



Township of Ramara - Website Policy

1.0 INTENT:

The purpose of this policy is to set guidelines, standards, roles and responsibilities for management and maintenance of the [Township of Ramara website](http://www.ramara.ca).

2.0 SCOPE:

The Township of Ramara website is the primary source for online information exchange with the public and stakeholders. This policy applies to the Township of Ramara website at www.ramara.ca ; including all current and future landing pages and any other approved Municipal websites.

3.0 RESPONSIBILITY

It is the responsibility of all Township employees who work on the Township of Ramara site to read, understand and follow the policy.

4.0 DEFINITIONS

“**Accessibility**” or “**Accessible**” is a general term used to describe the degree of ease that something (e.g., device, service, and environment) can be used and enjoyed by persons with a disability. The term implies conscious planning, design, and/or effort to ensure it is barrier-free to persons with a disability, and by extension, highly usable and practical for the general population as well.

“**Chief Administrative Officer**” or “**CAO**” means the Chief Administrative Officer of the Township of Ramara.

“**Clerk**” means the Clerk of Township of Ramara or Deputy Clerk.

“**Content Contributor(s)**” means Municipal employees who make routine edits to their respective department pages and submit content changes and additions to the Website Content Editor(s) for review/approval and publishing to website.

“**Content Management**” refers to the process of determining what information will be offered on the Township of Ramara’s website. Content management includes, but is not limited to, the tasks associated with routine maintenance as defined under this policy.

“**Content Management System**” or “**CMS**” is an application that allows users to create, edit, and manage online content. The Township of Ramara’s website uses the i:Create Content Management System, a product of the eSolutionsGroup.

“Corporate Communications” means a designated Municipal employee(s) who is responsible for the creation, review, and approval of website content and ensure overall compliance with website content guidelines.

“Council” means the Council of the Township of Ramara

“External Link” refers to any hyperlink that takes the website user from the Township’s official website to the website of another organization, association, or group.

“External Affiliated Website” refers to an external website that is affiliated with the Township of Ramara but is not managed and maintained by Corporate Communications.

“Objectionable Material” refers to content that contradicts the principles established by the Ontario Human Rights Code or materials of a pornographic, profane or sexually explicit nature, as well as content that may offend based on race, ancestry, place of origin, ethnicity, citizenship, creed, age, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, family status, religion or disability.

“PDF”, or Portable Document Format, is a file format that provides an electronic image of text or text and graphics that looks like a printed document and can be viewed, printed, and electronically transmitted or published.

“Routine Maintenance” includes, but is not limited to, the following tasks: updating the calendar of events, posting public notices, news, or other materials related to the Township, posting material as requested by various department heads, correcting information posted online in order to ensure accuracy, verifying all hyperlinks to ensure that they are functioning, conducting accessibility checks, posting Council, board and committee meeting minutes, posting Council agendas, and taking down any information that is deemed outdated and/or inaccurate.

“Senior Leadership Team” means the Director or Manager of a Department of the Township of Ramara, and who is a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

“Website(s)” refers to the official Township of Ramara website at www.ramara.ca, including all website-landing pages (e.g., Township of Ramara Public Library) and any other domain name(s) the Township acquires for official Municipal use.

5.0 GUIDELINES:

5.1 Roles and Responsibilities

The Township of Ramara website is structured and maintained through the i:Create Content Management System (CMS), a product of the eSolutionsGroup. Updates and upgrades to the i:Create CMS and its related modules may result in changes to the roles and responsibilities outlined below.

I. Content Contributor

- Regularly add, change, update and expire content that falls within their assigned area of responsibility on the site (but note that all content created, changed or expired by Content Contributors will be reviewed, edited and approved by Corporate Communications prior to going live on the website)
- Maintain ownership of specific pages on the website through the Content Management System.
- Seek advice, guidance and support from Web Content Editors and Corporate Communications on content management and web copywriting (i.e., how to write more concisely; tips on how to transform complex and lengthy technical information into language the general public will understand; etc.)

II. Website Content Editors

Website Content Editors hold the same access as Content Contributors plus are responsible for enforcing the Township's website policy and web-writing guidelines when receiving any content submitted by Content Contributors.

- Website Content Editors provide a support system for Content Contributors, who may seek advice or guidance on content management or web copywriting.
- Website Content Editors will not be responsible for continually monitoring the site (except for pages that have been specifically assigned to them) for the content's accuracy or relevance; that will be the Content Contributors' responsibility.
- Website Content Editors are responsible for ensuring content is easily understood and laid out, incorporating appropriate visuals, infographics, photography, and videos.

Some web content editors have specialized access to allow for direct posting of time sensitive notifications and updates.

III. Corporate Communications

- Have ultimate accountability of all of the content published on the website.
- Provide advice, and input to the Website Steering Committee regarding website and digital technology trends
- Review usage of website/content including most frequently accessed pages, pages with stale content, and resources that are not used on any webpages.
- Provide website analytics and reports on website usage.
- Assign roles, in consultation with departmental management, (e.g., Content Contributor) to individual staff across the corporation.
- Work with management in individual work areas across the corporation to manage the performance of Content Contributors (if necessary).
- Manage the performance of the Corporate Website Team including Website Content Editors and Content Contributors.
- Assist in identifying content that would benefit the public.

- Approve website content and approve requests for microsite and themed landing pages
- Coordinate all front page content and changes to front page calls to action.
- Have the authority to remove content immediately if content is found to be out-of-date, inaccurate, inappropriate, irrelevant or inaccessible.

Corporate Communications is not responsible for:

External affiliated website

The Township of Ramara has one external affiliated website that is managed and maintained by the Ramara Public Library.

Staff of the Ramara Public Library are responsible for the content management and routine maintenance of their respective landing pages. Landing pages must comply with the guidelines set out in this policy and should stay as consistent as possible with the language, style, and format of the general website.

Legislative Services Department

To ensure accuracy and that legislative requirements are met, the Legislative Services Department, specially the Clerks office, will be responsible for the content management and routine maintenance of the following website components:

- ICompass (including meeting agendas, minutes, and calendar)
- Municipal Election information
- News and Alerts, especially for Public Meeting Notices.
- Bylaws

This list may be adjusted at the discretion of the CAO and/or agreement of Corporate Communications and Clerk.

IV. CAO

The CAO, in consultation with Senior Leadership Team, is responsible to designate the role of Corporate Communications to the appropriate Municipal employee.

The CAO is responsible to ensure Senior Leadership Team performs reviews of their department's website sections.

The CAO will inform Corporate Communications of any website content additions and revisions as requested by Council.

The CAO will inform Corporate Communications of Council decisions and other Township news/public notice announcements that should be communicated on the website.

V. Senior Leadership Team

A representative from each department in the Senior Leadership Team will perform a semi-annual review of all website material posted under their department's website section. The Senior Leadership Team will inform their department's Website Contributor and Editor of any changes or updates that need to be made. Any content that is beyond the scope of the role of the Content Contributor or Content Editor will be performed by Corporate Communications.

Senior Leadership Team will communicate service and/or program changes or Council decisions that affect their department and should be communicated to the public via the website. The Senior Leadership Team member and Corporate Communications, with input from the CAO when appropriate, will decide by which method the information should be communicated through the website (e.g., news item, public notice, alert banner, displayed on homepage, creation of new interior page, etc.).

5.2 Content Management Guidelines

Content on the Township's website must meet one or more of the following criteria in order to be posted:

- a) Provides public information about events, activities and services provided by, in association with or supported by the Township or a board/committee of the Township.
- b) Provides public information about events, activities and services provided by, in association with or supported by upper tier governments that directly affect residents, visitors and persons conducting business in the Township.
- c) Provides information, deemed by Council, to be of interest to the Township of Ramara, its residents and/or visitors.

5.3 External Links

The Township will consider posting external links on its website if the link meets one or more of the following criteria:

- a. Connects the public with information and services provided by upper tier governments or government-funded agencies or boards in Canada.
- b. Provides further information on subject matter found on the Township's website. Such information must be provided by an official and/or accredited source.
- c. A Township affiliated organization, service club or registered charity (direct partnership by way of funding, sponsorship, staff resources or in-kind contributions).
- d. A business improvement area operating within the Township.
- e. A professional association as determined solely by the Township of Ramara.
- f. Organization approved by Council.

g. General benefit to the Township and its residents.

I. Removal of External Links

External Links will be removed by the Township without notice if, but not limited to, any of the following conditions apply:

- a) The site's original information has been altered or the context of the information has changed.
- b) The site no longer meets the conditions listed above for acceptable external links.
- c) In the Township's sole opinion, the information on the site has become inaccurate and/or not credible;
- d) The link returns a "not found" error.
- e) The link promotes, exhibits, illustrates or manifests objectionable material, as defined in this policy.
- f) The site and content does not comply with municipal, provincial or federal legislation.

The i:Create CMS module Link Checker will be performed on a routine basis by the Website Administrator to identify any links on the Township's website that are no longer active and/or are broken. The Township does reserve the right to post, refuse to post any external links on its website or delete links already posted on its site at any time, without notice.

5.4. Community Calendar

The Township will post information regarding community activities, programs, meetings, and events organized by the Township and other organizations in its website Community Calendar. Please note that all Council and Committee meetings will be posted on the Council Calendar in iCompass.

I. Criteria for Publishing Events Submitted by the Public

Members of the public may submit event information to be added on the website Community Calendar if the event is open to the public, occurs within the boundaries of the Township of Ramara and meets one of the following criteria:

- Organized or funded by another level of government.
- Organized by a government-funded agency or board.
- Organized by a Township of Ramara affiliated committee.
- Funded in full, or in part, the Township of Ramara.
- Sponsored by the Township of Ramara.
- Organized by a registered charitable organization or service club operating within the Township of Ramara.
- Located in a facility owned by the Township of Ramara.

Notwithstanding the criteria listed above, the Township reserves the right to post, refuse to post, or remove any event from the website Community Calendar at any time, without notice.

II. Submitting an Event

Requests from a member of the public to add an event to the website Community Calendar must be submitted on the Community Calendar page of the website. Users who wish to submit events are required to create an account prior to posting to the Community Calendar.

To be considered for publication, an event submission must be accompanied by the event title and event details, including date, time and location, and contact information of an individual from the event organizing committee. Anonymous postings of events will not be published. Corporate Communications will be responsible to monitor, approve, and/or disapprove Community Calendar event submissions.

5.5 Accessibility

The Township of Ramara values the contributions and participation of all residents, visitors and stakeholders in the municipality. To facilitate involvement, the Municipality is committed to provide goods, information, services and programs that are accessible to all.

As per the Township of Ramara's Accessibility Policy, by 2021 "Ramara shall ensure that all internet websites and web content on those sites conform to the WCAG 2.0, Level AA" requirements.

5.6 Privacy

The Township of Ramara is committed to protecting the privacy of those who visit its website.

Our practices concerning the collection, retention and disclosure of personal information, online or offline, have been designed to ensure compliance with the privacy provisions of the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. M. 56.

We work to ensure that only the required personal information is collected and that such information is used responsibly.

Information collected through the municipality's website will only be used for the purpose of which it was collected. Forms will include a notice of collection such as or similar to the following:

Notice of Collection: The personal information recorded on this form is collected and maintained in accordance with MFIPPA - the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act and will be used for the sole purpose of processing your request. Questions about the collection of personal information may be addressed to

the Records and Information Coordinator, Township of Ramara, 2297 Highway 12, P.O. Box 130, Brechin, ON L0K 1B0, 705-484-5374.

5.7 Disclaimer

Site ownership and operation

Ramara.ca is owned and operated by the Corporation of the Township of Ramara.

Accuracy

The Township's website content is provided as a public service as information only. While every attempt has been made to ensure its accuracy, the Township of Ramara makes no warranties or representations, expressed or implied, concerning the accuracy, or completeness of the information contained in or linked from this website. In the event of a discrepancy between the information contained on the website and the information contained in the records of the Township, please refer to the official records.

Links to External Sites

On occasion, the Township of Ramara's website provides links to external websites for information and convenience. The Municipality is not responsible for, and does not endorse, the content found on, nor the privacy practices of external websites.

Correspondence to Council

Individuals who submit letters and other information to Council should be aware that any personal information contained within their communications may become part of the public record and may be made available through the Council agenda process which includes publication on the Township's website.