

and the ordinances passed by the Commissioner in Council
is carried on by the Department of Northern Affairs
and National Resources. A federal administrative
Officer serves at each of the following territories:
central, Fort Smith, Northwest, Northwest and Yellowknife.
The seat of government is at Ottawa.

Municipal Government

3.

The earliest local government in Canada was
carried out by the citizens of New France who bore
along with military command and the administration of
justice, the responsibilities of appointing justices of the
peace and chairs of roads. Some of these officers were
soon replaced by a system elected by the people, the
first in form, though a mayor and two aldermen had held
office briefly in the city of Quebec in 1682. When the
system fell into disuse, such powers were delegated by
the Governor to officials. The City of Quebec was
incorporated in 1832, and the system of local government
for the province decreased in 1840 and later remodelled
by Acts of 1845, 1850 and 1860.

In the Atlantic Provinces, Saint John, N.B.,
had obtained the distinction of being Canada's first
incorporated city in 1785. Incorporation of Halifax, N.S.,
came in 1841 and Charlottetown, P.E.I., in 1855. In New-
foundland, St. John's was granted a town in 1838.

The Ontario Town and Township Act of 1793
provided for an annual meeting in a parish or township
to appoint local officers responsible to the settlement and
the courts, but the meetings had no law-making powers.
Brookville, in 1832, gained from the Governor in Council
some local powers that had previously been exercised
through the courts. In 1837, York was incorporated as
the self-governing City of Toronto. The Municipal Act
of 1849 became the foundation of the local government in
Ontario and later provided a model for the western provinces.
Subsequently, Acts have been passed in all provinces
governing aspects of municipal incorporation, powers and
duties. Constitutional provision that jurisdiction over
municipal affairs would rest with the provinces has re-
sulted, quite naturally, in decentralization in the
organization of local government across the country.
This stems not only from the differences in population
and subsequent independent growth in each province, but
also from variations in requirements arising out of
geographical and population differences.

The situation remains in a state of flux, with
constant amendment of provincial Acts and charters in an
attempt to solve old problems and to meet new ones, just
as the call for new and additional services has enlarged
the scope of federal and provincial activities. The
municipalities have had to assume responsibilities outside
of a few decades ago, or considered beyond their sphere of
activity. As a result, amendments to Acts have varied from
those enlarging the powers and the boundaries of municipal-
ities, to those establishing direct provincial control and
greater financial aid.

RVA

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