



# Annual Accessibility Status Report - 2022

The Township of Ramara has established a multi-year accessibility plan to prevent and remove barriers to accessibility and to meet requirements under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* and the Integrated Accessibility Standards.

This Annual Status Report details the required annual update for the year 2021 on the progress of measures taken to improve accessibility in Ramara Township. The purpose of this report is to track our organization's progress and make the public aware of our initiatives. This report is available online at <https://www.ramara.ca/en/municipal-office/accessibility.aspx?mid=64509>

To request an alternate format of this annual status report, please contact:

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## Customer Service Accomplishments

- Continue to comply with the requirements of the Customer Service Standard;
- Staff training sessions:
  - Change Management for Non-Change Managers
  - National Truth and Reconciliation Training
  - DISC Personality Insights into Communication Workshop
- Online payment tools for Short Term Rental Accommodation Application fees;
- Online permitting capabilities
- Continued upgrading of forms and documentation on the Township's website to allow for screen reader capabilities
- Options for scheduling building inspections (digital, phone, in-person)

## General Requirements Accomplishments

- Annual Public Meeting regarding the Township's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan
- Preparation of the Annual Status Report
- Continue to incorporate accessibility features in the acquisition of goods, services and facilities wherever practicable
- Establishment of a Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee

## Information and Communications Accomplishments

- Continued maintenance of website that is WCAG 2.0 Level AA compliant;
- Continued maintenance of social media platforms to ensure accessibility compliance;
- Continued improvements to closed captioning of streamed Council and Committee meetings;
- Increased use of online forms;
- Increased ability to complete applications online;
- Increased partnerships to bring internet services in hard to reach areas of the municipality.
- Purchase of new Electronic Document Records Management System Software (LaserFiche). Implementation will occur in 2023.
- Simplified language on applications and forms;
- Building and Planning Department offers system navigation as well as connecting individuals with other authorities, where applicable;
- Monthly Council Bulletin in the Orillia Today newspaper
- Library has added Decodable books for children with Dyslexia; stand up public computer; and Make & Take Kits for Profession Development Days and Holidays
- 2022 Election offers three methods of voting: Internet, Telephone and Traditional

## Employment Accomplishments

- Staff training sessions:
  - Change Management for Non-Change Managers
  - National Truth and Reconciliation Training
  - DISC Personality Insights into Communication Workshop

## Transportation – Not applicable

## Design of Public Spaces Accomplishments

- Improvements to the Township's parking strategy at waterfront access points;
- Installation of new playground equipment at the Lovey Day Park
- New off road trail from Fairgrounds Road to Howlyn Pines;

- Three new benches at various trail locations;
- Library implementation of the Story Book Walk

## Next Steps

The following barriers were identified at the Annual Multi-Year Accessibility Plan Public Meeting, which will be addressed in 2023 as budget allows:

- Inclusion of Accessible swing in future playground equipment
- Inclusion of Accessible benches along Ramara Trails

Ramara will:

- Continue to identify, prevent and remove barriers
- Continue to receive feedback from the public, including people with disabilities
- Continue to support and educate staff on creating accessible documents
- Continue to review and update accessibility policies, procedures and practices and provide training when required;
- Continue to review customer feedback and take appropriate action
- Proceed with the Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee with Severn Township (Terms of Reference attached).



## Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC)

### Terms of Reference

#### Purpose

The Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee (“Committee”) is established by the Corporation of Township of Severn (“Severn”) and the Corporation of the Township of Ramara (“Ramara”) in accordance with the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001, and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (“Acts”), and shall act as an advisory body in accordance with both Acts and all related standards.

#### Responsibilities

The Committee shall:

- a) Provide input on the preparation of the multi-year accessibility plans for consideration by the respective municipal Council.

The plans will address and include steps that each municipality has taken and plans to take with respect to the identification, removal, and prevention of barriers to persons with disabilities as required by legislation.

- b) Advise on major accessibility issues related to the significant renovation, operation, purchase or lease of buildings or structures or parts of buildings or structures used as municipal buildings with special attention to those that the public are encouraged to utilize through the review of site plans and drawings as described within the Planning Act that the Committee selects.
- c) Advise on opportunities with respect to the identification and removal of barriers to persons with disabilities at facilities owned or operated by the municipalities.
- d) Advise on ways to improve opportunities for persons with disabilities with respect to programs and services offered by the municipalities.
- e) Perform other functions that are specified in the Regulations of the “Acts”.

## Composition

The majority of Committee members must be person with disabilities as required under the Acts and must be residents of the member municipalities. All members, when eligible to vote, shall have one vote only. The Committee shall consist of four members as follows:

- a) Two non-elected members who are persons with disabilities, with preference given to appoint at least one eligible resident of “Severn” and “Ramara”.
- b) Two elected officials, one from each municipality. When possible, the elected officials will be persons with disabilities.

## Recruitment

Both municipalities will be responsible for advertising recruitment opportunities through local newspapers and relevant organizations representing persons with disabilities.

The municipalities will each be responsible for promoting recruitment opportunities on their respective websites and through their social media accounts and gathering applications.

Each of the municipalities, at their own expense, may do enhanced advertising.

## Appointment of Members

Elected officials are to be appointed by their respective Council or in accordance with their applicable by-laws or policies.

The respective Councils shall review the applications received within their municipality and appoint one citizen appointee from their municipality.

## Term of Appointment

- a) Elected Officials:
  - “Severn” Council member shall serve for the term of office.
  - “Ramara” Council member shall serve for the term of office.
- b) Non-elected representatives:
  - The term shall coincide with the term of Council.
  - Representatives are eligible for re-appointment.

Members may be required to resign from the “Committee” if they have been absent for three consecutive meetings without good cause.

## Chair/Vice-Chair

The Chair and Vice-Chair of the “Committee” shall be elected at the first meeting of the “Committee” every year, and the Chair and Vice-Chair shall rotate every year.

## Quorum

More than half of the members eligible to vote must be present in order to transact business.

## Meetings

Meetings may be scheduled as required, with a minimum of two meetings each year to support staff reporting and the advisory committee providing guidance and conducting facility reviews resulting in improved accessible services and facilities. All meetings shall be held electronically with the exception of site visits.

## Resources

The Clerk’s Departments for “Severn” and “Ramara” will share the responsibility for administrative support as appropriate, including co-ordination of meetings, compilation of agenda material, and meeting support.

Other staff resources by “Severn” and “Ramara” will be available for their respective facility reviews and as required.

The effectiveness of having a joint “Committee” will be subject to review by all participating municipal Councils at least once per term.

## Reporting

The “Committee” shall report to the respective Councils, in accordance with the provisions of their respective Procedure By-laws. The presentations of the “Committee’s” activities will be in the form of a report containing a record of those present at the meeting, the items considered, and the recommendations of the “Committee”. The respective Councils may only consider and act on the recommendations within their jurisdiction.

The “Committee” does not have the authority to specifically direct the activities of staff.

## Remuneration

Non-elected representatives shall be compensated in accordance with the existing policies and by-laws of their respective municipality.

Elected officials shall be compensated in accordance with existing policies of their respective municipalities.

Non-elected representatives who are persons with disabilities will be provided, at the expense of their respective municipality, with the resources related to their disability that are deemed necessary for them to fully participate in the “Committee’s” activities. The resources could include things such as transportation, sign language, Braille translation etc. Any equipment shall remain the property of the respective municipality.

Dated July 2022