

Vast majority have no say without amalgamation

Re: "Fussed about resident-only parking? Curb your enthusiasm," Jack Knox, March 9

In his recent column, Jack Knox missed a central point about resident-only parking.

Placing resident-only parking around large regional institutions places a huge extra burden on people trying to use these facilities.

The Royal Jubilee Hospital is the best example. There is simply not enough parking on site to accommodate people visiting patients or having tests or outpatient procedures.

Taking transit is not a good option. I live in Royal Oak, for example, and by bus it would take an absolute minimum of an hour each way, as opposed to no more than 30 minutes by car.

People living on streets near the hospital have gotten huge benefits from their proximity to the hospital — for example, through rising property values. They all have driveways.

I come from downtown Toronto, and grew up in neighbourhoods with no driveways, so residential-only parking was a necessity, but in Toronto, it only applies to overnight parking. Otherwise, non-residents can park for one to two hours.

Here, the oligarchy that rules the individual fiefdoms we call municipalities are not accountable to the vast majority of people using these regional facilities.

I live in Saanich, and have no say in parking regulations for places like the hospital.

Similarly, the plans for Clover Point and Dallas Road appear designed to curtail the use of Victoria parks by people who do not live in Victoria.

I and the vast majority of residents in Greater Victoria have no say in the changes being made to downtown.

The lack of real democracy in Greater Victoria is glaring.

As has happened in every other province, only if the B.C. government forces amalgamation will we have municipal democracy.

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