

# ARTICLING OPPORTUNITIES AT THE CITY OF TORONTO



JOIN OUR TEAM OF OVER 150 LAWYERS.

EXPERIENCE THE BREADTH AND VARIETY OF PRACTICE OF  
A FULL-SERVICE FIRM, WITHIN A COLLEGIAL  
ENVIRONMENT WORKING IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST.



# CITY OF TORONTO LEGAL SERVICES

The City of Toronto is one of the largest governments in Canada (larger than most provinces) and is by far the largest municipality in Canada. The City of Toronto faces complex and unique challenges every day in the course of governing and providing services to the residents of this City. The City of Toronto Legal Services Division, located in downtown Toronto, is called upon to assist with these challenges.

The City of Toronto Legal Services Division provides legal advice and litigation support to the City and its numerous operating divisions, such as Children's Services, City Planning, Economic Development and Culture, Engineering and Construction Services, Fire Services, Municipal Licensing and Standards, Parks, Forestry and Recreation, Public Health, Real Estate Services, Toronto Buildings, and Toronto Water.

In addition, the City of Toronto Legal Services Division provides a range of legal advice and litigation support to many agencies, boards and commissions of the City, ranging from the Toronto Police Services Board, the Toronto Public Library Board, the Board of Management of the Toronto Zoo, and the Board of Governors of Exhibition Place.

The City of Toronto's Articling Students program features a rotation system, where students are given the opportunity to work with lawyers in each of the seven practice groups of the Legal Services Division:

1. Employment Law
2. Planning and Administrative Tribunal Law
3. Litigation
4. Municipal Law
5. Prosecutions
6. Real Estate Law
7. Transit Expansion

Articling Students rotate through these seven practice groups and are assigned a mentor in each rotation. Our Articling Students also receive further training and learning opportunities in the form of lunch and learn seminars, designed to give students further exposure to various areas of the law we practice in the City of Toronto's Legal Services Division

Articling Students are exposed to numerous areas of law, with specific focus on:

- Administrative Law
- Civil Litigation
- Constitutional Law
- Employment Law
- Labour Law
- Land-Use Planning Law
- Municipal Law
- Real Estate Law
- Torts
- Quasi-criminal prosecutions under the *Provincial Offences Act*

Articling Students can also expect to have some exposure to the following areas of law:

- Bankruptcy and Insolvency
- Construction Contracts and Construction Law
- Environmental Law
- Family Law
- Health Law
- Human Rights
- Information and Privacy Law
- Intellectual Property
- Tax Law

# EMPLOYMENT LAW SECTION

The City of Toronto has approximately 37,000 full and part-time employees. Legal Services' Employment Law Section of 14 lawyers offers a full range of employment and management-side labour law services to the City regarding its role as an employer.

Our lawyers deal with issues arising from collective agreements between the City of Toronto and two major unions: TCEU, Local 416 and CUPE, Local 79, which is the largest municipal local in Canada. We also provide legal advice involving a variety of workplaces, including the Toronto Public Library, community centres, the Toronto Zoo, Exhibition Place, Civic Theatres Toronto, the Toronto Police Services Board, Toronto Paramedic Services, and Toronto Fire Services.

In addition to our diverse labour practice, our lawyers represent and provide legal advice to the City in matters involving non-unionized employees.

While articling at the City, students can expect to assist in a wide variety of matters, including:

- Labour arbitrations
- Ontario Labour Relations Board proceedings
- Workers' compensation files (including carriage of *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act* Appeals)
- Employment contract drafting
- Human Rights and Equity issues
- Collective bargaining
- Employment and Labour law opinions
- Wrongful dismissal civil claims
- Judicial reviews
- Occupational Health and Safety issues
- Delivering legal education seminars to client groups

With the supervision and guidance of our lawyers, students take an active role in all aspects of case preparation. Students may be asked to conduct client and witness interviews, research legal issues, draft opinion letters and draft pleadings or *facta*. Students are assigned carriage of their own files pertaining to appeals under the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act*.

## Did you know that City lawyers...

1. Advised Council and City staff regarding employment elements of the first municipal public service bylaw in Canada.
2. Played key roles in the negotiation and arbitration of the collective agreements between the City and its unions.
3. Attend hundreds of hearing dates annually before labour arbitrators, the Human Rights Tribunal, the Workplace Safety and Insurance Appeals Tribunal, and the courts.
4. Advise City staff in relation to employment issues that arise in relation to a diverse range of City initiatives.

# PLANNING & ADMINISTRATIVE TRIBUNAL LAW SECTION

The City's planning regime regulates the development and use of land in the City of Toronto. Development approvals before the City range from small additions to residential homes up to the construction of condominium and office towers.

Planning and Administrative Tribunal Law (or "Planning Law") is a team of 30 lawyers whose practice focuses on the administration of the municipal planning process. The lawyers in Planning Law engage with a number of provincial and municipal planning instruments, including the *Planning Act*, the Toronto Official Plan, and municipal zoning by-laws. The Planning Law section is regularly tasked with drafting zoning by-laws, negotiating and drafting agreements between the City and developers, and conducting hearings before the Toronto Local Appeal Body, the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal and appeals to the Divisional Court. In their role, planning lawyers frequently provide legal advice to other City departments, including City Planning, and engage with both City Councillors and the public on matters of planning policy and development approvals.

In addition to the Toronto Local Appeal Body and the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal, the Planning Law section also represents the City in a wide variety of other administrative tribunals regulating the use of private land, including the Ontario Alcohol and Gaming Commission, the Licence Appeal Tribunal, and the Heritage Conservation Review Board.

As a student in the Planning Law section, your work will include:

- Attending hearings, pre-hearings, mediations, and meetings with senior lawyers
- Drafting agreements securing parkland, public art, and other public benefits for the City while setting out the developer's obligations with regard to a particular development proposal
- Preparing and reviewing municipal by-laws and bills, including by-laws for re-zoning and official plan amendment applications
- Researching and drafting legal opinions
- Attending Community Council meetings

The Planning Law team is dedicated to ensuring that students learn the "nuts and bolts" of this unique area of law. We understand that students may not have been exposed to planning law issues prior to working at the City. In addition to discovering a new subject area, during this rotation students will develop and improve upon practical legal skills including oral and written advocacy, researching, and drafting.

## Did you know that City lawyers...

1. Facilitated new community revitalization programs in parts of the City, including Regent Park and Lawrence Heights.
2. Led the re-development of the diverse City's neighbourhoods such as the Waterfront and East Don Lands, which were recently developed into the site of the Athlete's Village for the 2015 Pan Am Games.
3. Promote City Council's position with respect to prominent and controversial development proposals such as the 80+ storey 3-tower Mirvish project in the theatre district, the proposed redevelopment of the Honest Ed's site and the Weston cultural hub.
4. Will work with City Planning and the Real Estate Services team regarding the development of the Rail Deck Park.

# LITIGATION SECTION

The City of Toronto employs a team of about 35 civil and commercial litigators, who enjoy a dynamic and diverse practice in a collegial work environment. The City's litigators are at the forefront of matters of public policy as they relate to a broad range of practice areas. These include litigation matters related to:

- Constitutional, *Charter* and other challenges to municipal by-laws
- Human Rights applications
- Environmental law issues
- Public Health law issues
- *Building Code Act* regulation
- Commercial law issues
- *Ontario Heritage Act* issues
- Personal injury claims
- Construction law claims
- Business Licensing issues
- Policing issues
- Land assessment and taxation issues
- Municipal Elections issues

The City's litigators appear at all levels of court, including the Ontario Superior Court of Justice, Divisional Court, the Ontario Court of Appeal, and the Supreme Court of Canada. City litigators also appear before a variety of administrative tribunals including the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario, the Toronto Licensing Tribunal, the Assessment Review Board as well as Coroner's Inquests.

The articling student experience with the Litigation Division is not limited to legal research. Students handle, with supervision, files on their own. This includes preparing pleadings, gathering evidence, conducting trials and hearings before the Small Claims Court and administrative tribunals, and arguing motions before the Small Claims Court and Superior Court. When working with other lawyers, students are exposed to every stage in the litigation process, including attending at examinations for discovery and mediations.

## Did you know that City lawyers...

1. Defended challenges to City by-laws, including challenges to prohibitions against hookah smoking in cafes, the use of herbicides, the imposition of fees to reduce garbage, the Alternative Penalties System for parking enforcement and taxation of advertising signs and billboards, including appearing before the Ontario Court of Appeal.
2. Represent the Toronto Police Services Board in numerous types of proceedings, including human rights proceedings such as the treatment of transgendered persons during arrest, coroner's inquests, and in defending civil litigation.
3. Intervened before the National Energy Board and Ontario Energy Board regarding safety, environmental, and infrastructure issues arising from the alteration of national and Ontario pipelines.
4. Intervened at the Supreme Court of Canada three times in the last few years in cases involving the interaction between municipalities and federally regulated entities.
5. Defended large construction law claims arising from major City projects.
6. Enforce public health laws, including obtaining detention and treatment orders to stop the spread of serious communicable diseases such as tuberculosis and HIV.



# MUNICIPAL LAW SECTION

Municipal government impacts the daily lives of citizens more directly than any other level of government. Just think about roads, parks, community centres and other public spaces, public health services, affordable housing and social services, garbage collection, recycling programs, fire, police and ambulance services, public libraries, snow removal and the water supplied to your home. The City of Toronto provides these services and more to its residents.

As the largest city in Canada, the City of Toronto also faces many complex issues relating to, for example, freedom of information, municipal elections, corporate governance, and municipal procurement.

Our municipal lawyers help the City work by giving legal advice on these and many other matters to the City's Agencies, Boards, Commissions, Divisions and Accountability Officers, Toronto City Council and its Committees and Sub-Committees. Municipal lawyers are often in the thick of high profile issues. For example, Municipal lawyers are involved in advising on the funding, construction and operation of major transit and infrastructure projects such as the rehabilitation of the Gardiner Expressway (est. \$3.5 Billion) and the Union Station Revitalization Project; navigating new technologies such as drones, autonomous vehicles and the sharing economy; the implementation of supervised injection services and the legalization of cannabis; environmental initiatives such as waste diversion, climate change adaptation and energy efficiency, and new related Provincial legislation and regulations; and the adoption of new governance structures following the reduction in City Councillors to 25 from 47 previously approved by City Council. Municipal lawyers are also involved in complex financial issues related to the City's \$13.46 Billion operating budget and \$40.67 Billion ten-year capital plan, including the creation of new fees and taxes and other revenue generating tools.

We see our students as an integral part of our legal team, and we give them a high level of responsibility. During your municipal rotation, you may be asked to draft reports and by-laws to present to City Council, opinion letters, negotiated agreements and general correspondence. You will also have the opportunity to attend Board/Committee or client meetings to better understand the "why" behind your assignments.

Some of the issues you may deal with during your municipal law rotation concern:

- Powers and jurisdiction under the *City of Toronto Act, 2006* and other municipal statutes
- The City's taxing powers and property tax issues
- *Charter*, Constitutional and jurisdictional questions
- Balancing public transparency with confidentiality and protection of privacy under the MFIPPA
- Information Technology and Telecommunications Matters
- Affordable Housing and Social Services
- Public Procurements such as RFPs, RFQs, Tenders and Public Private Partnerships
- Contract Interpretation
- Construction Agreements, Liens and Statutory Holdbacks
- Public Health Issues
- Intellectual Property Issues

## Did you know that City lawyers...

1. Drafted by-laws regulating dangerous dogs and advised Animal Services staff on the seizure of the Ikea Monkey.
2. Provided advice to City Council on the Province of Ontario's *Better Local Government Act, 2018*, and the reduction of the number of Toronto's municipal wards and Councillors.
3. Assisted staff in the enforcement of zoning by-laws against illegal marijuana dispensaries.
4. Provided advice and helped in negotiating the City's participation in the successful joint bid for the 2026 FIFA World Cup.
5. Advised on civil liberties and other issues during the 2010 G20 summit and in relation to Police carding.
6. Negotiate with production companies for the use of City property and facilities in movies and television.

# PROSECUTIONS SECTION

The City employs a team of eleven lawyers, four managers, two supervisors, prosecutors, law clerks, legal assistants and support assistants who are located in several offices across the City. The Prosecutions team fields a variety of legal issues including constitutional and *Charter* challenges. Prosecutions are conducted at the historic Old City Hall courthouse, as well as at the former York Civic Centre (2700 Eglinton Avenue West) and at the Toronto East Court Office (1530 Markham Road). The Prosecutions team further administers the parking violation dispute process through its award winning Administrative Penalty System at three locations including two in person offices located at Metro Hall and North York Civic Centre.

The Prosecutions team prosecutes a variety of matters falling under Part I and Part III of the *Provincial Offences Act*, including:

- *Fire Code* and *Building Code* violations;
- Traffic offences under the *Highway Traffic Act*
- Cannabis offences
- Smoking and vaping offences
- Dog bites and other dog-related offences
- Offences falling under various City of Toronto by-laws including zoning violations, water pollution offences, noise violations as well as offences under the City's Licensing by-laws.

Each of the City's articling students will participate in a multi-day rotation in the Prosecutions section. In that time students will have the opportunity to first observe and then conduct a variety of prosecutions, initially under the guidance of prosecutors and then on their own.

# REAL ESTATE LAW SECTION

Real estate lawyers at the City of Toronto enjoy being part of a large and knowledgeable team dealing with diverse and sophisticated real estate transactions in a uniquely urban structure. Our work ranges from agreements with small landowners or tenants to highly complex transactions involving multiple parties, complicated legal structures and exceptionally valuable properties in the urban core and surrounding areas. It is not uncommon for our real estate lawyers to see their transactions trending on social media, in the daily newspapers or on the local news stations.

As valued members of the Real Estate Law team, students will work with lawyers in providing advice to City Councillors, City Council and the City's Committees, Divisions and Agencies. Students will gain valuable practical experience through exposure to some of the following:

- Negotiating and drafting legal documents for purchases and sales, expropriations, tax sales, easements, leasing, licensing and other property transactions, while ensuring compliance with by-law and statutory requirements
- Preparing by-laws relating to real estate transactions for submission to City Council
- Providing ongoing interpretation and advice concerning the City's interests under existing real estate documents
- Researching and drafting legal opinions and reports to City Committees and Council
- Apprising City Council and its Divisions and Agencies of relevant changes in law affecting the City's real property interests
- Participating in meetings with Councillors and client groups

Students will spend time learning about the electronic land registration system and attending at the Land Registry Office, under the guidance of the conveyancing team, to learn about real property searches for real estate transactions, enforcement of property standards, and compliance with various statutory requirements. Students will also learn how to register documents for all types of real estate transactions, agreements under the *Planning Act* and the *Ontario Heritage Act*, by-laws, and discharges of various interests.

## Did you know that City lawyers...

1. Deal with sales and leases of property on behalf of the City, the largest single owner of real estate within the geographical boundaries of the City of Toronto.
2. Work to revitalize City-owned or City-managed cultural hot-spots, such as the Brick Works, St. Lawrence Market, BMO Field and The Bentway.
3. Acquire stratified property rights for projects that vary from storm water diversion tunnels buried 50 metres below ground to the air rights for the proposed Rail Deck Park.
4. Work closely with the Provincial and Federal governments on large-scale projects such as the creation of the Rouge National Urban Park, the first of its kind in Canada.



# TRANSIT EXPANSION SECTION

An unprecedented number of public transit projects are currently or soon to be underway in the City of Toronto, including the Eglinton Crosstown LRT, Sheppard East LRT, Finch West LRT, Scarborough LRT/Subway, and Toronto-York Spadina Subway Extension projects. In 2010, the Transit Expansion Unit was assembled to acquire the multitude of property interests required for these projects. This interdisciplinary group is comprised of six lawyers, in addition to real estate, appraisal, conveyancing and support staff.

Many of the transit projects to be completed over the next decade in Toronto are funded by Metrolinx, an agency of the Government of Ontario created to improve transportation in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area. As such, lawyers in the Transit Expansion Unit have the unique experience of advising and working cooperatively with another level of government on a daily basis.

As part of the Real Estate Law and Planning and Administrative Tribunal Law rotations, articling students will have the opportunity to take on assignments from the Transit Expansion Unit. Students may assist with:

- Property purchase transactions
- Expropriations
- Compensation arbitrations and hearings
- Associated research and drafting assignments

Working with the Transit Expansion Unit is an exciting opportunity for students to get involved in projects that will have positive impacts on the environment, the local economy and the daily experiences of those that live in, work in and visit Toronto.

## Did you know that City lawyers...

1. Have assisted Metrolinx in the acquisition of hundreds of property interests.
2. Work closely with Metrolinx and Infrastructure Ontario to ensure that property acquisition for transit projects happens on time and on budget.
3. Represent Metrolinx in claims for compensation related to expropriations.

# HOW TO APPLY AND FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

The City of Toronto receives and reviews applications and interviews students in accordance with the guidelines and rules established by the Law Society of Ontario. Please refer to the Law Society of Ontario's webpage at <https://lso.ca> for application deadlines.

Students interested in articling at the City of Toronto should submit an application consisting of a cover letter, resume, undergraduate, law school transcripts and two letters of reference. Please forward your application through ViDesktop. Applications can also be sent to the attention of Ray Mickevicius at the following address or by e-mail:

Mr. Ray Mickevicius  
Director, Real Estate Law  
City of Toronto - Legal Services Division  
26<sup>th</sup> Floor, Metro Hall, Stn. 1260  
55 John Street  
Toronto, ON M5V 3C6

Articling@toronto.ca

Students who have been selected for interviews will be contacted by one of our lawyers on call day in order to schedule the interview. Interviews will be held in accordance with the schedule set by the Law Society of Ontario.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### 1. Does the City of Toronto conduct second interviews and/or have cocktail parties?

No, the City of Toronto only conducts one interview and does not host social events during the articling interview week.

### 2. What does the City of Toronto look for in an Articling Student?

The City primarily looks for a student who demonstrates strong academic credentials and a desire to work for the public sector. This is demonstrated through the student's cover letter, resume, law school courses and other interests as well as in the interview itself.

### 3. How many articling students do you hire each year?

Generally, the City hires six articling students each year.

### 4. Do you hire back your articling students?

The City often hires back many of its students thereby recruiting the majority of its lawyers through the articling process. Hire-backs in any given year, as with many public sector workplaces, depends on budgetary approvals. However, as an example from the last few years, the City has hired back:

2019: 6 of 6  
2018: 6 of 6  
2017: 6 of 6  
2016: 6 of 6  
2015: 5 of 6  
2014: 6 of 6

### 5. When do articles usually start?

The City typically starts the articling year in mid-July.

## 6. Who can I contact for more information on the City's articling program?

The City is hosting an Open House on June 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2020 at Metro Hall (55 John St.), Room. 308/309 from 5:30 to 7:30 pm. Lawyers from all practice groups will be in attendance to provide information on our articling program and the work done by the City.

The City also attends spring career fairs at a number of schools throughout February and March of each year. You are encouraged to stop by our booth, where lawyers from the Legal Division will be more than happy to answer any questions you may have and will tell you about the interesting and challenging files they work on.

You can also contact one of the members of our Articling Committee.

Ray Mickevicius – Director Real Estate and Head of Articling Committee  
(416) 392-3912  
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