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Attitudes of Windsorites toward the concept of municipal amalgamation with regard to public choice and consolidationist theoretical perspectives of municipal governance.

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Abstract

The Ontario Progressive Conservative government of the 1990s implemented an administrative policy of municipal consolidation throughout the province of Ontario, as many other provinces did throughout Canada. Amalgamating cities, townships, and villages into larger municipalities, the government vowed to decrease municipal spending and create less government, while maintaining citizen satisfaction in the delivery of municipal services and access to local government. While not all newly consolidated municipalities rallied in favour of this new measure, most citizens polled in post-amalgamation studies preferred the new municipal structure. Two prominent theoretical models provide the framework for debate on municipal governance. The public choice model suggests that citizens are like consumers, and they will choose to reside in the municipality that offers them the best municipal taxation and service package. The consolidationist model, however, suggests a larger municipality is best. One where the economies of scale work to the economic benefit of citizens, and the political system is more accountable and transparent. Newly amalgamated municipalities, such as Chatham-Kent (among others), have illustrated the success of the consolidationist approach. However, the policy of municipal consolidation did not extend to the City of Windsor and surrounding towns and municipalities; they remain separate to this day. This study seeks to assess Windsor residents on their preferences regarding municipal amalgamation. Gathering public opinion on the proposition of an amalgamated Windsor and surrounding territory, a survey conducted on a sample group of Windsorites will discern if Windsor citizens prefer the status of municipalities as they are, or if they believe municipal services and political access would improve under municipal consolidation. A mall intercept survey was conducted, using a sample of 137 Windsor residents from among the five wards. Surveys were administered at municipal centres, in attempt to survey those residents with some base knowledge of the municipality. This paper considers the preference of Windsor residents towards municipal amalgamation with surrounding municipalities. Based on previous studies on consolidationism purporting the benefits of municipal amalgamation, it is expected that Windsor residents would likely take a consolidationist stance on municipal governance, supporting a hypothetical concept of municipal amalgamation with surrounding municipalities.
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Introduction

Between 1996 and 2004, 370 municipalities across Ontario effectively disappeared. Where once townships and villages existed in regional cooperation, there came a vast transformation in the Ontario municipal landscape. Over the period of eight years Ontario municipalities were reduced from 815 to 445.¹ This was the outcome of an administrative policy advanced by the Ontario Progressive Conservative (PC) Government of Ontario in 1995, part of a new agenda to rationalize local government and provincial government interaction, as well as curb government spending and reduce government redundancies. What this agenda did not specify and could not anticipate, however, was the manner in which it would change not only Ontario municipalities, but also the personal-political dynamic between the average resident and their municipality.

Before coming to power in 1995, the Ontario Progressive Conservative (PC) Party outlined its intentions for the province in its election campaign, the Common Sense Revolution (CSR). The primary goal of the CSR was simple; the Progressive Conservatives committed themselves to reducing the government expenditure, debt and deficit, and taxes. Ultimately, this election promise was a move toward eliminating government redundancies, as well as enhancing effectiveness and efficiency of government services. However, with this government plan there was an unintended result. In the years leading to its creation, there was no mention of any intended work towards reforming or restructuring municipalities. As a part of reducing government spending, the government undertook plans to alter the transfer payments to boards of

education; this would eventually lead to the greatest municipal reformation in Ontario, unlike anything seen since the Baldwin Act of 1949.²

Part of the PC plan involved a shifting in responsibility for board of education funding and holding on municipal property taxes. The provincial government opted to increase its transfer payments to municipal boards of education, with the intention of boards forfeiting their claim on municipal property taxes.³ It was expected that under the control of the municipalities the property tax would rise, subsequently leading to a decrease in the provincial transfer payment to the municipalities which, in turn, would allow the provincial government to increase its transfer payments to the boards of education;⁴ In the end, with funding to boards of education in the hands of the province, enhanced control of municipalities was almost a guarantee to follow.

What happened to municipalities instead was an increase in revenue to municipalities, the product of increased property taxes. Contrary to what the province may have expected, municipalities increased their autonomy, simply by having more of their own sources of funding outside of provincial transfers.⁵ The province continued to make its increased transfer payments to the municipal boards of education. However, it became evident to the province as well that, despite its best effort at attempting to assert more control on the municipality, the municipality was receiving more than its expected share of revenue.

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⁴ Siegel, 4.
⁵ Siegel, 5.
The byproduct of the CSR, Bill 26, the *Savings and Restructuring Act*, established the definitions for municipal restructuring, set out the procedural formula for which municipal restructuring would follow, and, in the case of necessary government arbitration, indicated the availability of a provincial commissioner to intervene in facilitating the new municipal structures.\(^6\) With municipalities seemingly able to manage more governmental responsibilities with the surge of tax revenue filling their coffers, the province advanced its own policies by creating larger municipalities, not only to reduce government redundancies (part of its initial goal), but also to prepare for taking on more responsibilities for its residents (a residual goal which came from shifting transfer payments). Within a few years of their election, the Ontario PC government began a campaign of municipal reduction with the introduction of larger municipalities as part of their municipal enlargement plan.

This plan to resize and restructure municipalities came on the heels of an earlier commitment the province was undertaking. Keeping in line with its commitment to reduce government expenditure, the PC government created a task force, the “Who Does What” group, charged with determining which level of government should be responsible for which services and what should be the protocol for the interaction between the levels of government. However, despite the mandate the task force was given, it could be argued there was a covert goal, on the part of the province, to restrict spending. For example, while the task force recommended that the provincial government undertake the costs of social services and housing, like other Canadian provinces, it was ultimately decided that the municipalities should shoulder the burden of delivering these services.\(^7\)

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\(^7\) Siegel, 7.
In many cases, decisions that should have been made given a neutral set of considerations, were in fact made with primarily financial considerations for the province.

Given the provincially-interpreted recommendations of the “Who Does What” task force, the campaign promise of the CSR, and the financial benefits befalling Ontario municipalities, municipal restructuring appeared the obvious solution to meeting the needs of the province and, to some extent, solving some of the problems afflicting the municipalities.

Municipal restructuring and amalgamation presented a viable solution to assumed municipal inefficiency and wasteful spending, as per provincial observation. Amalgamation would eliminate unnecessary government interaction between its different levels and would streamline the delivery of municipal services, by removing overlap and duplication of services between regional and local government, leading to the creation of single-tiered governments.8

While some citizens anticipated the benefits in services and tax relief that would result in consolidation, others preferred the municipalities to remain separate and operate as they had. Citizen receptiveness to this policy varied from municipality to municipality. Some municipalities, such as the former municipalities of Chatham-Kent, were initially strongly opposed to amalgamation, only to largely support it years later.9 In the years following amalgamation, the municipality of Chatham-Kent enjoyed savings in the millions of dollars annually.10 The amalgamation of the former municipalities of

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8 Sancton, 2000, 105.
10 Sancton, 2000, 105.
Chatham-Kent, as was the case in other new municipalities, demonstrated some considerable success in reaping the benefits of municipal consolidation, thereby obtaining the goals of the municipal restructuring policy program.

Unlike other administrative policies adopted by the province of Ontario, which may affect only select groups, the municipal restructuring program affected the interests of all parties within the province. The shifting in municipal boundaries may result in the restructuring of behaviour of the actors within that border, such as individual citizens and their attachment to the community. A municipality that is too large may alienate residents from their community, or a new municipality comprised of numerous former municipalities possesses the potential for discontent among residents accustomed to their own municipal structure (as opposed to that of other new community residents). From local government to surrounding business, the costs and benefits for groups within territorial boundaries are influenced by amalgamation. To the advantage of the local government, the tax base increases, and moreover, the inclusion of more businesses in the municipality allows the local government to act more prudent weighing decisions regarding contracts and capital expenditures. However advantageous amalgamation might be, the expansion of the municipality also requires the adjustment to the delivery of services which, in itself, can be problematic.

Those most impacted by municipal amalgamation are citizens. The delivery of municipal services, the collection and rate of taxation, and access to local government all change with municipal resizing. The province benefits greatly from this new municipal structure (via the downloading of government responsibilities to a lower government able
to shoulder the increasing services), but it is municipal residents who ultimately shoulder the benefit or burden of this transition.

For the municipality and the municipal resident there are several prominent implications that arise with the transition to larger government. Politically and economically, all citizens stand to gain certain advantages within the new structure, such as increased efficiency of municipal service delivery. However, there is the potential for adverse results for municipalities as there cannot be a guarantee that services could improve.

The political implications of making this structural transition are fairly straightforward. With amalgamation there are fewer local government representatives (proportional to the area as compared to pre-amalgamation figures), and presumably, more ‘distant’ from citizens. The citizenry of smaller municipalities, which previously enjoyed a municipal council that appeared readily available to address citizen concerns, due to primarily proximity and familiarity advantages, may find itself feeling alienated in a wider political structure and may voluntarily disengage itself from political participation within the new municipality. Conversely, some citizens, and especially those from larger municipalities in which general accountability in the public sector is an issue, may find that the transparency of single-tiered government appealing to their sense of political responsibility.11 Re-established trust in the political organization of the larger municipality might compel a percentage of citizen residents to renew their interest and activity in municipal politics. The political trust of residents in their municipality is a necessary component for the health and functioning of a thriving municipality.

11 Tindal and Tindal, 37.
Many factors create an aggregate level of political trust. However, of the three levels of governance in Canada, it is the municipal level which most greatly impacts upon daily living. The consequences, both positive and negative, of local political decision-making are most visibly seen at the local level. Political ideological leanings and sociodemographic factors may carry some influence in fluctuating political trust and subsequent enthusiasm for political participation; yet, the actions of the provincial and federal government may be perceived as being too far removed from the general populous and so these factors might do very little to alter the political attitudes of most persons. However, the operations and results of local government action are immediate and tangible factors, directly and perpetually impacting on the lives of residents, and therefore, affecting enthusiasm for the political system. Reorganization of municipal territory, and consequently, the structure of governance, lends itself to changing individual perception of the political system in general, and the level of political trust in the citizen. Municipal organization can affect change not only in the municipality on the whole, but also the sense of political efficacy and community attachment within the individual resident.

The general implication of this citizen satisfaction and attitude toward municipal amalgamation could directly impact the level of citizen political participation within the municipality. Is should be assumed that where citizens maintain a positive perception of their municipal government, both in service delivery and the political system, that political participation would either maintain itself at a expected moderate level, or else increase. In either case, political participation is a healthy condition for municipalities,
and where this participation exists post-amalgamation, it serves as an indication implying the success of amalgamation.

The economic implications of amalgamation are more uncertain. The redistribution of services and subsequent revamped system of taxation will benefit some, while it will be the burden of others to support this service structure. Creating a wider tax base, the shared pool of funding would enable the provision of a greater number of services, or else enhance existing programs based on increased funding for enhanced technology and specialized personnel. Understandably, the few who could support the tax base, as opposed to the many which would benefit from the amalgamated tax base, could be disgruntled with the larger responsibility arising from municipal amalgamation.

The economic results of amalgamation extend past the pocketbook, influencing an inherent social element. Social lines are many times drawn with regard to household income, resulting in pockets of affluent neighbourhoods throughout a municipality.\textsuperscript{12}

There are some cases in which, due to financial restraints, individuals would choose to reside in one municipality over another, if only because they are able to meet their payment obligation in the service-tax package. The result of this is the construction of a segregation of regional municipalities, where smaller, income-restrictive municipalities, cluster around the one or few municipalities in which citizen residents are, based on higher income, able to positively respond to the income requirement for services in that municipality. Municipal amalgamation removes these barriers, and eliminates socio-economic divisiveness among municipalities. While the relative position of the have and have-nots within the municipality will not change, the establishment of a larger

municipality will at least allow those persons with lower per capita income to enjoy some of the benefits afforded to those in the higher income bracket.

Understanding the possible implications and gains for municipal residents and governments, the question of what is the most beneficial local government structure is a continual debate. While throughout the 1990s many new municipalities were created through amalgamation, the city of Windsor and Essex County were largely untouched by the provincial restructuring. Minor boundary adjustments were made in 1995, but no structural changes were enacted to the same extent as that seen elsewhere not only in Ontario, but also throughout Canada. Many studies have been conducted post-amalgamation, illustrating both citizen approval of amalgamation and marked improvement in the delivery of some municipal services. While Windsor-Essex County municipalities have not amalgamated, and therefore no study can be conducted to demonstrate support for municipal amalgamation, a study could be conducted to illustrate Windsorite attitudes towards amalgamation. The purpose of this study is to give a snapshot of current Windsorite attitudes towards amalgamation.

Of the post-amalgamation studies conducted, there have been several benefits associated with enlarging municipalities through amalgamation, and it is probable that, given the opportunity, Windsor (as well as surrounding municipalities) would benefit from amalgamation; it is expected that Windsorites will support the concept of amalgamation. Given evidence of successful amalgamation in other areas of the province of Ontario, and the expected benefits arising from the consolidationist

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theoretical model, Windsorites are more likely to be consolidationists, thereby
demonstrating support for the concept of amalgamation with surrounding municipalities.

This study evaluates two dominant forms of municipal government structure,
which are used to conduct a study of Windsorite attitudes towards municipal governance.
To achieve these objectives, this study has been divided into five chapters. In this
introduction, changes in the Ontario municipal landscape, and the ramifications, have
been established.

Chapter One evaluates the history of municipal government in Canada, and
specifically that in Ontario, where the municipality serves as both a provider of services
and a tool for political attachment and self-governance. This analysis highlights the
importance of municipal structure and size. The analysis demonstrates that with
changing the physical structure of municipalities, there is also a shift in the expectations
and responsibilities of municipalities by both the province and municipal residents.

Chapter Two presents an argument between two philosophical approaches to
municipal governance; public choice theory and consolidationism. Both of these
approaches are supplemented with an evaluation of the role of boundaries, which tend to
affect economic and social considerations involved in managing local government
affairs. Other forms of municipal governance are evaluated as well. Based on both
citizen satisfaction surveys and empirical studies conducted on municipal service
provision, it is suggested that not only is the consolidationist approach the optimal
municipal structure, but it is also likely to be the municipal structure preferred by
Windsorites.
Chapter Three provides the methodology assessing the research question which proposed Windsorites are more likely to demonstrate attitudes leaning towards consolidationism, thereby demonstrating support for amalgamation with surrounding municipalities. Survey analysis is used to answer the research question. Rationale is provided for survey questions, as well as a brief explanation for why particular responses are associated with the public choice and consolidationist theoretical perspectives.

The results of the study of Windsorite attitudes are provided in Chapter Four. Lastly, Chapter Five provides a discussion of these results in light of the theory reviewed in Chapters One and Two.
Chapter One
Municipal Government

The introduction discussed the recent changes in Ontario municipalities and addressed the implications of municipal amalgamation. Chapter One evaluates the problems of modernizing municipal Canada and the needs of the public, as well as reasons for reform in municipal government structure. This chapter gives an abbreviated history of municipal government in Canada (and later Ontario, specifically) with discussion of the factors pertaining to the change in structure leading to the existence of municipalities as they currently exist. From this chapter, two themes of municipal government arise; first, that local government became increasingly more important in the eyes of the province as the provider of public services; and second, as the instrument for which municipal residents could exercise political relevance and attachment, and experience a sense of self-governance.

Local municipal government is possibly perceived by some as being the least important level of government, despite it being the form of government that most visibly impacts upon the daily life of citizens, more so than either the provincial or Canadian federal government. Many of the programs and incentives offered at higher levels of government may never be used by some Canadians, such as tax reforms or environmental projects. Accessibility to local political representation at the provincial and federal levels may not be accessible at all if representatives are bogged down by case work and special events, that is, if they are in their constituency (as a considerable bulk of their work involves their being in Toronto or Ottawa). However, local government, and its administration, is within proximity of municipal residents. Municipalities are an important component in the operation of the Canadian political landscape, although this
importance can be sometimes undervalued or misinterpreted, as is the municipal struggle between provincial direction in servicing and citizen need in political involvement.

**Municipalities Explained**

Municipalities are scattered throughout Canada, and range in size and scope of administration. Not confined to mega metropolises like Toronto and Vancouver, the classification of municipalities also include counties, towns, and villages. However, the influence these lesser sized municipalities holds is debatable, as in Ontario alone, one-third of the provincial population is found in just three municipalities (Toronto, Hamilton, and Ottawa).\(^1\) Regardless of size, these municipalities are expected to deliver comparable services for all municipal residents. The tax dollars of residents in Stratford, Ontario are used to provide much of the same services as those tax monies provided by Torontonians. They are unequal in size, but similar in services. Among other things, the key services provided by municipalities for their residents include policing, roads, solid waste collection and disposal, parks and recreation, and economic development and promotion. While delivery of these services will vary with the size of the municipality and allotted budget, it is expected municipal residents will receive essential services.

By definition, a municipality is a legal corporation, a legal device that allows residents of a specific geographic area to provide services that are of common interest.\(^2\) This definition is only half true in describing municipalities; there is a political and philosophical aspect which intertwines with the practical services and operations of local government. The political and the administrative facets of this level of government

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\(^1\) Tindal and Tindal, 3.  
\(^2\) Tindal and Tindal, 2.
should complement each other in such a way that municipalities exist as a healthy component in the daily lives of Canadians.

More than other levels of government in Canada, the municipal level provides an interesting dichotomy with regard to citizen expectation of its operation. It is of course in the best interest of the province to view the municipality as a corporation; as long as municipalities are in the business of delivering services, it is to the advantage of higher levels of government to download their services and relieve some of their service burden. Essentially, this becomes a mutual benefit between the upper levels of government and municipal citizens. Where there is downloading of services, there is also a diffusion of power from the higher levels of government to localities, and decisions regarding these services appears closer to the municipal electorate.

However, the manner in which the province views the role of municipalities is strikingly different from the way in which political philosophy would describe the role municipalities play in the lives of citizens.

*Early Canadian Municipalities*

The issue of democracy and the exercise of voter choice in determining the route of public policy and government decisions are perpetually debated, with the question of citizen involvement ranging from support for a “hands on” approach, to a separation between citizen and state. Citizens, and their involvement, are indispensable in making a municipality what it is intended to be – a government organ providing the needs of citizens. Municipalities, in this sense, afford the citizenry the opportunity for political participation. Since the early 1800s the topic of municipalities existing as the vehicles for political participation for municipal residents has been contested. An early proponent

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3 Tindal and Tindal, 6.
of this notion, the Earl of Durham, expressed the need for local citizens to learn about exercising their democratic rights in forums that were easy to understand and relatable.⁴

Local government in Canada did not come into common practice until the appearance of the Loyalist movement between 1782 and 1783, with many Loyalists hailing from New York and New England colonies. In those colonies, Loyalists had enjoyed a considerable level of local self-government, largely delivered in the form of the town meeting.⁵ The French civil law at this time limited local autonomy and what ensued, from Loyalist protest, was the development of a local administrative and judicial system under the protection of English civil law of Upper Canada.

The basis for the Loyalist argument was rooted in the idea that because they had fled the rebellious United States of America (and in doing so, demonstrated considerable loyalty to the British crown), Loyalists earned the right to self-rule.⁶ Upper Canada’s 1793 Parish and Town Officers Act enabled town citizens to participate annually in the election of town officials, and granted the allowance of town meetings to regulate matters of fence height and animals, and later financial assessment.⁷ However, even this political extension was still limiting. The qualifications to be a voter in these elections required the voter to be a male householder, owning a freehold estate, and maintaining loyalty to the King.⁸ Under these conditions, towns were governed by the elite, those persons with the financial bearings to allow them to exercise their voice in the deliberation of matters at the local level. From 1773, and leading to 1837, only the most urban areas of Upper

⁵ Tindal and Tindal, 25.
⁶ Tindal and Tindal, 26.
⁸ Tindal and Tindal, 27.
Canada were making strides in gaining local self-government, while rural townships remained in the control of magistrates of the Crown (the Courts of the Quarter Sessions). Reformist movements began galvanizing in both Upper and Lower Canada (where local governments were experiencing similar problems) as residents felt the magistrates were out of touch with local interests and were generally unfit to meet their needs. The expression of these reformist beliefs were executed in the 1837 Rebellion in Upper and Lower Canada.

*Municipalities as an Instrument for Democracy*

It became evident after the outbreak of the rebellions that local self-governance was closely linked and intertwined with the town residents. Having ultimately hailed from Britain, the residents of Upper Canada were not prepared to conduct their local lives in the form of some pseudo-colonization. Having the opportunity for self-rule was more than important, it was absolutely necessary. The notion that those who must live by the decisions of others separate from the local conditions and needs appeared absurd. For the province to function as the Crown intended, local communities and their inhabitants had to feel as though they maintained political relevance in the changing Canadian landscape.

The Crown response to this problem, and the turning point in the development of Canadian local government, was the investigation into the unrest and general state of the provinces. The Earl of Durham, in reporting to the Crown on British North America, wrote that local government was an essential component to the healthy operation of Upper and Lower Canada having stated “the...want of municipal institutions giving the people any control over their local affairs, may indeed be considered the as one of the main causes of the failure of representative government and of the bad administration of

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9 Tindal and Tindal, 27.
Durham's recommendations created the basis for responsible government, but it was not until the passage of the *District Councils Act* (1841) which broke the primary ties of Canadian local government with the governance of the Courts of the Quarter Sessions. There were no extreme changes in the system, with the exception of the election of new district councillors for the townships, new responsibilities were created for the township councils (including the maintenance of roads, social welfare, and education), and the levying of taxes on personal and real property to cover the expenses.

Durham understood the necessity of municipal governance in Upper Canada; the feeling of self-rule was essential to the health and well-being of the provinces, both physically and theoretically. It is obvious, of course, that those persons who should render decisions regarding local services should be local residents who understood the complexities of the decisions being made, albeit on simple matters such as roads. Theoretically, however, the reinvention of functioning local government (seen as responsible government) created a more lasting benefit. While the rules regarding local self-governance might always be subject to change, it is the simple knowledge that local self-rule exists that satisfies more than the conditions by which it operates. Moreover, it was good for the overall goal of creating the Dominion of Canada decades later. It was understood that residents who feel that they play a role in the administration of their local government would feel deeper levels of political attachment.

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11 Tindal and Tindal, 29.
12 Tindal and Tindal, 29.
The transformation of local government in (its earliest stages) reached completion with the passage of the first *Municipal Act* (passed initially as the *Municipal Corporations Act*), spearheaded by Robert Baldwin in 1849. Also regarded as the *Baldwin Act*, this act was built upon the principles of Dillon’s rule, in that, municipalities could not act on anything, unless given expressed permission from the province through the authority of provincial legislation.\(^{13}\) In the words of Supreme Court Judge John F. Dillon in 1868:

> A municipal corporation possesses and can exercise the following powers and no others; first, those granted in express words; second, those necessarily implied or necessarily incident to the power expressly granted; third, those absolutely essential to the declared objects and purposes of the corporation – not simply convenient but indispensable…\(^{14}\)

As municipalities were not constitutionally protected, they were obliged to follow provincial legislation. However, Dillon’s rule also made specific reference to the essential objects and purposes of the corporation, essentially referring to local matters. This rule would evolve and, while seeming restrictive for municipalities at first, would later help to create a state of enhanced autonomy and administrative freedom.

The *Municipal Act* was intended to consolidate all legislation regarding municipalities into one act, and with the influence of Dillon’s rule, become an extension building upon the *District Councils Act*, with the inclusion of legislation outlining that the county (not the district) would be the highest level of local government, as well as the

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\(^{13}\) Siegel, 14.

formal recognition of townships as rural parts of municipalities. Under this new act, the consideration of what is a municipality included not only cities, but also villages and towns, and the creation of the municipal system (as it is seen today) was laid out. Moreover, this act gave municipalities greater autonomy through establishing a wider permissive policy arrangement, rather than operating on narrower regulations. Included in this wider policy arrangement were several areas of jurisdiction for which the municipalities would have more authority; among them were highways, public utilities, waste management, and animals.

Moreover, this act altered the manner in which municipalities would conduct their affairs. Municipalities were assigned ‘natural persons power’, in which administratively, municipalities were awarded greater flexibility in that they would have the opportunity to enter into contracts, managing the employment of municipal employees (including hiring and termination), delegating municipal work to committees and councils, and purchasing and selling property. However, even these new powers enjoyed by the municipalities came with some hindrances. Legally, there were still some restrictions on financial transactions, and any by-laws municipalities intended to pass remained subject to federal and provincial legislation, to ensure no contradiction of the law.

Municipalities also became an instrument for democracy. More than just a provider for services, local municipal government became the vehicle in which local residents could maintain attachment to the political system, and feel as though their involvement contributed to the well-being of their local community. However, municipalities were far from receiving complete autonomy of operation; Section 92 (8) of The Constitution Act
(1867) allowed the provincial legislatures the exclusive right to make laws regarding municipal administration in Canada, and effectively stalled the development of autonomous municipal institutions in Canada.\(^{18}\) What makes this provision odd is that the local governments themselves predated the provinces; yet, at a time when most Canadians still lived in the rural parts of Canada, the municipalities did not carry populations sizeable enough to render much influence in higher levels of government.\(^{19}\) It was a matter of timing and population dispersion that further removed from local governments in Canada the constitutional right to self-governance.

At the turn of the century, from the 1890s to the 1920s, several major reforms affected the structure of municipal government. While the election of representatives remained intact, the administration of government underwent several major reforms. New administrative bodies were introduced so as to further separate the legislative and executive branches of local government. Municipal boards of control, composed of Council members, were introduced to strengthen the executive by removing the duties of preparing the budget and awarding contracts for capital works projects.\(^{20}\) The Office of the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) was introduced to act as an overarching city manager, whose primary role is to overlook municipal affairs and supervise municipal departments. However, the chief basis for the CAO’s work is carried down from the plans approved by Council; once approved, it is the CAO’s duty to implement those items Council passes, while ensuring that the municipal staff is fulfilling daily municipal


\(^{20}\) Tindal and Tindal, 55.
needs. The other particularly notable addition to local government came in the establishment of numerous boards and commissions (outside of the typical boards of health and police commissions as witnessed in the 1850s). These special purpose bodies exist to oversee specific areas of activity which might be too time-consuming or labour-intensive to be conductive within the parameters of regular council business.

These reforms helped to reform the municipal structure, both solving problems of past inefficiencies, while providing preventative measures to ensure against corruption at the council level. In moving toward the mid-twentieth century it was vital for Canadian municipalities, which were still in their infancy at this stage, to be able to carry the dual load of providing adequate services for their residents while ensuring that those same residents felt a connection with the direction their municipality was heading.

**The Provincial View of Municipalities**

The province has always maintained, however, that the primary aim of the municipality and its local government is to behave like a corporation; municipalities are told that business practices and principles are essential to their survival, as “economy and efficiency are... the touchstones of a well run municipality.”

The standard to which services is delivered is debatable however. By the 1960s, structural problems affecting service delivery changed both the quality and the efficiency of delivery. In some cases, there were a number of municipalities operating within one urban area, resulting in fragmentation held together by commonality of services. In other areas, the responsibilities found at the local level had outgrown the capabilities of the local municipal government, municipalities sought retreat in distributing some of the

\[21\] Tindal and Tindal, 56.
\[22\] Tindal and Tindal, 57.
\[23\] Tindal and Tindal, 60.
burden of servicing the municipality to the higher levels of government (especially in the case of social concerns in the areas of health and education). As a result, the sharing of responsibilities between two levels of government makes the delivery of services difficult to manage with regard to understanding which level of government is responsible for what and who is going to pay for these services.

What makes this situation more troubling for municipalities is government downloading on municipalities. While municipalities seek to mollify their social responsibilities by looking to higher levels of government, it is those same higher levels of government that exacerbate the service situation by creating new programs and delegating the responsibility of implementation to local municipal governments, as seen in the case of new urban renewal and environmental protection initiatives.

The overarching problem affecting these areas is that the goals and administration of local government purported by the higher levels of government a hundred years earlier were designed for communities that were drastically smaller and largely agrarian (outside of the handful of metropolitan areas littered throughout the province). In the late 19th century, it could have been assumed that municipalities would remain relatively static, limited in size, but would have the appropriately sized resources to maintain the service structure. However, Canada became highly urbanized, and knowledge-based, leading to larger populations and even larger territorial boundaries for municipalities. Municipalities themselves are not to blame for these problems; social and financial structures cannot be expected to adapt as quickly as independent factors change.

24 Tindal and Tindal, 82.
25 Tindal and Tindal, 82.
26 Rowat, 49.
These structural troubles created a problem for both facets of municipal government. From the viewpoint of the municipality as a corporation, the service structure was compromised with the increase of services required, without having a plan to account for the necessary funds to accommodate these increases. In this sense, the municipality could not be a business able to thrive without the assistance of higher levels of government. The notion of the municipality as being an instrument to instill a sense of self-governance and political attachment to the community in residents was challenged as well. Without a clear structure outlining what each level of government was responsible for and an uncertain future regarding social stability and safety, the symbolism of the municipality as being the vehicle for promoting political trust and involvement at the citizen level was weakened. Municipalities were tested, both as a corporation and as a symbol of Canadian self-government.

In defining ‘statehood’, there are three primary characteristics; population, territory, and sovereignty. While the condition of sovereignty and self-rule has always eluded municipalities, population and territory are almost in constant flux. Population is well understood in the case of Canadian municipalities. Canadians were moving out of the rural regions and gaining employment in urban areas. Territory was changing as well, but not through natural means. The change in territory for local government can benefit several interests. Among them; business interests benefit from policy areas related to economic development; senior bureaucrats in higher levels of government can shift fiscal responsibility and service provision to lower levels of government; and the careers of professionals, such as planners and engineers are furthered by the creation of special-

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purpose bodies.\textsuperscript{28} Infusing the municipalities with additional funding from the provinces could have been very costly. However, the benefits of territory adjustment seemed like a viable alternative.

\textit{Evolving Municipalities}

Since 1849, with the creation of responsible municipal government through the \textit{Baldwin Act},\textsuperscript{29} there had been no great structural changes. However, municipal problems which, up to the 1950s, had been steadily growing required change. Rectifying the structural problems came in the form of municipal restructuring.

Beginning with the creation of the Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto in 1953, creating North America’s first upper-tier multi-functional government,\textsuperscript{30} the Ontario municipal landscape began to resemble the county structures seen a century earlier. The difference between 1953 and the old county structure lay in the fact that thirteen lower-tier constituencies continued to operate below the upper-tier (Metropolitan Toronto), and the upper tier was given, by provincial grant, stronger administrative power. Later in 1967, these lower-tier municipalities would be reduced in number (to six) and increased in size,\textsuperscript{31} but this form of local government allowed the municipality to develop a servicing scheme capable of funding and developing an infrastructure necessary to accommodate growth pressures in the areas urbanizing in and around the metropolitan area.\textsuperscript{32} This municipal experiment was largely considered a success in creating a lucrative tax base able to service far-reaching territory, and throughout the 1960s and 1970s Ontario municipal restructuring began to follow in Metropolitan Toronto’s path.

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item[28] Higgins, 221.
\item[29] Siegel, 2.
\item[30] Sancton, 2000, 10.
\item[31] Sancton, 2000, 10.
\item[32] Tindal and Tindal, 107.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
Much of this restructuring came at the behest or imposition of the provincial government.³³ While initially this structural change in Toronto garnered major interest in North America, a final verdict on its success was not rendered until more than a decade later. The Smith Committee, also known as the Ontario Committee on Taxation, delivered a report in 1967 recommending that southern Ontario should model itself after the Metropolitan Toronto regional government.³⁴ A Royal Commission, established concurrently with metropolitan Toronto in 1953, concluded twelve years later that there should be endorsement of the continuation of the two-tier system.³⁵ This two-tiered local government system operated by assigning all tasks associated with the common metropolitan area to the Metropolitan Council and assigning local tasks to individual area municipalities.³⁶

The rationale for this local government consolidation speculated in that, in the aftermath of the Great Depression and the Second World War, the original city structure suffered from running a large backlog of public works services and repairs, in tandem with an increase in the population. The only way to provide for the needs of citizens, and improve the operation of the municipality, was to increase the size of local government, and subsequently, the tax base.

Based on the recommendations of upper levels of government, the years between 1969 and 1974 saw the creation of ten new regional governments, largely based around Toronto, but also found in Ottawa and Sudbury.³⁷ The most comprehensive structural

³³ Tindal and Tindal, 105.
³⁴ Siegel, 2.
³⁵ Tindal and Tindal, 105.
³⁷ Siegel, 2.
changes would not happen until much later, and until the 1990s, there was little discussion of municipal restructuring.

More than twenty years later, in 1998, all six lower-tiered municipalities and Metropolitan Toronto were amalgamated to create the modern-day City of Toronto, committed to the rationale that savings would be achieved with amalgamation. Structural reform, in this case, was aligned with financial reform, in that it was expected to save money for the municipality, thereby reducing the transfer payments it was receiving from the province. 38 Removing overlap and duplication of services, it was expected that the City of Toronto would save an annual $100 million beginning in 1998. 39

However, another view of the same argument suggests that the provincial government saw that increasing the number of elected representatives overall, and diluting the power of Metropolitan Toronto representatives (regarded as liberal spenders), would thereby curb the spending of the old city. 40 Essentially, the provincial government expected the municipality to provide much of the same fundamental services to its citizens, but within fiscal reason. It can be also speculated that the province assumed citizens outside of the Metropolitan Toronto area would opt to elect representatives with similar conservative attitudes toward spending, thereby justifying the province’s wants, veiled behind the wants of citizens in the exercise of their local government.

Public reaction to this the introduction of the new City of Toronto in 1998 was not supportive of this municipal amalgamation. Both local politicians and residents were opposed to the new city structure. The two-tiered local government was reduced to a single tier. Studies commissioned by the six major of Metropolitan Toronto found that

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38 Siegel, 11.
39 Reddy, 71.
40 Tindal and Tindal, 110.
75% of Toronto citizens wanted a say in the changes made to their local government, while the majority of those surveyed (52%) said that they opposed the amalgamation. The new municipal structure was ushered in, regardless. Since then, however, polling shows that the majority of top management and municipal residents accept the decision to amalgamate and have committed themselves to building the new city.

A new period of municipal restructuring was underway. Several more new municipalities followed the creation of the new City of Toronto, including the amalgamations of Hamilton-Wentworth, Ottawa-Carleton, and Sudbury. From the inception of large-scale municipal reform in Toronto in the mid-1990s, to the rippling effects in southern Ontario five years later, Ontario municipalities had halved in number.

**Aggressive Restructuring in Ontario**

Throughout the 1990s, municipal restructuring in Ontario and throughout Canada, became commonplace on the provincial agenda, as a means to reduce the size of local government and inspire economic development. Beginning in 1991, the New Democratic government engaged in joint study with the Association of Municipalities of Ontario in investigating the concept of service reallocation while creating simpler government, clarifying which levels of government are responsible for what services, and improving accountability and management in fiscal and financial matters. The concept of disentanglement dealt with the problem of responsibility, which was indistinguishable between the provincial and municipal levels of government. By 1993, a general draft had been created establishing the guidelines in which general welfare assistance would be

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41 Reddy, 72.
42 Reddy, 84.
43 Siegel, 11.
44 Tindal and Tindal, 186.
assumed by the provincial government, in exchange for the municipalities taking on a greater responsibility of roads and property assessment service payment, as well as accepting the stipulation that provincial grants would be reduced. This draft agreement fell through, however; when the province introduced the notion of an expenditure control program that called for major cutbacks on transfer payments to the local level.45

In the two years following the tentative agreement, a new government was elected to the Ontario provincial legislature. With a new government in power, the fight for disentanglement persevered. These new provincial plans were laid out in the Common Sense Revolution (CSR), the election platform for the Ontario Progressive Conservative Party in 1994, which suggested, among other things, that the regional and municipal levels of government should be rationalized to avoid the overlap and duplication of municipal services that currently exists.46 This ‘rationalization’ would, in practice, seek to improve areas of function (disentanglement) and finance (deficit reduction) in the municipalities.47 Years after the 1995 election, the municipal landscape in Ontario saw its greatest changes ever, with sweeping amalgamations and annexations seen throughout the province. Like a corporation consolidating its bureaus, the province took to bringing municipalities together in an effort to provide the same services with broader, and less costly, bodies of local government.

Disentanglement had been a contentious issue. The sharing of responsibilities between the two levels of government created a precarious situation in which both parties were left to wonder what specific obligations they were held to and how these services

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45 Tindal and Tindal, 187.
47 Sancton, 2000, 105.
were going to be financed. The disentanglement issue was further pursued in the January 1997, with a suggested realignment of governmental responsibilities. In what was one of the grandest governmental responsibility swaps seen provincially, Ontario PCs proposed to download onto the municipalities the services of social programs, which included homes for special care, long-term planning and care, health, and welfare assistance.48

Several government responsibilities were suggested by the “Who Does What” task force to remain in the hands of the province. However, this was not the case. In exchange for the assumption of these services, the province assured municipalities that it would shoulder the responsibilities of all education costs. It has been suggested that this was not a completely altruistic maneuver on the part of the province; in addition to downloading a considerable number of services on the municipalities, it was also the aim of the province to acquire full decision-making ability in the field of education (this was evident in the further agreement that municipal taxpayers would be held to continue paying for half of the education costs, while the province was left with the discretion of setting the education tax),49 as well as to increase its share of control on the municipalities (as explained in the introduction).

The province was forceful in acting on its municipal restructuring plan. Several of the amalgamations were pushed through by provincial edict (such as Toronto) while, in other cases, coercion was employed to manufacture the semblance of support in residents for the municipal restructuring.50 Many parts of southern Ontario were granted procedures which would help to facilitate voluntary amalgamation. However, some municipal groups would choose the option to have a commissioner provided to them,

48 Tindal and Tindal, 187.
49 Tindal and Tindal, 188.
50 Siegel, 12.
courtesy of municipal affairs, to effect amalgamation (the automatic result of municipalities not working towards amalgamation).

However, the attitude that some municipalities held (to leave the business of amalgamation in the hands of the province) changed when the first major amalgamation by commissioner was completed. The former municipalities of Chatham-Kent, opposed to amalgamation and intent on seeing the province producing the work and resources necessary to create the municipal restructuring, felt the weight of the province’s strength in forcing this restructure, when twenty-three municipalities were forced to join as one municipality. From that point forward, many municipalities began undergoing their own voluntarily designed plans for amalgamation. It was blatantly obvious by that point, the province was adamant about forcing through amalgamation. Right from the beginning of the restructuring of Toronto, the province intended to reap in the expected benefits of amalgamation; from the decrease in provincial transfers to the increase in downloading of provincial services on the municipalities, the province poised itself to assert more authority over the municipalities.

There was a considerable list of advantages associated with disentanglement and municipal restructuring. This rationalization of responsibilities removed the duplication of services, and was regarded as being a condition for which local autonomy could flourish, as the municipalities, albeit amalgamated into larger entities, would enjoy the privilege of uninterrupted decision-making. Moreover, it appeared that this service disentanglement was long past due. When municipalities were younger and smaller in size, services were provided to properties that were paid for, straightforwardly, by property taxes. By late in the 20th century, however, property taxes were being allotted to

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51 Siegel, 12.
many areas that were not actually property-related (such as health and education), and this drew considerable criticism. Arising from this criticism was the belief that people-related and property matters should carry distinction, both in taxation and delivery. Ultimately, it was expected that those services attributed to people, and not property, should be the concern of the provincial government, not the municipality (as the benefits of these types of services extend much further than municipal boundaries).

This rationale has been criticized for being too narrow, however logical it might appear. The idea that municipalities and their administration should only focus on those matters that are inherently local seems misinformed. Items that were traditional staples on the lists of municipal services, services such as public transit and garbage disposal, and are very local in the delivery of these services, are commonly being found under provincial jurisdiction. Again, if municipalities are to be looked at as vehicles for self-governance and democracy, then it should only be right that municipalities be involved in many areas outside of its immediate scope and jurisdiction.

Much of the theory behind this municipal restructuring is rooted in the tenets of neoliberalism, which is skeptical of the welfare state and expensive social programs. Neoliberalism, as it is currently practiced in Canadian local governments, values the need for greater efficiency and effectiveness in local government (harking back to the CSR), purports the philosophy that less government leads to better government, and understands that local government plays a considerable role in Canadian democratic governance and

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52 Tindal and Tindal, 189.
53 Andrew Sancton, “Canada as a Highly Urbanized Nation,” Canadian Public Administration 35 no. 3 (Fall 1992): 224
participation. Municipal restructuring, according to neoliberal theory, should lead to reconciliation between the provincial want of efficient and effective service delivery in municipalities, while satisfying the need of residents and citizens to have a responsible and accountable local government, thereby allowing them to feel politically enfranchised.

Creating fewer and larger municipal corporations, the role of the citizen broadened. No longer was a municipal resident another voice able to exercise a vote for their local council; now the citizen was regarded as a consumer, the recipient of supplies and goods afforded to them by the local government. New public management standards in municipalities strengthen the rights of citizens by providing more information about the standard of services they receive, as well as creating the vehicle for complaint and remedy. It would appear then that municipal citizens have a particularly unique and important role in the administration of municipalities. However, what is problematic about this arrangement is that municipalities are not just simply businesses, and citizens are not just simply consumers. Businesses, in practice, tend to only serve a narrowly defined group of persons, create and employ their own rules, and hold land in perpetuity. Municipalities are agencies of the state, however, and are hedged by constitutional restrictions; while local governments can perform many business practices (including performance measurement and best practices), municipalities are still considered “creatures of the provinces”, as was the case in 1867, and still answer to higher levels of government.

55 Vengroff and Whelan, 505.
56 Tindal and Tindal, 336.
58 Magnusson (December 2005), 906.
59 Tindal and Tindal, 337.
60 Magnusson (Spring 2005), 5.
Municipalities are more than just businesses, and the relationship between citizen and local government goes beyond their roles in service delivery. They are part of a more complex relationship of political trust and participation at the local government level. As per the notions of democracy, it is imperative for citizens to feel that they are part-owners of their government. It is a liability for municipalities to have citizens believing that they are too busy or unimportant enough to participate within their local government, for democracy will not function if citizens do not actively participate in the shaping of local public policy.\(^6\) The opportunity to reap the benefits of citizen participation at this level is there, too. Canadians tend to express more confidence and trust in government which is close to them, and in most cases, this is their local government.\(^6\)

The challenge in creating a local government structure that meets both the needs of the provinces and its citizens is likely not going to come to resolution any time soon. Municipalities are faced with competing interests; the provinces will continue to look for cost-saving measures just as they will likely download more services to the municipalities, while it is important that municipalities continue to maintain the trust and involvement of its citizens. The current trend, over the last fifteen years, has revealed that municipal amalgamation and restructuring is the preferred method of saving money and improving service delivery. Under these conditions, local government representation has increased as well, leading to more representation among a larger and, in some cases, diverse municipal population. However, a new problem arises with many newly restructured municipalities, in Ontario especially, being forced to reduce the size of their

\(^6\) André Carrel, *Citizen’s Hall* (Toronto: Between the Lines, 2001), 139.
\(^6\) Vengroff and Whelan, 509.
representative government in the name of efficiency. It is with time, trial and error, that local government will find the optimal condition in which it can operate as both the corporation providing services the province wants and the vehicle for political involvement and democracy that citizens need.

In concluding this chapter, it is important to note that municipalities, through necessity, could not exist as single-purpose governmental entities; they had to adapt to meet the material needs of residents as well satiate the need of those same residents to feel that they possess some stake in the operation of their local government and politics. The physical change of municipalities was unstoppable as well, and an unavoidable issue for provincial administrators. With populations quickly increasing in the early- to mid-1900s, and rural areas no longer existing as remotely as they did before, the physical structure of municipalities was bound to change as well. Residents began working in neighbouring municipalities, boundaries were shifting, and municipal services began to appear redundant, as there was considerable overlap between the local levels and the province.

Chapter Two considers literature on municipal boundaries and structures, with particular emphasis on the evolving responsibilities of local government. Two opposing viewpoints on municipal structure serve as the focus for this chapter, and will later form the basis of study in answering the research question. Based on the changing nature of municipal government as discussed in this chapter, Chapter Two explores the relevance and importance of understanding different municipal structures so as to optimize both municipal resident and provincial needs.
Chapter Two
Literature Review

The previous chapter highlighted the problems facing modern municipalities in Canada. Pressured by both the provinces through service downloading and growing needs of municipal residents in the face of changing urban conditions, municipalities could not remain mostly isolated, self-governing units as they had been a century earlier.

This literature review explores the significance of changing municipal structure by evaluating the ramifications of boundary adjustment, both socially and economically. Thereafter, it is suggested there are two viable, albeit opposing, municipal structures which try to balance what is required of municipalities by their own residents and the provinces. The consolidationist model and public choice theory both provide solutions to the problems currently faced by municipalities. However, by the end of this chapter, it is suggested the consolidationist model is preferable, given studies of municipal amalgamation demonstrating success in being able to not only deliver services, but also maintain healthy levels of municipal resident satisfaction. Based on this information, as well as other evidence showing that the City of Windsor is well integrated with the surrounding municipalities in Essex County, a research question is posed seeking to answer if Windsorites are likely to demonstrate attitudes leaning towards consolidationism, thereby demonstrating support for hypothetical amalgamation.

The Role of Boundaries

Boundaries play an imperative in the administration of municipalities. Boundaries provide order, municipal jurisdiction, and a sense of belonging among the residents who situate themselves within the border. Boundaries provide a context in
which residents can experience the world around them. Moreover, boundaries establish the political, economic, and social guidelines governing the existence of municipal residents, and organize them in such a manner that the maximum possible utility of services is obtained. When boundaries change, however, public reaction will often be mixed. This is especially true in cases where there is an increase in the territorial size of a municipality. With a change in territorial boundary there is not only a change in the size and population, there is also an adjustment in the delivery and production of municipal services, the system of taxation, and the exercise of political power. The interests of residents, businesses, and local organizations change with respect to municipal reorganization. Changes in the planning and coordination of services arise with the redrawing of municipal lines, affecting all residents. The new allocation of costs and benefits within the enlarged municipality comes to the detriment of some residents while improving the municipal conditions of others (in tax relief, for example). Understandably, this change in the local political landscape is likely to result in an ambivalent response from residents.

The process of altering municipal territory affects the operation of local government. This change can be beneficial for the entire collective community. In some cases, redrawn boundaries result in the attainment of new resources for municipal

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2 Savitch and Vogel, 761.
4 Savitch and Vogel, 761.
5 Feiock and Carr, 1.
6 Feiock and Carr, 3.
use, and expanding territory in order to secure new industries.\textsuperscript{7} Redistributive benefits arise with the creation of a new tax base,\textsuperscript{8} which, in the case of municipal enlargement, results in a larger economic pool from which municipal products and services are distributed across the community. Local government operations benefit from boundary change in this respect. However, programs already in existence under established municipal parameters stand to experience strain under new boundaries. In the case of enlargement, public works services may have to prioritize and select specific areas of improvement over others, especially in the construction of new roads, schools, and utility lines and infrastructure.\textsuperscript{9} In either case, some groups stand to benefit from the process of boundary change, while others will likely bear the burden of supporting the new change.

In addition to tangible service and product changes, reassigned municipal boundaries instill political change as well. The enlarged municipal political platform and increased population will alter the rules governing who makes the decisions for the collective group.\textsuperscript{10} Moreover, the enlarged arena of residents will result in a shifting of those enfranchised in the political system, as well as those disenfranchised.\textsuperscript{11} This is reasonable, in that more outspoken or affluent residents from the area merged into the new municipality might displace those residents who enjoyed marginal influence in the former municipality.

The power attached to boundaries has led to the creation of 'boundary entrepreneurs', municipal actors creating institutional changes based on incentives

\textsuperscript{7} Savitch and Vogel, 761.
\textsuperscript{8} Feiock and Carr, 3.
\textsuperscript{9} Savitch and Vogel, 761.
\textsuperscript{10} Lowery, 60.
\textsuperscript{11} Lowery, 60.
resulting from boundary change.\textsuperscript{12} By altering municipal lines, these entrepreneurs stand to gain advantages in the structural reform arising from restructuring. Such groups include businesses aiming to secure new contracts (especially in the case of groups outside of the larger municipality), or taxpayer groups (seeking to increase the tax-base to accommodate service improvements).\textsuperscript{13} More often than not, these groups seek to gain specific, individual incentives from enlarging the community,\textsuperscript{14} as opposed to advocating for municipal growth as a community benefit. Competing interests are often a theme in municipal governance, but this conflict can become heightened in the event of municipal reorganization when the rules of resource allocation and governance are re-established.

\textit{Amalgamation as a Solution}

Municipal amalgamation was seen as a natural progression for urban areas, especially in areas where there were considerable structural concerns associated with the vast numbers of municipalities operating within one general area of the province.\textsuperscript{15} As new urban problems develop, it becomes difficult to pass uniform solutions across a fragmented area, where concerted action in attempting to solve urban problems becomes difficult and unmanageable.\textsuperscript{15} Moreover, as municipalities made transitions throughout the latter-half of the twentieth century, in changing demographics and adapting to the needs of the changing population, some of the traditional responsibilities of the municipalities ‘outgrew’ the local level (including the areas of health and education).\textsuperscript{16} Previously, municipalities were more isolated, localized, and agrarian. Many of the services required by residents could be feasibly provided from within the community.

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{12} Feiock and Carr, 11.\textsuperscript{13} Feiock and Carr, 12.\textsuperscript{14} Feiock and Carr, 12.\textsuperscript{15} Tindal and Tindal, 82.\textsuperscript{16} Tindal and Tindal, 82.}
This system worked while municipalities were relatively young; but with growth and urban sprawl, more services and provisions were expected with less comparative resources. The result of this situation was the transference of some power to the provincial government or the sharing of responsibility between the province and municipalities.

It was not expected that the province would indefinitely shoulder the costs associated with municipalities too small to carry their service load. At the same time that municipalities were seeking assistance from their provincial governments, the provincial governments were seeking a solution to the problem of municipal dependence. This solution came in the form of downloading, wherein the provinces assigned responsibilities to the municipalities which were better suited to their resources, including housing and urban renewal.17 Of course, the operation of this plan was better facilitated under the mechanism of amalgamation, wherein a municipality with a larger tax base could accomplish those tasks the province was downloading. Effectively, the provincial governments were attempting to accomplish two tasks in one movement; through amalgamation, the province would, first, be able to download some of its responsibility onto the municipalities, and secondly, municipal consolidation would remove the redundancy of services and increase the size of the municipal coffer through a larger tax base (which would eventually lead to a point where municipalities are equipped to take on more responsibilities from the province).

Throughout the 1990s, in Ontario especially, the provincial government engaged in aggressive debt and deficit reduction; subsequently, this resulted in dramatic spending

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17 Tindal and Tindal, 82.
cuts, particularly in municipal-oriented areas such as housing and transportation. Essentially, municipalities were becoming the vehicles for which the province could lessen some of its responsibilities and the associated costs. While municipal amalgamation might appear to be nothing if only just a tool for which the province can relieve itself of its responsibilities, the process of amalgamation can provide many possible benefits for municipalities.

Two Conflicting Theories

There are two prominent theories of municipal governance, each claiming to have the best system of municipal organization maximizing the needs and wants of residents. Both of these paradigms originated from discourses in economics. The first paradigm, the public choice model, operates based on a system of municipal fragmentation, creating a political marketplace, where residents are like consumers, able to shop around for the municipality that best meets their needs. The second paradigm, the consolidationist theoretical model, asserts enlarging municipalities to inspire widespread coordinated planning and redistribution of resources, leading to increased municipal efficiency and effectiveness in delivering services.

Public Choice and Citizens as Consumers

The seminal work providing the structure for the public choice model is explained in Charles M. Tiebout’s 1956 article entitled, “A Pure Theory of Local Expenditures”.

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18 Tindal and Tindal, 83.
19 Sancton, 74.
Public choice in municipal governance is viewed as:

The consumer-voter... picking that community which best satisfies his preference pattern for public goods. At the central level the preferences of the consumer-voter are given, and the government tries to adjust to the pattern of those preferences, whereas as the local level various governments have their revenue and expenditure more or less fixed. Given these revenue and expenditure patterns, the consumer-voter moves to that community whose local government best satisfies his set of preferences.22

Tiebout’s argument suggests that people, as consumers, are able to shop for the municipality that bests meets their needs. Potential citizen residents evaluate the value of the services offered in each municipality, as compared to the tax burden the service package entails.23 Upon opting for the municipality that maintains and fosters their interests, persons will decide to reside in that municipality. Several assumptions about municipal residents are implied. First, citizens are fully mobile and are capable of moving to their desired community. Secondly, citizens are fully aware of the municipal options available to them.24 Thus, where citizens feel their needs can be best met in another municipality, rationality suggests they move to that superior municipality, and will continue to move as necessary to fulfill their interests with regard to taxation and municipal service packages.

However, Tiebout outlines several conditions imperative to the successful practice of his model. Among them, he suggests that a large number of competing municipalities

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24 Dowding et al., 767.

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promotes the greatest level of satisfaction among citizens,\textsuperscript{25} and that, where there are a considerable number of municipalities, that close proximity instills greater competition among municipalities to offer attractive taxation and municipal service plans.\textsuperscript{26} All conditions being met, it is presumed that citizens vote with their feet,\textsuperscript{27} and reside in the location offering the best competitive municipal service deal within a cluster of municipalities. Citizens, who eventually settle into a municipality, choose the municipality that best suits their needs, according the public choice model, as do citizens outside of the municipal boundary. This condition is not static, however, as citizens will move among municipalities as their possibly changing needs require fulfillment.

Also known as fragmentation (the division of several jurisdictional boundaries within a given larger territory),\textsuperscript{28} public choice asserts several propositions heralding it as a superior guide for municipal governance. First, there lies the assumption that citizens living in smaller municipalities are better informed of, and possess greater access to, local political officials and political office.\textsuperscript{29} Moreover, smaller communities encourage a sense of good citizenship within the community, subsequently leading to an increase in citizen participation in the community, largely due to the positive relationship between the citizen and the community.\textsuperscript{30} This is a logical assumption. Wherever there is a smaller ratio of citizens to elected officials (leading to enhanced access to public officials), there should be an increased level of both expected political awareness and efficacy. Another presumption lies in the belief that defragmented systems offer little

\textsuperscript{25} Tiebout, 419.
\textsuperscript{26} Tiebout, 419.
\textsuperscript{28} Keith Dowding and Thanos Mergoupis, “Fragmentation, Fiscal Mobility, and Efficiency,” Journal of Politics 65 (2003), 1191.
\textsuperscript{29} Lyons and Lowery, 534.
\textsuperscript{30} Lyons and Lowery, 534.
citizen satisfaction, largely because of the lack in variety of municipal service options.\(^{31}\)

Lastly, the competition element inherent in the public choice model is suggested as creating a more efficient system of taxation and service delivery.\(^{32}\)

Touted as the cornerstones of the Tiebout model, efficiency and effectiveness in the collection of revenue and the delivery of municipal services highlight the advantages of fragmentation.\(^{33}\) There are two sides of efficiency in municipal governance attributed to the claim made by public choice adherents. First, there is a productive efficiency on the part of the local politicians and administration.\(^{34}\) The ideal local government in the public choice approach, small and single-tiered, creates exclusive management of services and the local tax base. Dowding et al. suggest that this enables bureaucrats to maximize their budgets, providing considerable services.\(^{35}\)

The other side of the efficiency lies in the demand of the consumer-citizens and the efficiency in meeting that demand.\(^{36}\) Logically, in a smaller municipal setting, the delivery of services would be more effective in meeting the needs of citizens. Smaller communities, in the public choice model, are more likely to be homogenous and, therefore, want the same services across the community, leading to the perception of an enhanced system of service delivery.\(^{37}\) When citizens decide to reside in a municipality based on the service packages offered, their preferences for specific municipal packages will naturally sort citizens out among the various municipalities in the region.\(^{38}\) As each

\(^{31}\) Lyons and Lowery, 534.
\(^{32}\) Lyons and Lowery, 534.
\(^{33}\) Dowding and Mergoupis, 1190.
\(^{34}\) Sancton, 2000, 75.
\(^{35}\) Dowding et al., 769.
\(^{36}\) Sancton, 2000, 75.
\(^{37}\) Dowding et al., 773.
municipality offers a competitive package to citizens, each citizen will decide where they will reside, creating a demand for municipal services but, more importantly for the municipality, an addition to the tax base supporting the demand for services across the community. Hence, numerous municipalities located in close proximity to each other are very competitive; they will offer the municipal package with the most utility for the greatest number of potential citizens. Sorting, based on citizen-consumer preference, creates a state of equilibrium among the municipalities. When there is a negative shift in the municipal balance however (such as the modification of an existing municipal service), the detriment of one municipality might lead to the benefit of another. The citizen (as a consumer) will re-evaluate their options again, and move to where they are best served. However, as long as all citizens in the region reside in the municipalities which fit their needs and interests, it is assumed that each of the municipalities is homogenous in and of itself, with each resident wanting the same taxation and service packages as their neighbour. The more homogeneity in the community, the better the local bureaucracy will be in serving those needs.

As the number of local boundaries increases, leading to the creation of more municipalities, the service packages offered by municipalities will become more competitive. As each small municipality is sorted by service preference, a homogenous group will develop, leading to the enjoyment of efficient and effective services, as well as enhanced citizenship and participation within the local government.

39 Kollman et al., 989.
40 Kollman et al, 989.
Consolidationism and Redistributive Allocation of Resources

Fragmentation flourished in academic texts and practice from the 1950s to the 1980s. However, it was not without its criticism. Analysis of the public choice model in the 1970s led to reinvigorated interest in an older, alternative model of municipal governance, challenging the presumptions of Tiebout's public choice model.

Consolidation is the antithesis to the public choice model in that it seeks to extend the boundary across surrounding local territory, rather than parcel it out into smaller sections. Largely practiced in the form of amalgamation, the consolidationist approach seeks to improve municipal efficiency while, at the same time, reducing local government spending.\textsuperscript{41} However, one study exists to suggest that jurisdictional size may do little to affect service performance.\textsuperscript{42} This does not support either the public choice or consolidationist theory, but this study proposes that blanket assumptions cannot be laid on service delivery (assuming that one theoretical approach is better than the other). Rather, the technological character and individual incentives of services must be investigated in each new case of potential amalgamation to deem it necessary or not.\textsuperscript{43}

Moreover, consolidationism asserts a reduction in unnecessary bureaucracy and local government (creating less government), while maintaining accessibility to the local administration and politicians.\textsuperscript{44} Consolidation creates a larger municipal government, rid of the wasteful spending that arises from the practice of the public choice model.

\textsuperscript{41} Kushner and Siegel, 2003a, 49
\textsuperscript{42} David Lowery, "Public Choice When Services are Costs: The Divergent Case of Assessment Administration," \textit{American Journal of Political Science} 26 (February 1982), 70.
\textsuperscript{43} Lowery (1982), 74.
\textsuperscript{44} Kushner and Siegel, 2003a, 49.
Kushner and Siegel explain the theory of consolidation:

Larger units of government realize economies of scale, eliminate duplication and overlap of service provision by small municipalities, and reduce the problems of externalities. Larger units of government are better able to provide such services as economic development and land use planning, which require co-ordination over a relatively large area.45

Whereas the public choice model suggests that municipal residents benefit from service packages offered by competitive municipalities, the consolidationist theoretical model suggests that a larger government is able to provide enhanced services through economies of scale, where citizen savings are achieved when the costs of services are discharged among a larger municipal population.46 The ideal municipality, as per the consolidationist model, is one that spans large areas and produces enough service output to offset the average cost of production.47 So long as the optimal level of costs and output are realized, any deviations resulting from population increase or modification of services can be accounted for and the economies adjusted accordingly. Savings in input arise with the elimination of duplication or overlapping of services, the purchasing of equipment and services in bulk (lowering per unit costs), and a general reduction in administration.48

The consolidationist argument contests the idea of municipalities as acting simply like businesses. Residents, like consumers, may shop around for the municipality which best meets their needs but, unlike businesses, they do not have “just occasional and specific contracts with customers; they have ongoing and complex relationships with

46 Vojnovic, 2000, 387
47 Vojnovic, 2000, 387.
48 Vojnovic, 2000, 387.
This effectively contests the typical provincial view of the municipality as the purveyor of services.

Logistically, the consolidationist approach provides a sound argument for expanding the municipal boundary. In the public choice model, there exists the possibility of several of the exact same services being offered in a handful of municipalities. However, the tax base is considerably smaller in individual public choice municipalities than it would be in an enlarged community. Tax dollars and service delivery stand to be employed more effectively in a planned effort of coordination throughout the larger territory, along with the enhanced specialization of services. Complementing this service approach, larger municipalities have the financial resources to provide equipment and training of personnel necessary to carry out the widespread effort. Both of these improvements appeal to the same claims of efficiency and effectiveness as put forward by the public choice model. Newer and, in some cases, more specialized equipment lends itself to augmenting municipal service efficiency. The quality and effectiveness of services is attributable to public personnel with specialized training, facilitated by consolidated municipalities.

The public choice model argues that a larger municipality does not offer the municipal service packages that citizens want, and would receive, under municipally fragmented conditions. Consolidationists, such as Lowery and Lyons, contend with this suggestion by stating it is improbable that a large number of citizens living in fragmented communities would all find that their municipal service packages completely

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49 Tindal and Tindal, 337.
50 Tindal and Tindal, 337.
51 Tindal and Tindal, 337.
Additionally, an inherent flaw in the public choice models assumes that citizens know the municipal services offered by surrounding municipalities. Without accurately knowing the services of neighbouring municipalities, it is not logically possible to suggest that citizens are fully cognizant of their available options. Likewise, thousands of people cannot logically reside in one municipality, satisfied that all of their service preferences would be met. There would likely be some service that they would not opt for were it not that they were included in the overall service package. Another problem with this tenet of the public choice theory is the assumption that, even if residents as consumers knew of the service advantages in other municipalities, residents have the mobility to act upon the knowledge of better service packages; if residents of one municipality realize the benefits that come with living in another municipality but are unable to move to that municipality, then the fragmented system does not work to provide for the needs of the resident.

The competition that arises with the offers of municipal service packages is a hindrance to the growth of local government. There are two distinct types of per capita expenditures; the first is common expenditures shared by all residents (including police and sanitation), and the second is more specific social expenditures (such as education and welfare). Under the consolidationist approach, there is an incentive to want to increase programs and services for which the municipality can control and offer. This leads to an increase in expenditures, leading to an overall growth in government.

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52 Lyons and Lowery, 534.
53 Lyons and Lowery, 534.
54 Tindal and Tindal, 12.
56 Schneider, 258.
expenditure spending and social services are impeded in the public choice model, as smaller budgets in fragmented municipalities cannot account for the additional spending necessary to facilitate program expansion. While fragmented municipalities can offer competitive service packages, they are restricted to what they can offer after citizens have sorted themselves into the municipality of their choice. In a consolidated municipality, however, there is the availability for service growth.

A redistribution of resources fosters equity within the consolidationist community. Public choice is argued to promote social fragmentation, wherein citizens will reside in the communities that not only offer the most appealing municipal service package, but also the package that they are best able to afford (within their financial restraints).\(^{57}\) Elites are assumed to be able to afford the best services, while those lacking affluence will likely receive lower standard services. This can result in residential segregation and overall social tension.\(^{58}\) This is found in areas such the southern United States, where the lines of division are evident between the poorer and more affluent areas where state-local fiscal arrangements affect the dispersion of wealth.\(^{59}\) Consolidation attempts to overcome this problem by creating larger, single municipalities where the redistributive allocation of services, resulting from revenue sharing in a larger tax base, can best operate.\(^{60}\) Both the level of service quality and social equity improve under the conditions of consolidation.

Aside from equity, the additional social benefits arising from consolidation are wide reaching. Governance over a broad territory reduces the instances of competitive

\(^{57}\) Vojnovic (2000), 389.
\(^{58}\) Vojnovic (2000), 390.
\(^{59}\) Lyons and Lowery, 535.
\(^{60}\) Vojnovic (2000), 390.
economic development contributing to poor decisions in employing land, job growth, and increases regional planning. Siegel suggests there are several other considerable benefits for municipalities, as a result of amalgamation. First, there is the idea that despite provincial expectation, that municipalities will wield more power at the highest level of government. With larger municipalities, there comes a larger collective voice. As mentioned earlier, the municipalities of Toronto, Hamilton, and Ottawa comprise almost one-third of the population of Ontario, and where there is a problem in these municipalities, the federal parliament is very likely to listen. As well, there is considerable political unity in amalgamated municipalities. As opposed to regional governments where squabbling about time and tax spending and blame-shifting between lower and upper levels of government can become commonplace, single-tiered, amalgamated municipalities benefit from having to act as one unified voice. The power of these municipalities is also enhanced, qualitatively, by the effects of amalgamation. Monetarily, larger municipalities are afforded more funding, and have the ability to hire not only more staff, but also more specialized staff. The opportunity to hire more persons with expertise in the areas such as policy analysis would make the municipality more competitive with higher levels of government. Moreover, aspiring and talented politicians are likely to

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64 Siegel, 16.
65 Siegel, 18.
66 Kushner and Siegel (2003b), 1041.
enjoy the challenges that come with managing a larger municipality (as opposed to running for provincial or federal office).\footnote{Siegel, 17.} 

As discussed earlier in the introduction, an unintended consequence of municipal amalgamation, and the decision for the province to take on more of the payments for the boards of education, was that municipalities wound up generating more revenue than they did before. Since the province was covering more of the fees associated with the boards of education, municipalities had the opportunity to earn more of their own revenue by increasing municipal taxes and user fees. This revenue can be used unconditionally as it is not tied to the province, unlike before where, because of provincial transfer payments to the municipalities, municipalities were sometimes at the mercy of the province and were expected to align themselves with decisions made in the higher levels of government.\footnote{Siegel, 19.} Despite that provincial downloading still presents a situation in which the municipalities are obliged to follow much of what the province says, the fact that the municipalities possess more of their own untied money allows them the opportunity to act with more leverage in discussing policy matters.\footnote{Siegel, 19.}

Consolidationist perspectives are generally pro-government (despite the decrease in the number of politicians); generally, it is distrust in government that leads some citizens to prefer fragmented government.\footnote{Roger Keil, “Governance Restructuring in Los Angeles and Toronto: Amalgamation or Secession?,” International Journal of Urban and Regional Research 24.4 (2000), 760.} Under the consolidationist model, the availability of political resources and access to them does not decline. Consolidated government acts as a unified front, which is not the case in inter-municipal ventures in fragmented regions. Economic ventures are no longer considered zero-sum competitions.

\footnote{Siegel, 17.}
\footnote{Siegel, 19.}
\footnote{Siegel, 19.}
among fragmented groups, and development is focused on a regional level.\textsuperscript{71}

Consolidated municipal governments are able to utilize an expansive range of resources and problem-solving capabilities among municipal personnel and politicians across the enlarged municipality.\textsuperscript{72} These tools improve the delivery of services from elected office. Referring back to the social element associated with consolidation, an enlarged municipality increases the likelihood of more equitable representation of social groups among municipal council. Smaller municipalities increase segregation and, therefore, increase the possibility of divisive councils among municipalities.\textsuperscript{73} The political power of some socially-sensitive minority groups might be compromised, eventually leading to the disenfranchisement of select groups in society.

There is evidence to suggest, however, that municipal residents may not be immediately pleased with a new political structure following amalgamation. Poel found in an opinion survey of residents in the Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) that citizen criticisms were not neutralized after amalgamation.\textsuperscript{74} In fact, negative opinions of the new political structure prior to amalgamation were only found to improve after amalgamation with several municipal amalgamation and turnover of representation. Residents were leery of motives held by representatives of the former municipalities.

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\textsuperscript{71} Jered B. Carr and Richard C. Feiock, City-County Consolidation and its Alternatives: Reshaping the Local Government Landscape, (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 2004), 42.


\textsuperscript{74} Dale H. Poel "Amalgamation Perspectives: Citizen Responses to Municipal Consolidation," Canadian Journal of Regional Science 23 (Spring 2000), 44.
Contrary to what is suggested by the public choice model, consolidated municipal governance has transparent lines of political accountability.\textsuperscript{75} In a fragmented system, municipal governments are responsible for the delivery of promised services and, due to size, the public choice system creates a complex web of duties and responsibilities for politicians and administration.\textsuperscript{76} This creates difficulties in understanding the operation of government and calls to question the transparency of the government system under public choice. When several individuals or groups work horizontally of one another across multi-jurisdictional boundaries, problem-solving ability is compromised without a clear chain of command. Under the consolidationist model, the municipal structure is governed by a more simplistic approach, allocating responsibility to singular individuals, all working under the same lead bureaucratic officer.\textsuperscript{77} The line of authority is more efficient, working in a clear vertical hierarchy of command. This creates transparency and accountability for the municipal government as responsibility is visible on each level.

The consolidationist theoretical model of municipal governance benefits the greater community overall by providing social equity, both in the redistribution of services through a larger tax base, and in the potential for wider social representation on municipal council. Moreover, the economies of scale in a larger community provide efficient and effective services, while affording municipal residents savings in taxation. Larger municipalities are capable of affording the specialized training and equipment to develop further efficient municipal practices.

\textsuperscript{76} Vojnovic (2000), 390.
\textsuperscript{77} Vojnovic (2000), 390.
Alternative Models of Municipal Governance

Options outside of the public choice and consolidationist theoretical models receive attention as viable alternatives in municipal reorganization. Dollery wrote of Percy Allan’s theoretical model, “Virtual Local Government” in which the concept of a virtual municipality attempts to reconcile the sacrifice some municipalities make in opting for economic efficiencies associated with larger local authorities, in lieu of the political advantages of smaller councils, or vice versa. In this model, municipalities are able to enjoy the benefits of both models. The basic premise of this suggested type of government suggests there are two primary elements of municipal services; first, that there is an identified need for services and, second, efficiency in achieving the goals established to satisfy the public need. Allan’s model of municipal governance projects a system in which jurisdictional representatives are selected to represent a given area, working below a permanent secretariat. Primary municipal responsibility falls with the secretariat, formulating policy, with the delivery of municipal policy services resting with the jurisdictional representatives.

Similarly, another model, the Armidale Dumaresq-Guyra-Uralla-Walcha Strategic Alliance Model (or Strategic Alliance), contends that individual local authorities should operate as if they were independent councils, retaining considerable political authority, and auxiliary staff and resources should be pooled and dispersed in such a manner that they become individual units assigned to work on specific municipal services.

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79 Dollery, 84.
80 Dollery, 84.
Economically, each ‘council’ is responsible for paying for its own resources, as well as that of other councils (when that service is requested). It operates very much like a business in this sense, including conducting such practices as maintaining improvement programs and production of objective performance measurements.82

Both of these models use the best features of large municipal jurisdictions and the smaller, fragmented municipalities. They use the resource and technology advantages of larger municipalities,83 while employing the enhanced decision-making processes employed in smaller councils.84 In the first model, the economies of scale are not explored. Percy’s model does not evaluate the exit factors associated with citizen wants, leading them to select some municipalities over others. The Strategic Alliance model, however, is still a model in its infancy and has yet to effectively prove itself. While both offer viable alternatives to traditional amalgamation, they are not as established and repeatedly assessed as the public choice and consolidationist theoretical approaches to municipal governance.

Assessing Consolidation

Municipal consolidation is not only a theory in Canada, but is also a widely practiced reality. From British Columbia, to Ontario, to the Maritimes, amalgamation became a popular theme in municipal affairs in the last twenty years, rationalizing municipal organization.

Downey and Williams, conducting case studies of six newly amalgamated municipalities in Ontario, evaluated the transition to amalgamation and the results thereafter; both researchers paid particularly close attention to whether the municipalities

82 Dollery et al., 13.
83 Dollery et al., 8.
84 Dollery, 83.
united in good faith on their own terms, or else amalgamated with resistance and provincial intervention. Their research entailed assessing the manner in which ‘rationalizing’ was interpreted by both the province and the municipalities and, secondly, if the provincial government had come through on its promise to meet with municipalities and discuss the transition to amalgamation. The researchers found that the province was running its own agenda, separate of the municipalities and that, often times, the province dictated the process by which municipalities would amalgamate (this was a necessary resort, however, where new municipalities such as Hamilton-Wentworth pushed considerable resistance against the consolidation). However, some municipalities more amicably adjusted to the amalgamation.

Case studies of amalgamation outside of Ontario, conducted by Vojnovic, honed in on amalgamation in British Columbia, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia in the 1990s. Like the study conducted by Downey and Williams, Vojnovic evaluated the perceived success of newly formed municipalities. Assessing the administrative, economic, and political impact of amalgamation, the study found the most prevalent factor in determining the success of amalgamation was the history and circumstances of the municipalities prior to amalgamation. In the case of Abbotsford, B.C., amalgamation was successful largely due to the pre-amalgamation record of the former

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86 Downey and Williams, 210.
87 Downey and Williams, 221.
89 Vojnovic (1998), 281.
municipalities in engaging in joint projects. Consolidation, where the conditions are right, is successful.

Additional case studies addressing amalgamation's direct impact on municipal services have deemed that, despite provincial government claims, amalgamation does not translate directly into a cost-saving measure. A reduction in the number of total municipalities, and the creation of less government, does not necessarily entail reduced costs. For example, the new municipality of Miramichi, NB, saw an increase in standard annual operating costs by an estimated $1.5 million. Evaluation of financial trends in the days leading to amalgamation might indicate other reasons for the rise in costs. However, this is not to suggest that amalgamation is an automatic failure in delivery of services. Consolidation may not produce positive results across the entire municipal board. It may not produce savings in some areas, but other services might witness savings. A study of the Hamilton Regional Municipality police services department found more money had been saved than what was expected after amalgamation (in addition to a decrease in the number of sworn officers and services). The majority of citizens found that police services remained the same as they were prior to amalgamation. As per the consolidationist model, amalgamation can result in both a reduction in government spending while maintaining expected service levels.

92 Sancton (1997), 274.
93 Vincent L. Marando, “City-County Consolidation: Reform, Regionalism, Referenda and Requiem,” The Western Political Quarterly 32 (1979), 420.
95 McDavid, 561.
Kushner and Siegel undertook two studies, one in 2000 and again in 2003, evaluating citizen perceptions of amalgamation in three Ontario municipalities.\textsuperscript{96} Employing citizen opinion surveys, respondents were asked questions relating to their perception of the delivery of municipal services, sense of community attachment, and accessibility of local politicians.\textsuperscript{97} While respondents answered many of the questions as having no opinion or negative views to amalgamation in 2000, the same questions three years later received far more positive results. The researchers deemed that support for amalgamation is occurring very slowly, and this support is being shaped differently in various municipalities.\textsuperscript{98}

Windsor, unlike Chatham-Kent and Central Elgin, has not amalgamated with its surrounding municipalities. Windsor in the late 1990s made a gesture to the province, suggesting amalgamation with a large portion of Essex County. The offer presented an opportunity to amalgamate Windsor with county area stretching out to Town of Belle River, the Town of Essex, and the Town of Amherstburg.\textsuperscript{99} However, this offer was rejected.

When Chatham amalgamated with 22 other municipalities, studies showed that these municipalities were not in favour of this amalgamation, citing that Chatham was regarded as already being the prominent municipal actor.\textsuperscript{100} The same notion carried over to Windsor and Essex County. Officials in Essex County were generally worried that the City of Windsor would be out to grab their resources and taxes.\textsuperscript{101} As the City of

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\textsuperscript{96} Kushner and Siegel, 2003a, 49. \\
\textsuperscript{97} Kushner and Siegel, 2003a, 51. \\
\textsuperscript{98} Kushner and Siegel, 2003a, 58. \\
\textsuperscript{99} Trevor Price, telephone conversation with author, 3 Oct 2007. \\
\textsuperscript{100} Kushner and Siegel, 2003a, 49. \\
\textsuperscript{101} Price.
\end{flushright}
Windsor appealed for amalgamation, Essex County provided a counteroffer to the province, offering to consolidate all of its townships in seven. Their counteroffer was approved, and enacted by way of the *Savings and Restructuring Act*. Windsor did receive annexation with part of Essex County; annexation with Sandwich South allowed Windsor to expand itself industrially.

Political events helped to mold this situation. At the time of Windsor’s offer for amalgamation, Patrick O’Neil (for the Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario) ran for representation in the Essex riding. He knew party leader Mike Harris well, and it was expected that he would have helped to sway Essex County into accepted an arrangement of amalgamation. However, in both the 1999 and 2003 elections, O’Neil lost to Liberal Bruce Crozier. Crozier’s election assisted in stopping gestures toward amalgamating Windsor with Essex County.

The opportunity for Windsor amalgamation with Essex County was there. However, due to a strong counteroffer from the county and the provincial representation at the time, this opportunity was rejected.

Despite that Windsor and Essex County did not amalgamate, there remains cooperative ventures between them. There are many examples where there are cooperative efforts between Windsor and Essex County, with operations much the same as those seen in amalgamated municipalities. The Corporation of the County of Essex is comprised of seven lower tiered municipalities, and as an upper tier government is

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102 Price.
103 Price.
104 Price.
responsible for providing services shared among the municipalities in an effort to reduce the need for duplicate services and their administration.\textsuperscript{105}

The County of Essex is a funding partner with the City of Windsor, and provides many services which spans Windsor and surrounding area. One of those organizations, the Essex-Windsor Solid Waste Authority (EWSWA), provides waste management programs and facilities for both the city and the county. Established in a joint agreement on May 18, 1994, the city and the county agreed to establish, operate, and manage a local landfill, as well as a recycling program.\textsuperscript{106} Of the many responsibilities a municipality could shoulder, waste management and disposal is of high priority; while it is not aesthetically pleasing to witness the accumulation of trash, the potential health risks that come with overexposure to trash are even worse. However, it is a costly endeavour to operate EWSWA, despite contributions coming from both the city and the county. However, it is slightly problematic in that the operating costs come from two separate sources, taxes from the city and the county. Both are subject to expected costs and liabilities, and considerable paperwork is involved in accounting for this money annually.\textsuperscript{107} Operating as a single municipality would help to alleviate the redundancy in paperwork, as well as to perhaps improve efficiency in working out annual budgeting, and other items requiring reconciliation between the city and the county.

Other partnerships between the city and the county, such as the Greater Essex County District School Board, have proved to be successful. The association between

\textsuperscript{107} Essex-Windsor Solid Waste Authority
Windsor and the county for the purpose of providing education, funded by the province, and by municipal taxes, has been successful for years in meeting many of its objectives. The school board does this while coordinating efforts over the entire county, including Windsor and its immediate surrounding area. Other cooperative efforts have also rendered success in meeting the needs of local municipalities while delivering service throughout the county; among them: the Windsor Essex County Real Estate Board, the Windsor and Essex County Humane Society, the Windsor Essex County Health Unit, and the Convention & Visitors Bureau of Windsor, Essex County and Pelee Island.

While these and other groups may not be entirely funded with public dollars, they do demonstrate that cooperation between the city of Windsor and Essex County exists and does work. The foundation for amalgamation exists. Many of these services, such as EWSWA, provide services which are essential to thriving municipalities; under the hypothetical conditions of Windsor amalgamation with surrounding municipalities, these essential services would benefit from improvement and streamlining of administration. Moreover, the increased tax base resulting from amalgamation only serves to further improve the delivery of services.

Given evidence of successful amalgamation and of the benefits arising from the consolidationist theoretical model, as well as several examples of current integration between Windsor and surrounding municipalities, a research question is advanced suggesting that Windsorite attitudes towards a hypothetical concept of amalgamation are likely to be consolidationist.
Chapter Three
Methodology

To answer the research question asking if Windsorites are more likely to consolidationist in their attitude of municipal governance, thereby demonstrating support towards a hypothetical amalgamation with surrounding municipalities, a qualitative survey of Windsor residents is going to be employed to evaluate attitudes towards several concepts of municipal governance. The two most dominant concepts attributed to municipal governance, the delivery of municipal services and the accessibility of local politicians, are used to substantiate most of the survey questions. These concepts are important because their existence is derived directly from the municipal resident, as taxes paid by residents support municipal services and local politicians are only elected by the voting of the municipal electorate. While there are many opinions regarding the best form of municipal governance, there are two dominant perspectives for which these concepts can be evaluated and explained, as well as measured. Both perspectives help to explain differing attitudes towards municipal services and accessibility to local politicians; likewise, accounting for and analyzing differing attitudes help to explain which perspective respondents relate.

With a Windsor population of 216,473,¹ a minimum sample size of 383 residents is required to maintain a statistically acceptable population sample within a 95 percent confidence interval level. However, due to time and resource restraints, a smaller, convenience sample could be used to fulfill the goal of this study.


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A mall intercept surveying method will be employed to control the collection of surveys, as well as to meet the desired number of surveys necessary to conduct this study. As opposed to telephone or self-administered surveys, the response rate for mall intercept is controlled with face-to-face contact, and provides immediate results. Moreover, a mall intercept survey provides results suitable for opinion studies that are subject to financial restraints, as this study is.

Surveys will be administered towards the start of June to the end of June, from June 4th to June 22nd, 2007, and administered towards the latter half of the day, approximately from one in the afternoon to seven in the evening. Surveys will be administered in public parkland; specifically Realtor Park, Mic Mac Park, Dieppe Gardens (and other park area stretching the riverfront), and Jackson Park, and each on different days. Parks are selected for conducting this study as they are not subject to permission for study on private grounds, but also because they are a relaxed natural environment where respondents might feel more inclined to fill out a survey (as opposed to shoppers in a mall, for example).

Subjects will be approached and asked if they would fill out this survey, with an opening script following as such: "Hello, my name is Lauren Rankin and I am a graduate student at the University of Windsor. I am seeking to obtain Windsorite attitudes toward the concept of municipal amalgamation in order to complete my thesis. Completing the survey should take no more than five minutes. Do you live in Windsor? (If answered yes) Would you be willing to fill out a survey?".

Aside from myself, there will be one other person administering survey. My assistant will help me in distributing and collecting surveys. In training him to carry out
this study, he will be given an explanation of each of the questions (this is done in the event that respondents require survey clarification). Afterwards, my assistant will be given a dialogue to memorize, to be used to address potential respondents. The person assisting with the survey administration will state his name and then proceed to say, “I am helping Lauren Rankin, a graduate student at the University of Windsor, who is seeking to obtain Windsorite attitudes toward the concept of municipal amalgamation in order to complete research for her thesis. Do you live in Windsor? (If answered yes) Would you be willing to fill out a survey?”.

Filling out the survey should take no more than five minutes, with the total time between approaching respondents and completing the survey being no more than ten minutes.

This study seeks to survey subjects between the ages of 19 and 65, male and female, and from across the five wards. Only Windsorites are sought for this study, and only those persons able to speak English. Respondents will be chosen in passing, with every fifth person being asked to participate in the study.

Respondents will be given a signed letter of information, as well as a clipboard and a pencil or pen, with survey. There will be no identifiable distinctions on the surveys to identify particular respondents with their responses. Respondents will fill out their survey, and will be thanked for their participation in this research study. Rather than having the respondents hand back the surveys to administrators, respondents will be asked to put their completed surveys, folded up, into a sealed box fitted with a slot for insertion, so as to ensure anonymity.
Within the survey, accidental sampling will be used to canvass the Windsor population for survey respondents. Accidental sampling is preferable in this study, as citizens with knowledge of municipal services and local governance would be more desirable than persons with no knowledge of these subjects. Consequently, surveys will be conducted in locations where Windsorites would be likely to possess this knowledge, specifically, municipal arenas and civic centres. In addition to an overall survey of Windsorites, each ward within the municipality will be evaluated to assess the attitudes in separate Windsor areas. There is a strong possibility that Windsorites residing in wards along municipal boundary lines will hold a different opinion on amalgamation than those Windsorites whose residence is typically unaffected by the boundary; a secondary goal of this survey was to identify if Windsorites living on the municipal peripheral feel more positive towards amalgamation. Not only would this study assess citizen attitudes toward amalgamation among Windsorites overall, but it would also provide a comparison of attitudes among wards. While this study presents the statistics for a quantitative study, it is actually qualitative in nature due to the fact that random sampling will not be employed. The data provided in this study, while providing a good foundation for further study, cannot be used to make generalized findings.

The consolidationist and public choice attitudinal variables will be operationalized into a citizen opinion survey. The survey to be administered possesses both issue-specific questions relating to amalgamation and control questions which provide microanalysis within the study. Although questioning is designed to gain responses leading to alignment with the consolidationist or the public choice paradigm, a middle option allowing for mixed or unknown responses will be provided to avoid
forcing answers upon respondents, a respondent-selected ‘Don’t Know’ choice (or
another response indicating neutrality). An Appendix is provided with the survey
questions and coded responses for this study.

While there is the possibility of holding mixed attitudes towards amalgamation,
those persons with defined attitudes either for or against amalgamation will be assigned a
position in alignment with a theoretical paradigm of municipal governance. Residents
who are for amalgamation and broad municipal governance will be classified as
‘consolidationists’. Consolidationist thought purports democratic reallocation of funds
and services within an enlarged municipal arena, and single-tiered municipal governance,
lending itself to political accountability. Those against amalgamation and municipal
restructuring will be classified as ‘public choice adherents’. Public choice adherents
subscribe to a thought in which competitive taxation and municipal services packages
among several municipalities benefit citizens in allowing them the opportunity to live in
the best municipality to suit their needs.

Survey responses will be formatted in such a way that the attitudes of respondents
will be attributed to one of five possible perspectives within the municipal governance
theoretical framework. Each survey response will be coded; ‘Consolidationist’ and
‘Somewhat Consolidationist’ will be coded as one (1) and two (2), respectively; ‘Mixed’
(showing preferences relative to both consolidationist and public choice perspectives)
will be coded as three (3); and lastly, those responses showing some tendency toward the
public choice perspective, ‘Somewhat Public Choice’, will be coded as four (4), while
responses clearly indicating leanings towards ‘Public Choice’ will be coded as five (5).
Assessing both questions 1 and 2 in the Appendix, questions are asked regarding delivery and satisfaction of municipal services, such as waste disposal and public works projects. Those respondents answering negatively, in having a problem with their municipal services and maintaining low satisfaction of these services will fall under the category of consolidationists, as they feel services require change in that the infrastructure needs to become more efficient. Conversely, public choice adherents would likely respond positively to the questions in having no problems with municipal services and maintaining overall satisfaction. This follows from the notion that public choice adherents participate in a political marketplace in which citizens will shop the municipalities to find the municipality that best suits their needs. It is assumed that respondents satisfied with their services have selected the municipality that best meets their needs. In Question 1, a middle response is provided to account for approval for some services, and disapproval in others; in Question 2, respondents can answer that they are unsure, or do not know if they are satisfied with their services. If these responses are selected, they cannot be classified as aligning with either consolidationist or public choice attitudes.

Question 3 on the survey then asks if respondents believe that services would improve with amalgamation. The first two responses indicate that services would improve, thereby indicating a consolidationist attitude. The third response suggests there would be no change. Respondents choosing one of the last two responses do not believe services would improve with amalgamation and, therefore, would more likely fall in the category of public choice adherents.
Questions 4 and 5 on the survey inquire about political accessibility. Question 4 builds on the previous three questions, asking if political intervention was considered necessary in the case of municipal service dissatisfaction. If the respondents answer negatively, the respondents would be considered public choice. Public choice adherents will have had no need to contact their local councillor (as they would likely be satisfied with their services). However, if respondents feel that local government intervention was necessary, indicated in the first two responses, their answers would be considered as demonstrating consolidationist attitudes; where there are problems with municipal services, and the subsequent use of local government intervention is sought, residents are obviously not living somewhere where they have “shopped around” for the municipality offering the best municipal services. Respondents selecting the third response for Question 4 do not know if they have had to contact their local government, or have considered doing so, and therefore would not be considered as being consolidationist or public choice adherent.

Respondents may have, at some point, wanted to contact their local municipal councillor, regardless if it was for matters of municipal services or another matter. In any case, accessibility to municipal councillors is important, as they are the officials elected to represent the voice and meet the needs of citizens. Given the possible answers for Question 5, if respondents feel that their local municipal councillors are accessible or somewhat accessible, their responses would be considered as aligning with public choice theory. However, if respondents answer as feeling their local councillors are not accessible, those responses would indicate a consolidationist attitude. A lack of accessibility to municipal councillors could be due to having too few councillors trying to
take on many responsibilities. Through municipal consolidation, there would be a
decrease in the overlap of municipal services. Also, there would be a reduction in the
number of responsibilities taken on by each councillor. This would enable councillors to
both fulfill their jobs as representatives and be able to meet their constituents.
Respondents who do not know if their local councillors are accessible are given the
option of answering “Don’t Know”.

Question 6 asks if, with amalgamation, political accessibility would improve.
Respondents answering yes or that accessibility would likely get better, would be
considered consolidationist; those who answer that accessibility would likely not improve
or not at all demonstrate the public choice attitude. The last answer available claims
accessibility would remain the same, regardless of amalgamation.

The seventh question asks respondents if they believe that, with an allocation of
resources and funding among Windsor and surrounding municipalities, Windsor and
Windsorites would benefit. Public choice adherents would answer that Windsor would
likely not benefit or not at all (based on the argument that the current system of taxation
with subsequent service delivery is fine as it is). Consolidationists would see the benefit
in improving the effectiveness and efficiency of tax dollars and services, based on
widening and streamlining the municipal corporate and public works infrastructure;
respondents who feel this is true would answer either yes or that it would likely be
beneficial for Windsor. The “Don’t Know” option was available for those respondents
unsure of whether or not Windsor would benefit economically from amalgamation.

Question 8 asks respondents if, assuming that they were unsatisfied with Windsor,
they would consider moving to another municipality. Those respondents who answer
that they would move to another municipality, or would strongly consider it, would be considered public choice, as these respondents would advocate living in a municipality that best fits their needs. Consolidationists, on the other hand, attest to improving the existing municipal infrastructure, and would suggest doing so by the means of amalgamation. Therefore, consolidationists are expected to respond to the question by answering that they would not move, and would answer with either a definite “No” or else claim that they would not move even if it was suggested that it was the best thing to do. Respondents would also able to respond to Question 8 with “Don’t Know”.

Question 9 asks if the respondent supports Windsor’s amalgamation with surrounding municipalities. Expectedly, a respondent with a consolidationist attitude would answer either “Yes” or “Probably Yes”. Respondents unsure of whether or not they would support municipal amalgamation could answer “Don’t Know”. Respondents answering either “Probably Not” or “No” hold a public choice attitude.

This question is subsequently followed by the tenth question asking why, if the response to Question 9 was “No”, the respondent does not support amalgamation. This is the only open-ended question on the survey. It is designed to advance understanding of the reason why Windsor respondents would not or do not support amalgamation.

Seven additional survey questions follow the amalgamation-specific questions. These sociodemographic control questions, as seen in the Appendix, ask questions about the respondents and inquire about their history of living in Windsor.

For the purpose of analyzing respondent data, quantitative statistical analysis will be employed. Multiple linear regression analysis will be conducted to account for how resident satisfaction of municipal service and political access affect Windsorite
preference for amalgamation. In this study, resident attitude and satisfaction in the area of municipal services and political access are the independent variables accounting the dependent variable, support for amalgamation. The sociodemographic factors will be evaluated in order to discern which group, among the various respondents, is more or less likely to support municipal amalgamation.

Analysis will be conducted in order to discern if there is a difference in citizen attitude towards amalgamation among the five wards. Each ward will be evaluated by crosstabulation analysis. This will attest to the percentage of consolidationist respondents in each of the wards.

Validity and reliability of this study is affected by non-probability sampling. Accounted for earlier, accidental sampling will be administered to obtain survey data from Windsor residents with presumed knowledge of municipal services and government. Surveys will be administered as closely as possible, so as to not allow for considerable lapse of time between each administrative session.

Ultimately, this survey and response data provides a snapshot of Windsorite attitudes toward the hypothetical concept of amalgamation with surrounding municipalities.
Chapter Four

Results

The first chapter of this study introduced a discussion of municipalities and their role in both the Canadian political landscape and the lives of local residents. Municipal government, it has been argued, may not be the most prevalent level of government, but it is the level of government which most directly impacts upon the daily lives of Canadian citizens.

The subsequent chapters examined how municipalities arrived at where they are today and evaluated the optimal forms of local governance. Beginning with the 1950s with Tiebout’s discussion of public choice theory, consolidationist thought emerged and began to strengthen among those persons refusing to believe municipalities are commodities (allowing residents to satiate themselves by choosing the municipality which offered them the most ideal “package”), while also acknowledging that the duplication of services was a waste of taxpayer dollars.

Throughout much of the 1990s, the provinces believed consolidation was the preferred method to cut government spending without sacrificing the satisfaction of municipal residents in their municipalities. Many new municipalities were created in Ontario during this time, the product of mass amalgamation; Windsor and surrounding municipalities were not affected by this trend, however. While it may not be entirely clear why Windsor and Essex County were overlooked, the vast number of transformations across Ontario makes it even more uncertain why this amalgamation did not occur. Already amalgamated and cooperative in several economic areas, Windsor and surrounding municipalities exhibit qualities expected of an amalgamated municipality.
A research question was advanced, seeking to answer if Windsorites are more consolidationist in their attitudes towards municipal governance, thereby demonstrating support for the concept of hypothetical amalgamation. Asking a variety of questions regarding municipal life in Windsor, a survey was conducted to discern if Windsorites are consolidationist. A total of 137 surveys were completed.¹

*The Demographics*

The number of men and women surveyed were roughly equal, 48.2% and 51.8% of all respondents, respectively. Of those men and women surveyed, most fell into the 26-45 age cohort, comprising 46.7% of respondents. The second-largest group was those respondents between 46 and 65 years of age with 34.3% of the total number surveyed, followed by respondents between 18 and 25 years of age with 17.5% of respondents. Lastly, two persons were surveyed as being 65 years of age or older and 1.5% of persons surveyed. Figure 1 below illustrates these figures, as well as a distribution of Windsorites across Windsor’s five wards.

Many of the respondents surveyed did not know which ward they live in. Figure 1 shows that approximately a quarter of the group, 26.3% of respondents, were not sure where in Windsor’s five wards they lived. Out of those respondents who knew where they lived, 23.4% of the group lives in Ward 5. Ward 2 respondents were the next largest group, 16.1% of those surveyed.

¹ For a complete listing of survey results, see Appendix One

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A little over half of respondents, 54.7% of respondents, have lived in Windsor for over twenty years, represented in the last column of each box in Figure 2 below. Those respondents living in Windsor the least, 7 persons having lived in Windsor for less than five years, made up 5.1% of all persons surveyed.

Given the length of time in which some Windsorites have lived in Windsor, it is not unexpected that many have not lived outside of the municipality; 56.2% of the group, answered as always having lived in Windsor, and are represented in the last and most populated box in Figure 2 below. While not having always lived in Windsor, 19.7% of respondents have still resided within Essex County. Approximately a quarter of the group, 24.1% of respondents, have lived not only outside of Windsor, but also outside of Essex County.
Many of the persons surveyed claimed to have voted in the last municipal election (held November 13, 2006). Sixty-six persons, or 48.2% of respondents, voted or claimed to have voted. Many of the respondents, 27.7% of those surveyed, claimed that while they did not vote, they had intended on doing so. Roughly a quarter of respondents, 24.1% of the group, did not vote in the last election. The distribution of voters and non-voters is illustrated in Figure 3 below, which shows the majority of respondents did vote in the last election or claim to have voted.
Figure 3

Windsorite Income and Voting

Did you vote in the last election?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No, but I had intended to</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What is your pretax income?

Based on 137 Respondents

Regarding the annual pretax income of respondents, 40.1% earn a household income between $50,000 and $100,000; this is the largest income group among respondents. The group with the largest annual pretax household income, earning over $100,000 annually, was comprised of 13.1% of respondents. While being the group with the largest pretax income, it is also the smallest respondent income group (seen in the last bar of each box in Figure 3 above).

Hypothetical Concept of Amalgamation Surveyed

Two concepts associated with the administration of local government are examined, the delivery of municipal services and the accessibility to local politicians.

With regard to satisfaction with the delivery of municipal services, 43.8% of respondents
are somewhat satisfied. Very few respondents are completely satisfied or unsatisfied; 5.1% of respondents are unsatisfied, while 10.9% of respondents are satisfied.

Asking respondents if they have had problems with the delivery of their municipal services, 36.5% of respondents, answered as having had problems with the delivery of municipal services, but not being bothered. Those respondents are represented in the second bar in the graph in Figure 4 below. A smaller group of respondents, 11.7% of respondents, purport to both having a problem and be bothered by the delivery of their services. Just as 11.7% respondents answered as having had a problem with and were bothered by the delivery of municipal services, the same number of respondents claimed they had no problems with the delivery of their municipal services and do not see any room for improvement.

Figure 4

Windsorite Responses to Delivery of Municipal Services

![Bar chart showing responses to delivery of municipal services.]

Problem With Delivery of Municipal Services

Based on 137 Respondents

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Many respondents feel there are problems with the execution of their municipal services. This could be a matter of interpretation, and is certainly subjective; no one person is going to judge their delivery of their services the same way as another person, especially where there are different expectations and criteria for judging. However, there is a considerable percentage shown here showing general dissatisfaction. This could be attributable to more than just simply late waste disposal services, but to more chronic and lasting problems, such as poor roadwork.

When asked if the delivery of municipal services would improve upon a hypothetical amalgamation with surrounding municipalities, 54% of persons surveyed, responded by claiming that services might improve. Only a few respondents expect negative results for the delivery of municipal services upon hypothetical amalgamation; 10.9% of respondents, claim that services might not improve, while only 3.6% of respondents answered services would worsen. Overall, many of the respondents are confident that services would improve with the pooling of resources.

Inquiring about residents ever needing to contact their local councillors regarding a municipal problem, 13.9% of respondents, answered they did. Slightly more respondents felt that while they did not feel the need to contact their local councillor about a problem, they should have (15.3% of the group). Almost a quarter of the group, 24.1% of respondents, claimed they have never had the need to contact their local councillor about a problem regarding the delivery of municipal services.

More times than not, many respondents said as an aside, that consulting their councillor is not something that they ordinarily think to do if they have a problem. Generally, it seems, it would have to be a major problem that would cause residents to
contact councillors. Typically, these were problems such as trees that are on the verge of causing property damage or problems regarding utilities or sewers. Aside from that, most respondents who commented after the survey said that while it is nice to know that councillors are there to hear the comments from residents that they would likely not resort to contacting their councillors if there was a problem.

The subsequent question asked of the group inquired about perceived accessibility of local politicians (in this case, Windsor councillors) to the Windsorite population. Figure 5 shows the largest portion of respondents, 34.3% of respondents, do not know the accessibility of their councillors. Slightly less respondents, 32.1% of respondents, claim that councillors are somewhat accessible, and fewer respondents, 16.8% of the group, suggest that councillors are somewhat non-accessible.

Figure 5

Perceived Accessibility of Windsor Councillors

Count

Not accessible Somewhat non-accessible Don't know Somewhat accessible Accessible

How accessible are Local Councillors

Based on 137 Respondents
This is somewhat expected given the results of the previous question. Given that many respondents claim that they would not think to consult their local councillor if there was a problem, it should be expected that many would not have an opinion as to the accessibility of local councillors. Generally, every few people held firm opinions on councillor accessibility. Understandably, this might be due to respondents sharing different criteria for what they consider as being accessible. Subjectivity would account for the larger number of respondents answering that councillors are somewhat accessible or somewhat non-accessible. The degree to which councillors are regarded as being accessible will vary among residents.

Under the conditions of hypothetical amalgamation, 43.1% of the group, feel the accessibility of local councillors would remain the same. Of the remaining respondents, 16.1% of the group feels accessibility would likely not improve under the conditions of hypothetical amalgamation. However, almost double that number of respondents, 32.1% of respondents, feel that accessibility to local councillors would likely improve under the conditions of hypothetical amalgamation.

Given the economic conditions of a hypothetical amalgamation, there would be a reallocation of resources; almost half, 49.6% of respondents claim this would likely be beneficial for Windsor, as shown in Figure 6 below. A small portion of respondents, 11.7% of the surveyed group, feel the city of Windsor would benefit from the allocation of resources. Only four persons (2.9% of respondents) feel there would be no benefit for the city of Windsor under the condition of hypothetical amalgamation.

Most respondents appear to possess the understanding that the advantages that come with amalgamation would be to the benefit of all. Very few respondents feel that
amalgamation would not be beneficial for Windsor. Likely, this might be due to a perception that, under the hypothetical conditions of amalgamation, Windsor stands to lose more than it would gain; that is, Windsor would contribute more into the tax pool, but it would be the towns in the surrounding county which would reap the benefit of the enhanced financial resources. However, there is still the one group who believes that Windsor would undoubtedly benefit from amalgamation, some respondents having said optimistically that while their taxes may increase, they would be more than happy if it was to benefit their local services.

Figure 6

Perceived Benefit of a Reallocation of Resources Among Windsor and Surrounding Municipalities

![Bar chart showing perceived benefit of resource allocation among respondents.]

**Perceived Benefit of Resource Allocation**

Based on 137 Respondents

If they were unsatisfied with Windsor, 38.7% of respondents would not move to another municipality, but would strongly consider it, represented by the fourth bar in Figure 7 below. If unsatisfied with the municipal conditions, 10.2% of respondents would definitely not move to another municipality. However, almost the same number of
people, 9.5% of the surveyed group, would move to another municipality if they were unsatisfied with municipal conditions in Windsor.

What is potentially problematic in answering this question with full honesty involves finances and mobility. It is not within the power of every respondent to move when they feel the need, and that explains why there would be consideration in moving, but no subsequent move. Moving to another municipality is a potentially costly endeavour, not to mention emotional when tied in with family and social considerations. Only those respondents with financial freedom to move without penalty would do so. Most respondents are not in that position, however, and this could affect the way they answered this question.

Figure 7

Windsorite Willingness to Move to Another Municipality if Unsatisfied

Move to Another Municipality if Unsatisfied with Windsor

Based on 137 Respondents
When asked if they would support the hypothetical concept of Windsor amalgamation with surrounding municipalities, a little more than half of respondents, 51.8% of respondents, answered that they probably would support amalgamation. The next largest group, 26.3% of the group surveyed, answered that they would support amalgamation. A dozen persons, 8.8% of the group did not know if they would support amalgamation. The same number of people answered that they would probably not support amalgamation. Lastly, 4.4% of respondents answered that they would not support the hypothetical concept of Windsor’s amalgamation with surrounding municipalities. Figure 8 below illustrates the large support for the hypothetical concept of Windsor amalgamation with surrounding municipalities.

Figure 8

Windsorite Support Toward a Hypothetical Concept of Amalgamation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Support for Amalgamation</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Probably yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Probably not</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on 137 Respondents
The research question studied proposed Windsorites are more likely to demonstrate attitudes leaning towards consolidationism, thereby demonstrating support for amalgamation with surrounding municipalities. The variables used to analyze the research question are run through a multilinear regression analysis, with the Windsorite attitude independent variables assessed against the dependent variable, support for hypothetical amalgamation.

The adjusted R² value for the study is .431, indicating that 43.1% of the dependent variable (in this case, Windsorite support for consolidationism and the hypothetical concept of amalgamation) is explained by the independent variables (attitudes toward municipal services and accessibility to local politicians).

The coefficients which show the greatest significance in determining support for the hypothetical consolidation are the “Perceived Benefit of Resource Allocation” and “Problem With Delivery of Municipal Services” variables. In the measure of association between all the variables, the “Perceived Benefit of Resource Allocation” variable is highly statistically significant at a .000 level of significance. While this variable shows a positive relationship between Windsorite municipal attitudes and support for hypothetical amalgamation, it is only a moderately strong correlation, with a standardized Beta value of .410.

The “Problem With Delivery of Municipal Services” variable is the second-most significant variable, with a .001 level of statistical significance, and making this variable highly statistically significant. This variable also demonstrates a positive relationship with the dependent variable, although the correlation is weak with a standardized Beta value of .253.

² To see complete regression analysis, please see Appendix Two
While not as significant as the previous variables, the variable for "Move to Another Municipality if Unsatisfied With Windsor" is significant at a .008 level of significance, and cannot be relied upon for the same predictive accuracy as the previous two variables. This variable, unlike the previous two, demonstrates a negative relationship with the "Support for Amalgamation" dependent variable. This correlation is weak, however, with a .179 standardized Beta level.

The "How accessible are Local Councillors" and "Accessibility of Councillors under Amalgamation" variables are not statistically significant, with significance levels of .602 and .960, respectively. These variables do, however, share a negative relationship with the dependent variable "Support for Amalgamation". Both of these negative relationships are weak, though, with the "Accessibility of Councillors under Amalgamation" holding a weaker correlation of .004 standardized Beta, as compared to the .037 standardized Beta of "How accessible are Local Councillors".

The "Municipal Service Satisfaction", "Service Improvement with Amalgamation", and "Need to Contact Councillors about Municipal Problems" variables had no significance in the regression model. These variables respectively held significance levels of .829, .258, and .050, and all variables held a positive correlation with the dependent variable. The magnitude of these correlations varies, although they are all weak. The "Municipal Service Satisfaction" variable holds a standardized Beta level of .016. The "Service Improvement with Amalgamation" variable shows strength of .092. Lastly, the strongest of the three variables, albeit weak in the regression, is the "Need to Contact Councillors about Municipal Problems", which holds a standardized Beta level of .145.
Only two respondents answered question ten which, when asked if they did not support amalgamation, why that was the case. One respondent wrote, “Other municipalities would suck the money out of Windsor!” Another respondent answered, “I like our surrounding areas to maintain their individuality. They take care of themselves just fine without Windsor’s help”. Both of these responses essentially say the same thing, each from a slightly different perspective. While the latter response suggests that surrounding municipalities possess their own distinct quality (one which does not require funding from Windsor) and should remain that way for their own sake, the former exclaims that amalgamation would serve no other purpose but to drain money out of Windsor. While these are both valid points of view, they do not, perhaps, take into account that much of Windsor’s surrounding area is composed of affluent areas of residence and business. While it might seem that under the conditions of hypothetical amalgamation that more money would flow out of Windsor and into county areas, that it might not entirely be the case or entirely negative; in fact, while the pooling of the tax base might see a relative advantage to the county by way of being recipients, the City of Windsor would certainly benefit from the improvement to infrastructure and services that would come in streamlining all administration and operations of municipal services.

Ward By Ward

When evaluating support for the hypothetical concept of Windsor amalgamation among Windsor’s five wards, there are a couple of notable items. First, the general consensus among all the Windsor wards demonstrates a high degree of approval for amalgamation. Second, while there is a positive response to amalgamation, support is not evenly distributed among each of the five wards.
Of the surveys completed, well over half of respondents (one hundred and thirty-seven respondents), supported amalgamation. This is considerable when matched against the eighteen respondents who show little to no support for the hypothetical concept of amalgamation, or the dozen persons who do not know if they would support this consideration.

As seen in Figure 9 below, most respondents (outside of those not knowing which ward they reside in) live primarily in Wards 5 and 2. Their support, or lack of, for the concept of amalgamation, mimics the overall trend among all respondents across the wards; the majority supports the concept of amalgamation, while very few oppose it.

### Table 1

**Windsorite Support for Amalgamation by Ward**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Support for Amalgamation*</th>
<th>Which ward do you live in?</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ward 1</td>
<td>Ward 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Support for Amalgamation</strong>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(19.4%)</td>
<td>(16.7%)</td>
<td>(11.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Probably Yes</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(8.5%)</td>
<td>(14.1%)</td>
<td>(16.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t Know</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.0%)</td>
<td>(8.3%)</td>
<td>(16.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Probably Not</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(16.7%)</td>
<td>(25.0%)</td>
<td>(0.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.0%)</td>
<td>(33.3%)</td>
<td>(16.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>15</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(10.9%)</td>
<td>(16.1%)</td>
<td>(13.9%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on 137 Respondents
* Percentage of respondents within support level for amalgamation in brackets
The number of respondents who held negative attitudes towards the hypothetical concept of amalgamation is too few to make any significant findings; those numbers fluctuate by only small numbers, and they are relatively consistent among the wards.

The most noteworthy part of this section of the analysis is the evaluation of where support for amalgamation lies. As mentioned earlier, the highest level of support for the concept of amalgamation is seen in Wards 2 and 5. However, there is a reasonable level of support in Ward 3. Wards 2 and 5 lie along the Windsor border, lying on the most western and eastern border, respectively, of Windsor. These residents are accustomed to their municipal neighbours, and likely cross boundary lines everyday, be it for work purposes or for shopping. For those residents it might not even seem as though there is a border. Conversely, many of these residents might know that many residents outside of Windsor are employed in the city; they work in the municipality, but then return home to a municipality in which they enjoy a different, possibly better, municipal taxation and service package. These reasons might account for why residents in Wards 2 and 5 demonstrate support for amalgamation between Windsor and surrounding municipalities.

While residents in Wards 1 and 4 likely travel to outside municipalities, and are aware of the employment situation of many outside residents, there might be reasons to account for why they do not hold the same kind of support for amalgamation. First, many parts of these areas are populated with affluent Windsorites, residing in private residential neighbourhoods, or properties where, although real estate is older, it is of higher value than in many other areas of Windsor. For this reason, many residents might not be inclined to want to increase their municipal boundary; for fear that their taxes might go towards supporting a larger and, debatably, less deserving group of municipal
residents. Second, and this could apply to the other three wards as well, is the fear of political detachment. Windsor, with ten councillor representation for approximately 220,000 residents, might be compromised by enlarging the municipality too much. The proportion of representation to residents might change where there are more residents to councillors, leading to the disadvantage of residents in addressing their municipal concerns.
Chapter Five
Discussion

The role of the municipality in the life of its residents was introduced in Chapter One. It became understood that municipalities could not exist merely to serve the municipal resident, but to also fulfill the goals of the province in providing governmental services. Contemporaneously, municipalities were changing, evolving into integrated communities, moving from rural to urban settings. From the Municipal Act of 1849 and a century onward, municipalities shaped themselves into what they are today, large urban centres, providing for the needs of residents, ensuring economic growth and stability. This changed, however, when the province began evaluating its own options in attempting to assert more control of the municipalities while depositing more funding into its coffers. The result of this plan found that the municipalities earned more revenue (through raising taxes) and, subsequently, the province found it could meet its own needs by transferring services to the lower levels of government. This, in turn, led to discussion of amalgamation, deemed to be the optimal form of local governance able to manage this new service load.

Forms of local governance was the focus of Chapter Two where it was discussed that there are two forms of governance both purporting to be the best form of municipal management. On one side, consolidationist theory (the form selected by the province) suggests that municipalities amalgamated over one large area enjoy eventual economies of scale, while also enjoying ameliorated services provided by a larger pool of tax revenue. On the other side, public choice theory advocates smaller and more numerous municipalities, each offering different tax and service packages, thereby allowing the resident to act as consumer and select the municipality which best meets their needs.
Based on studies evaluating both forms of municipal governance, each is seen as a viable option. The Progressive Conservative government opted to pursue consolidationism in its local government restructuring of the mid-1990s. While many areas of the municipalities in the province morphed into larger cities, the area of Windsor and Essex County remained largely untouched. With only minor adjustments (as per the Savings and Restructuring Act), small amalgamations were imposed on Essex County, but nothing to the extent of Central Elgin or Chatham-Kent. It has been suggested that many Windsorites hold the belief that the Windsor and Essex County area should have been amalgamated as well, especially given that there are already several instances where there is some form of shared services between the city and the county present. A research question was then advanced, seeking to find out if Windsorites hold consolidationist attitudes towards municipal governance, thereby demonstrating support for a hypothetical concept of amalgamation.

The third chapter established the methodology of the study, and the following chapter outlined the results. Surveys were distributed among Windsorites to gain insight into their attitudes towards consolidation. From there, their responses were recoded, and analyzed using multilinear regression analysis. Crosstabulation analysis was conducted to further analyze where, among Windsor’s five wards, the greatest support for consolidation and the concept of amalgamation would be found.

A total of 137 surveys were completed by Windsor residents. The majority of respondents demonstrated a positive attitude towards consolidation.

Municipal services are a key part of the tenets of consolidationism and public choice theory. Under the provisions of consolidationism, municipal services are expected
to improve under the expectations of economies of scale, especially where there is an increased tax revenue pool. Given these circumstances, there is a uniform system whereby services, which would have been offered at varying levels between municipalities, are streamlined, and costs are reduced with the elimination of overlapping administration and infrastructure. However, public choice suggests that smaller and numerous municipalities compete for residents. In having this kind of competition, there is impetus for improvement of existing services, as well as motive to have more desirable services. Based on this theory, residents should also be residing in the areas they have chosen as their preferred municipality.

It appears that in Windsor, at least, residents are not living in the municipality which best suits their needs and offers the services they most prefer. Most respondents are only somewhat satisfied with the delivery of their services, and most Windsorites, while not being entirely bothered, have had problems with the delivery of their municipal services. This is not a quick and fast admission that Windsorites are consolidationist, but it certainly demonstrates that they are not public choice advocates. If Windsorites did show more satisfaction for their services, and claimed to have had fewer problems with their services, then they would likely support Windsor staying as it is, a municipality separate of surrounding municipalities. Yet, with the larger majority of respondents claiming to be unsatisfied with services or not knowing how they feel about their services, it is doubtful that they are residing in the municipality which best fits their needs.

Attitudes of Windsorites aside, the fact that almost half of respondents claim they have had problems with the delivery of their services suggests that the municipality might
require some work in improving the delivery and employment of its services. Again, if Windsorites held opinion of municipalities more in line with public choice theory, then they would have had little to no problems with their services. However, they do have problems with their services. When run through regression analysis, a strong and statistically significant relationship is shown, demonstrating a positive relationship to consolidationism. This, in tandem with the largely low satisfaction towards services, lends itself to understanding that change might be necessary. In this case, the municipality, as it currently exists, is not doing enough to offer appealing services. This might not be the case, however, if Windsor amalgamated with surrounding municipalities. In doing so, not only would there be an advantage in the increase of revenue coming from an enlarged pool of taxation resources, but also the wealth of knowledge would be advantageous, as municipalities can share best practices and troubleshooting; all things combined could ensure the optimal delivery of municipal services.

Despite there being problems, however, most Windsorites do not feel it is necessary to contact their local councillors when a problem with services arises. Interestingly, more Windsorites (approximately 33%) said that they did not feel the need to contact their local councillor about a service problem, as opposed to the 30% who claimed that they have or should have contacted them about a municipal problem. If residents did not feel that they needed to contact their local government about a service problem, then they likely feel that their services, albeit with some problems, are good. This attitude aligns itself more with public choice theory than it does with consolidationism. However, there is also a large percentage, almost 40% of respondents,
who do not know if they have had to contact their councillor(s) about a service delivery problem. It is possible that respondents did not know what was being asked of them, and that is why they responded as they did. However, with better clarification, it would be easier to discern if Windsorites held more consolidationist attitudes towards municipal services entirely.

The City of Toronto, in 1998, saw most of its residents opposed to the concept of amalgamation. Despite the touted savings that would arise with the consolidation of its municipalities, most residents did not support the local government restructuring. However, with time they came to accept the decision, and strove to actively build the new municipality. Savings from restructuring came to fruition. This, in conjunction with changing resident attitudes, allowed municipal amalgamation to be a positive change for the City of Toronto. It should come as no surprise that other municipal residents might feel the same way towards amalgamation.

Most Windsorites feel the possible benefits that come with amalgamation would be good for the municipality as well. The large majority of respondents, almost 65%, say the delivery of services would improve under the conditions of amalgamation. This response definitely suggests that Windsorites demonstrate consolidationist attitudes, and would support amalgamation with surrounding municipalities. A small percentage, less than 15%, say that services would not improve. Either they believe that Windsor services have reached their peak in optimal delivery, or else believe that nothing can be done to improve services. Those Windsorites are possibly aligned with public choice theory (and believe that Windsor provides the best services already), or are possibly pessimistic in believing that nothing can be done to improve services. In any case, this does not change
the fact that most Windsorites feel that services are not as they should be now, but could improve under the conditions of amalgamation.

Another major component to municipal living is association to local political office. It is important for all Canadians to feel a sense of political involvement and trust, as well as the satisfaction of knowing that their voices can be heard. Having no ability to participate in the political system and understand that their contribution is valid, disenfranchises residents, and leads to low satisfaction. This is especially true in the case of municipal governments, especially where residents understand that their local government is within close proximity of them and their concerns for their municipal well-being. Unlike provincial and federal governments, municipal political office is, literally, right in the backyard of most residents, and availability to local representation should be high given that they reside in the same areas of the same municipality.

Like service delivery, political accessibility to local office should be at its best under the conditions of public choice theory. Where residents live, under these conditions, they should have readily accessible local representation. However, consolidationist theory suggests that a larger municipality is better for political accessibility for residents. One reason why, consolidationism suggests, is that under the premises of public choice, there often is not one level of government. More times than not, there are local governments specific to particular municipalities, but then there are also regional governments which overlook handfuls of municipalities. Where this exists, there can be infighting between levels of government and lack of ownership where problems exist. Another reason for consolidationism, it is argued, is that it would have more governments clustered in one area, there exists the tendency to have unnecessary
duplication of administration, leading to wasteful spending at the local government level. If there is one level of government servicing a larger area, there would be the removal of unnecessary bureaucracy, and the streamlining of servicing so that administration costs would lower.

However, public choice advocates suggest that having smaller municipalities ensures that residents are best able to contact their local representative. Moreover, it is speculated this representative would likely share many of the same ideals as the resident given that they both chose to reside in the same municipality (and presumably, for the same reasons).

More Windsorites feel their local councillors are accessible than not (almost 45% feeling they are accessible to almost 21% feeling otherwise). Again, there is another large percentage of respondents who claim to not know the accessibility of their councillors. This might be due to lack of clarification on what 'accessible' is to respondents. For some, it might be as much as knowing they can send a letter to their local representative, and for others, it might be the expectation that any and all problems should be rectified as they happen. In any case, of those who possess their own definition of 'accessible', most respondents find their local representation to be accessible. This response might be as it is for a couple of reasons; first, it could come down to the individual personal responsiveness of the current Windsor city council (if the same question was posed many years ago, or several years from now, it could gain an entirely different answer); and second, the expectations of what is 'accessible' change all the time, and certainly under different sets of circumstances.
When asked if accessibility of councillors would improve under amalgamation, most Windsorites say that accessibility would remain the same. Of those respondents believing change would be effected, more respondents, about 37% feel that accessibility would likely get better. The last group, 20% of respondents, feel that accessibility would likely worsen. However, when the responses of this question and the previous one are analyzed using regression analysis, they show a negative relationship to consolidationism and support for amalgamation. They are weak relationships, and not statistically significant, but they do show that with regard to local representation, Windsorites are not wholly consolidationist.

Analysis of service delivery and accessibility to local representation rendered slightly different results. On one hand, Windsorites feel their services would improve under the hypothetical concept of amalgamation, given that current service status is not optimal. On the other hand, there are little to no problems with accessibility to local councillors (outside of those who do not know), and these responses demonstrate a negative relationship to support for consolidationism. When asked about the bigger picture though, the perceived benefit of a reallocation of resources, a strong 61% envision that under the conditions of hypothetical amalgamation, the benefit would be good. Approximately only 10% feel that there would be any benefit arising from the reallocation of services. Regression analysis showed a moderately strong, but statistically significant relationship, to support for consolidation. Even if little would change with regard to local representation, the reallocation of resources is likely seen as a great aid in ameliorating the perceived service problem.
If unsatisfied with Windsor, many respondents, almost half, say they would either move or strongly consider moving to another municipality. Very few, about 15% of respondents say they would not, even if it was the right thing to do. This variable, in regression analysis, demonstrates a negative relationship with support for consolidation (however, it is also a weak relationship). This likely means while there is some tendency towards public choice actions (in moving to desirable municipalities), there are also other things which prohibit a strong response in respondents to move. For instance, it could be that there are too many factors which prevent Windsorites from leaving (such as family and employment). Perhaps there is nothing holding Windsorites back from moving, but due to financial restraints, moving out of the municipality is not possible.

Regardless, when respondents were asked if they support Windsor amalgamation with surrounding municipalities, 78% of respondents say they do or they probably would. A smaller group, approximately 13% of respondents do not, nor would not, support Windsor amalgamating with surrounding municipalities. Of those respondents showing support for the concept of amalgamation with surrounding municipalities, those respondents are typically found in Wards 2 and 5 of Windsor. This is not entirely unexpected given these wards are situated on the most eastern and western parts of Windsor. These residents likely cross between municipalities often. Perhaps they have friends or co-workers who, despite coming to Windsor for employment purposes, live in another municipality and enjoy a more preferable tax and service package.

Evaluating the micro issues of municipal services and accessibility to local office, there is a difference in attitude between respondents. However, when evaluating the hypothetical concept of amalgamation on a large plain, there is more support for
consolidationism than for public choice theory. Therefore, it is assumed there is greater support for the hypothetical concept of Windsor amalgamation with surrounding municipalities.
Chapter Six
Conclusion

While not initially part of its election campaign, the 1995 Progressive Conservative government implemented the *Savings and Restructuring Act* with the intention of amalgamating municipalities and downloading services onto the municipalities. The provincial government claimed amalgamation was the appropriate manner in which to eliminate government waste and the duplication of services. In the long run, it was suggested that municipalities would save money and services would improve. Despite all of this, the most impacted group throughout restructuring is the municipal residents.

Chapter One discussed the history of municipal government in Ontario, and where the resident becomes an important actor in its operation. Beginning with the settler towns of early Canada, urbanization and interaction between towns led to the development of a definition of municipality and legislation regarding its operation and administration. Later, when the concept of responsible municipal government developed with the Baldwin Act, the municipality began to be seen as both a provider of services and a tool for political attachment and self-governance. Subsequent discussion evaluated the importance of municipal structure and size, and demonstrated that with adjusting municipal boundary structure, there is also a shift in the expectations and responsibilities of municipalities by both the province and municipal residents.

Chapter Two built on the earlier discussion of municipalities by engaging in a discussion of boundaries. It was argued that municipal boundaries can have an effect on both the economic and social aspects of resident living. Discussing boundaries led to a
debate on which is the optimal form of municipal governance. Two forms of governance were presented, the public choice theoretical perspective and the consolidationist approach. Each purport to having advantages to both the municipality and the resident which outweigh anything its opponent offers. Public choice theory recommends that municipalities operate best when small and numerous, thereby allowing the resident to act like a consumer and choose the municipality with the tax and service package which best appeals to them and their finances. Consolidationism, on the other hand, suggests that with a larger municipalities there is the elimination of the duplication of services and political administration and, with the economies of scale, services will not only improve, but that municipal residents will also benefit in tax savings by pooling their taxation resources. Given that most of southern Ontario went the route of consolidationism in the 1990s, but that Windsor and surrounding Essex County did not, it gave way to a research question which sought to ask, based on the attitudes of Windsorites towards their services and political attachment, would Windsorites support consolidationism and, therefore, the hypothetical concept of amalgamation.

Chapter Three outlined the survey which was undertaken in testing the research question. Each of the survey questions was explained, and the method in which the survey was conducted was outlined. Chapter Four provided the results of the survey, analyzed in the form of a multilinear regression analysis. Figures were provided to show for the demographics of those residents surveyed. A ward-by-ward evaluation was provided as well, to assess the support for the hypothetical concept of amalgamation across the five wards of the city of Windsor. Chapter Five evaluated the results of the
survey and subsequent regression analysis, and interpreted it based on the theory of the consolidationist approach and the public choice theory.

Overall, Windsorites are consolidationist in their attitudes toward municipal amalgamation. Although it is not a wholly strong support for consolidationism (given there is lenience towards public choice when respondents were asked about political accessibility) there is support for consolidationism, and therefore the hypothetical concept of amalgamation.

The large majority of Windsorites regard the reallocation of resources as being a major drawing feature towards consolidationism. This factor is highly statistically significant, and probably accounts largely for the support for hypothetical amalgamation. Most of the respondents surveyed probably understand that, under the conditions of hypothetical amalgamation, Windsor does not stand to automatically lose out on its share of the tax pool. Windsor already enjoys many services shared between it and the county, such as the Essex Windsor Solid Waste Authority. Given that some of the operations seen under the conditions of amalgamation are already a part of everyday municipal life in Windsor and Essex County, it should probably come as no surprise then, that with the proper reallocation of resources that Windsor would benefit.

However, these everyday services could stand to improve under the reallocation of resources, as shown in the survey. Most of the respondents in the survey claim that they have had problems with their municipal services; however, they also say that they are not bothered by these problems. There is a weaker correlation between this variable and the tendency for respondents to hold consolidationist attitudes towards amalgamation. However, it makes a valid point in suggesting that while there needs to be
some improvement in the delivery of municipal services, Windsorites also believe that the reallocation of resources through a pooled tax base would aid in making this improvement. It should be no coincidence that both of these factors are not only significant, but also affect each other significantly in the minds of respondents.

Expectedly, given that most residents claim they have or have had problems with their municipal services; most respondents are also only somewhat satisfied with their services. This factor holds little significance, although it shows a positive relationship with consolidationism, demonstrating that present conditions are not as favourable as they should be, they can improve. What is important here is that conditions are not optimal now. According to public choice theory, these conditions should be favourable to most residents, but for these respondents they are not. However, more than half of respondents feel that amalgamation would improve services. The suggestion that services will improve after amalgamation, although it is a weak relationship and demonstrates little to no significance, shows a positive direction with attitudes towards consolidationism. Just as most respondents believe that the reallocation of resources would benefit Windsor, they tend to believe (and based on consolidationism, rightly so) that services would improve under the conditions of hypothetical amalgamation.

Problems with municipal services exist, but they are not necessarily prevalent in their minds. Most respondents do not know if they have had to contact their local councillor if they have or have had problems with the delivery of their municipal services. The next largest group said that they do not, but that they should have. Understandably, this factor held no significance and did not share a particularly strong relationship with support for consolidationism.
Likewise, when asked about the perceived accessibility of their local councillors, most respondents do know the accessibility of their local councillors. However, the next largest group believes that councillors are somewhat accessible. As far as perceived accessibility under the conditions of amalgamation, most respondents say that accessibility would improve. Despite this, accessibility of councillors and perceived accessibility of councillors after amalgamation hold a negative relationship to consolidationism and support for amalgamation. Even though most respondents do not know much about the accessibility of their councillors, the fact that most respondents consider their councillors to be somewhat accessible, lends more to demonstrating that Windsorites hold an attitude more in line with the public choice theory. Both of these factors, while holding a negative relationship, are neither significant nor strong.

Many respondents say that they do not know if they would move to another municipality if unsatisfied. More respondents say that they would not move, but would strongly consider it. This factor was the third most significant variable, showing statistical significance. This variable, however, shows a negative relationship to consolidationism, indicating that moving is an option even if Windsorites are not prepared to move. This falls in line with the public choice theory, where residents are supposed to move to another municipality when they are unsatisfied with their current home; as long as there are many municipalities offering different taxation and service program packages, residents are free to find the one which best suits their needs.

Overall, however, most Windsorites support the hypothetical concept of amalgamation. With the exception of three variables, “How Accessible are Local Councillors”, “Accessibility of Councillors under Amalgamation”, and “Move to Another
Municipality if Unsatisfied with Windsor”, all other factors leaned towards consolidationism.

Aside from all other variables, support for the hypothetical concept of amalgamation is evident as 78.1% of respondents hold positive attitudes towards amalgamation, saying they support amalgamation, or would probably support amalgamation. However, when asking this question separate of the others, the answer could be fleeting, just a quick response devoid of any thought. By asking respondents about the hypothetical concept at the end of a string of questions designed to motivate the respondent to think about their municipality and their feelings toward it, the intention is to garner a more honest response. Hopefully this was the case.

Generally, most of the responses and respondent attitudes tend to lean towards consolidationism (this was especially the case in the wards in the east and west of Windsor). This might be for several reasons. Windsorites might be accustomed to hearing comments about how Windsor should amalgamate with its surrounding towns. Or perhaps Windsorites know friends or coworkers who work in Windsor, but live outside of the city and pay lower taxes (and receive better municipal services). Or maybe if Windsor was a larger municipality, it would register more on the economic map as a region (as opposed to simply a city), or gain a louder voice in the upper levels of government. There could be any number of reasons why Windsorites, or respondents in this survey, support the hypothetical concept of amalgamation. However, it is evident from the responses to the survey that improvement in the delivery of municipal services and the reallocation of resources among a larger municipality are considerable factors involved in creating this attitude towards amalgamation.

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Another reason for why respondents answer as they do is if residents were living in the area which they preferred, then they would show more positive attitudes towards their services and attitudes regarding local councillors. If public choice worked for respondents as the theory says it should, then respondents should have had the opportunity to shop around for the best municipality to suit their needs. All of their answers should have reflected this, and in doing so, all respondent answers should positively assess Windsor. The answers in this survey reflect what many consolidationists have maintained for years; that larger municipalities possess a proportionally larger tax base and, in having such, have more resources available to improve municipal services.

There are a few limitations to this research. First, the desired survey sample could not be achieved for this study. While the survey analysis collected from the convenience sample provides a good foundation for study, a larger sample could help to provide more concrete results. For a population of Windsor's size, a larger sample (almost twice the size of the sample used for this study) must be necessary in order to make more accurate generalized findings.

Another limitation to the study involves the selection of respondents for study. In order to truly capture the attitudes of Windsorites on the whole, Windsorites must be selected by non-probability sampling. However, given the financial limitations in conducting this research, accidental sampling was the preferable method for administering surveys. Otherwise, self-administered surveys, mailed at random to Windsorites, would have perhaps garnered a more accurate sense of Windsorite attitudes.
One last limitation to this study is time. The surveys were administered over the course of two weeks. However, it is possible that events which could transpire over the course of two weeks could affect the responses in the surveys; where respondents held attitudes towards their municipality one week, those attitudes could change the next. The ability to administer the study in one or two days would be a real advantage in conducting this study, as it would remove the possibility for external interferences which could influence respondent answers.

In the future, it would be interesting to consider the attitudes of those Essex County residents outside of Windsor. It is not enough to suggest that Windsorite attitudes are the only valid viewpoints in considering support for the hypothetical concept of municipal amalgamation. These kinds of studies could highlight the resident-perceived municipal conditions of other municipalities in Essex County. From there, comparative analysis between Windsor and its surrounding municipalities, or analysis among all municipalities regarding attitudes towards the hypothetical concept of amalgamation, could be conducted. Study such as this would allow for the possibility of discovering not only a particular attitude towards amalgamation in an individual municipality, but also a regional attitude as well.

Also, further research could evaluate these same factors of municipal governance for Windsorites at a different time. Understandably, attitudes can change over time. Windsorite attitudes towards the hypothetical concept of amalgamation may not be static, and can change based on new councillors or new by-laws and policies enacted by city council. Evaluating attitudes over the period of several years could yield more insight.
into Windsorite attitudes, if only to understand how established their attitudes are towards their municipality and amalgamation.
Bibliography


Sancton, A. “Canada as a Highly Urbanized Nation.” Canadian Public Administration (Fall 1992): 218-316


Appendix One

Attitudes of Windsorites Toward the Concept of Municipal Amalgamation
With Regard to Public Choice and Consolidationist Theoretical Perspectives of Municipal Governance

Survey

Topical Survey Questions

1) Have you ever had a problem with the delivery of your municipal services (i.e. inefficient or slow service)?

☐ Yes, and it bothers me (16)
☐ Yes, but it does not bother me (50)
☐ Not sure, some services need work, while others are fine (25)
☐ No, but there is room for improvement (30)
☐ No, there is nothing wrong with my municipal services (15)

2) Are you satisfied with Windsor municipal services (such as public works and waste disposal)?

☐ Satisfied (7)
☐ Somewhat Satisfied (29)
☐ Don't know (26)
☐ Somewhat Unsatisfied (60)
☐ Unsatisfied (15)

3) Do you feel municipal services would improve if Windsor amalgamated with outside townships and municipalities (such as Tecumseh, Belle River, Amherstburg, and LaSalle)?

☐ Yes, services would improve (14)
☐ Service might improve (74)
☐ Services would remain the same (29)
☐ Services might not improve (15)
☐ No, services would worsen (5)

4) Have you ever needed to contact your local councillor about a municipal problem?

☐ Yes (19)
☐ I didn't, but I should have (21)
☐ Don't know (52)
☐ I have thought about it, but didn't contact him/her (12)
☐ No (33)
5) How accessible do you feel your local councillors are?

☐ Accessible (6)
☐ Somewhat accessible (23)
☐ Don’t know (47)
☐ Somewhat non-accessible (44)
☐ Not accessible (17)

6) Municipal amalgamation could increase the size of municipal council, leading to an increase in the number of councillors in a larger local government. Under this condition, would you feel that councillors would become more accessible?

☐ Yes (7)
☐ Accessibility would likely get better (44)
☐ Accessibility would remain the same (59)
☐ Accessibility would not likely get better (25)
☐ No (5)

7) Do you believe an allocation of resources and funding among Windsor and surrounding municipalities would be beneficial to Windsor residents?

☐ Yes (16)
☐ It would likely be beneficial (68)
☐ Don’t know (39)
☐ It likely wouldn’t be beneficial (10)
☐ No (4)

8) If you were unsatisfied with Windsor municipal services and local government, would you move to another municipality?

☐ Yes (14)
☐ I wouldn’t move, but strongly consider it (7)
☐ Don’t know (50)
☐ I wouldn’t consider it even if moving was the right thing to do (53)
☐ No (13)

9) Would you support Windsor amalgamation with surrounding municipalities?

☐ Yes (36)
☐ Probably yes (71)
☐ Don’t know (12)
☐ Probably not (12)
☐ No (6)

10) If “No”, why?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

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Sociodemographic Control Questions

1) How long have you lived in Windsor?
   □ Less than 5 years (7)
   □ 5-10 years (8)
   □ 11-20 years (37)
   □ Over 20 years (75)

2) Where do you live?
   □ Ward 1 (15)
   □ Ward 2 (22)
   □ Ward 3 (19)
   □ Ward 4 (13)
   □ Ward 5 (32)
   □ Don't Know (36)

3) Have you ever lived anywhere else outside of Windsor?
   □ Yes, but within Essex County (27)
   □ Yes, outside of Essex County (33)
   □ No (77)

4) Did you vote in the last election?
   □ Yes (68)
   □ No, but I had intended to (38)
   □ No (33)

5) What is your gender?
   □ Male (66)
   □ Female (71)

6) How old are you?
   □ 18-25 years (24)
   □ 26-45 years (64)
   □ 46-65 years (47)
   □ Over 65 (2)

7) How much is your (pretax) annual household income?
   □ Below $15,000 (24)
   □ $15,000-50,000 (40)
   □ $50,000-100,000 (55)
   □ Over $100,000 (18)
## Appendix Two

### Multilinear Regression Analysis Output

**Variables Entered/Removed(b)**

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a All requested variables entered.
b Dependent Variable: Support for Amalgamation

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**Model Summary**

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*(a)* Predictors: (Constant), Move to Another Municipality if Unsatisfied with Windsor, Need to Contact Councillors about Municipal Problems, Perceived Benefit of Resource Allocation, How accessible are Local Councillors, Municipal Service Satisfaction, Accessibility of Councillors under Amalgamation, Problem With Delivery of Municipal Services, Service Improvement with Amalgamation

**ANOVA(b)**

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*(a)* Predictors: (Constant), Move to Another Municipality if Unsatisfied with Windsor, Need to Contact Councillors about Municipal Problems, Perceived Benefit of Resource Allocation, How accessible are Local Councillors, Municipal Service Satisfaction, Accessibility of Councillors under Amalgamation, Problem With Delivery of Municipal Services, Service Improvement with Amalgamation

*(b)* Dependent Variable: Support for Amalgamation

**Coefficients(a)**

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*(a)* Dependent Variable: Support for Amalgamation

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Appendix Three

University of Windsor Application to Involve Human Subjects in Research for Student Researchers
UNIVERSITY OF WINDSOR
APPLICATION TO INVOLVE HUMAN SUBJECTS IN RESEARCH
FOR STUDENT RESEARCHERS

Please complete, print, and submit four (4) copies (original plus three (3) copies) of this form to the Research Ethics Coordinator, Office of Research Services, Chrysler Hall Tower, Room 309

CHECKLIST

Title of Project: Attitudes of Windsorites Toward the Concept of Municipal Amalgamation With Regard to Public Choice and Consolidationist Theoretical Perspectives of Municipal Governance

Student Investigator: Lauren Rankin

Faculty Supervisor: Dr. Lydia Miljan

Please attach the following items, if applicable, in the following order at the back of the Application.

☐ Decisions Needed From Other REB Boards

☒ B.3.c.i. Questionnaires and Test Instruments

☐ B.3.d. Deception (If deception is going to be used, your application will go to Full Review)

☐ B.3.e. Debriefing Letter

☐ B.6.b. Letters of Permission Allowing Research to Take Place on Site


☒ E.1. Consent Form

☒ E.2. Letter of Information

☐ E.4. Parental/Guardian Information and Consent Form

☐ E.5. Assent Form

☐ F.2. Consent for Audio/Visual Taping Form

☒ Certificate of completion of on-line ethics tutorial (MUST BE COMPLETED BY ALL STUDENTS)
** Please make sure that all necessary signatures have been provided and that you are using the most recent version of this form (see www.uwindsor.ca/reb).
UNIVERSITY OF WINDSOR
APPLICATION TO INVOLVE HUMAN SUBJECTS IN RESEARCH
FOR STUDENT RESEARCHERS

Please complete, print, and submit the original plus three (3) copies of this form to the Research Ethics Coordinator, Office of Research Services, Chrysler Hall Tower, Room 309

Date: March 26, 2007

Title of Research Project: Attitudes of Windsorites Toward the Concept of Municipal Amalgamation With Regard to Public Choice and Consolidationist Theoretical Perspectives of Municipal Governance

Projected start date of the project: March 2007 Projected completion date: August 2007

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<th>Dept./Address</th>
<th>Phone/Ext.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Lauren Rankin</td>
<td>Political Science, University of Windsor</td>
<td>519-562-7017</td>
<td><a href="mailto:rankinc@uwindsor.ca">rankinc@uwindsor.ca</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investigator1</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Co-Investigator(s)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Faculty</td>
<td>Dr. Lydia Miljan</td>
<td>Political Science, University of Windsor</td>
<td>519-253-3000, x.2361</td>
<td><a href="mailto:lmiljan@uwindsor.ca">lmiljan@uwindsor.ca</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Supervisor2</td>
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Researchers from another institution who are a part of a research team, irrespective of their role, must seek clarification from their institutional REB as to the requirement for review and clearance. For each researcher, please indicate if REB clearance is required or briefly provide the rationale for why it is not required:

REVIEW FROM ANOTHER INSTITUTION

1. Has this application been submitted to another university REB or a hospital REB? □ Yes □ No
2. Has this application been reviewed, or will this application be reviewed, by another person or a committee for human research ethics in another organization, such as a school board? □ Yes □ No

If YES to either 1 or 2 above,

a. provide the name of the board:

b. provide the date of submission:

c. provide the decision and attach a copy of the approval document: □ Approved □ Univ. of Windsor clearance □ Approved Pending □ Other/In Process

STUDENT INVESTIGATOR ASSURANCE

I certify that the information provided in this application is complete and correct.

I understand that as Student Investigator, I have responsibility for the conduct of the study, the ethics performance of the project and the protection of the rights and welfare of human participants.

I agree to comply with the Tri-Council Policy Statement and all University of Windsor policies and procedures, governing the protection of human subjects in research.
Title of Research Project: Attitudes of Windsorites Toward the Concept of Municipal Amalgamation
With Regard to Public Choice and Consolidationist Theoretical
Perspectives of Municipal Governance

Student Investigator: Lauren Rankin

I certify that the information provided in this application is complete and correct.

I understand that as principal Faculty Supervisor, I have ultimate responsibility for the conduct of the study, the ethical performance of the project and the protection of the rights and welfare of human participants.

I agree to comply with the Tri-Council Policy Statement and all University of Windsor policies and procedures, governing the protection of human subjects in research, including, but not limited to, the following:

• performing the project by qualified and appropriately trained personnel in accordance with REB protocol;
• implementing no changes to the REB approved protocol or consent form/statement without notification to the REB of the proposed changes and their subsequent approval of the REB;
• reporting promptly significant adverse effects to the REB within five (5) working days of occurrence; and
• submitting, at minimum, a progress report annually or in accordance with the terms of certification.

Signature of Faculty Supervisor: ___________________________ Date: ____________________
A. PROJECT DETAILS

A.1. Level of Project

□ Ph.D. □ Masters □ Undergraduate □ Post Doctoral

□ Other (specify):

Is this research project related to a graduate course? or to your thesis/dissertation?

□ Yes □ No

If yes, please indicate the course number:

Please explain how this research project is related to your graduate course.

A.2. Funding Status

Is this project currently funded?

□ Yes □ No

If NO, is funding to be sought?

□ Yes □ No

A.3. Details of Funding (Funded or Applied for)

Agency:

□ NSERC ORS Application Number:

□ SSHRC ORS Application Number:

□ Other (specify):

ORS Application Number:

Period of funding: From: To:

Type of funding:

□ Grant □ Contract □ Research Agreement

B. SUMMARY OF PROPOSED RESEARCH

B.1. Describe the purpose and background rationale for the proposed project.

The purpose of this study is to gather information regarding the attitudes of Windsorites with regard to municipal amalgamation, with the subsequent intent of applying this information against two theoretical frameworks relating to municipal governance, the 'Public Choice' and 'Consolidationist' theoretical perspectives. The surveys themselves provide evidence of particular attitudes, while the theoretical backgrounds substantiate the rationale for these attitudes.

B.2. Describe the hypothesis(es)/research questions to be examined.

Based on the advantages and disadvantages presented with each theoretical perspective, it is believed that Windsorites would support the consolidationist theoretical perspective, in coordination with the benefits associated with municipal amalgamation. The 'Public Choice' model considers the optimal municipal structure as one being where there are many municipalities existing closely together, creating competitive municipal tax and
service packages, and allowing citizens to act like consumers and pick the municipality which best suits their needs (Charles M. Tiebout, "A Pure Theory of Local Expenditures," The Journal of Political Economy 64 (1956)). Conversely, the 'Consolidationist' theoretical advocates creating larger units of government spanning a larger territory; this type of municipal governance would realize the economies of scale and eliminate the duplication and overlap of services that can exist between closely situated municipalities (Joseph Kushner and David Siegel, "Effect of Municipal Amalgamation in Ontario on Political Representation and Accessibility," Canadian Journal of Political Science 36 (2003)). Moreover, the 'Consolidationist' approach assumes that a single-tiered council, typically found in this municipal governance approach, allows enhanced citizen accessibility to the local political system and representation. Ultimately, this study seeks to discern if the preferences of Windsorites are in accordance with the consolidationist approach to municipal governance, thereby indicating support for municipal amalgamation.

B.3. Methodology/Procedures

B.3.a. Do any of the procedures involve invasion of the body (e.g. touching, contact, attachment to instruments, withdrawal of specimens)? □ Yes ☒ No

B.3.b. Does the study involve the administration of prescribed or proscribed drugs? □ Yes ☒ No

B.3.c.i. Specify in a step-by-step outline exactly what the subject(s) will be asked to do. Attach a copy of any questionnaires or test instruments.

Surveys will be administered towards the start of June to the end of June, from June 4th to June 22nd, 2007. Surveys will be administered towards the latter half of the day, approximately from 1 in the afternoon to 7 in the evening. In this period, over 100 surveys are expected to be completed.

Surveys will be administered in public parkland, specifically Realtor Park, Mic Mac Park, Dieppe Gardens (and other park area stretching the riverfront), and Jackson Park, and each on different days. Parks have been selected for conducting this study as they are not only public areas (not subject to gathering permission for study), but also that they are a relaxed natural environment where respondents might feel more inclined to fill out a survey (as opposed to shoppers in a mall, for example).

Aside from myself, there will two other persons administering surveys. This study is seeking to survey subjects between the ages of 19 and 65 (although surveying an older cohort is more desirable for this study, and therefore, there will more emphasis on finding older adults, while not completing discriminating against younger Windsorites) male and female, and from across the five wards. Only Windsorites are sought for this study, and only those persons able to speak English. Respondents will be chosen in passing, with every fifth person being asked to conduct study.

Subjects will be approached and asked if they would fill out this survey, with the opening script following as such: "Hello, my name is Lauren Rankin and I am a graduate student at the University of Windsor. I am seeking to obtain Windsorite attitudes toward the concept of municipal amalgamation in order to complete my thesis. Completing the survey should take no more than five minutes. Do you live in Windsor? (If answered yes) Would you be willing to fill out a survey?". Those persons assisting with survey administration will say: "Hi my name is ______, and I am helping Lauren Rankin, a graduate student at the University of Windsor, in seeking out Windsorite attitudes toward the concept of municipal amalgamation. Do you live in Windsor? (If answered yes) Would you be interested in filling out a survey? The survey should take no more than five minutes to fill out!". Filling out the survey should take no more than five minutes, with the total time between approaching respondents and completing the survey being no more than ten minutes.

Respondents will be given a signed letter of information. Each respondent will be given a survey with clipboard and a pencil or pen. There are no identifiable distinctions on the surveys to identify particular respondents with their responses. Respondents will fill out the survey, and be thanked for their participation in this research study. Rather than having the respondents hand back the surveys to administrators, respondents will be asked to put their responses, folded up, into a sealed box fitted with a slot for insertion, so as to ensure further anonymity.
Respondents will be assured that no personal identification information is being collected, and that when results are statistically processed, they will saved and store in my own personal laptop, which is password protected. After completing the surveys, surveys will be placed into a locked container, which will then be locked in Dr. Miljan's filing cabinet at her University of Windsor office.

B.3.c.ii. What is the rationale for the use of this methodology? Please discuss briefly.

Survey analysis provides the best method for obtaining information which can be later coded and statistically analysed to produce the results needed to test the hypothesis. While focus group research would serve to enrich the contextual information regarding Windsorite attitudes towards municipal amalgamation, financial restrictions prevent this type of study from being plausible. Moreover, for this same reason, telephone surveying is not being employed (i.e. for hiring and training a staff), nor is mailed self-administered surveying being used. The other factor involved in determining the appropriate methodology is related to time efficiency. Mall intercept surveying allows for the quick administration of surveys and ensures that the appropriate sample size required for validity is met; telephone surveys would take too long to complete on a call-by-call basis, and there is no guarantee of obtaining an appropriate sample from self-administered mailed surveys. However, with mall intercept surveying the generalizability of the study is brought into question as random sampling of the Windsor population is not possible. The actual number of surveys being sought (between 100-150), while having a considerable margin of error, is a convenient sample for this study, based on time constraints. This number, along with the mall intercept style of surveying is necessary, though, in order to ensure that the necessary number of surveys is completed, and in due time. Were it not for lack of financial resources, other avenues could have been pursued, but given the need to fulfill a set number of surveys within a particular of time, mall intercept surveying provided the best approach.

B.3.d. Will deception be used in this study? □ Yes ☒ No
If YES, please describe and justify the need for deception.

B.3.e. Explain the debriefing procedures to be used and attach a copy of the written debriefing

B.4. Cite your experience with this kind of research. Use no more than 300 words for each research.

I have no experience with this kind of research outside of studying research methods, outside of having taken surveys, thereby having only a basic understanding of taking part in surveying, and not actually administering surveys.

B.5. Subjects Involved in the Study
Describe in detail the sample to be recruited including:

B.5.a. the number of subjects
Approximately 450

B.5.b. gender
Both males and females

B.5.c. age range
Above 19 years of age, to approximately 65 years of age

B.5.d. any special characteristics
B.5.e. institutional affiliation or where located

Public areas, such as municipal recreational and civic centres

B.6. Recruitment Process

B.6.a. Describe how and from what sources the subjects will be recruited.

Subjects will be approached via mall intercept approach, picked at random

B.6.b. Indicate where the study will take place. If applicable, attach letter(s) of permission from organizations where research is to take place.

Study will occur in municipally-owned arenas, parks, thereby eliminating the need for extensive pursuit for permission.

B.6.c. Describe any possible relationship between investigator(s) and subjects(s) (e.g. instructor - student; manager - employee).

None

B.6.d. Copies of any poster(s), advertisement(s) or letter(s) to be used for recruitment are attached. □ Yes ❌ No

B.7. Compensation of Subjects

B.7.a. Will subjects receive compensation for participation? □ Yes ❌ No

If YES, please provide details.

B.7.b. If subjects(s) choose to withdraw, how will you deal with compensation?

B.8. Feedback to Subjects

Whenever possible, upon completion of the study, subjects should be informed of the results. Describe below the arrangements for provision of this feedback. (Please note that the REB has web space available for publishing the results at www.uwindsor.ca/reb. You can enter your study results under Study Results on the website. Please provide the date when your results will be available)

It is expected the results of this study will be available from the REB Study Results website. Respondents will be informed of where they can find the results on the Letter of Information. This information will be available September 2007.

C. POTENTIAL BENEFITS FROM THE STUDY

C.1. Discuss any potential direct benefits to subjects from their involvement in the project.

Subjects will not receive direct benefits from participating in this study.

C.2. Comment on the (potential) benefits to (the scientific community)/society that would justify involvement of subjects in this study.

This study will provide the City of Windsor a snapshot in time of Windsorite attitudes toward municipal amalgamation. It my intention, upon completion of this study, that a copy will be given to the Chief Administer's Office at the City of Windsor. This study could be used at the discretion of the municipality in discussing policy, especially in the area of municipal services.
D. POTENTIAL RISKS OF THE STUDY

D.1. Are there any psychological risks/harm? (Might a subject feel demeaned, embarrassed, worried or upset?) □ Yes ☒ No

D.2. Are there any physical risks/harm? □ Yes ☒ No

D.3. Are there any social risks/harm? (Possible loss of status, privacy, and/or reputation?) □ Yes ☒ No

D.4. Describe the known and anticipated risks of the proposed research, specifying the particular risk(s)/harm associated with each procedure or task. Consider physical, psychological, emotional, and social risks/harm.

There is little potential for harm in conducting this study. Subjects may feel apprehensive about answering questions requesting their opinions. There are no expected physical, psychological, or emotional risks.

D.5. Describe how the potential risks to the subjects will be minimized.

As the only major risk associated with this study is of a social nature (i.e. revealing of personal opinions), the study will be designed to ensure that all responses will be kept confidential.

E. INFORMATION AND CONSENT PROCESS

If different groups of subjects are going to be asked to do different things during the course of the research, more than one consent may be necessary (i.e. if the research can be seen as having Phase I and Phase II).

E.1. Is a copy of a separate Consent Form attached to this application? □ Yes ☒ No

E.2. Is a copy of a separate Letter of Information attached to this application? ☒ Yes □ No

If written consent WILL NOT/CANNOT be obtained or is considered inadvisable, justify this and outline the process to be used to otherwise fully inform participants.

E.3. Are subjects competent to consent? ☒ Yes □ No

If not, describe the process to be used to obtain permission of parent or guardian.

E.4. Is a Parental/Guardian Information and Consent Form attached? □ Yes ☒ No

E.5. Is an Assent Form attached? □ Yes ☒ No

E.6. Withdrawal from Study

E.6.a. Do subjects have the right to withdraw at any time during and after the research project? ☒ Yes □ No

E.6.b. Are subjects to be informed of this right? ☒ Yes □ No

E.6.c. Describe the process to be used to inform subjects of their withdrawal right.

Subjects will be informed prior to completing the survey that they can withdraw at any point from the survey, as is indicated in the consent form.

F. CONFIDENTIALITY

Definitions: Anonymity - when the subject cannot be identified, even by the researcher. Confidentiality - must be provided when the subject can be identified, even if only by the researcher.

F.1. Describe the procedures to be used to ensure anonymity of subjects and confidentiality of data. Explain how written records, video/audio tapes and questionnaires will be secured, and provide details of their final disposal.
Upon completing this survey, respondents will be asked to put their responses, folded up, into a sealed box fitted with a slot for insertion, so as to ensure further anonymity. There are no identifiable marks associated with the surveys, and by having respondents insert their own responses into the sealed container investigators cannot associate responses with individual respondents, allowing the basis for anonymity to be firmly established. These responses will be kept within a sealed box, to be stored in Dr. Miljan's locked filing cabinet, ensuring that respondent answers are not visible to anyone. This data will be retained for a period not exceeding one year. While the results of this study will be shared with both the University of Windsor and the City of Windsor, the data will not be available for viewing by any other persons outside of the research group. As responses will be evaluated in aggregate form, thereby ensuring anonymity of the responses.

F.2. Is a Consent for Audio/Video Taping Form attached? □ Yes ☒ No

F.3. Specify if an assurance of anonymity or confidentiality is being given during:
   F.3.a. Conduct of research ☒ Yes □ No
   F.3.b. Release of findings ☒ Yes □ No
   F.3.c. Details of final disposal ☒ Yes □ No

G. REB REVIEW OF ONGOING RESEARCH

G.1. Are there any specific characteristics of this research which requires additional review by the REB when the research is ongoing? □ Yes ☒ No
   If YES, please explain.

G.2. Will the results of this research be used in a way to create financial gain for the researcher? □ Yes ☒ No
   If YES, please explain.

G.3. Is there an actual or potential conflict of interest? ☒ Yes □ No
   If YES, please explain for researchers who are involved.

   While I do not currently work for the City of Windsor, I have in the past. Throughout the course of my graduate year I have been volunteering some of my time to a policy project in the Council Services department.

G.4. Please propose a continuing review process (beyond the annual Progress Report) you deem to be appropriate for this research project/program.

   As this study is not expected to go beyond a year's time in study a continuing review process is not proposed.

   Please note that a Progress Report must be submitted to the Research Ethics Coordinator if your research extends beyond one year from the clearance date. A Final Report must be submitted when the project is completed. Forms are available at www.uwindsor.ca/reb.

H. SUBSEQUENT USE OF DATA

Generally, but not always, the possibility should be kept open for re-using the data obtained from research subjects. Will, or might, the data obtained from the subjects of this research project be used in subsequent research studies? □ Yes ☒ No

   If YES, please indicate on the Consent Form that the data may be used in other research studies.

I. CONSENT FORM

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If a Consent Form is required for your research, please use the following sample Consent Form template. If you wish to deviate from this format, please provide the rationale. Print out the Consent Form with the University of Windsor logo. The information in the Consent Form must be written/presented in language that is clear and understandable for the intended target audience.

J. LETTER OF INFORMATION

If a Letter of Information is required for your research, please use the following sample Letter of Information template. If you wish to deviate from this format, please provide the rationale. Print out the Letter of Information with the University of Windsor logo. The Letter of Information must be written/presented in language that is clear and understandable for the intended target audience.

Revised October 2006
LETTER OF INFORMATION FOR CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Title of Study: Attitudes of Windsorites Toward the Concept of Municipal Amalgamation With Regard to Public Choice and Consolidationist Theoretical Perspectives of Municipal Governance

You are asked to participate in a research study conducted by Lauren Rankin, student researcher, from the Department of Political Science at the University of Windsor, as a part of ongoing research contributing to a master's thesis.

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel to contact Dr. Lydia Miljan, professor of Political Science at the University of Windsor, at (519) 253-3000, x. 2361.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This study is designed to gather information about Windsorite attitudes regarding satisfaction of municipal services and access to local politicians. The information will be used to establish if Windsorites would prefer municipal amalgamation (in this study, hypothetical amalgamation is considered as Windsor amalgamating with Tecumseh, Lakeshore, Amherstburg, and LaSalle), based on information regarding two municipal models of governance.

PROCEDURES

If you volunteer to participate in this study, we would ask you to do the following:
Read over the questions of this survey, answering them to the best of your ability, and then place your completed survey in the slot of the sealed box provided. Answering the questions of this survey should take approximately 5 minutes. This study is being conducted at Realtor Park, Mic Mac Park, Dieppe Gardens (and other park area stretching the riverfront), and Jackson Park. Follow-up and results of this study will be provided on the University of Windsor Research Ethics Board website.

POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

There are no foreseeable risks associated with participating in this survey.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO SUBJECTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY

There are no direct benefits from participating in this study. However, the results of this research will be passed on the City of Windsor, as part of gaining further insight into municipal satisfaction of residents.

PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION

There is no payment for participation in this study.

ANONYMITY

Any information that is obtained from respondents, in connection with this study, will remain anonymous. Upon completing this survey, respondents are asked to insert their folded responses in the sealed container, so as to ensure anonymity, and that responses are not visible to anyone else. Anonymity of respondents and responses will be ensured. The surveys will then be stored in Dr. Miljan’s locked filing cabinet, in her office, at the University of Windsor. The data file that will be created from the survey results will be stored in my personal computer, which is password protected. There is no personal identification information that is being collected from this study. This data will be kept for a period not exceeding one year. While the results of this study will be shared with both the University of Windsor and the City of Windsor, the data will not be available for viewing by any other persons outside of the research group.

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PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

You can choose whether or not to participate in this study. If you volunteer to be in this study, you may withdraw at any time without consequence. You may also refuse to answer any questions you don't want to answer and still remain in the study. The investigator may remove a respondent from this study, in the event that a respondent becomes upset or disgruntled while completing this survey.

FEEDBACK OF THE RESULTS OF THIS STUDY TO THE SUBJECTS

Research findings will be available upon completion of all surveys. They will be made available September 2007, and made available through the University of Windsor Research Ethics Board website.

Web address: www.uwindsor.ca/reb
Date when results are available: September 2007

SUBSEQUENT USE OF DATA

This data will not be used in subsequent studies.

RIGHTS OF RESEARCH SUBJECTS

You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research subject, contact: Research Ethics Coordinator, University of Windsor, Windsor, Ontario N9B 3P4; telephone: 519-253-3000, ext. 3916; e-mail: lbunn@uwindsor.ca.

SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR

These are the terms under which I will conduct research.

_________________________               __________
Signature of Investigator               Date
NAME: Lauren Marie Rankin
PLACE OF BIRTH: Windsor, Ontario
YEAR OF BIRTH: 1983
EDUCATION:

University of Windsor, Windsor, Ontario
Bachelor of Arts, Honours Political Science
2006

University of Windsor, Windsor, Ontario
Master of Arts, Political Science
2007