

1/72



BUREAU OF  
MUNICIPAL  
RESEARCH ✓

*A bulletin issued by the Bureau of Municipal Research*

---

# CIVIC AFFAIRS

---

1972 No. 1 TORONTO 4 RICHMOND ST. E.

---

*Reorganizing*

*Local Government --*

*A Brief Look At Four Provinces*

REORGANIZING LOCAL GOVERNMENT -  
A BRIEF LOOK AT FOUR PROVINCES

# *Reorganizing Local Government -- A Brief Look At Four Provinces*

Since the end of World War II, governments in Canada have been called upon, encouraged, and even expected to provide more services to people and property than at any time in the nation's history. A major cause of this phenomenon has been the process of urbanization and its effects on the Canadian People. Local governments have borne a heavy load of these demands, but often have responded with only a modicum of success. The general inability of municipalities to satisfy local needs and desires may be seen as resulting from two fundamental impediments: outdated structures and inadequate financial resources.

Prior to 1960, the basic structure of municipal governments in almost every province has gone unchanged since the nineteenth century. Local institutions were rural-oriented, while the society was urbanizing. There were too many local units, as outlined in Table I, with thousands of separate administrative bodies to add to the fragmented landscape. Yet while local governments and special purpose agencies operated in an atmosphere of mutual exclusion, the realities of twentieth century economics and technology have indicated a high degree of intermunicipal and urban-rural interdependence. Existing structures simply were not capable of transforming this interdependence into properly coordinated programs and activities. Too frequently, local administrators, caught up in an exclusionist environment which tended to permeate their perspectives, were not capable of or amenable to looking at problems in a greater-than-local context. In effect, municipal government was close to stagnation during a time of dynamic social change.

The financial picture was little better. Municipalities have been restricted in most provinces to property taxation as their main source of revenue — a source among the most regressive types of taxation in use. It is not related to ability to pay, nor does it respond to fluctuations in the economy. By 1960, pressures on property led local governments to intensify their demands that the central governments aid in meeting popular demands for increased quality as well as quantity of service. In many instances the response was lucrative, but so laden with conditions that local council priority-setting became a figment of a budding councillor's imagination. Table II illustrates this growing financial dependence in several provinces, and the high percentage of conditional grants which is only recently giving way to greater unconditional assistance. Debenture financing, particularly during the 1960's, posed increasingly serious difficulties for local government because of the prohibitive interest rates applicable to most municipalities. Instead of pooling resources, many local councils chose to augment their efforts in the competition for industrial location, although many were at a serious disadvantage vis-à-vis the handful of large urban centres and their attempts to attract industry were largely unsuccessful. Squabbles over cost-sharing between municipalities for mutually beneficial projects often caused costly delays and even cancellation of planned improvements.

In those provinces where the problems were especially acute, the central governments have been faced with a host of alternatives ranging from "stand pat" to full provincial assumption of essentially municipal functions. Most provinces have

Information contained in this bulletin was collected in cooperation with the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation Task Force on Low Income Housing. The Bureau gratefully acknowledges the contributions of Stan Mackuch and Wendy Wright in this regard.

© COPYRIGHT, 1972

BUREAU OF MUNICIPAL RESEARCH

Editor: Susan A. Fish

Research Associate: David W. Barnes

TABLE 1A

NUMBER OF MUNICIPALITIES PER PROVINCE: 1951, 1961 & 1971

	Regional & Metropolitan Areas			Cities			Towns			Villages			Counties			Districts			Townships		
	1951	1961	1971	1951	1961	1971	1951	1961	1971	1951	1961	1971	1951	1961	1971	1951	1961	1971	1951	1961	1971
Newfoundland	-	-	1 <sup>1</sup>	1	2	2	26	33	72	-	43	99	-	-	-	2 <sup>2</sup>	2 <sup>2</sup>	2 <sup>2</sup>	-	-	-
Prince Edward Island	-	-	-	1	1	1	7	7	7	-	16	25	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Nova Scotia	-	-	-	2	3	3	40	39	38	-	-	-	18	18	18	-	-	-	-	-	-
New Brunswick	-	-	-	3	6	6	19	21	21	4	1	94	15	15	0	-	-	-	-	-	-
Quebec	-	2	3	34	55	45	132	168	219	331	337	277	76	74	72	-	-	-	5 <sup>5</sup>	6 <sup>6</sup>	6 <sup>6</sup>
Ontario	-	1	5 <sup>7</sup>	29	30	34	148 <sup>8</sup>	157 <sup>8</sup>	152 <sup>8</sup>	159	156	144	38	38	34	11 <sup>9</sup>	11	10	572	574	536 <sup>10</sup>
Manitoba	-	1	-	4	11 <sup>11</sup>	12 <sup>12</sup>	33	34	33	38	36	41	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Saskatchewan	-	-	-	8	11	11	90	115	130	388	364	356	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Alberta	-	-	-	7	10	10	68	90	102	135	159	167	2	17	30	13 <sup>13</sup>	13 <sup>13</sup>	13 <sup>13</sup>	-	-	-
British Columbia	-	-	28	35	32	31	-	4	14	46	59	60	-	-	-	-	-	-	14 <sup>14</sup>	14 <sup>14</sup>	14 <sup>14</sup>

- 1 Very limited functions. See Fyfe, *op. cit.*, P.6.
- 2 "Rural District".
- 3 "Village Commissions".
- 4 35 of these have locally constituted advisory committees.
- 5 1104 "parish, township, and other municipalities".
- 6 Includes individual and united (14) townships.
- 7 Includes District Municipality of Muskoka.
- 8 Includes "separated towns": 8 in 1951, and 6 in each of 1961 and 1971.
- 9 These districts are provincial administration divisions primarily.
- 10 Includes 5 boroughs in Metro Toronto.
- 11 Includes municipalities in Metro Winnipeg.
- 12 Except for "Metro" category, all 1971 figures for Manitoba are actually for 1970.
- 13 "Municipal District".
- 14 "District Municipalities".

Source: Annual Reports of Departments of Municipal Affairs and Provincial Annual Reports of Municipal Statistics; various years.

	Improvement Districts	"Rural Municipalities"	"Suburban Municipalities"	"Parish Municipalities"	Police Villages	Miscellaneous	Totals		
	1951	1961	1971	1951	1961	1971	1951	1961	1971
Newfoundland	-	3	27	-	-	-	31	85	205
Prince Edward Island	-	-	3	-	-	-	8	24	36
Nova Scotia	20	33	25	24	24	24	104	123	108
New Brunswick	40	62	192	-	-	-	81	105	313
Quebec	-	-	-	5	559	500	1677	1683	1733
Ontario	15	20	16	-	176	168	1068	1155	1066
Manitoba	-	-	19	4	-	-	189	191	214
Saskatchewan	21	12	9	-	-	-	806	798	798
Alberta	55	50	24	-	-	-	109	125	474
British Columbia	-	-	302	-	-	-	4394	4346	5298

TABLE 1B NUMBER OF MUNICIPALITIES PER PROVINCE: 1951, 1961 & 1971

TABLE 1B

Source: Annual Reports of Departments of Municipal Affairs and Provincial Annual Reports of Municipal Statistics; various years.

- 1 Very limited functions. See Fyfe, *op. cit.*, P.6.
- 2 "Rural District".
- 3 "Village Commissions".
- 4 35 of these have locally constituted advisory committees.
- 5 1104 "parish, township, and other municipalities".
- 6 Includes individual and united (14) townships.
- 7 Includes District Municipality of Muskoka.
- 8 Includes "separated towns": 8 in 1951, and 6 in each of 1961 and 1971.
- 9 These districts are provincial administration divisions primarily.
- 10 Includes 5 boroughs in Metro Toronto.
- 11 Includes municipalities in Metro Winnipeg.
- 12 Except for "Metro" category, all 1971 figures for Manitoba are actually for 1970.
- 13 "Municipal District".
- 14 "District Municipalities".

TABLE II

## PROVINCIAL TRANSFER PAYMENTS TO MUNICIPALITIES AS A % OF TOTAL MUNICIPAL REVENUES, BY PROVINCE

Province	Year	Municipal Tax Revenue	Municipal Non-Tax Revenue	Provincial Conditional Grants	Provincial Unconditional Grants	Total Municipal Revenue	Conditional Grants as % of Total	Unconditional Grants as % of Total
Alberta	1950	\$ 39,371,886.	\$ 5,612,727.	\$ 2,812,882.	\$ -	\$ 47,797,495.	5.88	NIL
	1955	63,379,885.	11,703,717.	9,495,736.	8,490,533.	93,069,871.	10.20	9.12
	1960	109,681,709.	21,763,312.	12,447,939.	14,382,378.	158,275,338.	7.86	9.08
	1965	154,889,804.	53,372,716.	15,295,338.	16,249,633.	239,807,491.	6.37	6.77
	1970	237,959,895.	103,940,191.	32,114,736.	36,095,330.	410,110,152.	7.83	8.80
British Columbia	1950	\$ 21,101,954.	\$ 6,608,424.	\$ 14,876,467.	\$ -	\$ 42,586,845.	34.93	NIL
	1955	39,966,701.	9,837,972.	5,714,680.	7,342,875.	62,862,228.	9.09	11.68
	1960	69,462,518.	17,894,377.	16,092,554.	11,138,056.	114,587,505.	14.04	9.72
	1965	95,896,568.	24,178,453.	26,240,653.	18,394,527.	164,710,201.	15.93	11.16
	1970	172,161,067.	37,219,548.	61,469,614.	46,624,006.	317,464,235.	19.35	14.68
Manitoba	1950	\$ 18,954,474.	\$ 3,969,054.	\$ No figures available	\$ -	\$ 22,923,528.	NIL	NIL
	1955	26,185,071.	2,978,387.	4,041,247.	-	29,163,458.	NIL	NIL
	1960	37,115,331.	9,988,425.	2,760,619.	-	51,145,003.	7.90	NIL
	1965	57,921,509.	13,731,555.	6,659,534.	7,314,559.	74,413,683.	3.70	NIL
	1970	81,063,693.	34,579,984.	-	-	129,617,770.	5.13	5.64
New Brunswick	1951	\$ 11,936,434.	\$ 1,649,572.	\$ 2,226,542.	\$ -	\$ 15,812,548.	14.08	NIL
	1955	17,971,805.	852,874.	3,110,449.	-	21,935,128.	14.18	NIL
	1960	26,820,933.	1,390,151.	7,745,571.	-	35,956,655.	21.54	NIL
	1965	37,848,072.	2,160,738.	12,128,589.	-	52,137,399.	23.26	NIL
	1970	13,631,054.	2,260,555.	758,982.	15,295,139.	31,945,730.	2.37	47.87
Newfoundland	1950	\$ 155,729.	\$ 32,255.	\$ 141,415.	\$ 98,258.	\$ 427,657.	33.06	22.97
	1955	2,199,021.	642,476.	741,032.	-	3,582,529.	20.6	NIL
	1960	4,250,325.	548,447.	1,240,478.	-	7,039,250.	17.62	NIL
	1965	6,585,168.	2,661,037.	1,656,319.	635,918.	11,538,442.	14.35	5.51
	1970	14,520,000.	4,617,184.	3,404,615.	3,463,938.	26,005,737.	13.08	13.32

Nova Scotia	1950	\$ 11,344,684.	\$ 1,322,739.	\$ 597,027.	\$ -	\$ 13,264,450.	4.50	NIL
	1955	22,648,367.	1,625,492.	930,434.	-	25,203,293.	3.69	NIL
	1960	36,041,075.	1,793,426.	5,214,164.	-	43,048,665.	12.11	NIL
	1965	51,438,792.	3,057,211.	3,394,829.	1,207,357.	59,098,189.	5.74	2.04
	1970	79,755,700.	4,405,000.	16,969,000.	1,830,300.	102,960,000.	16.48	1.77
Ontario	1950	\$ 188,498,279.	\$ 33,860,531.	\$ 17,316,783.	\$ 5,254,295.	\$ 244,929,888.	7.07	2.14
	1955	336,345,472.	29,947,862.	29,858,484.	21,850,852.	418,002,670.	7.14	5.22
	1960	586,864,598.	44,905,886.	63,499,377.	36,881,879.	732,151,740.	8.67	5.03
	1965	877,812,860.	70,772,207.	95,599,732.	46,274,405.	1,090,459,204.	8.76	4.24
	1970	1,459,025,615.	112,971,877.	357,171,711.	45,327,395.	1,974,496,598.	1.80	2.29
Prince Edward Island	1950	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -		
	1955	-	-	-	-	-		
	1960	-	-	-	-	-		
	1965	-	-	-	-	-		
	1970	4,107,935.	1,510,849.	187,047.	617,077.	6,422,908.	.29	.96
Quebec	1950	\$ 80,204,341.	\$ 41,545,742.	\$ 1,103,645.	-	\$ 122,853,728.	.08	NIL
	1955	129,071,352.	16,157,654.	3,718,654.	-	148,947,660.	.24	NIL
	1960	216,508,513.	23,070,449.	10,183,822.	-	249,762,784.	.40	NIL
	1965	336,113,757.	61,752,403.	42,774,226.	-	440,640,386.	.97	NIL
	1969	634,600,000.	96,000,000.	14,200,000.	-	764,800,000.	.44	NIL
Saskatchewan	1950	\$ 36,139,865.	\$ 4,108,965.	\$ 1,169,442.	-	\$ 41,418,472.	.28	NIL
	1955	57,051,561.	5,826,000.	2,579,691.	-	65,457,252.	.39	NIL
	1960	80,823,725.	8,172,425.	12,946,845.	-	101,942,995.	1.27	NIL
	1965	109,065,503.	9,057,200.	17,113,961.	-	135,236,664.	1.26	NIL
	1970	162,231,483.	12,423,372.	18,015,950.	-	192,670,805.	.93	NIL

Source: Annual Reports of Departments of Municipal Affairs and Provincial Annual Reports of Municipal Statistics; various years.

selected an option somewhere in between, reorganizing local government structures, altering fiscal transfers, and shifting functional responsibilities. A discussion of what four provinces have done in this regard — their attempts at solving the problems of urbanization, land use, and the delivery of services — will comprise the bulk of this volume.

Rather than comment extensively on the programs involved, this *Civic Affairs* has been designed to scan the field of municipal reform in British Columbia, Alberta, Ontario, and New Brunswick over the past ten years. These provinces were selected primarily because they have attempted some general comprehensive reform. Particular attention will be given to the question of why the reforms were implemented when they were, since, though there are many common problems, there are also several stimuli for reform singular to each province. Manitoba — which has reorganized Winnipeg in a way quite different from the reorganizations in the other four provinces included in this review — has not been included since the Winnipeg reorganization has been looked at in detail in various other journals.

Three functions will be examined: education, land use planning, and water supply and sewerage. In each of the four provinces, reform of local educational structures preceded and helped pave the way for that of general municipal structures. Ontario experienced the greatest difficulty in implementing educational reform, but even that was not too formidable. As noted below, once the Cabinet swung around to supporting a consolidation policy, no serious impediments were encountered. Public opposition, though sporadically vociferous, was generally low-key, and demands for the preservation of local autonomy bowed rather easily to provincial policies of structural rationalization.

During the 1960's the existence of seriously polluted areas of the environment gave rise to a groundswell of public pressure

for legislation and facilities to control and prevent pollution. It soon became obvious, especially in larger urban areas, that mechanisms to control pollution effectively would have to be based on jurisdictions greater than existing municipalities. The same was true for authorities responsible for the provision of water and disposal of sewage. Municipalities, with only a few exceptions, were financially ill-equipped to meet these new demands, and many began to look towards co-operative efforts. During the same period, "regional" land use planning came to be recognized as a necessary goal. Often as a result of direct provincial pressure, municipalities became members of planning areas ranging from parts of counties in Ontario to large districts in Alberta. The planning boards which were established, however, were almost always advisory since they lacked the regulatory power normally delegated to municipal councils. Pressures for regional planning, then, were eventually joined by pressures for greater authority at this regional level to allow for effective interim land use controls and, ultimately, unified administration of official plans.

In all four provinces, two important features are apparent in each of these essentially local functions. First, the trend was towards much larger areas of responsibility. In some cases, neighbouring municipalities became active participants in common bodies where previously they had remained staunchly isolationist in their approach to one another. In most instances, rural areas found themselves part of readily visible mechanisms linking them with large urban areas. Acceptance of these bonds was frequently reluctant, but tended to increase with familiarity. Here, in fact, lies the second, and perhaps more important feature: the period from educational reform to reform of municipal governments involved a passage of time sufficient for people to become used to thinking in "regional" terms, to become somewhat more prepared for local government reorganization.

## BRITISH COLUMBIA

British Columbia has implemented a province-wide system of multi-functional regional governments. The scheme was operationalized in stages, beginning in 1965 when groups of areas were incorporated as "regional districts". Local opposition to the scheme throughout the province was the primary obstacle to blanket implementation in the first year. Although a number of factors may be cited as having led to the creation of regional districts, the most common element was a desire to eliminate, if possible, what the Minister of Municipal Affairs called the "cancerous parochialism" which "tends to block or kill the benefits which could otherwise be achieved by a community"<sup>1</sup>. Connected with this was the major problem of inadequate land use control and the undesirable phenomenon of sprawl. In the organized territories of the Province there were also the questions of how to handle problems that transcended municipal boundaries, how to effect some form of amalgamation or federation in some areas that would ultimately reduce the unnecessary duplication of common services and thereby save money over the long term, and how to provide certain necessary services in the small municipalities which could not afford them on their own.

In the unorganized territory the only form of government was the province, but many people did not identify with that structure; nor did they like paying taxes without some more localized forms of government.<sup>2</sup> Traditional municipal struc-

tures were deemed inadequate for most of these areas, and extension of the local improvement district method did not present a better alternative. The provincial administration was too small to deal with the amount of territory for which it was responsible (in total, approximately 99% of the province, since less than 1% had been municipally organized), and thus was almost totally ineffective.<sup>3</sup> In the unorganized territory immediately outside municipal boundaries, there was no adequate mechanism to control development except for imposition of provincial land use restrictions. More and more people moved into these areas to avoid paying municipal taxes, yet quickly began to demand the amenities to which they were accustomed when living within municipal boundaries. Regionalism seemed to be the only solution to all of these problems.

For the more organized parts of the province there was a further incentive for regionalism. In 1960, the Metropolitan Joint Committee studying local government in the Vancouver area concluded that it was "feasible and practical to place under the jurisdiction of a single metropolitan board" such functions as wholesale supply of water, trunk sewers and treatment facilities, and land use planning.<sup>4</sup> It also recommended that all member municipalities be represented on a policy-making body, and that a municipality have a right to appeal against any decision of the metropolitan board. Although a public referendum on this report failed to pass, there is little doubt that its

<sup>1</sup> See D. W. Barnes, "The System of Regional Districts in British Columbia", an article appearing in a forthcoming edition on Canadian municipal reform, Stewart Fyfe, ed., p.5.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p.6.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p.6. As already noted, the province was the only level of government for the municipally unorganized territories prior to the regional district scheme. Under the new structure, the regional government becomes the "municipal" level of government for these territories, and they were divided up wherever possible along lines of recognizable communities of interest. They were given the new name of "electoral areas", and representation on the regional board was by direct election. (Representatives from already incorporated areas were elected indirectly). The extension of local government to the previously unorganized areas served in part to justify the provincial policy of giving regional boards a good deal of the authority which used to belong to municipal councils. Initial opposition to regionalization from municipal politicians tended to be offset by support from rural areas for the basic philosophy of providing them with a more localized level of government.

<sup>4</sup> Metropolitan Joint Committee, *Final Report to the Minister of Municipal Affairs, British Columbia* (Vancouver: Metropolitan Joint Committee, 1960), p.35.

recommendations had a direct bearing on the subsequent thinking in the Department of Municipal Affairs.<sup>5</sup>

The catalyst which brought about implementation of regional districts was the 1964 appointment of a new Minister of Municipal Affairs. Instead of unilateral action by the Department of Municipal Affairs through legislated mandatory incorporation, the new Minister chose enabling legislation and a promotional program. Tennant and Zirnhelt refer to this as a "legitimizing myth" approach to win over local politicians and populace, a myth which hinged on the concepts of local initiative and the ability to opt out of any or all regional functions.<sup>6</sup> The model for the structure of a regional district was the Greater Vancouver Water District, with some modifications based upon observations of a pilot project to deal with regional problems in the Victoria area, established in 1964 as the Joint Services Board.

The need to facilitate greater co-ordination at the local level based upon the realization of both inter-municipal and urban-rural interdependence; the effect of the recommendations of the Metropolitan Joint Committee on the thinking in the Department of Municipal Affairs; a desire at the provincial level to reduce the number of municipal units both in the short term, since the regional district would assume a major role in provincial-local relations, and in the long-run as amalgamations of municipalities could be more easily effected after a "regional" consciousness took hold; and the appointment of a forceful Minister committed to a rationalization of municipal government in B.C., all combined in the early 1960's to establish the climate for the development of regional government in British Columbia.

A regional district is essentially a federated two-tier entity founded upon the premise of the pooling of resources and integration of jurisdictions to achieve greater co-ordination and efficiency in the delivery of services. Incorporation of a regional district was by Letters Patent rather than special legislation for each region (as Ontario

<sup>5</sup> Barnes, *op.cit.*, p.7.

<sup>6</sup> P. Tennant and D. Zirnhelt, *The Emergence of Metropolitan Government in Greater Vancouver*, a paper delivered to the Learned Societies Meetings, St. John's, Nfld., June 1971 (mimeo) pp. 14-15.

has done). The Letters Patent specified the structure, regional functions and cost sharing. Subsequent functional consolidations have been effected by supplementary Letters Patent. The currently mandatory regional functions came into effect largely through provincial statute.

Representatives to the regional board from incorporated municipalities are elected from the municipal councils, while those from the previously unorganized areas are elected directly by the inhabitants. The requisite number of "directors" is determined by a predefined number called a voting unit. This divisor is a certain fraction of the total population arrived at by negotiation, keeping in mind the minimum population figure in the entire region and the overall balance of population throughout the regional district. The voting power of a member municipality or electoral area on a Board is then determined as being the total population of that entity divided by the voting unit. Each fraction goes up to the next integer. Since no director may have more than five votes, the number of directors of a member municipality is the number of votes already allotted to that municipality divided by five, again with each fraction being taken up to the next integer. The voting unit of the Capital Regional District, for example, is 5,000, the population of the City of Victoria is 57,453, and hence Victoria is allotted 12 votes on the board divided among 3 directors. The number of votes of each municipal director is negotiated at the Council level, but must be divided evenly. It is important that no director may split votes when voting, and may not vote on a function unless the municipality or electoral area is directly involved in sharing the cost of that function in the current or ensuing year.

There is no limit to the number of times one person may be appointed by a Council, neither in succession nor in total. The directors from the electoral areas are elected every two years, for which the board makes adequate provision, at the sole cost of each electoral area respectively, in terms of the processes involved in holding an election.

A quorum is a majority of the directors

having among them a majority of the votes. Unless otherwise specified, all by-laws and resolutions of the Board are decided by a majority of the directors at a meeting having among them a majority of the votes. These two levels of double stipulation, rather unique in Canada, were included in the legislation to prevent any domination either by a large municipality or by a group of small electoral areas and/or municipalities.

A noteworthy feature of the regional district is the right of a member municipality or electoral area to opt out of any regional function which is not obligatory for the region to perform.<sup>7</sup> Another, and perhaps more accurate, approach would be that the region may undertake any number of functions at the request of its member areas, but these would be paid for by those respective member areas rather than from a general levy. These are known as "partial functions", as noted in Table III. The supply of water and sewerage facilities is one of these partial functions.

Table III indicates only two regions providing a water supply as a partial function. At the same time, one region has undertaken a trunk sewer system and treatment facilities for all its members, while two regions provide this service for only some of their member areas. As of January 1, 1972, the two separate servicing bodies in the Vancouver area (the Greater Vancouver Water Board and Greater Vancouver Sewer and Drainage Board) became departments of the Greater Vancouver Regional District, but remained separate legal entities similar to the hospital district.<sup>8</sup> Unlike the previous arrangements, however, member municipalities in the Vancouver area now have a vote in the policy-making echelons for the regional water and sewerage functions. Water supply and sewage disposal are not priority items in most parts of B.C., at least not in

the context of requiring the regional mechanism for problem solution. The traditional device of local improvement districts still dominates much of water and sewerage servicing in B.C. Of the 302 improvement districts operating in May of 1972, 236 handled a waterworks function and 34 a sewerage system.

The cornerstone function of regional districts is regional planning. Initially the province tried to make this function mandatory with the creation of each region, but the lack of qualified people and the rather extensive local opposition to the idea of statutory functions forced a temporary change in the province's stance. By 1969, however, slightly more than half the regional districts had adopted the planning role, and this provided a favourable atmosphere for the province to make regional planning obligatory in all regions as of January 1, 1970. As a result, each region is now required to formulate and adopt an official plan, as well as to develop community planning services for its electoral areas.

Planning is a line function in each region rather than an advisory one, and the Regional Board is the planning board for the purposes of the *Planning Act*. Section 798B of the *Municipal Act* requires that in each regional district there be a Technical Planning Committee established by the Board to review and advise on all planning matters referred to it by the Board. The Regional planning director acts as chairman, and the membership includes the regional medical officer, an employee at the option of each member municipality, a planning officer from the Department of Municipal Affairs, as well as other representatives from various provincial departments and even a few federal government departments. This staff co-ordinating committee, because of its influence stemming from its collective exper-

<sup>7</sup> If there is a proposal before a Board for the region to take on a function for the entire region, and it is passed by two-thirds of the directors having among them two-thirds of the votes, then opting out by a member municipality is no longer possible.

<sup>8</sup> Under the *Regional Hospital District Act, 1967*, the Regional Hospital Board and the Regional Board are separate groups. The boundaries of the regional hospital districts were made co-terminous with those of the regional districts, and every region was required to adopt the hospital function. In practice, the two Boards and administrative staffs are the same people, with, of course, the necessary professional complements. In a sense, one could consider the administrators of the hospital function as comprising a department of the Regional Board, but with the requisite cautionary stipulation regarding the legal context of the structure. Allowing similar status to the water and sewerage district staffs appears largely as a concession to reduce their opposition to amalgamation.

TABLE III

REGIONAL DISTRICT FUNCTIONS - BRITISH COLUMBIA - AS AT DECEMBER 31, 1971

Function	Alberni-Clayoquot	Bulkley-Nechaco	Capital	Cariboo	Central Fraser Valley	Central Kootenay	Central Okanagan	Columbia-Shuswap	Comox-Strathcona	Cowichan Valley	Dewdney-Alouette	East Kootenay	Fraser-Cheam	Fraser-Fort George	Greater Vancouver	Kitimat-Stikine	Kootenay Boundary	Mount Waddington	Nanaimo	North Okanagan	Ocean Falls	Okanagan-Similkameen	Peace-River-Liard	Powell River	Skena A	Squamish-Lillooet	Sunshine Coast	Thompson-Nicola
Regional Planning <sup>1</sup>																												
Community Planning <sup>1</sup>																												
Building Inspection <sup>1</sup>																												
Contract Services <sup>1</sup>																												
Local Works and Services <sup>1</sup>																												
Grants-in-Aid <sup>1</sup>																												
Ambulance	X																											
Airport Facilities																												
Air Pollution Control																												
Bus Transit																												
Civil Defence																												
Control of Gatherings																												
Firearms Control																												
Fireworks Control																												
Health Regulation																												
Home Nursing																												
Library Services																												
Nuisance Control																												
Okanagan Basin Water Board																												
Pest Control																												
Public Housing																												
Recreation Facilities																												
Refuse Disposal Programme																												
Regional Parks																												
Sewers																												
Soil Removal																												
Urban Renewal																												
Water																												

1 Assigned by Statute to all Regional Districts

X = Indicates Function

P = Indicates application of function in part of Regional District only

Source: B.C. Department of Municipal Affairs, *Annual Report, 1971*, p.35

tise as well as its compliment of provincial officials, has proven to be an extremely persuasive unit, particularly in Vancouver. Recent experience in the Greater Vancouver Regional District has seen the Technical Planning Committee attempting to expand its role toward the definition of inter-municipal problems and the regional means by which those problems can be approached.<sup>9</sup> The members of the TPC felt that municipal administrators, engineers, and social agencies should be represented on the TPC in addition to the planning department so that the Committee could acquire a greater co-ordinative capability. In effect a staff committee was being formed that would perform the fundamental role of the Regional Board itself although rational in planning terms, such a structure invites elected director-appointed staff conflict.<sup>10</sup>

For the electoral areas, a Board may establish Advisory Planning Commissions. These groups are composed primarily of residents of the respective areas to advise the Board on matters of more localized planning. In practice, they also serve to keep directors informed on a variety of local matters. The Board may, on the basis of information supplied by the APC's, exercise any power in the field of building regulations in the electoral areas as would be exercised by the council of a municipality. An amendment to the *Municipal Act* is currently before the House which would set aside the APC, in areas desiring to do so, in favour of an Advisory Council. This Council, elected directly yet responsible to the Regional Board, would have wider terms of reference than the APC.

All regional districts receive a grant from the province of from \$5,000 to \$25,000 to aid in meeting planning costs. In areas where development is imminent but the regional board is not able to develop and administer its own land use by-laws, the province may establish a community planning area under

the *Local Services Act* to implement interim land use controls. Presently the Department directly administers three such areas. When the regional district is both willing and capable of assuming responsibility, the community planning areas are transferred to their jurisdiction.

The school districts in B.C. are independent of the regional districts, but there are discernible relationships between them. When regional districts were originally being contemplated, the existing 82 school districts were used as guidelines such that within each regional district there were an average of three or four entire school districts. In only a very few cases were school boundaries not followed when regional district boundaries were drafted.

The school districts themselves had already undergone a process of consolidation. In 1959, there were 649 largely uncoordinated, highly disparate districts. The sharp variations in resources between most areas inhibited any chance at an equitable distribution of qualified teaching personnel across the province, and academic programs showed a correspondingly wide divergence in quality. The province assumed full control over education in 1961 when a deconcentrated structure to administer provincial education policies was established.<sup>11</sup>

The consolidation of B.C.'s school districts resulted directly from the 1960 report of a Royal Commission on Education, which called for a review of boundaries "in the interests of economy and efficiency."<sup>12</sup> In addition to a concern about the effects of a fractionalized education administration at the local level, the Commission expressed concern that the province had removed too much power from the local area that "the limits of central authority have been overstepped in some respects" and "the autonomy of local boards has been weakened".<sup>13</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Tennant and Zirnhelt, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

<sup>10</sup> Legislation is currently before the House to reassert the position of the Regional Board by emphasizing that a T.P.C. may deal only with matters directed to it by the Board.

<sup>11</sup> Throughout this paper, decentralization refers to the transfer of authority from a provincial to a municipal form of government, whereas deconcentration refers to retention of authority by a provincial government but with some decision-making power delegated to branch offices.

<sup>12</sup> British Columbia, Royal Commission on Education, *Report* (Victoria: Queen's Printer, 1960), p.56.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p.61.



In the revised educational system, the province employs a force of district superintendents who act as a liaison between local boards and the Department. Of greater importance, however, is their supervisory capacity over all educational matters in their districts, including curriculum, hiring and placement of teachers, and opening or closing of secondary schools on the basis of distribution of school population. At the local level, each district has an annually elected board of trustees which sets staff salaries, builds and maintains schools, provides health services to pupils, and arranges transportation. Each board has 3, 5, 7, or 9 members as determined by the Minister. On approval of the Minister, a district superintendent may be appointed an executive officer of a board and assigned whatever additional duties deemed necessary by the board.

When it established firm administrative control over education in 1961, the provincial government paid no heed to the Royal Commission criticism of excessive central assumption of authority. The doctrine of local autonomy was largely ignored and district boards emerged with little more than a token role in the administration of education. The same is not true of regional district boards. The province has retained ultimate authority over everything its subordinate governments do, as is the case in all provinces. It has not, however, created a large bureaucracy to handle virtually every detail of municipal administration. In the municipal realm, the centralization of day-to-day administration is not as complete as it is in education but in both cases the province has moved toward increased intervention and control.

## ALBERTA

Alberta's response to pressures for local government reorganization has been to rely on a one tier county government in many rural areas and special purpose regional *ad hoc* structures where necessary for inter-municipal servicing. Alberta contends that "with a strong regional planning component and, more important, support to the principle of regional planning, the need does not exist for a multi-structured government".<sup>14</sup>

When Alberta became a province in 1905 there were 602 small school districts covering four square miles each in rural areas and usually a bit more than the municipally organized territory in urban centres. Each district had its own elected board responsible to the electors and the provincial Department of Education. By 1936, the number of districts had risen to over 4,000, but the impact of the depression years caused serious financial difficulties for many of them. The response of the Social Credit

government was to amalgamate approximately fifty or sixty small units into a large division. The program was implemented relatively easily, and within five years nearly 3,500 small units had been blended into 50 divisions. Subsequently, several municipal and school administrations were amalgamated into larger county structures, an integral feature of which was to make educational officials more directly accountable for use of public funds than they were previously. Many parts of the province, however, did not adopt the county system, nor did the large school division find universal application, particularly in the more remote areas. The local educational structure, then, consisted of school districts, school divisions, and counties.

Roughly concurrent with the program for school districts in the late 1930's was a similar consolidation of small rural municipalities. Between 1928 and 1940, 27 rural

municipalities were disorganized due to inadequate finance, and their administration of services was centralized. In 1942 the Department of Municipal Affairs began a program of reorganizing local units, and within two years the original 143 rural municipal districts had been reduced to 60. Unquestionably the combination of insolvency in some districts and success in school board amalgamations created a political climate in Alberta which was amenable to this early scheme for municipal reform.

In each area of reform the fundamental purpose was to rationalize the local level through a more economic and efficient delivery structure, as well as some degree of melding of poor and wealthy areas to equalize tax burdens. Although the quality of servicing did increase in the two types of enlarged units, the confusing overlap of district boundaries, particularly when it came to the matter of annual requisitions by school boards from municipal council, remained a major problem.

The first of two measures inaugurated in the early 1950's to overcome the administrative problems and the conflicts of interest between the two types of local units was the passage of the *County Act* in April of 1950. Under this *Act* rural educational and municipal administrative units would be combined voluntarily, but initially only two counties were created.<sup>15</sup> Local opposition was very strong, but tended to be predominantly bureaucratic in nature. Educationists proclaimed the sacrifice of quality of instruction in favour of increased roads. Municipal administrators and politicians founded their criticisms on such items as higher taxes, reduced services, and loss of contact between the electors and their councils. The province effected a compromise by stipulating that a plebiscite would be a mandatory prerequisite to formation of a county as well as a required reappraisal after four years of operation if a county system were adopted. Since inception of the *County Act*, 31 counties have

been created, and in only one instance did the retention plebiscite fail to pass and the county return to its former status.

The second measure was the work of the Co-terminous Boundary Commission, whose hearings and investigations extended from March 1953 to the end of 1954. The function of the Commission was to establish co-terminous boundaries "wherever possible for school divisions and enlarged municipal districts which did not choose to unite as counties".<sup>16</sup> Despite speculation that the Commission would lead to the demise of the counties, 23 counties have been established since 1958.

The county scheme had important benefits which eventually led to its extension. Counties have produced some economies of scale in various services while maintaining existing standards of educational service. There has been no appreciable loss of autonomy for school or municipal officials; except for passing money by-laws and approving budgets, school committees continue to function as they did when they were boards of trustees. The unification feature of the *County Act* placed all expenditures under the direct jurisdiction of the county council, while expanding the size of that council to accommodate the members of the previous school boards. Possible frictions between the councils and school committees tended to be reduced since a majority of every county council sits on the respective school committee.

There are currently 30 counties in Alberta covering the majority of the populated rural area. The counties encompass over 1,200 townships and 220,000 people; the remaining rural municipal districts in the province contain 567 townships supporting a population of 97,000.

As in most other provinces, Alberta's cities, towns, and villages are classified largely on the basis of rigid divisions according to population (except in the case of villages where incorporation depends upon the existence of 75 or more occupied dwell-

<sup>14</sup> A. W. Morrison, Deputy Minister of Municipal Affairs, letter of April 13, 1972. The Alberta Task Force on Urbanization and the Future, however recently called for consideration of a regional form of government on a two-tier basis for the more heavily urbanized parts of the province to control and co-ordinate present and future growth tendencies. See Task Force on Urbanization and the Future, *Choices for Metropolitan Growth* (Edmonton: The Task Force, 1972) pp.12 and ff.

<sup>15</sup> In its initial form the *Act* included hospital as well as school and municipal districts for amalgamation under the one authority, but the hospital districts were soon deleted. As a compromise, the county was granted membership on the local hospital board to a degree corresponding to the amount of the hospital district contained in the country.

<sup>16</sup> Alberta, Department of Municipal Affairs, "After Twenty Years" (Edmonton: Department of Municipal Affairs, 1971) (mimeo) p.4.

lings). In all three cases, the municipal and school administrations are elected and function separately, the former acting as the assessing and collecting agencies for the latter's financial requirements. A similar relationship exists in the "new towns" created under special legislation in which any area may be so designated by the cabinet to facilitate rapid development or expansion originating from the presence of a new or resurgent resource area. A "new town" is governed by a Board of Administrators appointed by Cabinet, and consists of provincial employees, local representatives, and representatives of industry. The Board has special borrowing powers, but generally operates as would a town council.

Under the *Municipal and School Administration Act*, "excluding those cities and towns that are in a separate or consolidated school district or within a county or school division for school purposes",<sup>17</sup> a city, town or village and its related school district(s) may amalgamate their administrations into one "urban county". The same two plebiscite qualifications of the rural counties apply to their urban counterparts. Equally similar between the two types of counties

are the provisions for administrative integration. Upon unification, the municipal council becomes a larger body, but is divided into two basic committees – one for general municipal services and the other for education. The preliminary plebiscite is held at the time of a normally scheduled municipal election (held in October every 3rd year). If it passes, and application for union is made to the Cabinet before December 1, the new structure is implemented the following January 1. Until the next regularly scheduled municipal election the members of the school board constitute the education committee of council.

In cities, wards must be abolished for the first and subsequent elections of the new council. Here, as in the other provinces under study, the emphasis is on ever larger municipal units with little or no attention to the neighbourhood or community unit. A town may, by by-law, increase its council membership from seven to an even number up to ten. If there is an eight or ten-member council, the number of votes won by a councillor in the election determine the councillor's term of office (see Table IV).

TABLE IV

## GRADUATED TERMS OF OFFICE FOR AMALGAMATED TOWN COUNCILS

Council Membership	3-year term	2-year term	1-year term
8	1st 3 nominated*, or 3 polling highest vote	next 3 nominated or next 3 by no. of votes	others
10	1st 4 nominated, or 4 polling highest vote	next 3 nominated or next 3 by no. of votes	others

\* in all cases this applies if no poll is held.

Source: "In Other Words . . . – An Explanation of the Municipal and School Administration Act", Department of Municipal Affairs, (Edmonton: Queen's Printer, 1962).

<sup>17</sup> Alberta, Department of Municipal Affairs, "Local Government and the Department of Municipal Affairs", Municipal Affairs Information Brief "A" (Edmonton: Department of Municipal Affairs), p.2 (mimeo).

If 5% or more of the total number of pupils in the district come from outside a town or city, the area electors may elect a representative directly to the school committee for a two-year term. This representative may sit on council with full membership privileges only when council is discussing school business. In a city, the education committee must have no less than five members, and in a town, not less than three members, not including in either context representatives from outside areas.

Alberta has produced one additional vehicle to promote county adoption in the remaining non-county parts of the province. On the basis of a 1967 amendment to the *County Act*, an improvement district and its related towns, villages, and school division(s) may amalgamate their administrations into a "Metropole" county. The Department of Municipal Affairs characterizes this entity as "a cluster of contrasting (i.e. rural-urban) heterogeneous communities sharing geographic economic and social interests . . ."<sup>18</sup> To date, no such counties have been incorporated.

For those parts of the province adopting the county policy, then, Alberta has adopted a generally unified approach to local servicing structures for both urban and rural areas. In addition, it has taken the step of cracking through the isolated position of local educational institutions and encouraged their amalgamation under the county framework. The enlargement of municipal districts into counties in the 1940's, largely for the preservation of solvency, produced a local structure sufficiently capable of providing services during the 1950's and 1960's when other provinces began to consider seriously the need for structural reform to keep up with servicing demands. Few special arrangements have had to be made, and these have occurred mainly in the water supply and planning sectors.

Alberta employs an *ad hoc* commission device for the supply of water on an inter-municipal basis. There are nine urban

and rural municipalities in the Edmonton area receiving water by agreement from the City. Instead of one board (as in the Greater Vancouver Water District) there are three boards representing the municipalities being served by three water lines radiating from the city – one to the south, one to the west, and one to the east. There are no similar inter-municipal servicing structures elsewhere in Alberta.

Planning at the local level is the responsibility of regional planning commissions. Outside the regional planning areas, planning is a provincial responsibility. There are seven commissions covering 57.7% of the province and 86.4% of the population, as may be noted in Table V. The planning regions emerged as a municipal response to the need for co-ordinated efforts to meet common problems related to land use. Membership on a commission includes representatives from municipalities as well as provincial departments. Municipalities are not required to join a planning commission, but a recent legislative amendment making a commission a subdivision approval authority increases the likelihood of membership. The commissions do not requisition operating funds directly from their membership, although in the past they did depend on municipal and provincial government contributions. An amendment to the legislation in 1971 provided for a province-wide planning fund to which every municipality contributes through a formula based upon population. The range is from 0.10 mills to 0.45 mills, but Calgary and Edmonton – which have their own planning departments – only pay .05 mills per person. For all other members of regional commissions, the technical staff and facilities of the commission are available on a contract basis for more localized planning needs. Once partial and completed regional plans are implemented, the regional commissions perform a regulatory function in all matters relating to planning.

<sup>18</sup> Alberta, Department of Municipal Affairs, "After Twenty Years" (Edmonton: D.M.A., 1971) p.9. (mimeo).

TABLE V

## ALBERTA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSIONS

Regional Planning Commission	Date of Establishment	Number of Staff	1971 Regional Population	Population Growth: 1961-71	Percent Urban: 1971	Area of Planning Commission	No. of Member Mun's. & I.D.'s	No. of Non-Member Municipalities
Battle River Regional Planning Commission	1960	3 professional 3 others	59,714	+ 940	35.8%	5,768 sq.mi.	19	7
Calgary Regional Planning Commission	1951	4 professional 7 others	454,970	+147,987	89 %	10,600 sq.mi.	14	17
Edmonton Regional Planning Commission	1950	4 professional 6 others	538,733	+150,685	90.2%	5,000 sq.mi.	26	0
Medicine Hat Regional Planning Commission	1954	2 professional 6 others	45,500	- 4,005	62.5%	10,500 sq.mi.	11	5
Oldman Regional Planning Commission	1955	5 professional 6 others	116,591	- 2,707	61.4%	10,300 sq.mi.	28	11
Peace River Regional Planning Commission	1958	5 professional 5 others	87,078	+ 18,740	41 %	85,000 sq.mi.	34	4
Red Deer Regional Planning Commission	1952	6 professional 9 others	103,134	+ 11,156	46.7%	13,416 sq.mi.	27	9
Totals			1,405,620 <sup>2</sup>			140,584 sq.mi. <sup>3</sup>		

<sup>1</sup> Includes cities, towns, and villages over 1,000 population.

<sup>2</sup> Population outside Planning Regions - 221,929

<sup>3</sup> Area outside Planning Regions - 114,901 sq. mi.

Source: Task Force on Urbanization and the Future, *The Role of Regional Planning*, pp10-11.

## ONTARIO

Ontario has adopted a regional government program quite different from that of Alberta and British Columbia. Ontario has a county system in the southern part of the province but it is a weak structure which has existed since 1849<sup>19</sup>. There has been extensive reform of local educational structures, but no real tie-in to regional government decision-making. There is also "Design for Development" - Ontario's province-wide plan for economic development announced in 1966.<sup>20</sup>

The ten economic regions that form the basis for Design for Development date back to the 1953 Federal-Provincial agreements to establish economic regions for data compilation purposes; Ontario was divided into ten economic regions. In the same year, Metropolitan Toronto - Ontario's first regional government - was established. A decade later, the Metropolitan Toronto and Region Transportation Study (begun in 1962) shifted its focus from a strict analysis of transportation problems and trends to a broader treatment of regional development. The announcement of Design for Development in 1966 was backed by an elaborate provincial decision-making and implementation structure which included: a special committee of cabinet, an advisory committee on regional development (deputy minister level), ten regional advisory boards (senior staff), ten regional development councils (composed mainly of local council and business representatives), the Ontario Development Corporation, and the Regional Development Branch of the Department of Treasury and Economics, (now Treasury, Economics, and Intergovernmental Affairs) whose responsibility was co-ordination of the activities of government departments towards regional growth.

In November, 1968, Design for Development - Phase II was announced. This time,

the province made an important shift in the economic development program by adding local government reform to the implementation machinery. A network of urban-centred regional governments were to become a basic instrument in carrying through regional economic development. The refusal of Metropolitan Toronto to participate in the Central Ontario Regional Development Council, however, served to weaken the importance of this group considerably. The province subsequently established an independent and overlapping territory referred to as the Toronto-Centred Region, announced May, 1970, in Design for Development - the Toronto-Centred Region. TCR was designed to pick up the slack caused by Metro's absence from the regional development scheme, and partly to concentrate much of its planning efforts on the most important area of growth in Ontario. From the beginning TCR was exclusively a provincial exercise that set a pattern for greater emphasis on centralized planning.

In June, 1972, Design for Development - Phase III was announced. The ten economic regions were reduced to five "planning regions", eliminating much of the overlap which occurred when the Toronto-Centred Region was announced - the TCR boundaries took in parts of four of the original ten regions. The new regions have been designed to take over functions of their predecessors; their membership will include industrial, commercial and academic representatives, set up under the aegis of the Ontario Economic Council. Municipalities will have a counterpart body in each region, under the purview of the Provincial-Municipal Liaison Committee. The Advisory Committee on Regional Development became the Advisory Committee on Urban and Regional Planning, with its membership expanded to include

<sup>19</sup> With the exception of an amalgamation in the Fort William-Port Arthur area in 1971, the proposed amalgamation in the Timmins area to create a 1,000 square mile city of 42,000 people, and the impending implementation of a regional government for Sudbury and its environs, there is very little of consequence embodied in current provincial plans in the context of municipal reform or consolidation in Northern Ontario. Virtually all the activity is occurring south of Parry Sound District; this review has accordingly been confined to Southern Ontario.

<sup>20</sup> The existence of an overall provincial framework for development to which local areas may relate is not unique to Ontario, for New Brunswick introduced its own version in 1967. British Columbia and Alberta, however, have not as yet developed a general program of this nature.

the regional deputy ministers in all policy fields and its terms of reference extended to encompass issues of policy on regional government. The memberships of the five new regional advisory boards of top civil servants were expanded in a parallel manner. Design for Development – Phase III noticeably downplayed the local role in development policy-making in favour of an augmented role for the provincial bureaucracy.

As in British Columbia, Ontario's regional governments are being created to consolidate the several hundred incorporated municipalities; to institutionalize the reality of urban-rural interdependence; to merge as much as possible the wealthier with the less wealthy areas in order to reduce disparities through a more equitable overall balance; to provide a stronger local unit which can take over many of the services currently provided by the nearly 6,500<sup>21</sup> of unco-ordinated, often competing, and only remotely accountable single purpose boards and commissions; and, in many instances, simply to provide the normally local services that several municipalities are not able to undertake.

In 1965, the Select Committee on the Municipal Act and Related Acts (Beckett Committee) strongly endorsed regional municipal organization instead of continuing functional centralization to the province. Shortly thereafter, the Ontario Committee on Taxation (Smith Committee) also outlined a regional scheme which it deemed requisite to its proposed restructuring of municipal finance, which in part was founded on a consolidation program to achieve better municipal tax bases. The Beckett Committee recommended the adoption of the county as the basic unit of two-tiered regional government, but with cities and separated towns included in the regional structure. The Smith Committee, however, following its two fundamental criteria for regionalization (service and access), rejected the county as a basic unit since adherence to county lines would constitute a perpetual obstacle to a successful

balance between the two criteria.<sup>22</sup> The Cabinet ultimately accepted the Beckett approach.

The Government did, however, accept the Smith Committee's five ancillary criteria for regional government: sense of community; balance of interests; adequate financial base; large enough so that local responsibilities can be performed efficiently; and boundaries that encourage maximum co-operation between regions. Two other elements were added. The Government intended to encourage community participation in the formation of regional governments through local government review commissions and post-review implementation discussions with local representatives. Regional government boundaries were expected to be usable by other agencies, including local educational Boards. If two-tiered regions were incorporated, the lower levels would be designed using these same seven criteria. In terms of size, a minimum population for a region was set at between 150,000 and 200,000. At the local level the minimum would be 8,000 to 10,000 people.

The early reorganizations relied heavily on counties as basic units for regional boundaries and made frequent use of the two-tiered structure. Both of these have been called into question in Design for Development – Phase III and it now appears that decisions on structure and boundaries – key elements in the reorganization – will vary with the study findings on the needs of each area. There is no fixed schedule for establishing regions (as recommended by the Smith Committee). Instead, the province will work on a priority basis beginning with the remaining urbanizing areas whose structures are inhibiting adequate performance of responsibilities. Preference will be given to the municipalities within the Toronto-Centred Region, and by the fall of 1972 there will be proposals made respecting the territory covered by Northumberland, Durham, Ontario, Peel, Halton and Wentworth counties. Next in line will be the remaining areas along the Windsor-Montreal corridor. The only timetable currently being

followed is for proposals for municipal reform throughout southern Ontario to be announced by 1975.

To encourage municipal reform, as well as win acceptance of its proposed regional structures, the province introduced the *Regional Municipal Grants Act* in 1970. Under this legislation, the region would receive minimum per capita grants totaling \$9.00 to be passed on to the member municipalities. The province also encouraged discussion of potential restructuring by local and county councils to permit regional government to emerge from local initiative. There was little response. Local inactivity was subsequently used by the province in implementing consolidations. This procedure of encouragement followed by essentially unilateral action closely parallels the pattern found in the rationalization of educational structures described below.

In addition to government reorganization, the province has assumed responsibility for the assessment of property and has introduced a province wide system of market value assessment.<sup>23</sup> Several categories of properties previously exempt from municipal taxation will lose that status when the new tax base is applied, sometime after 1974. At the same time, a tax credit plan to reduce the regressivity of property taxes will

link these taxes with personal income from 1973 onward. Freedom of local councils to determine how revenues are allocated presumably will be enhanced when the present complex web of provincial grants to municipalities is rationalized, and several conditional grants are absorbed into an unconditional grant structure.

The policy of the present government is for ultimate consolidation of many municipalities in southern Ontario into regional governments. In a number of areas the traditional devices of annexation and amalgamation will suffice. If past practices are any indication, future regional governments will be similar in structure to Metropolitan Toronto upon which the existing regions were based, but with the implementary adjustments initiated with Niagara and York Regions. Metro Toronto and the Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton were incorporated with no internal amalgamations. The existing municipalities were merged into a two-tier system with split and shared functions. Unlike British Columbia, the division of functions in its entirety formed part of the legislation for each region. In Niagara, York, and Muskoka regions,<sup>24</sup> however, internal boundary adjustments constituted an integral aspect of the implementation process, as outlined in Table VI.

TABLE VI

## MUNICIPAL CONSOLIDATION WITHIN ONTARIO'S REGIONAL MUNICIPALITIES

Region	Date of Implementation	Size of Regional Council	Previous No. of Municipalities	Time of Internal Amalgamation	Current No. of Municipalities
Metro Toronto	Jan. 1, 1954	33 <sup>1</sup>	13	Jan. 1, 1967	6
Ottawa-Carleton	Jan. 1, 1969	31	16	–	16
Niagara	Jan. 1, 1970	29	26	Jan. 1, 1970	12
York	Jan. 1, 1971	17	14	Jan. 1, 1971	9
Muskoka	Jan. 1, 1971	23	25	Jan. 1, 1971	6
Waterloo	Jan. 1, 1973	25	16	Jan. 1, 1973	7
Sudbury	Jan. 1, 1973	21	19 + parts of 14 other Twps.	Jan. 1, 1973	7

1 – Includes the chairman in all cases.

Sources: the incorporating legislation for each region.

<sup>23</sup> See Bureau of Municipal Research, *Civic Affairs*, Market Value Reassessment: A Study of the Theory, the Practice and the Results. Summer 1970.

<sup>24</sup> Although Muskoka is officially a "district municipality" instead of a "regional municipality", it is talked of here as a region for the purposes of convenience based on its virtually identical structure with those of the regional municipalities.

<sup>21</sup> In February of 1970 there were estimated to be in excess of 6,500 such bodies in Ontario. See S. J. Clasky, "Background to the Development of Regional Government in Ontario", a paper delivered to the Conference on Regional Government, University of Windsor, February 14, 1970 (Toronto: Department of Municipal Affairs, 1970), p.3 (mimeo).

<sup>22</sup> See Ontario Committee on Taxation, *Report* (Toronto: Queen's Printer, 1967) Vol. II Chap. 23, and Bureau of Municipal Research *Civic Affairs*, May 1968 (Toronto: the Bureau, 1968), pp. 30-31.

Three methods of election to the regional council are being employed in the five regions on an experimental basis since provincial officials are still uncertain as to which approach is better for all regions. Indirect election is common to Metro Toronto, Ottawa-Carleton, and Muskoka regions, as all regional councillors are

selected from the councils of the member areas. Niagara has a combined indirect-direct system. For each member municipality with more than one representative, the mayor is automatically a regional councillor and the other seats are filled by direct election. In York, the Mayor is on the regional council but the additional representatives are

TABLE VII

## REGIONAL FUNCTIONAL ALLOCATION - ONTARIO

Function	Metro	Ottawa-Carleton	Niagara	York	Muskoka	Waterloo	Sudbury
Planning	S <sup>1</sup>	S <sup>2</sup>	S	S	S <sup>2</sup>	S	R
Water Supply	S	R	S	S	L	S	R
Sewage	S	S	S	S	S	S	R
Roads	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Traffic	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Sidewalks	L	L	L	L	L	L	L
Parking	S	S	S	S	L	S	S
Health Unit	L	R	R	R	R <sup>3</sup>	R	R <sup>4</sup>
General Welfare	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
Child Welfare	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
Homes for the Aged	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
Juvenile Court (costs by order)	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
Nursing Services & Day Nurseries (costs)	R	S	R	R	R	R	R
Homes for the Retarded (costs)	R	L	S	S	S	R	R
Grants to Hospitals	S	S	S	S	S	S	R
Ambulance Service	R	L	L	L	L	L	L
War Veterans Burial	R	L	R	R	R	R	R
Sanatoria for Consumptives	S	S	R	R	R	R	R
Anatomy Act	R	S	R	R	R	R	R
Police	R	L	S	R	P	R	R
Fire Protection	L	L	L <sup>5</sup>	L <sup>5</sup>	L <sup>5</sup>	L <sup>5</sup>	L <sup>5</sup>
E.M.O.	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
Solid Waste	S	L	L	L	L	S	S
Parks	S	L	L	S	L	L	L
Recreation and Community Centres	L	L	L	L	L	L	L
Library	L	L	L	L	L	S <sup>6</sup>	L
Gas and Electricity distribution	L <sup>2</sup>	L <sup>2</sup>	L <sup>2</sup>	L <sup>2</sup>	L <sup>2</sup>	L <sup>2</sup>	L <sup>2</sup>
Public Transit	R	L	L	L	L	R <sup>7</sup>	R <sup>7</sup>
Tax Collection	L	L	L	L	L	L	L
Tax Levy	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Borrowing	R	R	R	R	R	R	R

Codes: S - Shared R - Regional L - Local P - Provincial.

- 1- Separate Boards at regional and local levels.
- 2- Separate Boards at local level (optional for planning in Muskoka).
- 3- The District Municipality of Muskoka is part of the Muskoka-ParrySound Health Unit.
- 4- The Regional Municipality of Sudbury will be part of the Sudbury and District Health Unit.
- 5- However, a regional fire co-ordinator is required
- 6- A regional function in the four township municipalities only.
- 7- At the option of the regional council.

Sources: D.M.A., "Comparative Analysis of Regional Government Legislation in Ontario".

Regional Municipality of Waterloo Act, 1972.  
Regional Municipality of Sudbury Act, 1972.

directly elected jointly to the local and regional councils. Regional councils - as all municipal councils in the province - sit for a term of two years. A regional councillor has one vote, and only Metro Toronto and Ottawa-Carleton have an executive committee of the regional council.

The allocation of functions in Ontario's regions is now standard with few variations on the norm. Generally, the common, region-wide, or trunk services are the responsibility of the upper tier, and the more local or local aspects of services rest with the lower tier. Table VII provides a detailed outline of functional responsibilities.

In the field of planning, Metro Toronto still has a separate planning board. Regional planning in the other four regions is a line function under the direct responsibility of the councils. In all five instances planning is shared yet hierarchical. The subsidiary planning areas (the member municipalities) in Metro Toronto and Ottawa-Carleton utilize advisory boards, while their counterparts in Niagara and York may not. Muskoka's local municipalities may place planning in the hands of council or a board, whichever they choose. With the exception of Metro Toronto, the regional councils may be delegated powers of approval under the *Planning Act* over plans and rezoning in their subsidiary planning areas.

The regional councils, with the exception of Muskoka, are responsible for water supply and purification, construction and maintenance of trunk lines, and "wholesale" distribution. In addition, they may establish standards and regulations for local water systems, and have inspection authority over all water mains in the region. Local distribution mains and the "retail" supply of water is a local council function, except in Ottawa-Carleton where it is a regional responsibility. Public utilities commissions are prohibited in all regions other than Metro Toronto as part of a provincial program to reduce the high number of *ad hoc* boards at the local level and relocate their functions as direct council responsibilities.

Sewerage treatment, disposal facilities, and sanitary and storm trunk lines are upper tier functions in all five regions. As with water supply, the regional councils set standards for local systems and have power of inspection over them. Construction and maintenance of local storm and sanitary sewers and primary collection of sewage are local council responsibilities.

In the non-regionalized parts of Ontario, planning is undertaken by *ad hoc* boards whose territories may range from one or two up to as many as twenty-eight municipalities. As of August 31, 1971, the province had 68 Joint Planning Boards (7 of which were inactive), 179 Subsidiary Planning Boards (8 of which were inactive) and 130 Single Independent Planning Boards (6 of which were inactive),<sup>25</sup> not including the boards and councils in the regionalized areas. Water supply for most of the municipalities in the province is also under the authority of *ad hoc* commissions, while sewage collection and disposal facilities are rare.

Consolidation of local units for education had a thirty-year history in Ontario, but was effected in two major stages only in the past decade. Between 1938 and 1957 the provincial government operated an incentive program for amalgamation of local elementary school structures because previous attempts at forcing consolidation met with heavy opposition.<sup>26</sup> Initially a grant of \$100 was paid for each school section absorbed into a township, but by 1959 this figure had increased to \$500. By 1957, 3,607 school sections had been reduced to 574 township school areas, as may be noted in Table VIII, but the scheme was voluntary and not adopted across the province.

The program was actively encouraged by departmental officials until the appointment of W. J. Dunlop as Minister of Education in 1951, who ordered termination of provincial encouragement until his replacement in 1959.

At the time of the succession of John Robarts as Minister of Education that same year, several problems were apparent throughout the provincial educational

<sup>25</sup> Ontario. Community Planning Branch, Department of Municipal Affairs, *Directory of Planning Boards and Committees of Adjustment* (Toronto: D.M.A., 1971)

<sup>26</sup> David Cameron, *Schools for Ontario* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press), p.14. This section of the study is heavily indebted to the above edition and to W. G. Fleming. *The Administrative Structure, Vol. II in Ontario Educative Society* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971).

TABLE VIII

## ANNUAL FORMATION OF TOWNSHIP SCHOOL AREAS, 1938-57

Year	Net No. of TSA's formed	Total No. of TSA's	No. of School Sections Included
Before 1938	15	15	84
1938	15	30	154
1939	43	73	366
1940	26	99	513
1941	31	130	665
1942	35	165	862
1943	22	187	1008
1944	61	248	1421
1945	149	397	2340
1946	58	455	2841
1947	29	484	3071
1948	15	499	3224
1949	15	514	3325
1950	22	536	3465
1951	11	547	3488
1952	7	554	3547
1953	0	554	3529
1954	1	555	3527
1955	8	563	3565
1956	6	569	3577
1957	5	574	3607

Source: Cameron, *Schools for Ontario*, P. 16

system. Despite the incentive scheme, there were still too many local units, with many of them having very small school populations.<sup>27</sup> A large increase in student enrolment caused a marked increase in expenditures, and this was aggravated by public demand for improved quality in almost every part of the province. The adequacy of local financial resources to meet these two pressures came into serious question, and augmented provincial grants were not considered an adequate solution. The basic difficulties were too closely interrelated to be soluble without a reduction in the number of local units. But the cabinet was still against enforced consolidation.

In 1963, a foundation grant plan was established to stimulate amalgamation further. The plan was based on the premise that school districts could be treated equally only if they were subject to the same grant formula. Working in the context of school districts *per se*, rather than creating classifications of districts, necessitated a greater

equality of resources between them, and the approach proved to be politically astute. Opposition to consolidation of local units large enough to support such a grant system became more difficult to sustain, not only in Cabinet but also in the rural areas where traditionally antagonism had been the deepest.

The shift in government policy found expression in the 1964 legislation making the township the basic unit for local government in education. If a town or village had less than 1,000 inhabitants, it joined with a township to form a school district. Over 1,600 small units were summarily reduced to 255 township boards. At the same time, county councils were allowed to establish consultative committees to undertake feasibility studies on further enlargement of school areas, though on a voluntary basis. Should all the areas within its territory agree on unification, the county council – or municipal councils in the northern districts – were empowered to effect the change. By

mid-1966, all counties had created consultative committees, and twenty-five county or district units were organized by the end of the year. The predominance of municipal councillors on the committees may have gone a long way towards making these further consolidations possible.

Two complementary trends were underway prior to the final adjustment in 1968. The first of these trends was the consolidation of secondary school districts which, unlike the situation in Alberta, were distinct from the elementary school sections. High schools grew out of the nineteenth century grammar schools, and even in rural areas provincial control over them went largely unchallenged. As far back as 1937, county councils were authorized to set up consultative committees on secondary school districts with terms of reference similar to their elementary school counterparts almost thirty years later. During the years after World War II, the Department pressed for larger high school districts and was generally successful in achieving essentially voluntary consolidations.

In its 1967 report, the Ontario Committee on Taxation called for the integration of secondary education "as a regular responsibility of the regional council" in its proposed regional governments. A departmental committee convened in November of 1966, however, preferred another approach. In its preliminary studies, the committee restricted its purview to the more populous southern part of the province. It hoped for unification of elementary and secondary education under one board in each county. Five major urban areas were to remain as distinct school districts since they would tend to dominate a strictly county structure. Elementary and secondary amalgamation was recommended for purposes of economic efficiency and improved co-ordination. The county level was selected because it was convenient, it already conveyed some sense of community, and very few school districts transcended county boundaries.

The second trend was a reorganization of the Department of Education in 1965. The province was divided into ten administrative regions (in a few sectors similar to the economic regions, but not originally designed that way). Five were officially designated in February of 1965, and the remaining five fourteen months later. A

main purpose of the reorganization was the integration of elementary and secondary education. The departmental restructuring was to achieve greater specialization in the field similar to that in the central offices, and towards this end the regional staffs included business administrators and program development consultants who were to assist schools upon request. At the same time, the Department wanted local structures of a parallel nature, because in its shift to a more service-oriented role the local boards would have to adopt an augmented regulatory responsibility. This in turn would require a further rationalization of local structures. Decentralization of authority would be somewhat facilitated by the emergence of sophisticated staffs in many boards, but even more such personnel as well as greater technical facilities would be required. These necessities were simply out of reach of most township boards.

In November of 1967, then, Premier Robarts announced the final step. The ultimate goal was stated as 100 local units of government for education. The counties would each constitute a school district, as would the cities of Hamilton, London, and Windsor. Metro Toronto was to continue its two-tier structure comprising boards for each of the six municipalities and a metropolitan board. In Ottawa-Carleton, the cities of Ottawa and Eastview and the village of Rockcliffe Park had one board, with another for the other municipalities in the region. In the north, because of the scattered nature of population distribution, districts were created based largely on a grouping of public school sections into units accessible to existing secondary schools. Forty-eight existing elementary school sections were retained since they were too distant from secondary school districts. In all, the 1010 school boards operating in 1967 were reduced by the following year to 125.

The final consolidation was designed to make local units similar in administrative structure to the Department with staffs capable of using the services the province would provide. The emphasis on efficiency and technical expertise forced creation of larger districts which could support these staffs and improved facilities. The new boards were made responsible for inspection of schools, and were authorized to issue their own debentures instead of issuing them

<sup>27</sup> As late as 1964 there were 2,846 elementary boards in Ontario, and 810 of these had average daily attendances of fewer than 30 pupils. See Cameron, *op. cit.*, p.27.

through the municipal council as they had in the past. But here the reforms stopped.

The Smith Committee referred to the inequitable position of municipal councils who had to provide funds for school boards on a requisition basis, but no provision appeared in the 1968 legislation to make boards more directly accountable for public funds consumed. The Premier, as noted above, deemed educational restructuring as being the third part of the "Design for Development" plan and the Minister of Municipal Affairs added on December 2 of 1968 that:<sup>28</sup>

... as new Regional Governments are formed, we will attempt to design them so that they and the school authorities will be co-terminous, or

will have co-terminous outer boundaries . . .

This was true, but only insofar as both school districts and regional governments have been and will continue to be based largely upon counties in southern Ontario and the more heavily populated parts of the territorial districts in northern Ontario.<sup>29</sup> Nevertheless, the incentive of largely co-terminous boundaries does not appear sufficient at this time to bring about a further restructuring which would place educational administration under the regional councils. The firmly entrenched education bureaucracy constitutes an obstacle even Cabinet would have extreme difficulty swaying, regardless of general public reaction to an amalgamation proposal.

## NEW BRUNSWICK

In 1967, New Brunswick adopted what became known as a "Program for Equal Opportunity". This plan was the implementation of a large package of reforms of municipal government as recommended by the Royal Commission on Finance and Municipal Taxation (Byrne Commission). The report of the Commission was released in 1963, and after some four years of study, the Government decided to accept the proposals with only a few changes. The terms of reference under which the Commission operated focused on existing problems in both provincial and municipal finance and taxation, but the commission concluded that "provincial-municipal problems were not just a matter of allocation of tax fields, but were basically problems of governmental organization and structure".<sup>30</sup>

Until 1963, the municipal system in New Brunswick had gone essentially unchanged

since the nineteenth century. This while urbanization was not as rampant a process in New Brunswick as in the rest of Canada (in 1960, Canada was 70% urbanized, while only 46% of New Brunswick's population lived in urban areas), the rate of urbanization did constitute a serious difficulty. New Brunswick was a slow growth area and the large rural non-farm population meant serious revenue consequences for rural local government not just in terms of fundamental servicing needs, but also in view of rising demands for qualitative and quantitative service augmentations. There was also a lack of incorporated villages which could provide the mechanism for local service provision. This vacuum was only partially filled in 1945 by the Local Improvement Districts Act which authorized creation of a variety of single purpose districts covering such services as water supply, sewerage systems,

sidewalks, community planning, fire protection, and garbage collection. At times the districts overlapped one another, but like most *ad hoc* structures in local government, co-ordination of activities was generally poor if not non-existent.

Virtually hand in hand with the inability of municipalities to provide services went the process of continual fragmentation of their authority.

Powers formerly in the hands of county and other municipal councils were assigned increasingly to a variety of independent local agencies whose members were frequently appointed by the lieutenant governor-in-council.<sup>31</sup>

Municipalities were also subject to increasingly detailed central control similar to that found besieging English local governments by the Redcliffe-Maud Commission.<sup>32</sup> Centralization of local responsibilities occurred with increasing regularity as well.

Municipalities were authorized to levy and collect taxes, but there was no uniformity of assessment or taxation policies across the province. As cities and towns grew within counties, cost-sharing for necessary inter-municipal services invariably caused conflicts due to inequities stemming from the lack of a system for assessment equalization. The overall local taxation picture was one of chaos and confusion, particularly for the local taxpayers.

Revenue problems were by no means peculiar to the rural non-farm communities. Cities and towns had varying degrees of success balancing needs with resources, while counties usually found themselves with far less enviable records. By 1966, in fact, three counties were virtually bankrupt.

Community planning was a rare process in New Brunswick, and where it was being undertaken (primarily in the more heavily urbanized areas where there were several adjoining municipalities), there was no effective co-ordination. The 1961 Community

Planning Act enabled the Provincial Planning Board to require official plans and subdivision by-laws from any municipal council. The difficulty here lay in the fact that most councils knew little or nothing about the planning process, and they could not afford to hire professional staffs. Nor could the province provide technical planning assistance since it too was under-staffed. In the areas which could afford it, district planning commissions were established, but they were advisory and continually encountered problems when dealing with the groups of municipal councils within their territory since the councillors could seldom see beyond their political boundaries.

By 1962, New Brunswick had 422 school districts and a wide range of disparity between them in terms of quality of education. In addition, the province-wide level of education was substantially below the national average on the basis of expenditures per pupil.<sup>33</sup> More than half the districts had no secondary level program, and only a very few used French as the language of instruction. Vocational courses were available in larger urban areas only, despite the great need for their existence in the depressed rural areas.

Perhaps the root problem in education was the lack of adequate finances across the province. The provincial government paid only a small part of the costs of education, which meant that only the few wealthier urban areas could supply adequate facilities and qualified teachers. It also meant, in turn, that only these areas could offer good and balanced programs, while at best only a bare majority of the population had reasonable access to these programs. The others had little or no hope of acquiring anything close to the standard of education found in the wealthier areas and a main cause of this disparity was the lack of an equitable provincial support scheme. What grants did exist favoured the less needy areas since they were based primarily on percentage of cost.

<sup>28</sup> The Hon. Darcy McKeough, "Design for Development: Phase II," a statement to the Legislature on Dec. 2, 1968 (Toronto: D.M.A., 1968), pp. 2-3 (mimeo).

<sup>29</sup> Two more regional governments are to be created in Waterloo County and in the Sudbury area, effective January 1, 1973. They follow this pattern, as did their predecessors with only minor variations in Ottawa-Carleton and Muskoka. Previous local government reviews also adhered to this apparent norm.

<sup>30</sup> See Ralph R. Krueger, "Provincial-Municipal Government Revolution in New Brunswick," in *Canadian Public Administration*, Vol. XIII, No. 1, Spring 1970.

<sup>31</sup> See H. J. Whalen, *The Development of Local Government in New Brunswick*, (Fredericton: Queen's Printer, 1963).

<sup>32</sup> The Commission noted a major problem as being that "... central government tries itself to do some of the things that belong properly to local government," while local governments "are not given enough freedom to go their own way." See Royal Commission on Local Government in England (1966-69), *Report* (London: H.M.S.O., 1969), Vol I, p.30

<sup>33</sup> The New Brunswick average expenditure per pupil in 1960 was \$203, whereas the nation-wide average was \$327.

Previous attempts at consolidation of school districts were largely a failure. During the years immediately after World War II the county was selected as the local unit for school finance purposes and administration of a capital assistance program for rural districts. The counties, however, had inadequate resources at their disposal to maintain this function and were ineffective as an equalization mechanism. A system of amalgamating school districts was also introduced and by 1962 approximately 153 consolidated and regional school districts were in operation. The scheme, however, was voluntary and not uniform, resulting in sporadic acceptance. The report of the Mackenzie Commission on School Finance, released in 1955, called for large administrative districts sufficient in size to provide "a full complement of academic and vocational facilities . . . and to provide for full use of these facilities". The recommendations of the Commission were not implemented.

The problems cited above are but a few of the vast array of difficulties confronting New Brunswick and its municipalities in 1963, but they do indicate the seriousness of the situation. Previous attempts at solutions had been piecemeal, and created a complex mass of bits of legislation which followed no general pattern or policy. The province found itself in general agreement with the Byrne Commission's insistence on sweeping changes, primarily because

without some fundamental changes, any increased financial assistance to municipalities would not solve the basic problem for long, and in fact might present the government with an even greater problem in the future.<sup>34</sup>

The government adopted the Commission's premise that local functions be divided into two categories of services to people (education, health, welfare, and justice), and services related to property (planning, water, sewage, parks, fire protection). The former group, since their application should be uniform and equitable throughout the

<sup>34</sup> Krueger, *op. cit.*, p.71

<sup>35</sup> These services are drainage, fire protection, police protection, garbage collection and disposal, sewerage, sidewalks, roads and streets, regulation of traffic, community planning, street lighting, water, parks, recreational facilities, tourist promotion and development, industrial development, urban redevelopment, housing and land assembly. See E. G. Allen, *Municipal Organization in New Brunswick, 1967*, (Fredericton: Queen's Printer, 1968), pp. 8-9.

province, were centralized. Assessment and collection of municipal taxes were also taken over by the Province. Service to property would remain as far as possible at the municipal level, but supported by a new financial structure which provided a flat rate grant and an equalization grant. The consolidated *Municipalities Act* of 1966 set down the framework for local servicing, and provided for four types of local structures. To the cities and towns were added seventy-six incorporated villages, while small unincorporated settlements could be designated local service districts upon request.

New Brunswick was divided into twelve administrative regions with Municipal Service Representatives in each regional centre. Through this deconcentration, the Province provides direct assistance and advice to municipalities and local service districts, and administers its own functions in unincorporated areas. These regions are also administrative units for other provincial departments. With services allocated centrally or to incorporated municipalities, counties became redundant. They were eliminated by the 1966 legislation.

Under the revamped system, then, cities and towns may provide any or all of the lengthy list of services enumerated in the *Municipalities Act*.<sup>35</sup> Villages may provide similar services, although the Province has responsibility for police protection (R.C.M.P. on a contract basis), sidewalks, roads and streets (including snow removal), and storm sewers. With the addition of garbage disposal to the previous list of exclusively provincial functions, local service districts may also provide the other services undertaken in incorporated municipalities. Provincial departments perform any functions desired at the request of local service districts. The advisory committees in the districts, which may be set up at the option of the residents, are not authorized to levy taxes. Instead, the Province raises the taxes locally to cover the costs of services requested. All other parts of New Brunswick

are under direct provincial administration.

Amalgamation or annexation have been the traditional methods for municipal restructuring and consolidation throughout the province's history. The Byrne Commission agreed with the amalgamation of a number of municipalities in the St. John area as recommended by the Royal Commission on Metropolitan St. John in 1963. The amalgamation received provincial approval, and the larger city came into being in January of 1967. Amalgamation studies have also been undertaken for the Moncton, Fredericton and St. Stephen-Milltown areas.<sup>36</sup>

Water supply and sanitary sewerage were classified along with electricity as utility services requiring user-charge financing. With the exception of estimated costs for water used in fire fighting, and the portion of the cost for storm sewers which may form part of a combined sewer system, funds for water supply or sewerage may not be included in the general municipal budget. Administration of these functions may be allocated to *ad hoc* commissions at the discretion of the councils. Abutting municipalities may enter into agreements for joint provision of common services, but only two such arrangements have been made for sewage facilities to date.

Community planning was recommended by the Byrne Commission for mandatory joint provision in abutting municipalities, and augmented provision throughout the province in general. The province for the most part agreed with this approach. Beginning at the local level, the *Community Planning Act* requires every municipal council to establish an advisory planning commission and to adopt a subdivision by-law. A council may allocate administrative powers to its commission if it so desires. All council decisions on planning matters must be preceded by referral of those topics to the commission for perusal and comment.

The cabinet may, upon recommendation

from the Provincial Planning Board, require two or more councils to establish a planning district for coordinative purposes. Each district is similarly placed under a separate planning commission. Membership on these commissions (five of which have been created to date), is determined by the complementary by-laws of the municipalities establishing the district. For non-municipal areas (including improvement districts) included in a planning district, the Provincial Planning Board acts as the municipal council.

The most significant program of structural consolidation occurred in the field of education. Responsibility for education has been completely centralized. The number of school districts has been reduced from 422 to 33 rather than to 60 as originally recommended by the Byrne Commission. In addition, high schools have been consolidated from 165 in 1966-67 to 72 in 1971-72, with 40 as the ultimate goal.

The province provides total financing for education, and sets out the basic curricula for all elementary and secondary schools. Its Department of Education sets a common salary scale for teachers throughout the province, and this scale was initially the level paid in St. John in 1967. Now rural or depressed areas are better able to compete for qualified teachers as well as benefit from upgraded standards. On the other hand, areas which desire to do so are no longer capable of providing a level of education above provincial standards. Nor are they sufficiently able to tailor their programs and facilities to meet what district boards perceive as needs peculiar to their own jurisdictions. As in British Columbia and Ontario, the loss of any effective decision-making capacity at the local level was more complete in the educational sector than in the municipal. The province owns all educational facilities, and, after consultation with district trustees, determines the location of all schools. (It also assumed capital debts of the previous districts). There is no tax levy

<sup>36</sup> The Fredericton and Moncton area studies were submitted in June of 1971. The St. Stephen-Milltown study was submitted in June of 1970. For an evaluation of the Fredericton and Moncton studies, see Bureau of Municipal Research, "Amalgamation: A Solution to the Problem in Greater Moncton and Greater Fredericton?" BMR Comment No. 127, (Toronto: The Bureau, August, 1971). (mimeo.)



specifically for education, and all expenditures are made from the Consolidated Revenue Fund of the province.

The Department of Education has created seven administrative regions, or "superintendencies", staffed by provincial employees. These regional officials administer departmental policy and interpret it to schools and trustees, function as a liaison between the province and boards of trustees, provide professional consultation to schools, and perform an evaluative and feedback role to top departmental personnel in the context of the overall program of education. Each region contains an average of from three to six school districts. Within each district there is a board of trustees (a majority of whom are directly elected) and an administrative staff headed by a district superintendent.

The district board consists of nine or fifteen members as determined by the Minister. One third of the trustees are appointed by the Minister, and two-thirds are directly elected for two-year terms. All elections are on an at-large basis. An amend-

ment to the *Schools Act* in 1968 provided for division of a district into electoral wards or subdistricts, with one ward for each elected trusteeship. Two or more wards may amalgamate into one electoral zone, and the requisite number of trustees stand for election at large in the larger zone.

District boards are responsible for administration of public school education in their districts, and employment of school personnel, under the direct supervision of the regional staffs. In November of each year every board must submit a budget to the Department for approval, and once approved the required funds are transferred to the board. The board is then responsible for disbursement of those funds to meet operational and maintenance costs. Since January of 1970 a centralized payroll system removed responsibility for salary disbursements from the trustees. Boards of trustees hire administrative staffs, but have little or no role in determining their duties. Terms of reference for district administrators are essentially provincial in origin.

## SUMMARY

All four provinces have implemented programs of structural consolidation with a variety of purposes in mind, including to improve co-ordination of activities at the local level, reduce the fragmentation of local structures, provide an adequate base for the provision of services, reduce intra-provincial disparities particularly in the field of education, seek economies of scale, augment the efficiency of local administration, coordinate growth forces, and provide better mechanisms to control land use and undesirable urban sprawl. To achieve these and related ends, the traditional devices of amalgamation and creation of *ad hoc* boards and commissions have been employed in Alberta and New Brunswick. To these have been added regional government programs in British Columbia and, to a lesser degree, Ontario. British Columbia, Ontario and New Brunswick established firm provincial direction over education, substantially weakening the role of local boards in the process. Only Ontario then moved to restrengthen the

local boards once consolidation had been completed.

The single common factor in every instance of consolidation has been efficiency, or more correctly the pursuit of efficiency. Certainly this approach must be an essential ingredient in bringing structures oriented towards rural life more in line with Canada's rapidly urbanizing society. Indeed, in an age of specialization and sophisticated technology, the resultant demands and problems cannot be met without governments which are capable of understanding them and providing adequate solutions. To do this, governments must be able to hire qualified personnel, install expensive facilities and institute comprehensive long range plans instead of essentially short-term "contingency" remedies. At all three governmental levels, this has meant extensive increases in required revenue, but the limitations upon sources of funds for municipalities has made their predicament particularly acute. Consolidations have been

effected to eliminate wasteful duplications and pool resources of neighbouring communities experiencing common problems. This rationalization of local administrations, as Table II indicates, is being coupled with significant trends in some provinces away from conditional to unconditional grants, as well as greater amounts of money in general. Not only are councils finding greater resources at their disposal but gradually some of them are being freed from a few of the heavy restrictions placed upon their abilities to establish priorities.

The age old problem of reorganization, however, is to strike a balance between efficiency in the administrative structure and sufficient openness to encourage public participation in policy making. All too often municipal consolidations have placed the major emphasis on efficiency. The regional governments in B.C. and Ontario, for example, may be characterized by deliberate removal of the regional level from the political forum since they function via indirect election,<sup>37</sup> and indirect taxation. The

upper tiers are clearly administratively oriented and not directly accountable to the electorate. The emphasis on administrative efficiency is also very evident in the centralization of functions in New Brunswick. Yet, as Charles Adrian notes:<sup>38</sup>

I think that there is ample, if unsystematic, evidence to show that these (efficiency and economy) are not goals for many citizens, indeed that the citizen is cynical about efficiency if it interests him at all and that he therefore concentrates on what is, in any case, a higher order of values to him — access to decision-makers, and a sense of having councils and boards that are representative.

The task of establishing local structures with improved resource bases, standards of service, and efficiency is well on its way in several parts of Canada. Provincial attention should now turn to building into those structures a high potential for responsiveness to the needs and preferences of the people to be served.

<sup>37</sup> This does not include the representatives to regional boards in B.C. who are directly elected from the previously unorganized territories. There are also a few exceptions in the York and Niagara Regions in Ontario.

<sup>38</sup> Charles R. Adrian, "Public Attitudes and Metropolitan Decision-Making", in Thomas R. Dye and Brett W. Hawkins, eds., *Politics in the Metropolis*, 2nd edn. (Columbus: Charles E. Merrill Co., 1971), p.528.

13-06

Folio #9



## BUREAU OF MUNICIPAL RESEARCH

---

Founded in 1914 as a non-profit research agency staffed by well qualified personnel, the Bureau of Municipal Research maintains continuous study of the problems facing municipalities and their residents.

Long an advocate of responsive and responsible government, the Bureau has gained wide recognition for the high calibre of its quarterly *Civic Affairs*, its monthly *BMR Comment*, its information and advisory services, and the participation of its staff in the public discussion of issues.

The Bureau is an independent agency supported by a broad cross-section of business and professional firms, organizations, governments, and individuals.

*your inquiries are invited:*

---

BUREAU OF MUNICIPAL RESEARCH  
Suite 406, 4 RICHMOND ST. E., Toronto 1, 363-9265

---