

Toronto amalgamation produced Rob Ford

Re: “Check out Toronto’s amalgamation experience,” letter, Jan. 6.

Two letter-writers have recently held up Toronto as an example of successful amalgamation for Greater Victoria to follow. To which we should simply reply: Were you a fan of former mayor Rob Ford?

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Ford’s election was the direct result of the dysfunction and division that arose from former premier Mike Harris’s shotgun marriage of the Toronto boroughs into one megacity. Far from promoting co-operation, it put the suburbs and downtown at such odds that the suburbs voted for a “Trump” who promised to beat up those “cappuccino-guzzling downtown elites.”

It had become a “win-lose” situation, with transportation one of the most intractable problems. All the great advances in Greater Toronto’s infrastructure took place before amalgamation; ever since, the arguments have resembled the Capital Regional District trying to come up with a sewage-treatment plan.

Amalgamation was a disaster for Toronto. Let’s learn from it.

David Conway

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