

Submitted by *Councillor Perks*

Backgrounder

The Better Local Government Act

MM 44.128

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So what is happening to Toronto City Council?

The Better Local Government Act would, if passed, amend the City of Toronto Act to reduce the number of councillors and wards in the city from 47 to 25 with boundaries aligning with current federal and provincial electoral boundaries with all changes in place in time for the October 22, 2018 municipal election.

The act would also remove the City of Toronto's ability to establish, divide or dissolve wards or the composition of council.

Why is the Government changing the size of Toronto City Council?

At 44 seats, growing to 47 seats, Toronto City Council has become increasingly dysfunctional and inefficient through a combination of entrenched incumbency and established special interests. A streamlined Toronto City Council would empower Toronto's mayor and help ensure that Toronto taxpayers can count on an efficient and effective municipal government. This change is estimated to save Toronto taxpayers over \$25.5 million over four years.

What will happen to individuals nominated to run for existing Toronto municipal boundaries?

The Better Local Government Act would, if passed, amend the Municipal Elections Act to extend the nomination period for candidates for Toronto council and school boards for 2018 only. The nomination period would close on September 14, 2018.

Do any of these changes impact the powers of the Mayor of Toronto or the Mayoral campaign?

No. The deadline for nominations for Mayor would remain July 27, 2018 and the powers of the Mayor's Office would remain unchanged under the act.

How will the Better Local Government Act impact the races for Toronto area School Board Trustees?

School Board trustees are elected under the Education Act. There are no changes to the Education Act and the number of school board trustees will remain unchanged. The nomination deadline would be extended to September 14, 2018. Ontario Regulation 412/00 under the Education Act would be amended to ensure that Toronto school board trustee seats are aligned to the revised Toronto ward boundaries.

What is happening to Regional Chair Elections?

In 2016, the previous Government changed the Municipal Act, without consultation, to require all regional municipalities (with the exception of Oxford County) to select their regional chair by direct election. Previously, regional municipalities could decide to select their regional chair by election or appointment.

The Better Local Government Act would, if passed, effectively reintroduce the ability for a municipality to determine how their regional chair is selected in 2022 and thereafter.

Why are you halting direct election for regional chairs in these regions?

The imposed decision to add a fourth level of elected government in these regions invited dysfunction and discord. This additional level of government competes with local municipalities, who are already responsible for delivering key municipal services.

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What will happen to the Regions of Waterloo, Durham and Halton and Oxford County?

There would be no changes to the powers or, methods of selection, for chairs in these areas under the Better Local Government Act.

What is the long-term plan for regional governance?

The Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing will be conducting a review of regional governance across Ontario. This review will include consultations with municipal partners starting with consultations at the upcoming Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) conference from August 19-22, 2018.