

THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF RAMARA  
**RDAD - Routine Disclosure / Active Dissemination Policy**

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**OBJECTIVE / INTRODUCTION:**

This policy will guide the Township of Ramara in:

- Ensuring that information is available to its citizens and to support a culture of open and transparent government.
- Meeting its legal obligations and requirements of MFIPPA - the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* and other privacy legislation in order to protect confidentiality and personal information.

The main objective is to enable open access to public records while protecting the privacy of personal information which is within the custody or under the control of the municipality. Routine access and active dissemination should satisfy most information needs and be a standard practice. Formal FOI requests should be used as a last resort to seek access to recorded information.

Much of the Township’s information is available directly from our departments, where no formal request is required. Refer to this policy for a summary of the types of documentation and information that the public may request and may be readily disclosed informally or formally.

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**APPLICATION:**

This policy applies to all Township employees, Committees, Affiliates, Agents, Contractors, as well as Members of Council and applies to all records under the Township's custody or control.

**POLICY AUTHORITY:**

- The "Head" will have final decision-making authority in determining what information is released from Township records, in compliance with legislation.
- Township departments will work with the FOI Coordinator to identify and publish records that are appropriate for **proactive disclosure**. Township staff may be directed to respond to requests for records that may be **released routinely**, in person or by telephone, fax, mail, or email; releasing records in an open, complete and timely manner.
- **Relevant Legislation**

**DEFINITIONS:**

**Access** is the ability to obtain information held by the municipality. Under this policy, access may mean either providing a copy of the records requested or providing a means and opportunity to view the records, whichever is administratively most efficient as determined by the Department.

**AD - Active Dissemination** is the periodic and proactive release of government information and records in the absence of a specific request. Whenever the public interest is likely to be engaged and no exemption applies, information may be actively circulated, E.g. – Agendas, Public Notices, etc.

**Disposal** refers to the process of eliminating and deleting data, documents and records so that the recorded information no longer exists.

**FOI - Freedom of Information** is an expression commonly used to describe the right of citizens to access information that is held by the government.

**Head** is a designated individual or body given decision making authority over access and privacy issues regarding MFIPPA. Ramara Township Council has delegated the duties of the head to the Municipal Clerk.

**MFIPPA** refers to the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, which came into effect in Ontario on January 1, 1991. The purpose of the act is to both provide a right of access to information and to protect the privacy of individuals. The act

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establishes a process by which individuals may request access to information and outlines certain exemptions which restrict disclosure where necessary. MFIPPA governs the collection, use and disclosure of information within Ontario municipalities.

**Personal Information** or **PI** means recorded information about an identifiable individual which includes, but is not limited to, information relating to the name, address, race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation or marital or family status of the individual, the personal opinions or views of the individual except if they relate to another individual. If an image displays these characteristics of an identifiable individual or the activities in which he or she is engaged, its contents will be considered “personal information”.

Records related to a **business**, proprietorship or trade union are NOT personal information MFIPPA Sec. 2(2.1). Information about individuals acting in their business or professional capacity is NOT personal information, your name, position and records about routine work matters do not usually constitute personal information. Certain staff information (e.g. job description, salary range or benefits) does not qualify for protection as personal information.

However, personal information can be public if collected and maintained specifically for the purpose of creating a record available to the general public, i.e. assessment rolls.

**Privacy** is the right to be protected from unnecessary collection or release of personal information.

**Record** means any record of information however recorded, whether in printed form, on film, by electronic means or otherwise, and includes, correspondence, a memorandum, a post-it note, a book, a plan, a map, a drawing, a diagram, a pictorial or graphic work, a photograph, a film, a microfilm, a sound recording, a video recording, a machine readable record, a voice mail, an email, any other documentary material, regardless of physical form or characteristics, and any copy thereof, and, any record that is capable of being produced from a machine readable record under the control of an institution by means of computer hardware and software or any other information storage equipment and technical expertise normally used by the institution. Records are not distinguished by medium or format. It is the content that determines what is and what is not an official record.

**RD - Routine Disclosure** is the routine or automatic release of certain types of records, where no exemption applies, which may be handled as informal rather than as formal requests under MFIPPA, e.g. – Bylaws

### **GUIDELINES / PROCEDURES:**

1. **Active Dissemination:** Access to Township information and records will, wherever possible, be made available to the public via the Township website, orally, by news

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releases, newspapers, or through public inspection at the Township's Municipal offices, etc.

2. The Township will where possible, make records accessible to the public without the necessity of submitting a formal Freedom of Information (FOI) request under MFIPPA.
3. If someone is seeking information, refer to the **Records Chart**, which outlines routine disclosures and items not to be disclosed, in order to determine which type of action to take. If not in chart, consult with the FOI Coordinator.
4. To confirm **identity**, ask to see identification such as driver's license or tax bill, provide affidavit, etc. If the person seeking the information is not the individual, but represents the individual named in the record, then the MFIPPA, section 54 applies. For an individual who is a minor, seriously ill or mentally incapacitated, consent may be obtained from a legal guardian or power of attorney.
5. A staff member must be present at all times when a requester is viewing an original record.
6. **Assessment Roll:** Follow Assessment Roll Policy. The public may visit the office in person to view the assessment rolls. The public may transcribe information, but may neither photocopy nor take pictures of pages within the assessment roll, nor use scanning technology. No personal information may be provided over the telephone, unless they are the owner.
7. **Confidentiality:** The Township of Ramara will protect confidential corporate and personal information by withholding or removing information as permitted by MFIPPA. The right of access to personal, confidential and/or third party information may be subject to exemptions under MFIPPA resulting in portions of the record being severed when required.
8. **Creation of new records:** The Township is not required to create a record(s) in response to a request except where the record is electronic and it would not interfere with the operation of the Corporation to do so.
9. **Fees and Charges:** The Township's Fees and Charges Bylaw outlines permitted charges for documents provided outside the formal access process. Unless other fees are applicable, standard photocopy charges will apply. MFIPPA stipulates the fees to be charged for formal requests.
10. **Formal Requests:** Reasons for directing a requester to pursue a formal access request include, but are not limited to, the following:
  - Search time/preparation time for the requested records would be excessive;
  - Records relate to a matter that may result in litigation;
  - Records were supplied by a third party;

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- Records contain solicitor-client information; or
  - Records are not currently part of routine disclosure and records contain personal information and the person seeking the record is other than the individual named in the record.
11. **Legislative Compliance:** The Township of Ramara complies with its disclosure obligations under MFIPPA in a way that recognizes the public's right to access the records of a public body and reflects Ramara's commitment to openness, transparency and accountability. If another piece of legislation requires disclosure, the record is routinely released.
  12. **Quotation and Tender Information:** The Township typically receives requests for bid-related information on tenders and requests for proposals. The Township only releases bid amounts which are read at the public tender openings. Bid documents should contain a clause indicating whether or not unit prices submitted will remain confidential. A request is referred to the FOI Coordinator only if a requester insists on receiving individual "unit prices" and there is no clause. In these cases, the Coordinator will contact the third party bidders to determine if they will consent to the information being disclosed. If permission granted, then a waiver is obtained and the records released; if not, then the Coordinator will suggest that the requester make a formal request under MFIPPA.
  13. **Solicitations:** The Township cannot release lists of resident contact info (i.e. names, addresses and phone numbers) to parties wishing to solicit business.
  14. **Surveys:** Property owners may gain access to surveys for the property they own, but it will be indicated that the information is copyrighted. Otherwise, remove the personal information, copy the requested portion and mark the record as a "copy", or redirect requesters to the Land Registry Office.

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RECORDS CHART BY DEPARTMENT:

**ADMINISTRATION DEPARTMENT**

**Routine disclosures:**

<b>RECORD</b>	<b>ACCESS METHOD</b>
Consultant prepared reports / studies	Municipal office
Economic Development	Refer to FOI Coordinator - discussions with potential purchasers to remain confidential
Job Descriptions	Municipal office
Labour negotiations	Refer to FOI Coordinator
Legal or other information subject to Solicitor client privilege or otherwise protected by MFIPPA.	Refer to FOI Coordinator
Media Relations - Notices, Advertising, Press Releases	Twp website; Municipal office
Organizational Structure of Corporation	Municipal office
Personnel / Employee Records	Municipal office – Subject to 48 hour notice for review by Head
Policies & Procedures, Corporate	Municipal office
Recruitment information	Refer to FOI Coordinator - Release interview questions only
Staff Reports	Twp website; Municipal office Confidential Staff Reports- Refer to FOI Coordinator - only release to individual to which it directly relates through formal FOI request.
Strategic Plan	Twp website; Municipal office

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**BUILDING DEPARTMENT**

**Routine disclosures:**

<b>RECORD</b>	<b>ACCESS METHOD</b>
Building Plans	Municipal office - Property owner, agent or requester with written consent of owner may view file & pay for copies
Compliance Letters	Municipal office - Pay fee
Consultant prepared reports / studies	Municipal office
Inspections	Municipal office - Property owner, agent or requester with written consent of owner may view file & pay for copies; Other requesters pay for copies after personal information removed
Permits, Building	Municipal office - Property owner, agent or requester with written consent of owner may view file & pay for copies; Other requesters pay for copies after personal information removed
Permits, Septic	Municipal office - Property owner, agent or requester with written consent of owner may view file & pay for copies; Other requesters pay for copies after personal information removed
Permits, Special Occasion	Municipal office - Property owner, agent or requester with written consent of owner may view file & pay for copies; Other requesters pay for copies after personal information removed
Property Files	Municipal office - Property owner, agent or requester with written consent of owner may view file & pay for copies
Reports and Statistics	Municipal office or agenda packages for reports and statistics presented to Council or Committee
Site Plans	Municipal office - Owner may view file & pay for copies; otherwise Formal FOI request

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Staff Reports	Twp website; Municipal office Confidential Staff Reports- Refer to FOI Coordinator - only release to individual to which it directly relates through formal FOI request.
Surveys	Municipal office - Property owner, agent or requester with written consent of owner may view file & pay for copies Other requesters pay for copies after personal information removed and record is marked as a "copy". Or redirect requesters to Land Registry Office in Barrie.



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**CORPORATE SERVICES**  
**CLERKS DEPARTMENT**

**Routine disclosures:**

<b>RECORD</b>	<b>ACCESS METHODS</b>
Agendas for Council & Committees	Twp website; Municipal office
Agendas for Closed Session Council & Committees	Refer to FOI Coordinator - MFIPPA s.6(1)(b)
Agreements under seal and passed by bylaw	Twp website; Municipal office
Agreements not under seal	Refer to FOI Coordinator
Appointments to Committees & Boards	Municipal office - Release names once appointed, but not addresses and résumés. If consent provided, may release contact info.
Archival information	Contact Simcoe County Archives directly to retrieve records or re-direct requester to Archives
Building and Property Maintenance (manuals, property inspection reports)	Municipal office
Bylaws – current and past	Twp website - for commonly requested bylaws; Municipal office or retrieve from County Archives; Draft bylaws however do not have to be disclosed. - Municipal Act, s. 253 (1); MFIPPA, s. 6(1) - Refer to FOI Coordinator
Bylaw Enforcement Officer Notes	Refer to FOI Coordinator – Cannot release complainant's name and other personal info
Canine Control Notices - Lost & Found Dogs; Dogs for Adoption	Twp website; Municipal office; Canine Control Office
Canine Control Officer Notes	Refer to FOI Coordinator – Cannot release complainant's name and other personal information
Cemeteries	Municipal office or Simcoe County Branch of the Ontario Genealogical Society

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Census Data	Twp website; Municipal office - Reports from Mark Dorfman or re-direct to Statistics Canada
Consultant prepared reports / studies	Municipal office
Directory of Records	Twp website; Municipal office - MFIPPA, s. 34
Election Info	Twp website or Municipal office, - Municipal Elections Act, 1996, s. 88 (5)
Gaming Licensing	Municipal office - Release after personal info removed
History Books - Mara & Rama	View copy at Library or pay fee to purchase at Municipal office
Industrial Park - Brechin Business Park	Brechin Business Park website; Municipal office for portfolio for potential investors; rack card; Info on buying & selling of land, but not negotiations discussed in closed session
Land Transactions	Municipal office - Info on buying & selling of land, but not negotiations discussed in closed session
Licensing	Municipal office - Release after personal info removed
Local Improvement Roll	Municipal office – O. Reg 586/06, Local Improvement Charges - Priority Lien Status, s. 23
Lottery Licensing	Municipal office - Release after personal info removed
Mailing Lists	Municipal office - Electors list – Remove personal information
Maps	Municipal office - Maps produced by Chamber of Commerce - free; County produced maps - pay fee for hardcopy or visit Simcoe County interactive mapping website
Minutes for Council & Committees	Twp website; Municipal office - Municipal Act, s. 253 (1)
Minutes/Reports for Closed Session Council &	Refer to FOI Coordinator – MFIPPA s.6(1)(b), Municipal Act, s. 253 (1)

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Committees	
Motions and Resolutions	Twp website; Municipal office - Municipal Act, s. 253 (1)
PIB - Personal Information Banks - index of records containing personal information	Twp website; Municipal office - MFIPPA, s. 34
Property Register - Cultural Heritage Value	Municipal office - Ontario Heritage Act, s. 27
Quotation & Tender Documents	Municipal office - Release records read at meetings open to the public; Not specific pricing details Refer to FOI Coordinator - Specific unit pricing details for quotations and tenders unless there is a clause to permit release.
Resolutions, and Motions	Twp website; Municipal office - Municipal Act, s. 253 (1)
Staff Reports	Twp website; Municipal office Confidential Staff Reports- Refer to FOI Coordinator - only release to individual to which it directly relates through formal FOI request.
Surplus Lands, Township owned	Municipal office contact Municipal Clerk

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**FINANCE / TAX / TREASURY DEPARTMENT**

**Routine disclosures:**

<b>RECORD</b>	<b>ACCESS METHOD</b>
Accounts Payable	Municipal office – after personal information and unit prices removed.
Accounts Receivable	Municipal office – after personal information and unit prices removed.
Assessment Rolls	Must visit Municipal office and examine in person. Info cannot be duplicated using photocopier, camera or scanning technology. No personal information to be provided over the telephone, unless to owner - <i>Assessment Act, s. 39</i>
Audits	Municipal office - <i>Municipal Act, s. 296 (6)</i>
Budgets	Municipal office - Drafts and final budgets presented at Council / Committee meetings Budget working papers - Refer to FOI Coordinator
Consultant prepared reports / studies	Municipal office
Employee Benefits	Municipal office
Expense Statements	Municipal office - Release info re Council members - <i>Municipal Act, s. 284</i>
Financial Statements	Twp website; Municipal office or retrieve from County Archives
Grant projects	Formal FOI request for reports and working papers
Insurance	Municipal office - Annual premium information available through minutes. Formal FOI request when seeking more detail than what is available in Council minutes
Local Improvement Roll	Municipal office - <i>O. Reg 586/06, Local Improvement Charges - Priority Lien Status, s. 23</i>
Municipal Addressing – 911#s	Municipal office – after personal information removed.
MPMP - Municipal Performance	Twp website; Municipal office - <i>Municipal Act, 2001</i>

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Measures Program	& MMAH – Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing
Policies and Procedures	Municipal office
Salary Disclosures	Municipal office - Salary Range for position may be released, but not for specific person; however those making \$100,000 and over are required to be released. - <i>Public Sector Salary Disclosure Act, 1996</i>
Staff Reports	Twp website; Municipal office Confidential Staff Reports- Refer to FOI Coordinator - only release to individual to which it directly relates through formal FOI request.
Tax Certificates	Municipal office - Free to owner; other parties must pay fee
Tax History	Municipal office - pay fee
Tax Receipts, Duplicate	Municipal office - pay fee
Tax Rolls & Records	Municipal office
Utilities	Municipal office – Utility statements & consumption info only released to owner

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**RECREATION DEPARTMENT**

**Routine disclosures:**

<b>RECORD</b>	<b>ACCESS METHOD</b>
Consultant prepared reports / studies	Municipal office
Facility/Parks Rental Information	Twp website, Municipal office or Recreation office for hours & rates Refer to FOI Coordinator for Formal FOI request if it involves specific rentals/individuals/groups
Parks	Municipal office - Contact Municipal Clerk
Policies and Procedures	Municipal office or Recreation office
Recreational programming	Twp website, Municipal office or Recreation office for hours and rates Refer to FOI Coordinator for Formal FOI request if it involves personal information
Registration Forms	Twp website, Municipal office or Recreation office for blank forms Refer to FOI Coordinator for Formal FOI request for completed forms
Staff Reports	Twp website; Municipal office Confidential Staff Reports- Refer to FOI Coordinator - only release to individual to which it directly relates through formal FOI request.
Trails	Twp website; Municipal office

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**ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

**Routine disclosures:**

<b>RECORD</b>	<b>ACCESS METHOD</b>
Annual Reports of Water Systems	Twp website; ES office
Bylaws	Municipal office; Twp website
Consultant prepared reports / studies	Municipal office; ES office
Inspections Reports of Water Treatment Plants	Twp website; ES office
Policies and Procedures	Twp website; Municipal office; ES office
Sewers	ES office
Source Water Protection documents related to Clean Water Act: -Risk Management Plans -Compliance Notices & Orders -Risk Assessments	ES office
Staff Reports	Twp website; Municipal office Confidential Staff Reports- Refer to FOI Coordinator - only release to individual to which it directly relates through formal FOI request.
Water line locations	ES office
Purchase price of Water meters	Municipal office; ES office
Water and sanitary sewer permits	Municipal office; ES office after personal information removed. Water and sewer permit applications - Refer to FOI Coordinator
Water Treatment Plants	Twp website; ES office
Water and or sewer rates	Twp website; Municipal office; ES office

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**FIRE & RESCUE SERVICES/ EMERGENCY PLANNING**

**Routine disclosures:**

<b>RECORD</b>	<b>ACCESS METHOD</b>
Consultant prepared reports / studies	Municipal office
Emergency Plan	Twp website; Municipal office Only release public version of plan which does not contain personal phone #s
Fire Dept Incident Reports	Municipal office for fee, after personal info severed Requests for complete copy of a fire file – Refer to FOI Coordinator – info released only by formal FOI request
Fire Dept Inspection Reports (complaint vs. non complaint driven)	Municipal office - Owner may view file & pay for copies; otherwise Formal FOI request
Fire Dept Road Atlas	Municipal office - Pay fee
Firefighter Officer Notes	Refer to FOI Coordinator - Only released by formal FOI request with personal info removed.
Fire Prevention and Public Safety Information	Twp website; Municipal office; Social media
Quotation & Tender Documents	Municipal office for records read at meetings open to the public; Not specific unit pricing details Refer to FOI Coordinator - Specific unit pricing details for quotations and tenders unless there is a clause to permit release.
Registration Forms	Municipal office
Staff Reports	Twp website; Municipal office Confidential Staff Reports- Refer to FOI Coordinator - only release to individual to which it directly relates through formal FOI request.
Vehicle and Fleet Management	Inventory info on Twp website; Municipal office



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**PLANNING DEPARTMENT**

**Routine disclosures:**

<b>RECORD</b>	<b>ACCESS METHOD</b>
Committee of Adjustment Applications	Municipal office
Committee of Adjustment Notices and Decisions	Twp website; Municipal office
Compliance Letters	Municipal office - Pay fee
Consultant prepared reports / studies	Municipal office
Design Criteria & Drawings	Municipal office - Pay fee
Official Plan & Amendments	Twp website; Municipal office - Pay fee
OMB - Ontario Municipal Board hearings	Municipal office or contact OMB
Planning	Municipal office for info & materials required to be submitted to municipality under the Planning Act
Planning Applications	Municipal office Letters regarding a planning application that have not yet become a public record - Refer to FOI Coordinator
Policies and Procedures	Municipal office
Property Files	Municipal office - Owner/agent may view file & pay for copies Refer to FOI Coordinator if not requested by owner/agent
Public Planning meeting info	Twp website; Municipal office
Site Plans	Municipal office - If site plan application has been formally submitted, it is public knowledge – however this is only for viewing not for copies – approval from owner must be given if copies requested – Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990
Staff Reports	Twp website; Municipal office Confidential Staff Reports- Refer to FOI Coordinator - only release to individual to which it directly relates

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	through formal FOI request.
Subdivision / Site Plan Agreement Information	Municipal office – If owner is requesting a copy, copy can be provided – otherwise, it should be searched in registry office
Surveys / Reference Plans	Municipal office - Release to property owner; otherwise remove the personal information, copy the requested portion and mark the record as a “copy” or re-direct to Land Registry Office
Zoning Bylaw & Amendments	Municipal office - Pay fee

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**WORKS DEPARTMENT**

**Routine disclosures:**

<b>RECORD</b>	<b>ACCESS METHOD</b>
Consultant prepared reports / studies	Municipal office
Culvert permit & installation	Municipal office - Owner may view property file & pay for copies
Municipal Addressing	Municipal office - Pay for copies after personal info removed
Quotation & Tender Documents	Municipal office for records read at meetings open to the public Refer to FOI Coordinator - Specific unit pricing details for quotations and tenders unless there is a clause to permit release.
Staff Reports	Twp website; Municipal office Confidential Staff Reports- Refer to FOI Coordinator - only release to individual to which it directly relates through formal FOI request.

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**REFERENCES CONSULTED:**

*Developing Your Municipality's Routine Disclosure / Active Dissemination Policy.*  
Ontario: AMCTO - Municipal Information Access & Privacy Project Team, 2011.

Township of Ramara Retention Bylaw 2004.31

**RELEVANT LEGISLATION:**

*Assessment Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c.31 s.39 (2)

*Municipal Act*, S.O. 2001, c.25 s.253 (1), s.284, s.296, O.Reg 586/06 – s.23

*Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, R.S.O. 1990, s.6, s.34,  
s.54

*Ontario Heritage Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c.18 s.27

*Planning Act*, R.S.O. 1990 s.1.0.1

*Public Sector Salary Disclosure Act*, S.O. 1996, c.1 s.3, s.4

**REVIEW CYCLE:**

This policy will be reviewed by Township staff every 5 years or sooner if there are changes to relevant legislation or the Township's Retention Schedule.

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