

2025-05-21

To: Mayor Salonen and Members of Wilmot Council

Re: Wilmot “*Strong Mayor*” Powers

I am writing to express my concern with the recent addition of “*strong mayor*” powers to include Wilmot. I believe strong mayor power diminishes municipal democracy and weakens the role of our elected members of Council. There are concerns I have with regards to strong mayor powers, not limited to but most notably:

- **Erosion of Democratic Checks and Balances** - Enabling Wilmot Mayors to override Council decisions undermines local democracy and the principles of shared governance.
- **Risk of Corruption and Cronyism** - In smaller Townships like Wilmot, where oversight is limited, strong mayor powers could lead to unchecked influence from developers and political allies.
- **Marginalization of Council Voices** - Council members may feel sidelined, reducing the diversity of perspectives in decision-making and potentially alienating constituents.
- **Environmental and Planning Concerns** - Mayoral ability to “fast-track” sprawl developments on farmland, or the ability to veto bylaws, raise concerns about long-term planning and sustainability.

Municipal governance requires proper check and balances, transparent processes, and inclusive decision making. I believe strong mayor power threatens these principals, particularly in smaller communities like Wilmot.

“*With great power comes great responsibility.*” As a community granted with strong mayor powers, Mayor Salonen holds tools that can accelerate progress—but also reshape how democracy functions in Wilmot. I hope Mayor Salonen, and future Mayor’s of our Township use these powers to lead boldly, but thoughtfully. To continue to collaborate, not dictate. To build trust, not just buildings. To protect Wilmot’s long-term interests, balancing growth with sustainability, with undue influence from developers or special interests.

I will continue to keep a watchful eye as this unfolds, as I hope all Wilmot residents will do.

Thanks,

Rory Farnan
Wilmot Township Resident