



Green Job Establishes Roots in City of Cornwall

ANGELA PARKER'S POSITION AS Sustainability Project Coordinator may be a new role for the City of Cornwall, but it's a busy one that will have lasting impacts.

"I basically ensure that current projects and future projects mitigate greenhouses gases, and are resilient to extreme weather events and adaptable to climate change," she explains. "It encompasses working with every department – everywhere from Emergency Services, to Infrastructure Planning, to Environmental Services."





Mackenzie collecting donated clothing during the City's Give a Shirt Day



Mackenzie helping to plant trees at a city park

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Angela Parker, Sustainability Project Coordinator for the City of Cornwall

As the only employee in the City’s Environmental Services Department that focuses solely on sustainability, she needed an assistant to help her further the community’s environmental and sustainability goals.

In the fall of 2021, she was able to obtain that job support thanks the CPRA Green Jobs Initiative, which is funded in part by the Government of Canada’s Youth Employment Skills Strategy program.

“It was really good opportunity for the City to have this, and it gave me an opportunity to just show senior management that there’s a need for more green jobs,” she says. “We’re so grateful for the funding that was provided by CPRA. It is a great initiative.”

Mackenzie Nelson, who was hired through the grant as a Sustainability Research Assistant, spent much of her time taking inventory of the ash trees on City property using GPS and GIS. She also created a map of the municipality’s ash trees as well as their current conditions – helping the municipality flag which ones to remove, and which are suitable to maintain and treat.

“It was busy, but very rewarding,” says Mackenzie, who had recently completed a forestry technician program at Algonquin College in nearby Pembroke. “The land here is different than Pembroke, so it gave me an opportunity to learn what the soil types are here.”

Angela adds that Mackenzie’s work has also been made available to the public on the City’s website, so residents can

be more informed about why certain trees may have been removed.

Additionally, Mackenzie also scouted out areas in need of green space, led presentations at community outreach events, and assisted with tree planting events in September.

“I wanted to give her lots of opportunities,” Angela says. “I knew she was very talented in a lot of different areas with outreach, public engagement, as well as tree knowledge. So, I wanted her to be able to utilize all her skills, and see how they can be used in a municipal setting.”

Mackenzie says the role was a great transition from student life to work life, and gave her opportunities in the workplace she would not have otherwise had.

“I was able to build connections with people,” she says. “It was really nice to have the opportunity to meet people from the forestry and environmental field – and other fields as well.”

The grant was also a positive experience for Angela, and allowed her to fulfill some of her goals as a sustainability project coordinator.

“I always say I need another Mackenzie,” Angela says. “It was a really good opportunity for the City to have this grant, and it encouraged the community to be more in tune with the trees around them and helped them understand how climate change and extreme weather events affect our natural assets such as trees, and our parks.” 🍁