



Parks and Trails

Municipalities have a variety of parks that contain facilities such as trails, playgrounds, gardens, and activity fields for activities such as golf, soccer, basketball, or field hockey. As well, to preserve the features of the natural landscape, municipalities maintain and add trees and vegetation in parks. More municipalities are now starting to build bicycle trails, as well. Various types of careers are required for operational, management and stewardship services such as arborists, project managers/park superintendents, construction workers, gardeners, geographic information technologists, bobcat operators, and engineers.

Municipal Careers Cards



Careers Trading Cards:

This activity is targeted at school children (Grade 5 and above) to make them aware of the various career options provided by their municipality or government. This can help them understand the role played by municipal workers in running their day-to-day lives.

For further involvement of students (especially at the Grade 10 level), have students create the playing cards, either through group work or individual work. A competitive game can be carried out afterwards.

Grade Levels: Grade 5 and above

Suggested Related Curriculum:

Civics, Arts, Social Studies, and English1

How to Play:

Use Municipal Career playing cards for class participation. Each card is with a picture of a municipal worker, matched with another card providing a description of their job responsibilities and contribution to the community. The intention is to have the students match pictures with the description of the job function / municipal profession, i.e. a Chief of Police or waste water services engineer.

Length of Activity: 1 hour



Police Officers & Chiefs



Councillor



Mayor / Reeve / Chair / Warden



By-Law Enforcement Officer



Librarian



Construction Crew Worker



The Clerk & Treasurer



Fire Fighters



Fleet Operators



Solid Waste Management Officer



Land Use Planners



Water Service and Operation Workers



Recreation Workers



Public Transit Employees



Long Term Care Home Workers



Emergency Response Workers



Housing Services & Affordable Housing Workers



Paramedics



Parks and Trails



Traffic Workers



Administration and IT Services Employees

Police Officers & Chiefs

Many municipalities in Ontario have a local police service to ensure security within a community. Other municipalities use the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) to provide police services. Police officers work to prevent crimes, and enforce the law by working in partnership with individuals and the community. Depending on the size of municipalities, there are various specialized units such as community outreach/education, marine units and police dog units. The Chief of Police takes a lead role in managing police services within a municipality and ensuring the police service meets the needs of the community.

Councillor

An elected member of municipal council. They act on behalf of the local residents and respond to their particular needs and preferences. Councillors are chosen from at large elections or ward elections. They are responsible to make decisions on behalf of the community for matters such as (but not restricted to) the annual budget, what services and programs to provide, municipal regulations (e.g. to ban the use of pesticides or rezone lands for a new development) and representing the municipality or their ward at public functions. Depending on the municipality, councillors may or may not be paid a wage (or per diem), and may work full or part-time as a councillor.

Mayor / Reeve / Chair / Warden

The elected head of a municipal council. Interestingly, the position brings no additional formal powers but often requires an influential political figure. They only have one vote like other members of council and may or may not be paid to serve this position. As head of the municipal council, they chair the council meetings and are recognized as a leader for the municipality. Like municipal councillors, they have many people working behind the scenes as municipal employees to provide an effective and productive means of local governance.

By-law Enforcement Officer

A By-law is generally a local law passed by the members of a Council to serve a specific purpose and alter behaviour. By-laws are often put in place for health and safety reasons, or to implement a municipal policy (e.g. a zoning by-law that regulates the use of land and implements the Official Plan policies). Other examples include a traffic control, noise control, business licensing, animal control, property standards or dumping by-laws. By-law Enforcement Officers enforce the by-laws of the municipality through activities such as conducting investigations or issuing tickets. Also, municipalities employ or contract policy and legal experts to help develop by-laws.

Librarians

Do you have a library card? Notice the name of your municipality is labelled on the card. Many municipalities have libraries to serve the community by providing literacy related services and materials such as books, as well as youth homework programs or pre-school reading programs. All municipalities with public libraries must have a library board. Professional librarians who are trained in library and information sciences organize, coordinate and deliver the wide variety of services and materials provided by libraries. What services does your local library provide?

Construction Crew Worker

Who fixes the potholes on your street? The construction and repair of municipal streets and side walks are great examples of how a municipality functions on a day to day basis to maintain its infrastructure. Staff in departments such as Public Works or Transportation are responsible for these services. Related careers include engineers, millwrights, program superintendents or managers, concrete mixers, machinists, truck drivers, and design and drafting technologists.

The Clerk & Treasurer

All municipalities in Ontario must have a Clerk and a Treasurer position. The Clerk prepares the agenda and the minutes for all council meetings. The Clerk's office is the main point of contact for municipal administration matters and sends information received out to the various departments for followup. They must carry out duties directed by provincial legislation. Clerks issue licenses such as marriage certificates, and register births and deaths. The Treasurer takes care of a municipality's finances, especially the preparation of the annual budget and ensuring that revenues are properly collected and the bills are paid. Some municipalities combine these positions into a 'Clerk-Treasurer'. Various professions that work with the Clerk and Treasurer are secretaries/administrators, filing clerks, solicitors, auditors, financial officers, financial and communication advisors, and research analysts.

Fire Fighters

Fires can be a devastating event resulting in property damage, injuries and even death. Municipalities have fire departments to extinguish fires and rescue people. They also work to prevent fires by conducting building inspections and educating the public on fire prevention. Municipalities can have full-time fire fighters, volunteer fire fighters, or part-time fire fighters, along with a Fire Chief and Captains. Some municipalities partner with neighbouring municipalities in providing local fire services.

Fleet Operators

Fleet Operators purchase, maintain and dispose of various vehicles, trucks and heavy equipment used (in most cases) to maintain, repair and service municipal infrastructure. To manage and operate fleets there are various skilled positions required such as certified mechanics, safety inspectors, fleet supervisors/managers, driver trainers, information technologists, and procurement officers.

Solid Waste Management Officer

The municipality collects, transports, and processes the disposal or recycling of solid waste. Most municipalities have established rules and policies on related matters such as how often waste is collected, what can be disposed of and how, how much garbage households and businesses can put out for pick-up per week, and recycling. Waste Management Departments require various skilled and professional positions such as waste management directors and coordinators, educators, route supervisors, refuse collectors, and recycling equipment machinists. Some municipalities contract out to private companies to provide their waste management services.

Land Use Planners

Deciding on how a municipality will develop or redevelop is an important responsibility of a municipal council. But behind those decisions are the planning professionals that develop and recommend the land use plans, policies and by-laws to council. Three of the main planning powers are adoption of an official plan, passing of zoning bylaws, and subdivision control (or land division). To undertake such work, planners may specialize as (but not limited to) planning policy advisors, by-law control planners, transportation planners, subdivision control planners, environmental planners, housing advisors, research analysts, and also work with professions such as lawyers, Geographic Information technicians and civil engineers.

Water Service and Operation Workers

In urban areas, most residents rely on municipal water services for clean water in their sinks, toilets, showers, washing machines and dish washers. The waste or "grey" water returns through underground pipes to a municipality's water facility. The waste water is treated and cleaned at the facility before it goes back into the environment. Most municipalities treat storm water (rain water) and waste water separately. Even in municipal areas without piped water services (with private wells), staff may be required for activities such as well inspections and permits to take water. Various staff are required to do these jobs, such as water technicians/scientists, engineers, pipe fitters, plumbers, treatment plant operators and operation superintendents/managers.

Recreation Workers

Sports, summer camps, arts and crafts, fitness, clubs, and age specific programs are all examples of recreational programs that many municipalities develop and deliver for residents. Recreation facilities include swimming pools, ice rinks, community centres, dance rooms, gyms, etc. These all require maintenance and repair by the municipality. Youth program coordinators, fitness directors and instructors, arena/pool operators, ground /building supervisors, cleaners, and recreational programmers are only a few examples of related careers.

Public Transit Employees

Many municipalities have public transit to provide affordable and environmentally friendly transportation options for their residents. Of course, the size of municipal transit systems is dependent on the regional development and commuting patterns, and municipal population size and distribution. Various types of careers are required to plan, operate, and maintain a municipal transit system, such as driver operators, transportation engineers, project managers, computer programmers, and mechanics.

Long Term Care Home Workers

Most municipalities are involved with providing services and housing for seniors. There are various programs for individuals requiring care ranging from adult day programs and long term care homes. Many municipalities rely on not-for-profit organizations like Meals On Wheels to assist, and may work with neighbouring municipalities to provide services. Several types of careers are involved in this field, such as respite care workers, nurses, activity coordinators, placement coordinators, doctors, program directors, resident councillors and therapists.

Emergency Response Workers

Floods, large snow storms, and explosions are examples of why municipalities need to prepare for disasters or emergencies. All municipalities in Ontario are required to prepare an emergency management/recovery plan. Responding to emergencies requires an emergency and disaster recovery committee. There are many types of careers involved in this municipal service, such as community/land use planners, emergency planning managers/coordinators, rescue workers, police and fire fighters, paramedics, ambulance drivers, financial analysts, and research advisors.

Human Services & Affordable Housing Workers

There are many programs that municipalities have to support individuals, families, and groups within a community. Municipalities may partner with neighbouring municipalities or not-for-profit organizations to help deliver these services. There is a diversity of services provided, such as parenting support groups, implementation of Ontario Works for employment assistance, child care, and the provision of affordable housing. Careers geared toward these municipal services include social workers, research and policy analysts, councillors, early childhood educators, youth outreach workers, community organizers, integration and training advisors, housing advisors, housing superintendents, and program planners.

Paramedics

Municipalities provide ambulance emergency services for people that need critical emergency care. Paramedics work hard to provide emergency health care and a speedy yet safe mode of transport for victims. Transportation may be via ambulance trucks and even helicopters or boats. Paramedics assess, treat, and transport patients safely and promptly to emergency health facilities like hospitals. Emergency dispatchers act as the first line of contact for the help seekers who call in on the phone. Some neighbouring municipalities work together to provide ambulance services.

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Traffic Workers

How many street lights are on your street? Municipalities know this because they repair, operate and monitor the traffic and public street lights for security and visibility. Ensuring public street lights turn on at sunset and the traffic control signal is fixed on Main Street are just two examples of what municipal workers do. Careers geared toward this municipal service include traffic control operators, transportation engineers, electricians, signal technicians, and computer programmers.

Administration and IT Services Employees

The Administrative and IT services within a municipality are rarely seen by the public, yet they ensure and simplify the planning and delivery of many municipal services. Every service you use, such as recreational and camp programs, building permits, applying for municipal jobs, paying property taxes or surfing your municipality's website, are reliant on people such as IT experts, computer programmers, procurement officers, customer service representatives, administrative clerks, secretaries and coordinators.

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