100, Better Regional Governance Act, 2026* was introduced by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing on April 2, 2026.
 - If enacted, the proposed legislation will allow the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing to appoint regional chairs in upper-tier municipalities, altering the authority of Peel Regional Council under the existing legislation to appoint the chair.
 - The Province has proposed that Minister-appointed chairs will be given “strong chair” powers that mirror previously established “strong mayor” powers, including powers that would authorize the chair to appoint and dismiss the CAO, hire and dismiss division heads, appoint chairs and vice-chairs of prescribed local boards, bring forward matters tied to provincial priorities for council consideration, veto certain by-laws that interfere with provincial priorities, and propose a budget and in-year budgetary amendments.
 - *Bill 100* also authorizes the Minister, by regulation, to implement weighed voting in an upper-tier municipality.
 - Changes to council composition in Niagara Region and Simcoe County proposed in *Bill 100* are not addressed in this report.
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DISCUSSION

1. Background

On April 2, 2026, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing Robert Flack introduced *Bill 100, Better Regional Governance Act, 2026* (“*Bill 100*”) with the stated goal of helping local leaders speed up decision-making, reduce costs, and expedite housing and infrastructure. If enacted, this bill will amend the *Municipal Act, 2001*, and the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.

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2. Proposed Changes to the *Municipal Act, 2001*

a) Provincially Appointed Regional Chairs

Bill 100, if enacted will allow the Minister to appoint regional chairs in Durham, Halton, Muskoka, Niagara, Peel, Waterloo and York, as well as the warden of Simcoe County. The stated objective of this approach is to improve strategic alignment with provincial priorities and ensure more efficient, streamlined regional decision making.

If the Minister does not appoint a chair (referred to as the head of council for the purpose of the legislation) prior to the first meeting of the new council following a regular election, the *Bill 100* amendments provide that the members of council shall appoint the head of council. The proposed amendments provide that: at any time the Minister may remove the head of council, regardless of whether they are appointed by the Minister or by council; the Minister may appoint a new head of council if the Minister removes a head of council, and; in the case of a vacancy, the Minister may appoint the head of council to fill the vacancy or council must appoint a head of council within 60 days after a declaration of vacancy is made.

Although the *Municipal Act, 2001* currently provides that the head of council is to be elected by general vote or to be appointed by the members of council, in 2022 the Province enacted legislation giving the Minister the authority to appoint chairs in Niagara, Peel and York Regions for the 2022-2026 council term only.

The *Bill 100* amendments confirm that the proposed legislative process to appoint regional chairs will continue as the process for future council terms and is not limited to the 2026 term of council. In this regard, the Minister is entitled to appoint the chair following the 2026 regular election and following every subsequent election, with council making the appointment should an appointment by the Minister not be made.

b) Strong Chair Powers

Bill 100 as proposed gives the Minister authority to make regulations such as prescribing powers and duties of the heads of councils for 8 upper-tier municipalities, including Peel Region. If *Bill 100* is enacted, the Province has indicated it’s intention to amend the strong mayor powers regulation of the *Municipal Act, 2001*, Part VI.1.O.Reg.530/22, to grant strong chair powers and duties to select upper-tier heads of council with technical modifications to support implementation in a two-tier structure, as necessary. The Province has indicated that the “strong chair” powers would mirror the strong mayor powers and would include the following:

- Appoint/dismiss the Chief Administrative Officer.
- Hire/dismiss division heads and determine the organizational structure of the region.
- Create committees of council, assign their functions and appoint chairs and vice-chairs of committees.
- Bring forward matters tied to provincial priorities for council consideration.
- Appoint the chairs and vice-chairs of prescribed local boards.
- Direct staff in relation to the head of council’s exercise of powers and duties.

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- Veto 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, subject to a council override process.
- Propose the municipal budget and in-year budget amendments, which would be subject to council amendments and a separate head of council veto and council override process.
- Propose certain municipal by-laws if the head of council is of the opinion that the proposed by-law could potentially advance a prescribed provincial priority. The by-law can then be passed if more than one third of council members vote in favour.

The proposed regulatory amendments have not yet been made available for review, however, comments on the proposed changes to the strong mayor/chairs powers have been posted on the Ontario Regulatory Registry for comment, as outlined further in this report. If enacted, these changes to strong chair powers will come into effect for the 2026-2030 municipal council term commencing on November 15, 2026.

c) Weighted Voting

The changes proposed in *Bill 100* will enable the Minister to implement weighted voting in an upper-tier municipality and establish rules for weighted voting to ensure composition maintains fair local representation. Currently, upper-tier municipalities have the option of using weighted voting whereby an upper-tier municipality may change the number of votes given to any member so long as each member has at least one vote. *Bill 100* would authorize the Minister to make regulations prescribing the number of votes to be given to each member, the rules for when the number of votes given to any member is more than one vote, and the matters or questions for which the numbers of votes given to any member is more than one vote. If these proposed changes are enacted, weighted voting could be established not only by a by-law of council passed via the triple majority process under existing legislative authority, but also by a regulation made by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing in relation to a particular upper-tier municipality.

3. Ontario Regulatory Registry Postings (Consultations) – Upper-Tier Municipal Governance and Strong Mayor/Chair Designation Election Year Rules

The Province posted two proposals related to *Bill 100, Better Regional Governance Act, 2026* to the Ontario Regulatory Registry (ORR) for comment. One is with respect to changes to upper-tier governance outlined in this report and the other related to strong mayor powers, which are outlined below:

- *Proposed amendments to the Municipal Act, 2001 and Municipal Elections Act, 1996 to strengthen upper-tier municipal governance* – This proposal pertains to the legislative amendments to the *Municipal Act, 2001* in *Bill 100* related to Upper-tier (Regional) governance that are outlined in this report. The comment due date is **May 2, 2026**.
- *Proposed Regulatory Amendments to O.Reg. 530/22 to Update Strong Mayor Designation, Election Year Rules, and Support Regional Governance Changes* – The proposal deals with three matters. First, it proposes limits to strong mayor activities during municipal election year by applying certain rules (e.g., lame duck

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rules) to certain strong mayor powers. Second, it supports implementation of regional governance reforms by granting strong mayor powers and duties to select upper-tier municipality heads of council. Third, it touches on changes to reflect updated council composition by updating the list of designated municipalities granted strong head of council powers. The comment due date is **May 17, 2026**.

Staff have not proposed comments to the Province on the proposed legislative and regulatory amendments. Should Regional Council wish to submit comments to the Province on these ORR postings, direction will be required.

CONCLUSION

If *Bill 100* is enacted, the ability of the Minister to appoint regional chairs will be permanent and it is expected that regional chairs will be extended strong chair powers that mirror the strong mayor powers set out in the *Municipal Act, 2001*.

Staff will continue to monitor the progress of *Bill 100* as it moves through the legislative process and will report back to Council on any key regulations impacting Peel’s governance model as additional details become available.



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