



# Regional government review

We are reviewing the governance, decision-making, and service delivery functions of 8 regional municipalities and Simcoe County. Learn more about the review and how you can participate.

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## Overview

With the help of an advisory body comprised of 2 special advisors, we are reviewing regional governments and Simcoe County to help ensure that these municipalities are working effectively and efficiently, and can continue to provide the vital services that communities depend on.

## Participate in the review

The review will include consultations with municipal councilors and leaders, stakeholder organizations and the public in the spring of 2019.

## The special advisors

The Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing has appointed 2 special advisors as an advisory body to help with this review, Ken Seiling and Michael Fenn.

The special advisors will follow the terms outlined in the [terms of reference](#).

## Municipalities covered under the review

The review covers Ontario's 8 regional municipalities (Durham, Halton, Muskoka District, Niagara, Oxford County, Peel, Waterloo, York), Simcoe County, and their lower-tier municipalities.

In total, 82 upper and lower-tier municipalities are included in the review.

## Durham Region

- Ajax
- Brock
- Clarington
- Oshawa
- Pickering
- Scugog
- Uxbridge
- Whitby

## **Halton Region**

- Burlington
- Halton Hills
- Milton
- Oakville

## **Muskoka District**

- Bracebridge
- Gravenhurst
- Georgian Bay
- Huntsville
- Lake of Bays
- Muskoka Lakes

## **Niagara Region**

- Fort Erie
- Grimsby
- Lincoln
- Niagara Falls
- Niagara-on-the-Lake
- Pelham
- Port Colborne
- St. Catharines
- Thorold
- Wainfleet
- Welland
- West Lincoln

## **Oxford County**

- Blandford-Blenheim
- East Zorra-Tavistock
- Ingersoll
- Norwich
- South-West Oxford
- Tilsonburg
- Woodstock
- Zorra

## **Peel Region**

- Brampton
- Caledon
- Mississauga

## **Waterloo Region**

- Cambridge
- Kitchener
- North Dumfries
- Wilmot
- Waterloo
- Wellesley
- Woolwich

## **York Region**

- Aurora
- East Gwillimbury
- Georgina
- King
- Markham
- Newmarket
- Richmond Hill
- Vaughan
- Whitchurch-Stouffville

## **Simcoe County**

- Adjala-Tosorontio
- Bradford West Gwillimbury
- Clearview
- Collingwood
- Essa
- Innisfil
- Midland
- New Tecumseth
- Oro-Medonte
- Penetanguishene
- Ramara
- Severn
- Springwater
- Tay
- Tiny
- Wasaga Beach

## **Terms of reference for the special advisors**

### **Background**

Since Ontario's regional municipalities were established in the 1970s, populations have grown or changed, infrastructure pressures have increased, and taxpayers' dollars are being stretched.

The government is committed to undertaking a review of regional government and Simcoe County to help ensure that the upper- and lower-tier municipalities in these geographic areas are efficient and accountable to their residents and businesses.

The review will cover Ontario's eight regional municipalities (Halton, York, Durham, Waterloo, Niagara, Peel, Muskoka District, and Oxford County) and their lower-tier municipalities. Simcoe County and its lower-tier municipalities will be included in the review because of its rapid growth and associated challenges.

## **Mandate**

1. The mandate of the advisory body is to provide expert advice to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing and to make recommendations to the government on opportunities to improve regional governance and service delivery.

Recommendations from the advisory body will focus on the following questions:

Questions on municipal governance and decision-making;

- a. Is the decision-making (mechanisms and priorities) of upper- and lower-tier municipalities efficiently aligned?
- b. Does the existing model support the capacity of the municipalities to make decisions efficiently?
- c. Are two-tier structures appropriate for all of these municipalities?
- d. Does the distribution of councillors represent the residents well?
- e. Do the ways that regional councillors/heads of council get elected/appointed to serve on regional council help to align lower- and upper-tier priorities?

Questions on municipal service delivery;

- f. Is there opportunity for more efficient allocation of various service responsibilities?
- g. Is there duplication of activities?
- h. Are there opportunities for cost savings?
- i. Are there barriers to making effective and responsive infrastructure and service delivery decisions?

## **Responsibilities of the advisory body**

2. The responsibility of the advisory body is to deliver expert advice to the Minister based on the subject-matter expertise of the two special advisors and the assessment of feedback received through the consultation process.

The advisory body will solicit input from elected and appointed council members, municipal and business stakeholders and members of the public from the nine upper-tier municipalities and 73 lower-tier member municipalities. The consultation process will include, but is not limited to:

- a. initial interviews with all upper and lower-tier heads of council in early 2019 to elicit their views on an individual basis and to prepare for group consultations in spring 2019
- b. consultations with all nine upper-tier councils as well as the Mayors and Regional Chairs of Ontario (MARCO)

- c. engaging key municipal associations such as the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO), the Association of Municipal Managers, Clerks and Treasurers of Ontario (AMCTO), etc.
- d. a provincially-hosted online consultation targeted to residents and businesses within the regions and Simcoe County
- e. accessing background information and expertise as needed to inform the review by meeting with municipal staff and appointed/elected officials, or by reviewing research, reports, and other materials
- f. other consultation methods deemed appropriate to solicit additional input from other stakeholders, communities and/or organizations

## **Support for the advisory body**

3. Staff from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing will provide administrative support to the advisory body as needed. This may include, but is not limited to, logistical and writing support, the provision of access to relevant background information (e.g. research, reports), subject-matter expertise and setting meetings with municipal staff or elected and appointed officials. The advisory body will direct media inquiries to the Ministry.

## **Deliverables**

- 4. The advisory body will develop a work plan that will outline the proposed approach for delivering on the review and submit it to the Ministry on or before January 18, 2019 for approval.
- 5. The advisory body will develop a detailed consultation plan for the review and submit it to the Ministry on or before January 31, 2019 for approval.
- 6. The advisory body will develop recommendations for the Minister for the purpose of improving governance, decision-making and service delivery in the regions/Simcoe County and their lower-tier municipalities, and actionable options for implementation.
- 7. These recommendations will be submitted in the form of a written document to the Minister, and could be specific to particular regions/Simcoe County to account for their different needs, challenges, resources and objectives.

## **Timeframe**

- 8. The work of the advisory body will begin on December 20, 2018. Recommendations will be submitted to the Minister in Summer 2019. The Minister may retain the special advisors to assist with additional advice until September 30, 2019.

## **Conflict of interest**

- 9. Members of the advisory body are required to declare to the Ministry any actual, potential, or perceived conflict of interest arising in regard to any matter under discussion as part of the review.

## **Confidentiality and access to information**

10. Members of the advisory body shall not use or disclose any confidential information, either during or after the appointment, obtained as a result of their appointment for any purpose unrelated to the duties of the appointment, except if required to do so by law or authorized to do so by the Minister.

11. All materials produced by the advisory body, including research analysis, reports and recommendations, are the exclusive property of the Ministry and may be released publicly at the discretion of the Ministry.

12. Background research reports prepared for the advisory body are the exclusive property of the Ministry and may be made available to the public at the discretion of the Ministry.

13. Documents in the possession of the Ontario Public Service related to the work or support for the advisory body will be subject to the provisions of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

## Questions about the review

If you have any questions or want more information, email us at [regionalgovreview@ontario.ca](mailto:regionalgovreview@ontario.ca) (<mailto:regionalgovreview@ontario.ca>).

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### Related

[List of Ontario municipalities \(http://www.mah.gov.on.ca/Page1591.aspx\)](http://www.mah.gov.on.ca/Page1591.aspx)