

Editorial ? Beware of efforts to cut council

The City of Brampton is pushing ahead with efforts to get its representation at Peel Regional council increased.

That's up to the City's leadership. If these people want to move in that direction, it's up to them.

But Town officials must be on guard against attempts to use this as an excuse to reduce Caledon's representation.

Town councillors had a good, healthy discussion on the matter Tuesday, raising several valid points. The comments that fewer than five representatives from Caledon would be hard pressed to provide adequate service to the community was most compelling. As Councillor Richard Paterak observed, councillors in Caledon do not have constituency assistants or other staff to do their research for them, unlike federal and Provincial politicians. They have to do all that work on their own to make informed decisions for the benefit of all.

Fortunately, we hear few calls to reduce the number of councillors. There was one attempt about 20 years ago, led by people who pushed the short-sighted message that cutting the area representation (leaving just Regional councillors) would save money. What that would have done was gut representation for Caledon, and meant that as few as three people might have held control over the municipality ? a recipe for disaster.

Mayor Marolyn Morrison has made the point that Caledon, some time in the future, might have to look at a single-tier system for governance. Mississauga has gone that route, and that's basically what Brampton is now pushing for. If Caledon goes down that path, then there must be provisions that the town's contingent in Regional representation does not suffer.

And if one takes a realistic look at the situation, there's no reason why it should. With the growth planned for Caledon in the coming years, adequate representation would appear to be essential, would it not?