

Check out Toronto's amalgamation experience

On Jan. 1, 1954, Ontario in its wisdom decided that the 13 municipalities that comprised the rapidly growing Toronto metropolitan area needed a government to look after regional affairs. Thus was the city of Metro Toronto formed for the region, with the 13 boroughs looking after local affairs.

In 1967, 13 seemed too many and became six by amalgamation. All was well until 1998, when the Mike Harris hammer dropped and this productive sharing of regional and local power among Metro and the boroughs was abolished and the mega city emerged.

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Given the absence of regional government and the governance issues arising in metropolitan Victoria — which are becoming increasingly evident — fewer municipalities and real regional government (a.k.a. fundamental reform) seem like a plan. It's been done before and elsewhere. The province should check this out before the next new year rolls around.

John Olson

Colwood

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