

REFORM PARTY OF ONTARIO's "PURPLE BOOK"

November 2009

MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT REFORM

Our Values:

1. The will of the majority must prevail, within the bounds of the Canadian Constitution.
2. Government exists only to do those things that individuals or groups of individuals cannot do as efficiently.
3. Government services should be provided at the level closest to the user of that service, with that level of government being held accountable to voters.
4. Taxation should occur only to fund government services authorized by the people's representatives.
6. We believe that Ontarians are overtaxed and that our tax system must be simplified, reorganized, and taxes reduced.
9. We believe that all three levels of government in Canada must have unique and non-overlapping responsibilities.
17. We believe that modern & well-planned infrastructure is needed to ensure the safety and prosperity of our citizens.

Municipal Government Reform is needed in Ontario:

Ontario's municipalities govern those responsibilities closest to taxpayers and residents. To that end they have the ability to be the most responsive level of government, with the greatest opportunity for public input.

Municipalities have seen their roles eclipsed by the increasing involvement of the provincial and federal government in areas that used to be the sole purview of municipalities.

Further, the size of a municipal government need be only as large as those residents within its boundaries wish it to be. Amalgamations in recent years have produced large and ungainly municipalities that provide no economic savings to residents while offering more red tape and even poorer services and accountability.

MPAC has proven a highly unpopular way to calculate property tax values to determine assessments used in levying municipal/school taxes.

To that end, we propose the following remedies:

1. Allow all requests for municipal de-amalgamation to proceed to a decision-making stage at the Ministry of Municipal Affairs without the approval of the new, larger municipal council that now oversees that former municipality seeking re-instatement.
2. Municipalities will have sole jurisdiction over a slate of responsibilities and will have the tax and revenue base to deliver those services and projects without any provincial or federal help.
3. Municipalities will take on the following very important local services as part of their mandate: Policing, hospitals/health care clinics, & all publicly-funded schools within their boundaries. Counties will likely administer such services in rural Ontario.
4. The Municipal Property Assessment Corp. will be disbanded, and the municipalities will adjust real property values as properties sell.