

April 15, 2026

Sent Via Email – (salmas@collingwood.ca)

Sara Almas - Director, Legislative Services/Clerk
TOWN OF COLLINGWOOD
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File No. 0284174.0002

Dear Ms. Almas:

Re: Strong Mayor Powers and Chief Administrative Officer

Pursuant to Council's direction, this letter sets out a basic summary, for public discussion, of the impact of strong mayor powers on the position of chief administrative officer ("**CAO**"). I note Council's intention not to waive privilege over any other solicitor-client communication.

Strong Mayor Powers and Chief Administrative Officers

- The CAO is an optional appointment made under the *Municipal Act, 2001*. The CAO's core statutory role is to exercise general control and management of a municipality's affairs, for the purpose of ensuring the municipality's efficient and effective operation.
- Traditionally, Council has had the power to (a) appoint the CAO and (b) assign additional duties. Where strong mayor powers apply, my opinion is that both powers have been reassigned to the head of council – i.e. the Mayor, in the Town's case.
- If the head delegates those powers, it can only be to Council. The head could revoke that delegation at a later time (since the statutory assignment remains unchanged).
- The above points will require care in future application of the Town's CAO By-law, No. 2022-073, since it will not be able to enforce provisions conflicting with statutory strong mayor powers. Strong mayor powers also remain subject to legislative amendment and judicial interpretation.
- The CAO's central and overriding duty remains to the Town's operation and affairs. The Town also retains the ability to uphold human resources policies and adopt procedures for input on employee and officer performance.

Sincerely,
MILLER THOMSON LLP

Per:



Thomas Sanderson