



Career Opportunities in Local Government

Facilitator's Guide

Presentation to High School Students

Career Opportunities in Local Government High School Presentation

Alberta Municipal Affairs
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Introduction to the Presentation



Introduction

Welcome to the Facilitator's Guide to "Career Opportunities in Local Government." This presentation is designed for Alberta high school students to stimulate their interest in a future career in local government.

As you know, capable municipal employees are fundamental to achieving and maintaining effectiveness in local governance. Alberta municipalities have historically been able to recruit and retain sufficient numbers of capable staff members; however, with recent economic trends, local governments are finding it increasingly difficult to recruit new people into the sector. Clearly, there is a need for municipalities to recruit and train additional capable employees to meet the future demands, but where can we find these individuals?

By the time students have graduated from a post-secondary institution, they have a pretty good idea of the type of job they are looking for. Unfortunately, not many of those students are focused on a career in local government. Most post-secondary graduates have not considered local government as a career option because this is not typically a job sector high school students hear much about. It is important to reach these students before they begin their post-secondary studies so that they may choose to pursue post-secondary programs that will help prepare them for a career in local government.

High school students need to know that this opportunity exists, the types of jobs available, what educational programs prepare them for this career, and the rewards of working in local government. The goal of this presentation is to encourage more students to consider this field and choose it as a career when they are ready to enter the workforce. This is where you come in. You are the best resource these students have to learn about municipal government and the career opportunities available to them in the field. This Guide can help connect you with local students in a fun, yet informative, environment.

The Target Audience

Although this presentation could fit into any high school social studies curriculum, a good option for reaching many high school students is through CALM classes. CALM stands for Career and Life Management, and is a class that all Alberta high school students must take to graduate. Students typically take this class in grade 11. The aim of this class is to help students make well-informed choices in all aspects of their lives and to develop behaviours and attitudes that contribute to the well-being and respect of themselves and others. Part of this class involves introducing students to career and life choices. Most teachers use, and are encouraged to use, guest speakers in their course planning to achieve the outcomes of the class. This is an excellent opportunity to market careers in local government to high school students.

To become a guest speaker for CALM classes, contact high school teachers or guidance counsellors in your school division. So that you can promote a career in local government, you may also wish to consider coordinating your presentations with other nearby municipalities so that you can reduce overlap when contacting schools. Schools can be contacted in one of the following ways:

1. Determine the email addresses of each of the high schools in your municipality. Using the sample letter provided in the Appendix, send an e-mail to either the principal or the CALM teacher at each of the schools you want to contact.
2. Mail or hand-deliver a copy of the letter to each high school.
3. Drop off copies of the letter to each school division head office and request that they send a copy of the letter to each of their high schools.
4. Phone each high school to find out the name(s) and contact information for the CALM teacher(s). Phone or e-mail them directly to talk about the presentation.

This letter should be sent to each high school twice in the school year: once at the start of the school year (September), and once at the start of the second semester (February).

While CALM classes are usually the best classroom for this presentation, some Social Studies teachers may be open to the presentation as well. Therefore, you may also want to contact the Social Studies teachers in the high schools.

What to Expect

Teachers will usually try to book you at least a few weeks in advance, but some may request a presentation with less notice. You may also receive more requests than you can handle. Although it would be ideal to reach every single school in your municipality, it may not be realistic; just accept as many presentations as you can manage.

When booking a presentation with a teacher, you will need to find out the following:

- Start and end time for the class;
- The teacher's name;
- The number of students in the class;
- Address and phone number for the school;
- Where to park;
- If there is an overhead slide projector in the room (most classrooms will have an overhead projector, but it is best to request one just in case); and
- OPTIONAL: If there is access to a laptop and projector, or if you need to bring one with you and how much time you will have to set up.

Included in the Appendix, on page eight, is a copy of a blank booking form that you may photocopy and use when booking your presentations.

Most high school classes run for 80 minutes and most teachers will prefer you to speak for the duration of the class. While this may feel like a long time for a presentation, the activities built into the presentation will help you to keep the students' attention. However, there may be an occasion where you will need a shorter presentation. For your convenience, both an 80-minute and 40-minute presentation are included in this Guide.

When you arrive at the school, it is best to announce yourself at the general office, in case you need to sign in as a guest. The receptionist will either direct you to the right classroom, or call the teacher to meet you in the office. Most high schools have a five-to ten-minute break scheduled between each class, so you will most likely not have access to the classroom until the previous class is finished. If you do not have access to the classroom before starting your presentation, you may not have time to set up a laptop and projector for the PowerPoint presentation. Therefore, along with the electronic version of the presentation, you may wish to print off some or all of the slides provided.

Your Role

Most teachers will remain in the classroom during your presentation, although you may want to confirm this with the teacher before you arrive. Therefore, your responsibility is to facilitate the presentation, engage the students, and present interesting information. Your role should not involve disciplining disruptive students therefore, it is a good idea to have the teacher in the room during the presentation.

If you have not presented to high school students in the past, know that they are much different to present to than adults. High school students are more challenging to engage and you may find, at least at the beginning of the presentation, that the class is quite quiet. If you show the class respect, if you are relaxed, and if you have fun, the students will respond in kind. Most high school students appreciate an interactive style of presentation as opposed to a lecture-style. Therefore, when possible, ask the students questions, ask for their opinions, and ask for their thoughts. This will help engage the students during your presentation.

It is important for a presenter to feel comfortable and animated when delivering the presentation in order to properly engage the class. You may wish to bring a co-facilitator with you to make the presentation easier to manage. This may be a fellow co-worker or someone with an interesting job in local government.

For your convenience, the Appendix on page eight provides helpful tips on how to work with and engage students.

Using this Guide

The Facilitator's Guide has been divided into two columns. The left hand column in blue shading uses the following quick reference symbols:



- suggests how long this section should take to facilitate



- reminds you to pass out a handout to the students



- indicates which slide you should be showing at this point



- indicates an item you should show to the class



- indicates that this is an interactive activity for the class

The right hand column of the Guide provides you with information you may wish to use during the presentation. Words in italics indicate what you may want to say to the class to introduce each section of the presentation, or may indicate a question you will want to ask the students. Words not in italics are either tips for you or background information that you may want to share with the class.

On page 14 of the 80-minute presentation, you will see a number of activity options. Each option is designed the same way, but provides a different issue for the students to discuss. Choose one of the activities that you are most comfortable with. If none of these activities interest you, the last activity has been left blank for you to fill in with a local issue that you would like the students to discuss.

There are blank lines throughout the Guide. These spaces are provided for you to fill in information relevant to your municipality. For example, on page eight of the presentation, there are blank lines provided for you to list bylaws specific to your municipality. Tailoring the presentation will help make it more interesting and relevant to the students. Although all of the information provided in this Guide is helpful for the students to know, you can choose how to present the information in a way that is most comfortable for you. You may even choose to reorder the presentation. Feel free to speak verbatim from the guide, add in any interesting local information, or paraphrase the information in a way that is easier for you to describe. Good facilitation means bringing in your own information relevant to the audience. Overall, have fun with this presentation!

What to Bring

Before you head off to your presentation, ensure you have the following items:

- Copy of the *Municipal Government Act*
 - Overhead slides or the electronic presentation (feel free to modify the slides to suit your presentation)
 - Handouts (enough for each student and teacher)
 - Make sure these handouts are hole-punched for students to put into their binders:
 - Local Government Quiz
 - Municipal Government in Alberta
 - Careers in Municipal Government
 - Finding a Job in Municipal Government
 - Municipal Internship Program
 - Evaluation Form
- } To save paper, and make it easier for you to hand these out in class, you may want to double-side and staple these four together.
- An organizational chart from your municipality (hard copy or electronic version)
 - A map of your municipality
 - Statistics on the municipality (blank spaces provided throughout the presentation for you to record this information):
 - Name and salary of Chief Elected Official (CEO) and councillors
 - Name and salary of Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) (optional)
 - Nearby cities, towns, villages, summer villages, and counties and municipal districts
 - Bylaws in your municipality
 - Municipal departments in your municipality
 - Salary of some of the municipal positions offered in your municipality
 - Your website
 - Size (optional)
 - Population (optional)
 - A local issue you would like to use for the activity (optional)
 - Optional items to incorporate into your presentation:
 - Pictures from your municipality
 - Prizes for the students
 - Promotional items from your municipality (for example, pins, pens)
 - Candies

Now you are ready for your presentation. Good luck and have fun!

Appendix

Included in this Appendix:

- Introduction Letter to Teachers
- Classroom Booking Form
- Tips on How to Engage Students

*Your address and
phone number*

Date

Attention: CALM Teachers

Did you know that Alberta municipalities are one of the largest employers in the province, providing work for over 30,000 full-time staff? Are your students aware of the various career opportunities available to them in the local government sector?

The **municipality** would like to offer support to your Career and Life Management (CALM) class. With this in mind, we have a career presentation that we believe would be of interest to your senior school high students:

Careers in Local Government

This presentation gives students an overview of what local government does, the career opportunities available, and how to find a job in local government. This presentation can fill an 80-minute period or be adjusted for a shorter length of time, if necessary.

There is no cost associated with having one of our staff make a presentation to your classes. Book early as these presentations will be scheduled on a first-come, first-served basis. A minimum of three weeks' notice before a presentation would be appreciated so we are better able to schedule your request.

If you have any further questions or want to book a presentation, please contact us at the address or phone numbers noted above, or by e-mail at ***your e-mail address***.

Sincerely,

Your Name
Position

Career Opportunities in Local Government Booking Form

Date: _____

Time:	# of Students:
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

School Name: _____

Address: _____

Contact Name: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Equipment Requested: overhead projector

Additional Guest Presenters: _____

Notes (i.e. parking):

Tips on Engaging Students

Facilitating Presentations

Your presentations are most effective when people become involved and participate in the presentation. When you use facilitation skills, you encourage involvement by showing interest in the audience and helping people feel free to comment and ask questions. As a facilitator, you bridge the gap between the content and the audience.

Since some students may not appear excited about learning about government, it is your role to make the presentation fun, relevant, and interesting. Most high school students prefer an interactive style of presentation as opposed to a lecture-style. Therefore, the more relaxed, natural and dynamic you are, the more you will be able to engage the students.

Facilitation skills do not come naturally to all of us; however, those skills can be developed and strengthened over time. These facilitator tips can help you to work with and engage students during your presentation.

Thinking about Working with Students

You have an important role to play in increasing students' understanding and interest in a local government career. Students need help to know about the career options available to them in local government. Many students do not understand the political process and the language of government.



Strategies for Preparing to Work with Students

Some general tips:

- Be yourself;
- Be open, approachable and honest with students;
- Relax by taking a couple of deep breaths before the presentation;
- Accept nervousness as an energizer that helps to keep you on your toes and performing at your best;
- Avoid using political or government jargon or be prepared to explain it;
- Treat students with respect;
- Remember that not all students will require the same approach;
- Reinforce students' need to get involved with things that affect them directly;
- Interest yourself in the specific issues that students are involved with;
- Make an effort to be flexible in the methods you use;
- Look for opportunities for new ways of engaging students;
- Respect the diversity of young people and explore ways of reaching out to different groups of students; and
- Actively listen to what students are saying and take them seriously.

Rather than a lecture, we suggest you provide an environment in which students are free to ask questions and participate in activities. Consider ways that you and different individuals in your municipal office can participate and work with students.

Prepare to be questioned by students when you are in the classroom. Many students will be interested in your personal stories as well as knowledge you have about the municipality and the jobs available. Think of some anecdotes that you are willing to share with students; however, ensure that your anecdotes relate to the topics you are discussing and are sensitive to the diversity of students in the classroom. Students will appreciate your interest in their stories as well. You may also think of some questions you can ask of students, such as how long they have lived in the municipality, and what issues and concerns they are most interested in. Respond directly to student questions and provide concrete examples in your responses.

Providing students with interesting information is critical in enhancing their understanding of what the municipality they live in looks like and how municipal government has influenced its development. Plan in advance the information you wish to share with students. Information about your municipality will help students understand that although the functions of different departments can be

similar across municipalities, the issues and choices that municipal governments deal with can be very different.

Prepare stories and examples that illustrate the roles and responsibilities of the council and administration. Students will be interested in hearing about some of the personal challenges you face as you work for your municipality and what a day in the life of your job might look like. Students will also be interested in the personal aspects of your job. They will want to hear how you react to the issues that you face as a municipal official.

Ask students for their opinions and thoughts on different issues and topics. Students appreciate the opportunity to offer and share their own perspectives. Personalize your discussions. Tell them about challenges you have faced in dealing with issues as a municipal official. In informal discussions, draw from student questions and the experiences they share to help illustrate the points you want to make with them.

Effective Communication and Involvement with Students

Students can be interesting and exciting to work with. They need to realize that you are interested in them, what they are doing and how they are learning. Plan ways you can interact effectively with students:

- Think of questions you can ask students and ways you can personalize the information you are providing to them;
- Use visual aids to help students focus on the information you are presenting (ensure they are appropriate and relevant to the presentation);
- Bring original artifacts connected to the municipal government, if available;
- Think of ways you can vary the pace of your presentation;
- Maintain good eye contact while you are talking;
- Focus on acting as a facilitator of learning, rather than a lecturer;
- Ensure that you plan ways to encourage students to share their own insights and experiences;
- Move around the classroom while you are presenting;
- Face the audience when speaking to ensure they can hear you;
- Take some time before you go into any classroom to talk with the teacher about his/her particular group of students;
- Enjoy the time you spend with a class; and
- Provide a memento of your visit such as pens, pins, maps or brochures.

Participating in a Classroom Activity

To make your presentation interactive, classroom activity options have been provided to help you engage the students as much as possible. These activities are designed to help students understand the decision-making process in the municipality. There may be specific projects that interest students and motivate them to become involved. Several types of projects/issues are included in the presentation.

During the activity, talk to students about the importance of listening to and considering different views and consider perspectives during council and community meetings. Explain to students the accountability that administration has to residents, the electorate and interest groups. Provide examples, such as ways you work with individuals and groups in the municipality. Make sure students know that you are accountable to them as well.

Have Fun

Overall, if you are passionate about the presentation, this will be conveyed to the students. Treat them with respect and they will respond in kind. No matter how you choose to present, have some fun!

40-minute Presentation



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3 minutes

Introduction

Introduce yourself, your background, and your experience working in government.



#1

How many of you have thought about what you want to be when you finish high school? What careers have you thought about?

Has anyone seriously considered a job in local government? No? Doesn't that sound like an exciting career? Why does government not sound exciting?

I'm here today to help you understand a little bit more about what local government does, and to introduce you to the exciting career opportunities available to you.



#2

When I talk about local government, there's actually two parts to it. One, the side you're probably most familiar with, is the political side. This is called the council, and the council members are responsible for setting the direction and policy for the municipality. The other side is the administration, or the staff. Administration consists of the people who follow through with and implement council's decisions. These are the people you will see sitting in the office issuing permits, or out in the graders cleaning your street. When I'm talking about careers in local government, I'm focussing on the administration side, not the political side.



3 minutes

Government

Think back to your social studies class in elementary school. Do you remember learning about the three levels of government? What are the three levels? Do you remember which level is responsible for what? Let's see!



#3

Show slide listing government services and have class guess which level is responsible for each service.

- Sports arenas (**municipal**)
- Fire Service (**municipal**)
- Citizenship (**federal**)
- Child welfare (**provincial**)
- Labour (**provincial**)
- Police service (**municipal; RCMP is provincial**)
- Water (**municipal**)
- Highways (**provincial**)
- Education (**provincial**)
- National defense (**federal**)
- Health (**provincial**)
- Sidewalks (**municipal**)
- Cemeteries (**municipal**)
- Postal service (**federal**)
- Money/currency (**federal**)
- Libraries (**municipal and provincial**)

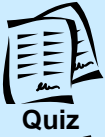


#4

Show slide listing a detailed, but not complete, list of all of the services that local governments can provide. Ask students which services on this list are surprising to them.



12 minutes



#5 - 11

Local Government Quiz

This next activity will test how much you can remember from your social studies classes.

Pass out the quiz and give time for everyone to answer. Some students may groan at the idea of a quiz, but typically students are cooperative and do not mind going through the quiz individually first if it is presented in a fun way. If you choose to bring prizes or promotional items to distribute to the class, this may be one of the times you choose to award a prize.

As a large group, review the answers to the questions. The quiz questions have been provided on the overhead slides, if you wish to use them at this point.

Note:

- You may need to define the term “municipality” for the students.
- Throughout this presentation, the word “municipal” and “local” are used interchangeably. Use the word you are most comfortable with; however, you may need to explain to students why both words are used.



#5

1. The mayor/reeve is the sole decision maker for a municipality.

False - Every municipality in Alberta is governed by a council. A councillor’s job is to work with other council members to set the overall direction of the municipality through his or her role as a policy maker. The policies that a council sets are the guidelines for the administrative staff to follow as they do the job of running a municipality. The number of members on council depends on the size of the municipality, but the council should have an odd number of members, and have no less than three councillors.

How many council members does your municipality have?

One member of council is called the chief elected official (or CEO), commonly known as the mayor or the reeve. In a village or municipal district, the CEO is appointed among the councillors. In a city or town, the CEO is elected at large or by a vote of the residents. CEOs in rural areas are generally known as “reeve,” while villages, towns and cities refer to their CEO as “mayor.”

Most of you have heard of your mayor/reeve - what is his/her name?

The mayor/reeve is considered the spokesperson for the municipality, which is why most of you may know of that person. However, a common misconception is that the mayor/reeve has more power in decision making than the rest of the council members. This is not true. The mayor/reeve only has one vote (just like a councillor) and has the responsibilities as the rest of the councillors.

Briefly discuss the difference in roles between the mayor/reeve, council, and administration.

Name of Mayor / Reeve: _____

Number of Councillors: _____

Names of Councillors: _____



#5



#6

2. There are approximately 125 municipalities across Alberta.

False - Ask students to guess the correct number. There are 360 municipalities in Alberta and each municipality has a different name (as of January 1, 2008).

Show slide with the map of Alberta. In Alberta, there are several different types of municipalities. Some of ones you would be most familiar with are:

- Cities - 10,000 people or more; currently **16** in Alberta.

→ Nearby example: _____

- Towns - 1,000 people or more; currently **109** in Alberta.

→ Nearby example: _____

- Villages - 300 people or more; currently **99** in Alberta.

→ Nearby example: _____

- Summer Villages – meetings held in the summer and electors may not be permanent residents, just property owners; **51** in Alberta.

→ Nearby example: _____

- Specialized municipalities - formed under special circumstances; currently **4** (Wood Buffalo, Strathcona, Jasper, MacKenzie, Crowsnest Pass).

- Municipal Districts / Counties - includes rural areas and farm land as well as business, industrial, and residential areas; council representatives from electoral districts (wards); currently **64**.

→ Nearby example: _____

- Hamlets – within an MD or county; an unincorporated community that consists of five or more dwellings and has a generally accepted boundary.

→ Nearby example:



3. A municipal council can create bylaws, such as a curfew on teenagers, for the municipality.

True - The purpose of a municipality, among many things, is to develop and maintain safe and viable communities. Under the *Municipal Government Act*, council has the right to pass bylaws for a number of reasons, including protecting the safety, health and welfare of people and for the protection of people and property.

Council could hear concerns from the residents first and then direct municipal staff to do research on this topic. After doing research, staff would present council with a report on their findings. If research suggested that property damage was shown to be caused by teenagers late at night, one of the recommendations may include implementing a curfew on teenagers. Based on that information, council may decide to pass a curfew bylaw.

Bylaws receive three readings at a council meeting and those meetings must be open to the public. Therefore, residents have the opportunity to state their opinions for or against a bylaw before the third reading when the bylaw will be passed. Ultimately, it is council's job to decide what is best for the whole community.

Why do you think that council would choose to pass a bylaw placing a curfew on teenagers?

What other types of bylaws could a council pass? (i.e. bullying)

How does a municipality enforce these bylaws?

Examples of other bylaws in your community. You may also wish to mention the Municipal Excellence Network where students could search different bylaws that are in place across Alberta:



#7

4. A municipal council decides where residential and commercial properties can be built.

True - Every municipal council must pass a land-use bylaw which divides the municipality into designated districts, outlines the types of land uses allowed in each area, and provides the planning standards (for example, distances from property lines, height restrictions). Any municipality with a population over 3,500 is required to also have long-term land-use plan, called a Municipal Development Plan.

The purpose of these plans and bylaws is to achieve orderly, economical and beneficial development, and to maintain and improve the quality of the physical environment for the residents. It is council's responsibility to decide what is best for the whole community.

For example, imagine these bylaws were not in place and a restaurant was to be built right in the middle of a residential area.

What are the issues that would need to be considered when building the restaurant?

What if it was a liquor store being proposed?

Does the municipality have moral obligations to consider?

Why is it important for a municipality to balance the range of land use between residential, commercial, industrial, and park space?

(Have students consider such issues as noise, parking, increased traffic, lighting, increased activity in the evening, etc.)

Note: If you are familiar with the computer game called Sim City, ask the students if they have played the game and ask what happens when you build a power plant next to a residential area.

Do people move into that residential area? No, they don't. Why don't people want to live next to a power plant?



#8

5. People with any type of degree or diploma can work in local government.

True - The number and type of staff needed for any municipality depends on the size, location and needs of that municipality. Therefore, each municipality has different staffing needs, each requiring different levels of education and experience. For example, a local government office can employ sports complex managers, police officers, lawyers and engineers.

Remember that there are 360 municipalities in Alberta.

Guess how many full-time positions are available in local government?

There are approximately 30,000 positions available, and that does not include part-time or casual positions. That means there are a lot of very different job opportunities out there requiring varying levels of experience and education. Not to mention the fact that a large portion of the workforce is heading for retirement in the next three to five years, which will open up a lot more job opportunities. Later on in the presentation you will see some of the different jobs available in local government.

Has anyone worked in local government?

What municipal jobs are you familiar with?

Does anyone have any friends or family members who have worked or are working in local government?



#8

6. Salaries of some senior positions in local government can exceed \$100,000 per year.

True - Later we will talk about what types of jobs are available in local government, but it is true that some positions can exceed \$100,000 per year. Salary, of course, will depend on the location and size of the municipality, and the qualifications and experience needed for that position.

Talk about the position of the chief administrative officer (CAO), the duties and position on an organizational chart. Talk a little bit about the role of the CAO and his or her role in working with council.

Show slide with a sample organizational chart. Ask the students if they know who their municipality's CAO is (if it is not the presenter) and how much their salary is. Or, if you prefer, you can just talk general salary ranges for CAOs in your area. If this is the salary of the top position in a municipality, all other jobs are just under this range.



#9

Name of CAO: _____

Salary of CAO: _____

Since most students are more familiar with the mayor/reeve role than the CAO position, for comparison sake, ask students to guess how much their mayor/reeve and councillors make.

Salary of mayor/reeve: _____

Salary or per diems of councillors: _____

Note: High school students are very interested in how much money they can make. Therefore, although not all municipalities can offer this type of salary, this question is designed to get students to start thinking that local government has viable career options for them and to realize that the CAO makes more money than the mayor or reeve (the position they are most familiar with). Other rewards and benefits of working in local government are discussed later.



5 minutes



Activity

Now I'm going to show you that local government is an exciting field to work in!

Ask the group to imagine that council is debating a current issue affecting the municipality. Your role is to discuss the pros and cons of this issue. Remember this activity is not to determine the right or wrong answer but to illustrate what issues local governments must face.

Ask the class to consider the various perspective of one of the following:

- Implementing a teenage curfew
- ATV use in the area
- Building a recreation centre versus an apartment complex
- Building a skate park or youth activity centre

Explain that this activity was just to give them a sense of what local government is like and the kinds of issues municipal officials deal with on a daily basis. Once a decision like this is made by council, it is up to the administration to decide how best to implement this policy.



10 minutes



#10 - 14

Local Government Career Opportunities

Referring to the previous activity, discuss how a decision would impact staff in each municipal department. Use slides to illustrate the different departments and jobs.

For example, if the decision was to build a recreation centre, it would be the responsibility of the planners to determine where to build, the finance department would have to figure out how to pay for the recreation centre, human resources would be responsible for hiring new staff to maintain the centre, etc.

Use the accompanying slides to discuss what each department is responsible for, and the duties that are involved with each job.

****Note:** Students will be interested to know and will probably ask what the salary range is for each position. Be prepared to provide salary ranges that are offered in your area. Blank spaces are provided below for you to fill in that information for reference.

Municipal Departments:

- Land Use Planning

→ GIS Coordinator: _____

→ Development Officer: _____

→ Planner: _____

→ Planning Technician: _____

→ _____

- Protective Services

→ Bylaw Officer: _____

→ Paramedic: _____

→ Firefighter: _____

→ Police Officer: _____

→ _____

Local Government Career Opportunities – cont'd

- Recreation and Culture
 - Recreation Director: _____
 - Library Clerk: _____
 - Lifeguard: _____
 - _____

- Family and Community Support Services
 - Counsellor: _____
 - Youth Programmer: _____
 - Family Support Worker: _____
 - _____

- Public Works
 - Engineer: _____
 - Electrician: _____
 - Grader Operator: _____
 - _____

- Utilities
 - Refuse Collector: _____
 - Water Plant Operator: _____
 - Recycling Coordinator: _____
 - _____

- Financial Services
 - Finance Officer: _____
 - Assessor: _____
 - Tax Officer: _____
 - _____

Local Government Career Opportunities – cont'd

- Human Resource Services
 - Human Resource Director: _____
 - Payroll and Benefits Coordinator: _____
 - Human Resources Assistant: _____
 - _____

- Administration and Communication
 - Communications Officer: _____
 - Business Analyst: _____
 - Lawyer: _____
 - Economic Development Officer: _____
 - Administrative Support Staff: _____
 - Chief Administrative Officer: _____

Local Information

If you want to attract people to work in your municipality, talk to students about the interesting and unique features about your municipality, summer positions that will be available, and other municipal departments not listed above.

- Other departments specific to your municipality:



2 minutes



#15

Rewards

What are some of the benefits of working in local government?

Have students brainstorm the benefits or rewards that a career in local government could offer.

Add to list, if necessary:

- working for a government that most closely affects people;
- working towards the betterment of the community you live in;
- a position with direct impact on the community;
- fast-paced job with lots of variety;
- have the option of an office job, or a job in the field, or both;
- great opportunity to move around to different positions and to different places around Alberta (even around Canada);
- stability – local governments will always be around;
- vacation time, statutory holidays; and
- salary and pension.

Talk to the students about why you find local government so rewarding.



2 minutes



#16

How to Find a Job in Local Government

Hopefully right now you are intrigued about local government and the opportunities it may offer you and are wondering how to find more information. There are a number of ways:

- *Just as teachers and doctors belong to associations, there are also associations for municipalities. Each of these associations has a website with more information about local government, and a listing of job openings around the province. You will get a handout at the end of the class with these websites.*
- *You can contact each municipality directly. Many municipalities have websites you can look at to find out more about that municipality, and may even have summer, temporary and permanent positions listed. Provide your municipality's website to the students: _____.*
- *You may also want to get involved in your municipality by attending council meetings or by sitting on a board. Most municipalities have different agencies, boards, and commissions (ABCs) that look for residents' participation and some boards may specifically look for student participation. To find out more information on these boards, or on council meetings, visit your municipality's website. Examples of boards in your area that may interest students:
_____.*
- *You can go to the Municipal Affairs and the Municipal Excellence Network websites to find out about the provincial government's role and how it works with local government. This site also provides information on what local government means, and, under municipal profiles, it will give you a listing of all the municipalities in Alberta and statistics on each one.*
- *You can go to the Government of Alberta website to find out more about the role of the provincial government, the services it provides, and the different ministries within the government.*



1 minutes



Handout
Package

Handouts

Pass the handout package to the students and the teacher.

Handout includes information on municipal government, sample job opportunities, important websites, and the Municipal Internship Program.



4 minutes



#17

Evaluations

Questions and Evaluation

Allow time for questions and answers.

After questions have been addressed, ask students to complete an evaluation form on the presentation.

Appendix

Handouts Included:

- Local Government Quiz
- Municipal Government in Alberta
- Careers in Municipal Government
- Finding a Job in Municipal Government
- Municipal Internship Program
- Evaluation Form

Local Government: True or False?

_____ 1. The mayor/reeve is the sole decision maker for a municipality.

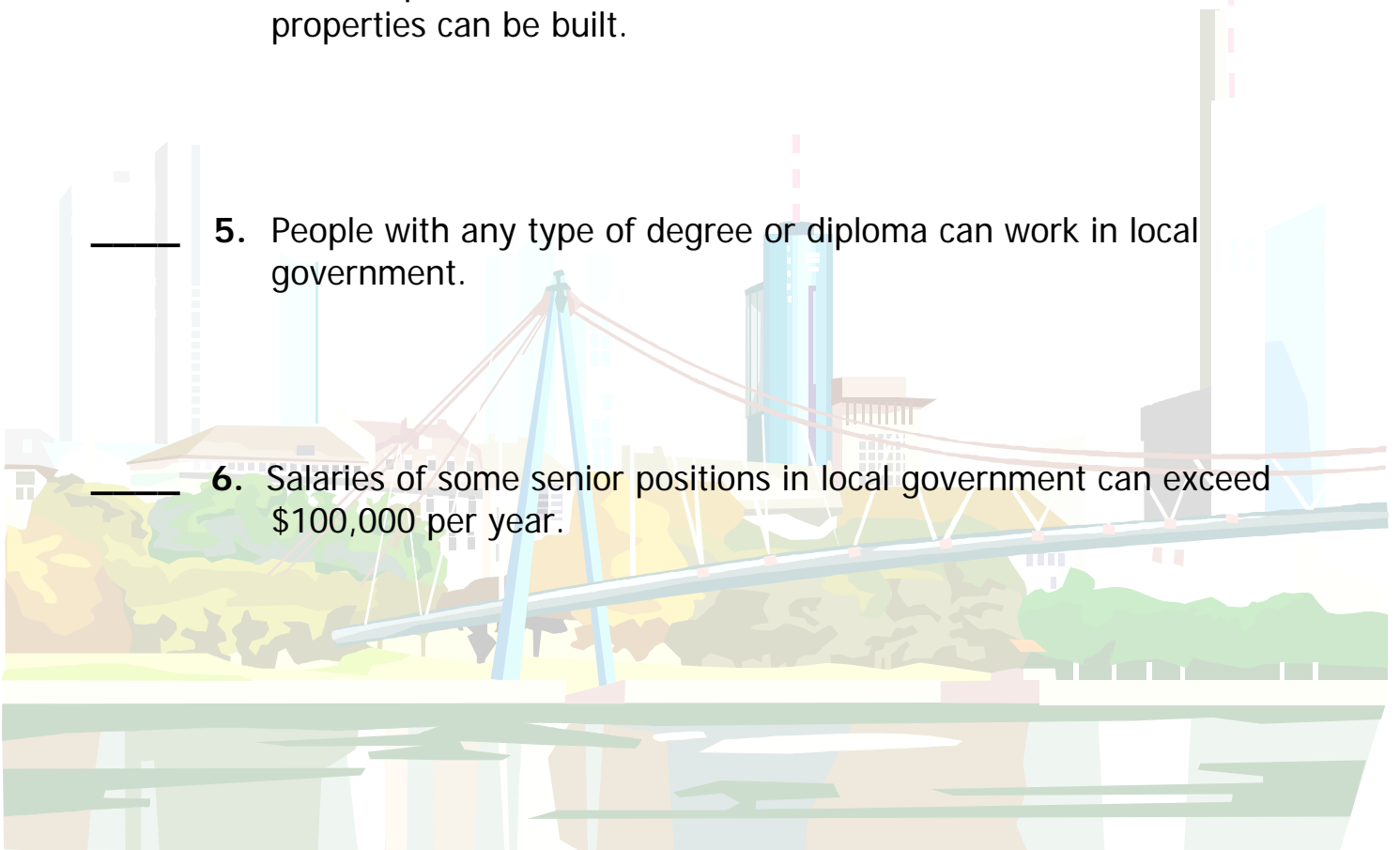
_____ 2. There are approximately 125 municipalities across Alberta.

_____ 3. A municipal council can create bylaws, such as a curfew on teenagers, for the municipality.

_____ 4. A municipal council decides where residential and commercial properties can be built.

_____ 5. People with any type of degree or diploma can work in local government.

_____ 6. Salaries of some senior positions in local government can exceed \$100,000 per year.



MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT IN ALBERTA

We often associate municipalities with our municipal councils and the people who serve as elected officials on those councils. Municipalities also provide essential, local services such as road maintenance, water and sewer services, and garbage collection. All municipalities share the characteristics of having land and boundaries, providing residents with ways to make decisions about local issues, and being a focus for community activities.



Municipalities can be called many things in Alberta, including: city, town, village, municipal district (also called a county) or improvement district. No matter what the size or name of a municipality, it is the job of the administration to provide services, facilities or other things that, in the opinion of council, are necessary or desirable for all or a part of the municipality. Your municipality plays an important role in your everyday life!

Find out more about municipal government by checking out the following resources:

This link will take you to the Municipal Affairs and Housing information page called, “About Municipalities”: www.municipalaffairs.alberta.ca/mc_about_municipalities.cfm

A great way to learn about all municipalities is to learn about the services your own municipality provides. Talk to a member of your local council or administration and ask them what services the municipality provides to citizens and what roles council and administration plays in your municipality. Below is a link to information about all the municipalities in Alberta. All have contact information, and many have websites to check out: www.municipalaffairs.alberta.ca/mc_municipal_profiles.cfm

To learn more about the history of local government in Canada and municipal roles and responsibilities, check out these books at your local library:

Alberta’s Local Governments: Politics and Democracy by Jack Masson with Edward LeSage Jr. (1994)

Canadian Metropolitics: Governing our Cities – Edited by James Lightbody (1995)

City Politics, Canada - by James Lightbody (2006)

Local Government in Canada – 6th Edition by C. Richard Tindal and Susan Nobes Tindal (2004)

CAREERS IN MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT

What can you do in municipal government?

Municipalities undertake a wide variety of work everyday to ensure the efficient delivery of services to their citizens. Municipal government is a challenging and rewarding career for recent graduates. Whatever your field of study, you can be sure there is a municipality out there that requires your specific skills, ambition and positive attitude. Listed is a small sample of the wide variety of jobs found in municipalities across Alberta and typical educational requirements for each position.

Build Your career...

Planner

Bachelor degree in Planning

Information Technology Assistant

Bachelor degree in Computer Science

Police Constable/Peace Officer/ Bylaw Enforcement

Wide variety of post-secondary degrees and diplomas are considered

Communications Coordinator

Bachelor degree in Communications, Public Relations or Journalism

Economic Development Officer

Degree in Marketing, Commerce or Business Administration

Engineering Technologist

Civil Engineering Diploma

Human Resources Coordinator

Degree/Diploma in Human Resources

Recreation Director

Bachelor degree in Education or Recreation Administration

Geographics Technologist

Bachelor degree with in computer-aided drafting, surveying, GIS technology

...while building strong municipalities

Assessor

Diploma in assessment/
appraisal related field of study

Youth Programmer

Bachelor of Arts degree in
the Social Sciences

Chief Financial Officer

Masters degree in Business
Administration or Economics,
CA, CMA, or CA designation

Transit Fleet and Equipment Engineering Coordinator

Bachelor of Science degree in Mechanical or Electrical
Engineering

Business Analyst

Bachelor degree in Business
Administration, Commerce or
Computer Science

Firefighter

Wide variety of post-
secondary degrees are
considered

This is just a sample of the rewarding careers in Alberta's municipalities. New opportunities in a variety of positions are always opening up!

FINDING A JOB IN MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT IMPORTANT WEBSITES FOR YOU TO KNOW

Municipal Associations

Alberta Urban Municipalities Association
www.auma.ca/live

Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties
www.aamdc.com

Society of Local Government Managers
www.clgm.net

Alberta Rural Municipal Administrators Association
www.aamdc.com/armaa

Local Government Administration Association
www.lgaa.ab.ca

Alberta Assessors Association
www.assessor.ab.ca

Municipal Profiles

www.municipalaffairs.alberta.ca/mc_municipal_profiles.cfm

Municipal Excellence Network

www.menet.ca

Alberta Municipal Affairs

www.municipalaffairs.alberta.ca

Alberta Learning Information Service

www.alis.ca

Government of Alberta

www.alberta.ca

MUNICIPAL INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

Build Your career...

...while building strong municipalities.

Who:

We are looking for recent post-secondary graduates who are interested in pursuing a career in municipal government administration or municipal planning.

What:

We are offering a paid 12 or 24-month experience as an intern in Alberta where you will have the opportunity to learn about local government, to develop as a professional, and to embark on a rewarding career in municipal administration or land use planning.

Why:

Plenty of Opportunity

Alberta is experiencing significant growth and development during a period when many senior planners and managers are retiring. For young, highly trained, skilled, and dedicated individuals, the career opportunities abound in the municipal field.

Professionally Rewarding

Municipal government is a diverse and challenging career field.

Personally Fulfilling

Most public servants will tell you that they find their jobs rewarding. This is particularly true of municipal employees who often work directly with the public. As one of our former interns, Tyler, says: "Everyday in municipal government is entirely different than the previous one. People who like problem solving, multi-tasking, and demanding yet rewarding work are surely a good candidate for a career in this sector."

When:

Internship placements begin in May every year and run for 12 or 24 months, until the following April.

Where:

Typically smaller municipalities from across Alberta, and some close to Edmonton and Calgary, will be hosting interns.

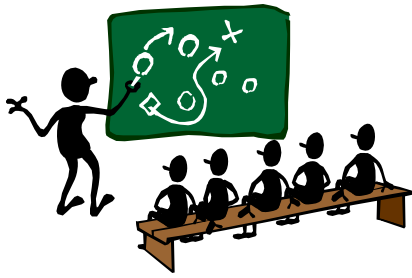
You will live in a dynamic community and work with a dedicated team of municipal staff who are willing to support your training and development.

How:

To get more information on the Municipal Internship Program and how to apply to be an intern, you can visit our website at: www.municipalaffairs.alberta.ca/ms/internship or contact the program staff at Municipal Affairs by phone at (780) 427-2225.

If you are calling long-distance, phone 310-0000 then (780) 427-2225.





Careers in Local Government

Presentation Evaluation

Date: _____

School: _____

Please indicate the ratings that best describe your reaction to this presentation:

Strongly Agree **Agree** **Disagree** **Strongly Disagree**

1. The information obtained from the presentation was helpful.

Comments: _____

2. The information obtained from this presentation was better than I expected.

Comments: _____

3. I will consider a career in local government in the future as a result of this presentation.

Comments: _____

4. What did you like about this presentation?

5. What did you dislike about this presentation?

80-minute Presentation



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4 minutes

Introduction

Introduce yourself, your background, and your experience working in government.



#1

How many of you have thought about what you want to be when you finish high school? What careers have you thought about?

Has anyone seriously considered a job in local government? No? Doesn't that sound like an exciting career? Why does government not sound exciting?

I'm here today to help you understand a little bit more about what local government does, and to introduce you to the exciting career opportunities available to you.



#2

When I talk about local government, there's actually two parts to it. One, the side you're probably most familiar with, is the political side. This is called the council, and the council members are responsible for setting the direction and policy for the municipality. The other side is the administration, or the staff. Administration consists of the people who follow through with and implement council's decisions. These are the people you will see sitting in the office issuing permits, or out in the graders cleaning your street. When I'm talking about careers in local government, I'm focussing on the administration side, not the political side.



5 minutes

Government

Think back to your social studies class in elementary school. Do you remember learning about the three levels of government? What are the three levels? Do you remember which level is responsible for what? Let's see!



#3

Show slide listing government services and have class guess which level is responsible for each service.

- Sports arenas (**municipal**)
- Fire Service (**municipal**)
- Citizenship (**federal**)
- Child welfare (**provincial**)
- Labour (**provincial**)
- Police service (**municipal; RCMP is provincial**)
- Water (**municipal**)
- Highways (**provincial**)
- Education (**provincial**)
- National defense (**federal**)
- Health (**provincial**)
- Sidewalks (**municipal**)
- Cemeteries (**municipal**)
- Postal service (**federal**)
- Money/currency (**federal**)
- Libraries (**municipal and provincial**)



#4

Show slide listing a detailed, but not complete, list of all of the services that local governments can provide. Ask students which services on this list are surprising to them.



20 minutes



Quiz



#5 - 11

Local Government Quiz

This next activity will test how much you can remember from your social studies classes.

Pass out the quiz and give time for everyone to answer. Some students may groan at the idea of a quiz, but typically students are cooperative and do not mind going through the quiz individually first if it is presented in a fun way. If you choose to bring prizes or promotional items to distribute to the class, this may be one of the times you choose to award a prize.

As a large group, review the answers to the questions. The quiz questions have been provided on the overhead slides, if you wish to use them at this point.

Note:

- You may need to define the term “municipality” for the students.
- Throughout this presentation, the word “municipal” and “local” are used interchangeably. Use the word you are most comfortable with; however, you may need to explain to students why both words are used.



1. The mayor/reeve is the sole decision maker for a municipality.

False - Every municipality in Alberta is governed by a council. A councillor's job is to work with other council members to set the overall direction of the municipality through his or her role as a policy maker. The policies that a council sets are the guidelines for the administrative staff to follow as they do the job of running a municipality. The number of members on council depends on the size of the municipality, but the council should have an odd number of members, and have no less than three councillors.

How many council members does your municipality have?

One member of council is called the chief elected official (or CEO), commonly known as the mayor or the reeve. In a village or municipal district, the CEO is appointed among the councillors. In a city or town, the CEO is elected at large or by a vote of the residents. CEOs in rural areas are generally known as "reeve," while villages, towns and cities refer to their CEO as "mayor."

Most of you have heard of your mayor/reeve - what is his/her name?

The mayor/reeve is considered the spokesperson for the municipality, which is why most of you may know of that person. However, a common misconception is that the mayor/reeve has more power in decision making than the rest of the council members. This is not true. The mayor/reeve only has one vote (just like a councillor) and has the responsibilities as the rest of the councillors.

Briefly discuss the difference in roles between the mayor/reeve, council, and administration.

Name of Mayor / Reeve: _____

Number of Councillors: _____

Names of Councillors: _____



#5



MGA

2. One municipality can take land from another municipality.

True - However, this process is not as simple as it sounds. First, all municipalities are governed by legislation from the provincial government called the *Municipal Government Act (MGA)*. The MGA specifies what a municipality has the power to do, and how it is to be done.

When a municipality is growing in population, it may need more houses and businesses to accommodate all of the new people in the area. Therefore, when a municipality needs more land, it gives written notice of its intent to its neighbouring municipality (it may help students understand this process by providing them with specific examples or theoretical examples from your area). This process is called annexation. The two municipalities would then negotiate the terms of the annexation (such as, the amount of land to be annexed and the compensation provided). If, after negotiations, both parties agree to the proposed annexation, then it will happen.

If, after negotiations, one municipality does not agree to the proposed annexation, then both municipalities would seek the help of a body called the Municipal Government Board. This quasi-judicial board is similar to a court, but is an independent and impartial body set up to make decisions on certain appeals and disputes. The Board would then make the decision as to whether or not the annexation would take place, the amount of land to be annexed, and what the terms of the compensation will be. However, a municipality does not necessarily just take ownership of the land; it also takes over governance, planning, and service delivery responsibilities for that land area needed for growth.

If no municipality was ever allowed to annex land, then how would the municipality be able to grow and accommodate new people moving to the area?

How do you think this new growth affects the environment?



#6

3. There are approximately 125 municipalities across Alberta.

False - Ask students to guess the correct number. There are 360 municipalities in Alberta and each municipality has a different name (as of January 1, 2008).



#7

Show slide with the map of Alberta. In Alberta, there are several different types of municipalities. Some of ones you would be most familiar with are:

- Cities - 10,000 people or more; currently **16** in Alberta.
→ Nearby example: _____

- Towns - 1,000 people or more; currently **109** in Alberta.
→ Nearby example: _____

- Villages - 300 people or more; currently **99** in Alberta.
→ Nearby example: _____

- Summer Villages – meetings held in the summer and electors may not be permanent residents, just property owners; **51** in Alberta.
→ Nearby example: _____

- Specialized municipalities - formed under special circumstances; currently **4** (Wood Buffalo, Strathcona, Jasper, MacKenzie, Crowsnest Pass).

- Municipal Districts / Counties - includes rural areas and farm land as well as business, industrial parks, and residential areas; council representatives from electoral districts (wards); currently **64** in Alberta.
→ Nearby example: _____
 - Hamlets – within an MD or county; an unincorporated community that consists of five or more dwellings and has a generally accepted boundary.
→ Nearby example:



4. A municipal council can create bylaws, such as a curfew on teenagers, for the municipality.

True - The purpose of a municipality, among many things, is to develop and maintain safe and viable communities. Under the *Municipal Government Act*, council has the right to pass bylaws for a number of reasons, including protecting the safety, health and welfare of people and for the protection of people and property.

Council could hear concerns from the residents first and then direct municipal staff to do research on this topic. After doing research, staff would present council with a report on their findings. If research suggested that property damage was shown to be caused by teenagers late at night, one of the recommendations may include implementing a curfew on teenagers. Based on that information, council may decide to pass a curfew bylaw.

Bylaws receive three readings at a council meeting and those meetings must be open to the public. Therefore, residents have the opportunity to state their opinions for or against a bylaw before the third reading when the bylaw will be passed. Ultimately, it is council's job to decide what is best for the whole community.

Why do you think that council would choose to pass a bylaw placing a curfew on teenagers?

What other types of bylaws could a council pass? (i.e. bullying)

How does a municipality enforce these bylaws?

Examples of other bylaws in your community. You may also wish to mention the Municipal Excellence Network where students could search different bylaws that are in place across Alberta:



5. A municipal council decides where residential and commercial properties can be built.

True - Every municipal council must pass a land-use bylaw which divides the municipality into designated districts, outlines the types of land uses allowed in each area, and provides the planning standards (for example, distances from property lines, height restrictions). Any municipality with a population over 3,500 is required to also have long-term land-use plan, called a Municipal Development Plan.

The purpose of these plans and bylaws is to achieve orderly, economical and beneficial development, and to maintain and improve the quality of the physical environment for the residents. It is council's responsibility to decide what is best for the whole community.

For example, imagine these bylaws were not in place and a restaurant was to be built right in the middle of a residential area.

What are the issues that would need to be considered when building the restaurant?

What if it was a liquor store being proposed?

Does the municipality have moral obligations to consider?

Why is it important for a municipality to balance the range of land use between residential, commercial, industrial, and park space?

(Have students consider such issues as noise, parking, increased traffic, lighting, increased activity in the evening, etc.)

Note: If you are familiar with the computer game called Sim City, ask the students if they have played the game and ask what happens when you build a power plant next to a residential area.

Do people move into that residential area? No, they don't. Why don't people want to live next to a power plant?



6. Municipalities get all of their funding from the provincial government.

False - Property taxes are the usually the largest source of revenue used to help sustain a municipality (approx. 44%). Property owners have their property value assessed by municipal staff or municipal contractors and are taxed based on the value of their property.

Note: you may be need to differentiate what the different types of taxes are (i.e., income tax, sales tax, education tax, property tax).

How much revenue does your municipality receive from taxes?

Tax revenue in your municipality: _____

Every year administrative staff prepare an annual budget which must be approved by council. The budget includes an operating and a capital budget. The operating budget outlines what is needed to maintain the day-to-day operation of the municipality. For example, grading of roadways, maintenance of lighting, paying garbage collection staff, etc. The capital budget addresses the expenditures related to larger ticket items, such as the cost of building a new recreation centre and the purchase of new transit buses.

This chart illustrates total expenditures for all municipalities in a one-year period. (Highlight key expenditure categories, and discuss what this includes. If possible, you may want to highlight expenditure amounts specific to your municipality.)



Part of the budget process involves a determination of the revenue sources for the municipality (show slide illustrating revenue sources for all municipalities). Some of these sources include user fees, grants, investment income, and licences. Once all of the revenues and expenditures have been calculated, the difference is the amount needed to be raised through property taxes, which go directly to the municipality.





#11

7. People with any type of degree or diploma can work in local government.

True - The number and type of staff needed for any municipality depends on the size, location and needs of that municipality. Therefore, each municipality has different staffing needs, each requiring different levels of education and experience. For example, a local government office can employ sports complex managers, police officers, lawyers and engineers.

Remember that there are 360 municipalities in Alberta.

Guess how many full-time positions are available in local government?

There are approximately 30,000 positions available, and that does not include part-time or casual positions. That means there are a lot of very different job opportunities out there requiring varying levels of experience and education. Not to mention the fact that a large portion of the workforce is heading for retirement in the next three to five years, which will open up a lot more job opportunities. Later on in the presentation you will see some of the different jobs available in local government.

Has anyone worked in local government?

What municipal jobs are you familiar with?

Does anyone have any friends or family members who have worked or are working in local government?



#11

8. Salaries of some senior positions in local government can exceed \$100,000 per year.

True - Later we will talk about what types of jobs are available in local government, but it is true that some positions can exceed \$100,000 per year. Salary, of course, will depend on the location and size of the municipality, and the qualifications and experience needed for that position.

Talk about the position of the chief administrative officer (CAO), the duties and position on an organizational chart. Talk a little bit about the role of the CAO and his or her role in working with council. Show slide with a sample organizational chart. Ask the students if they know who their municipality's CAO is (if it is not the presenter) and how much their salary is. Or, if you prefer, you can just talk general salary ranges for CAOs in your area. If this is the salary of the top position in a municipality, all other jobs are just under this range.

Name of CAO: _____

Salary of CAO: _____

Since most students are more familiar with the mayor/reeve role than the CAO position, for comparison sake, ask students to guess how much their mayor/reeve and councillors make.

Salary of mayor/reeve: _____

Salary or per diem of councillors: _____

Note: High school students are very interested in how much money they can make. Therefore, although not all municipalities can offer this type of salary, this question is designed to get students to start thinking that local government has viable career options for them and to realize that the CAO makes more money than the mayor or reeve (the position they are most familiar with). Other rewards and benefits of working in local government are discussed later.



#12



Activity Option #1 - Debate on a Teenage Curfew

Now I'm going to show you that local government is an exciting field to work in!



Your municipality is debating whether or not to create a teenage curfew bylaw for the community because the amount of crime and vandalism, apparently caused by teenagers, has been rising. Your role is to lead a debate with students discussing the various perspectives on the issue of setting a curfew banning teenagers from being out from 1 a.m. to 6 a.m. as an attempt to reduce the vandalism. Remember, this activity is not to determine the right or wrong answer, but to illustrate the issues that local governments must face.

Tell the students that they are the residents in the community who will be affected by the bylaw. Split the students into two groups. One group will be **for** the curfew and one group will be **against** the curfew.

Once the students are broken into groups, give them about five to seven minutes to discuss the pros and cons, and how a decision would affect them. Lead a debate, having the residents present their cases on whether or not to have a curfew on teenagers.

The facilitator will take on the role of administration. Your role will be to add to the discussion, when necessary, things that administration will need to consider, such as:

- *What are the benefits of the curfew? What are the consequences of the curfew? Will a curfew make the community safer?*
- *What if a teenager works until after the curfew hours start?*
- *How does this relate to the Charter of Rights and Freedoms?*
- *How will the curfew be enforced? What's the punishment? What do you do with repeat offenders?*
- *Should parents be held responsible when their teenager breaks curfew?*
- *Will this be a permanent curfew or is this a pilot test?*

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____



15 minutes



Activity Option #2 – Debate on ATV Use

Now I'm going to show you that local government is an exciting field to work in!

Your municipality has been hearing complaints from residents about the noise that all-terrain vehicle (ATV) produce and the tracks have been damaging land in the municipality. Your role is to discuss how to manage ATV use. Remember, this activity is not to determine the right or wrong answer, but to illustrate the issues that local governments must face.

Tell the students that they are the residents in the community who are affected by this issue. Split the students into two groups. One group represents ATV enthusiasts and the other group are residents who do not use ATVs.

Once the students are broken into groups, give them about five to seven minutes to discuss the issue and how a decision would affect them. Lead a debate on ATV use, having residents present their cases on ATV use.

The facilitator will take on the role of administration. Your role will be to add to the discussion, when necessary, things that administration will need to consider, such as:

- *Is there a safe area for people to ride ATVs?*
- *Should we designate an area for ATV use?*
- *How does ATV use affect air quality?*
- *How does ATV use affect the land?*
- *How can proper ATV use be enforced?*
- *What happens when someone gets injured on their ATV on municipal land?*

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____



15 minutes



Activity Option #3 - Debate on a Skate Park

Now I'm going to show you that local government is an exciting field to work in!

Your municipality is debating whether or not to build a skate park in the community. Your role is to lead a debate with students discussing the various perspectives on the issue of building the skate park.

Remember, this activity is not to determine the right or wrong answer, but to illustrate the issues that local governments must face. If your municipality already has a skate park, you may wish to discuss recent concerns about the park, or debate why the skate park should continue to exist in the community. Alternatively, you may also to debate the creation of a youth activity centre.

Tell the students that they are the residents who live in the community where the skate park will be built. Split the students into two groups. One group will be **for** the skate park and one group will be **against** the skate park.

Once the students are broken into groups, give them about five to seven minutes to discuss the pros and cons, and how a decision would affect them. Lead a debate on the skate park, having the residents present their cases on whether or not to build a skate park.

The facilitator will take on the role of administration. Your role will be to add to the discussion, when necessary, things that administration will need to consider, such as:

- *How to pay for building the park (including construction, maintenance, lighting, repairs, etc.)? Increase in tax rates? A special tax? User fees (how to collect)?*
- *What about insurance issues surrounding the skate park? What happens if someone gets hurt? How to deal with illegal activities?*
- *Security around the park? Should the park be fenced and only open certain hours, or should the park be open all the time?*
- *Who will be responsible for clean-up at the park?*
- *Where will the skate park be built?*
- *Will assessment values on neighbouring properties be affected?*
- _____
- _____



15 minutes



Activity Option #4 - Debate on a Land-use Issue

Now I'm going to show you that local government is an exciting field to work in!

Your municipality is deciding the best use a large parcel of undeveloped land. Your role is to discuss the options. Remember, this activity is not to determine the right or wrong answer, but to illustrate the issues that local governments must face.

Tell the students that they are the residents who live in the community and are interested in how this parcel of land will be developed. Split the students into three groups. One group will be in **support of using the land for a new recreation centre**. One group will be in **support of using the land for commercial purposes**. The other group will be in **support of building housing and apartment complexes** on the land.

Once the students are broken into groups, give them about five to seven minutes to discuss the pros and cons of each specific use of the land, and how a decision would affect them. Lead a debate, having the residents present their cases on the best use of the land.

The facilitator will take on the role of administration. Your role is to add to the discussion, when necessary, things that administration will need to consider, such as:

- *What are the pros and cons of building the recreation centre, the housing and apartment complexes, and commercial properties?*
- *Are there other options for using the land?*
- *How to pay for the recreation centre? Will we need to hire more staff to operate the centre?*
- *How to pay for the water and sewer systems to the new area?*
- *Which option would result in more tax revenue to the municipality (may need to explain the difference in tax revenues of each option)?*
- *Which option would be of most benefit to the municipality (i.e., short-term and long-term benefits)?*
- *Will assessment values on neighbouring properties be affected?*
- *Who benefits from these land uses and who does not?*
- *What if the land is not developed because there is no agreement?*

• _____
• _____



15 minutes



Activity Option #5 – Debate on What is a Community?

Now I'm going to show you that local government is an exciting field to work in!

Conduct a brainstorming activity with the students. Encourage discussion among the group and write down their ideas on the board. Remember, this activity is not to determine the right or wrong answer, but to illustrate the issues that local governments must face.

Ask the students to answer some of the following questions. Choose the questions you want to ask based on the students' discussions.

- *What is a community?*
- *What should a community provide?*
- *What services are lacking in your community and why? Is it the responsibility of the municipality to provide these services?*
- *What happens if a service is not the responsibility of a municipal government?*
- *How should the municipality provide those services? Who should pay for those services? Where can the municipality get the money?*
- *Should we share our resources and services with other municipalities? What services should we share?*
- *What should our community look like? (density, green space, tall buildings, etc.)*
- *How is our community affected by nearby municipalities?*
- *How do you keep your community safe?*
- *What can you do to help strengthen your community?*
- _____

The facilitator will take on the role of administration. Your role is to add to the discussion, when necessary, how the wants and needs of a community affect administration.



15 minutes



Activity Option #6 - Debate on a local issue

Now I'm going to show you that local government is an exciting field to work in!

Use an issue currently being faced by your municipality. Ask the group to imagine that council is debating the idea of

_____.

Your role is to lead a debate with students discussing the various perspectives on the issue. Remember, this activity is not to determine the right or wrong answer, but to illustrate the issues that local governments must face.

Tell the students that they are the residents who live in this community that are affected by this issue. Split the students into two groups. One group will be _____ and one group will be

_____.

Once the students are broken into groups, give them about five to seven minutes to discuss the pros and cons, and how a decision would affect them. Lead a debate, having the residents present their cases to the class.

The facilitator will take on the role of administration. Your role will be to add to the discussion, when necessary, things that administration will need to consider, such as:

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____



10 minutes

Activity Debrief

After the debate is over, call time and debrief the activity. Ask the students questions such as:

- *How do you think council will vote on this issue?*
- *How do you think this decision will impact the community?*
- *What happens when not everyone is in favour of this decision (i.e. councillors, the public, administration)?*
- *How does this issue affect administration?*
- *What role does administration play?*

Explain that this activity was just to give them a sense of what local government is like and the kinds of issues municipal officials deal with on a daily basis. Once a decision like this is made by council, it is up to the administration to decide how best to implement this policy.



10 minutes



#13 - 17

Local Government Career Opportunities

Referring to the discussion from the previous activity, discuss how a decision would impact staff in each municipal department. Use slides to illustrate the different departments and jobs.

For example, if the decision was to build a recreation centre, it would be the responsibility of the planners to determine where to build, the finance department would have to figure out how to pay for the recreation centre, human resources would be responsible for hiring new staff to maintain the centre, etc.

Use the accompanying slides to discuss what each department is responsible for, and the duties that are involved with each job.

****Note:** Students will be interested to know and will probably ask what the salary range is for each position. Be prepared to provide salary ranges that are offered in your area. Blank spaces are provided below for you to fill in that information for reference.

Municipal Departments:

- Land Use Planning

→ GIS Coordinator: _____

→ Development Officer: _____

→ Planner: _____

→ Planning Technician: _____

→ _____

- Protective Services

→ Bylaw Officer: _____

→ Paramedic: _____

→ Firefighter: _____

→ Police Officer: _____

→ _____

Local Government Career Opportunities – cont'd

- Recreation and Culture
 - Recreation Director: _____
 - Library Clerk: _____
 - Lifeguard: _____
 - _____

- Family and Community Support Services
 - Counsellor: _____
 - Youth Programmer: _____
 - Family Support Worker: _____
 - _____

- Public Works
 - Engineer: _____
 - Electrician: _____
 - Grader Operator: _____
 - _____

- Utilities
 - Refuse Collector: _____
 - Water Plant Operator: _____
 - Recycling Coordinator: _____
 - _____

- Financial Services
 - Finance Officer: _____
 - Assessor: _____
 - Tax Officer: _____
 - _____

Local Government Career Opportunities – cont'd

- Human Resource Services
 - Human Resource Director: _____
 - Payroll and Benefits Coordinator: _____
 - Human Resources Assistant: _____
 - _____

- Administration and Communication
 - Communications Officer: _____
 - Business Analyst: _____
 - Lawyer: _____
 - Economic Development Officer: _____
 - Administrative Support Staff: _____
 - Chief Administrative Officer: _____



5 minutes

Local Information

If you want to attract people to work in your municipality, talk to students about the interesting and unique features about your municipality, summer positions that will be available, and other municipal departments not listed above.

- Other departments specific to your municipality:



5 minutes



#13

How to Find a Job in Local Government

Hopefully right now you are intrigued about local government and the opportunities it may offer you and are wondering how to find more information. There are a number of ways:

- *Just as teachers and doctors belong to associations, there are also associations for municipalities. Each of these associations has a website with more information about local government, and a listing of job openings around the province. You will get a handout at the end of the class with these websites.*
- *You can contact each municipality directly. Many municipalities have websites you can look at to find out more about that municipality, and may even have summer, temporary and permanent positions listed. Provide your municipality's website to the students: _____.*
- *You may also want to get involved in your municipality by attending council meetings or by sitting on a board. Most municipalities have different agencies, boards, and commissions (ABCs) that look for residents' participation and some boards may specifically look for student participation. To find out more information on these boards, or on council meetings, visit your municipality's website. Examples of boards in your area that may interest students:
_____.*
- *You can go to the Municipal Affairs and the Municipal Excellence websites to find out about the provincial government's role and how it works with local government. This site also provides information on what local government means, and, under municipal profiles, it will give you a listing of all the municipalities in Alberta and statistics on each one.*
- *You can go to the Government of Alberta website to find out more about the role of the provincial government, the services it provides, and the different ministries within the government.*



Municipal Internship Program

For those of you who are interested in a career in local government but are not sure what area you would like to work in, the Municipal Internship Program may be a possibility for you.

The program is for recent university or college graduates with a diploma or degree in any discipline who are interested in starting their career in local government administration or land use planning. The internship is a 12 or 24-month paid position and provides you with the opportunity to get a broad understanding of the key functional areas in a municipality. For more information, check out the website at www.municipalaffairs.gov.ab.ca/ms/internship.



If you have time, you may wish to show the students some of the accompanying slides to illustrate some of the interesting activities that you can get involved in with the Municipal Internship Program and local government. The slides show interns working with council, with public works, recreation and culture and with protective services.

Rewards



What are some of the benefits of working in local government?

Have students brainstorm the benefits or rewards that a career in local government could offer. Add to list, if necessary:

- working for a government that most closely affects people;
- working towards the betterment of the community you live in;
- a position with direct impact on the community;
- fast-paced job with lots of variety;
- have the option of an office job, or a job in the field, or both;
- great opportunity to move around to different positions and to different places around Alberta (even around Canada);
- stability – local governments will always be around;
- vacation time, statutory holidays; and
- salary and pension.

Talk to the students about why you find local government so rewarding.



2 minutes

Handouts

Pass the handout package to the students and the teacher.

Handout includes information on municipal government, sample job opportunities, important websites, and the Municipal Internship Program.



Handout
Package



5 minutes

Questions and Evaluation

Allow time for questions and answers.

After questions have been addressed, ask students to complete an evaluation form on the presentation.



#26



Evaluations

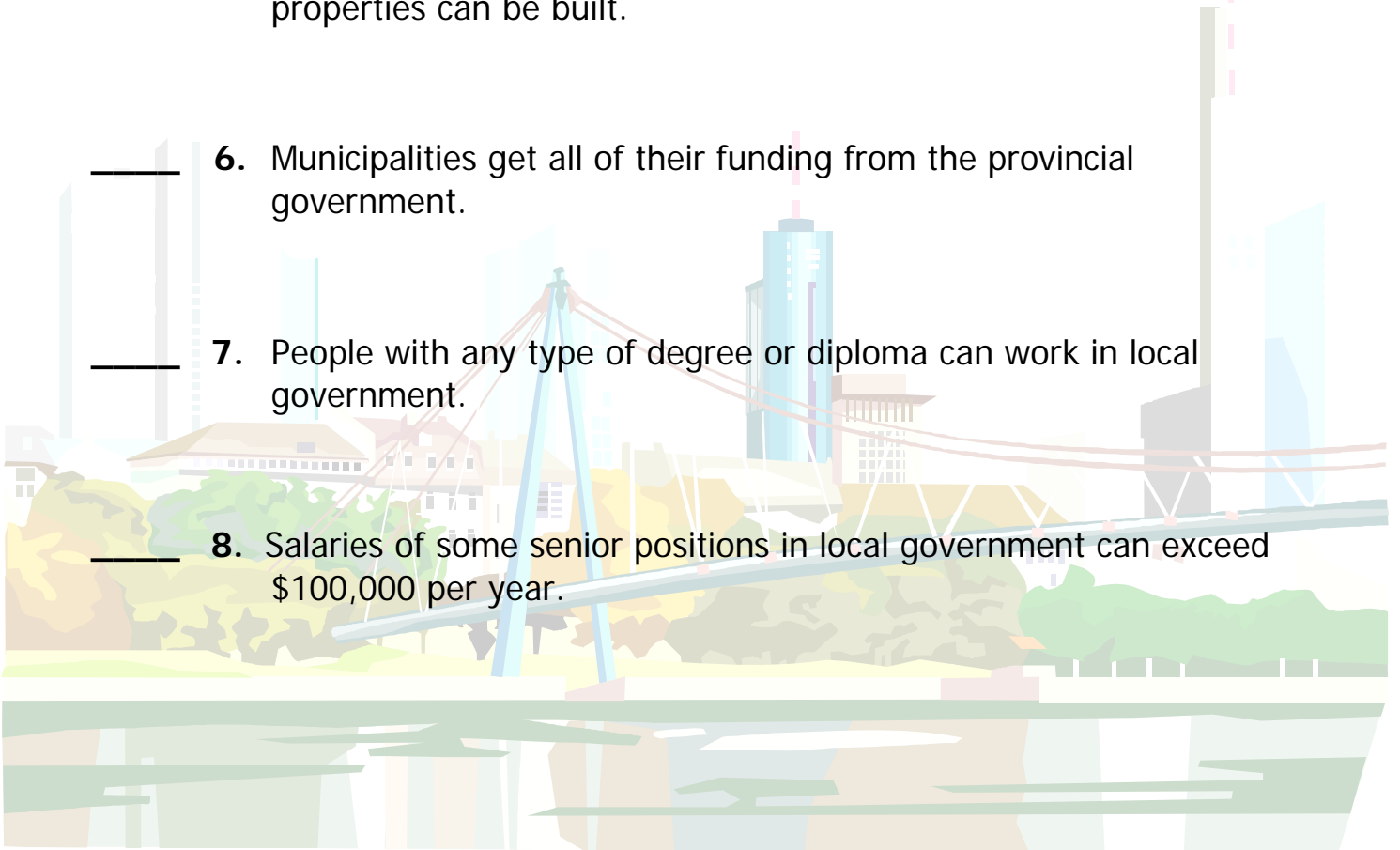
Appendix

Handouts Included:

- Local Government Quiz
- Municipal Government in Alberta
- Careers in Municipal Government
- Finding a Job in Municipal Government
- Municipal Internship Program
- Evaluation Form

Local Government: True or False?

- _____ 1. The mayor/reeve is the sole decision maker for a municipality.
- _____ 2. One municipality can take land from another municipality.
- _____ 3. There are approximately 125 municipalities across Alberta.
- _____ 4. A municipal council can create bylaws, such as a curfew on teenagers, for the municipality.
- _____ 5. A municipal council decides where residential and commercial properties can be built.
- _____ 6. Municipalities get all of their funding from the provincial government.
- _____ 7. People with any type of degree or diploma can work in local government.
- _____ 8. Salaries of some senior positions in local government can exceed \$100,000 per year.



MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT IN ALBERTA

We often associate municipalities with our municipal councils and the people who serve as elected officials on those councils. Municipalities also provide essential, local services such as road maintenance, water and sewer services, and garbage collection. All municipalities share the characteristics of having land and boundaries, providing residents with ways to make decisions about local issues, and being a focus for community activities.



Municipalities can be called many things in Alberta, including: city, town, village, municipal district (also called a county) or improvement district. No matter what the size or name of a municipality, it is the job of the administration to provide services, facilities or other things that, in the opinion of council, are necessary or desirable for all or a part of the municipality. Your municipality plays an important role in your everyday life!

Find out more about municipal government by checking out the following resources:

This link will take you to the Municipal Affairs and Housing information page called, “About Municipalities”: www.municipalaffairs.alberta.ca/mc_about_municipalities.cfm

A great way to learn about all municipalities is to learn about the services your own municipality provides. Talk to a member of your local council or administration and ask them what services the municipality provides to citizens and what roles council and administration plays in your municipality. Below is a link to information about all the municipalities in Alberta. All have contact information, and many have websites to check out: www.municipalaffairs.alberta.ca/mc_municipal_profiles.cfm

To learn more about the history of local government in Canada and municipal roles and responsibilities, check out these books at your local library:

Alberta’s Local Governments: Politics and Democracy by Jack Masson with Edward LeSage Jr. (1994)

Canadian Metropolitics: Governing our Cities – Edited by James Lightbody (1995)

City Politics, Canada - by James Lightbody (2006)

Local Government in Canada – 6th Edition by C. Richard Tindal and Susan Nobes Tindal (2004)

CAREERS IN MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT

What can you do in municipal government?

Municipalities undertake a wide variety of work everyday to ensure the efficient delivery of services to their citizens. Municipal government is a challenging and rewarding career for recent graduates. Whatever your field of study, you can be sure there is a municipality out there that requires your specific skills, ambition and positive attitude. Listed is a small sample of the wide variety of jobs found in municipalities across Alberta and typical educational requirements for each position.

Build Your career...

Planner

Bachelor degree in Planning

Information Technology Assistant

Bachelor degree in Computer Science

Police Constable/Peace Officer/ Bylaw Enforcement

Wide variety of post-secondary degrees and diplomas are considered

Communications Coordinator

Bachelor degree in Communications, Public Relations or Journalism

Economic Development Officer

Degree in Marketing, Commerce or Business Administration

Engineering Technologist

Civil Engineering Diploma

Human Resources Coordinator

Degree/Diploma in Human Resources

Recreation Director

Bachelor degree in Education or Recreation Administration

Geographics Technologist

Bachelor degree with in computer-aided drafting, surveying, GIS technology

...while building strong municipalities

Assessor

Diploma in assessment/
appraisal related field of study

Youth Programmer

Bachelor of Arts degree in
the Social Sciences

Chief Financial Officer

Masters degree in Business
Administration or Economics,
CA, CMA, or CA designation

Transit Fleet and Equipment Engineering Coordinator

Bachelor of Science degree in Mechanical or Electrical
Engineering

Business Analyst

Bachelor degree in Business
Administration, Commerce or
Computer Science

Firefighter

Wide variety of post-
secondary degrees are
considered

This is just a sample of the rewarding careers in Alberta's municipalities. New opportunities in a variety of positions are always opening up!

FINDING A JOB IN MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT IMPORTANT WEBSITES FOR YOU TO KNOW

Municipal Associations

Alberta Urban Municipalities Association
www.auma.ca/live

Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties
www.aamdc.com

Society of Local Government Managers
www.clgm.net

Alberta Rural Municipal Administrators Association
www.aamdc.com/armaa

Local Government Administration Association
www.lgaa.ab.ca

Alberta Assessors Association
www.assessor.ab.ca

Municipal Profiles

www.municipalaffairs.alberta.ca/mc_municipal_profiles.cfm

Municipal Excellence Network

www.menet.ca

Alberta Municipal Affairs

www.municipalaffairs.alberta.ca

Alberta Learning Information Service

www.alis.ca

Government of Alberta

www.alberta.ca

MUNICIPAL INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

Build Your career...

...while building strong municipalities.

Who:

We are looking for recent post-secondary graduates who are interested in pursuing a career in municipal government administration or municipal planning.

What:

We are offering a paid 12 or 24-month experience as an intern in Alberta where you will have the opportunity to learn about local government, to develop as a professional, and to embark on a rewarding career in municipal administration or land use planning.

Why:

Plenty of Opportunity

Alberta is experiencing significant growth and development during a period when many senior planners and managers are retiring. For young, highly trained, skilled, and dedicated individuals, the career opportunities abound in the municipal field.

Professionally Rewarding

Municipal government is a diverse and challenging career field.

Personally Fulfilling

Most public servants will tell you that they find their jobs rewarding. This is particularly true of municipal employees who often work directly with the public. As one of our former interns, Tyler, says: "Everyday in municipal government is entirely different than the previous one. People who like problem solving, multi-tasking, and demanding yet rewarding work are surely a good candidate for a career in this sector."

When:

Internship placements begin in May every year and run for 12 or 24 months, until the following April.

Where:

Typically smaller municipalities from across Alberta, and some close to Edmonton and Calgary, will be hosting interns.

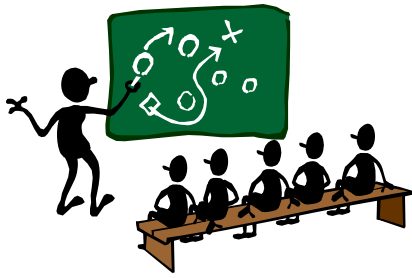
You will live in a dynamic community and work with a dedicated team of municipal staff who are willing to support your training and development.

How:

To get more information on the Municipal Internship Program and how to apply to be an intern, you can visit our website at: www.municipalaffairs.alberta.ca/ms/internship or contact the program staff at Municipal Affairs by phone at (780) 427-2225.

If you are calling long-distance, phone 310-0000 then (780) 427-2225.

The logo for the province of Alberta, featuring the word "Alberta" in a stylized, blue, sans-serif font.



Careers in Local Government

Presentation Evaluation

Date: _____

School: _____

Please indicate the ratings that best describe your reaction to this presentation:

**Strongly
Agree**

Agree

Disagree

**Strongly
Disagree**

1. The information obtained from the presentation was helpful.

Comments: _____

2. The information obtained from this presentation was better than I expected.

Comments: _____

3. I will consider a career in local government in the future as a result of this presentation.

Comments: _____

4. What did you like about this presentation?

5. What did you dislike about this presentation?

Contact Information

For a copy of this presentation, or for more information, please contact an Advisor at:

Municipal Advisory Resources and Internship Unit
Municipal Services Branch
Local Government Services
Alberta Municipal Affairs
17th Floor, Commerce Place
10155-102 Street
Edmonton, AB T5J 4L4

Phone: (780) 427-2225

