



February 28, 2025

Caledon Council Surrenders Major Spending Responsibility to Town's CAO

On February 25th, Council voted 5 to 4 to support a February 4th motion allowing the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) to approve 'non-standard' procurements of up to \$500,000 **each** without Council approval. Non-standard procurements for goods or services are typically "single source," where there is no competitive bidding for a contract, or "sole source," where only one supplier is available.

There is NO need for such a huge approval limit for the CAO on these types of procurements. According to Councillor Doug Maskell, during the first half of 2024, there were **12** non-standard procurements, **totalling** \$421,000 – a clear demonstration that \$500,000 **per contract** is much higher than necessary.

Replacing Council oversight with a biannual report that includes all non-standard procurements, **after** the contracts have been awarded, does not meet the necessary standard for accountability to Caledon taxpayers.

At Council on February 25th, Mayor Annette Groves spoke to the need for timely decision-making. That's easy: Avoid delays by holding a virtual Council meeting on as little as a day's notice for an urgent procurement.

Democracy Caledon says the CAO's approval limit per contract should be \$100,000 – one-fifth of what a slim majority of Council just approved.

This Council decision gives the CAO free rein to make an unlimited number of non-standard purchases of up to half a million dollars each of taxpayers' money, with **NO** Council oversight.

This is a serious abandonment of Council's responsibilities under Ontario's Municipal Act.

Is Democracy Caledon's proposed CAO approval limit of \$100,000 per contract – up from Caledon's previous \$50,000 – out of line? Not at all. Let's compare Caledon's new \$500,000 CAO approval limit to nearby municipalities' procurement by-law limits for non-standard procurements, above which Council approval is required:

Aurora:	\$250,000*
Dufferin County:	\$50,000

Halton Hills:	\$50,000
King:	\$100,000
Milton:	\$25,000
Mississauga:	\$100,000*
Peel Region:	\$250,000
Vaughan:	\$100,000

**Mayor Groves has stated Aurora's and Mississauga's limits are \$1 million.*

Out of Caledon's neighbouring municipalities, Brampton and Orangeville appear to be outliers, in which their respective procurement by-laws do not require Council approval of *any* procurements, regardless of procurement type or value.

Democracy Caledon applauds the four Councillors who opposed the \$500,000 CAO approval limit: deBoer, Early, Kiernan and Sheen. We are alarmed at the surrender of Council's fiscal management responsibilities by the Council members who voted in favour – Groves, Maskell, Napoli, Rosa and Russo.