



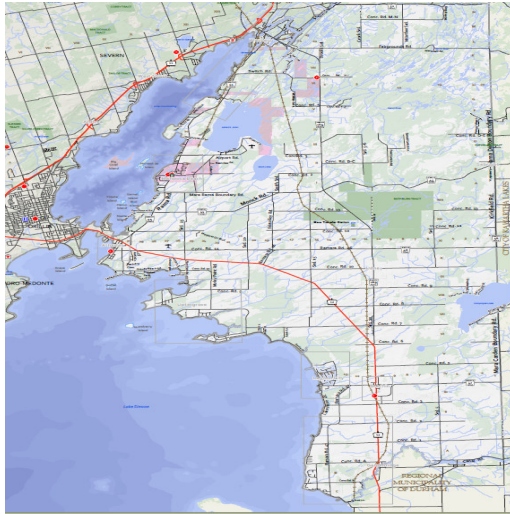
MUNICIPALITY OF THE MONTH

December, 2012
The Township of Ramara



Where is it?

Ramara lies on the eastern and northern shores of Lake Simcoe and Lake Couchiching in Simcoe County near Orillia. To the north it borders Muskoka and the municipality of Kawartha Lakes, with Durham Region bordering along the south. Ramara Township was established in 1994 when the two smaller townships of Rama and Mara were amalgamated.



What are the biggest attractions?

Ramara has an abundance of waterfront; Lakes Simcoe, Couchiching, Dalrymple and St. John provide endless four season recreational opportunities for tourists and residents. The rivers such as the Severn, Black, Head and Talbot provide corridors for boats, canoes and kayaks. Summer and permanent homes line the shoreline. Businesses such as resorts, marinas and recreational suppliers provide for visitors and residents wanting to utilize this remarkable resource. The Trent-Severn Waterway goes through the Township; boaters from all over Ontario and the U.S. cruise our waters each summer. Ramara is rich in aggregates and provides limestone throughout Ontario. Some of the largest producers in the country have quarries in the Township. These companies are major employers for Ramara residents. Ramara can also boast of having its own one of a kind "Venice" in the form of Lagoon City. This sometimes controversial project was developed in the 1960's, and is an area of high population density and a haven for many. Canals run adjacent to the properties so most home owners have access to the water and Lake Simcoe.

What makes the municipality unique?

The thing that stands out about the Township of Ramara is its diversity. There are not many places where lakefront development, agriculture and aggregate facilities can co-exist

in a relatively harmonious way. They do in Ramara. Although, soil quality has limited agriculture in the Township, it remains a dominant, traditional way of life. There are sheep and beef operations and dairy farms throughout the landscape. Planning and compromise has been the key to keeping property owners and the aggregate producers reasonably tolerant of each other.

What are the most common issues faced by the Committee of Adjustment?

Ramara has appointed five members of the community to sit on the Committee of Adjustment. The individuals come from a variety of backgrounds and bring to the table diversified life experiences. The appointments, whether by plan or luck, created a group with a positive chemistry with which to deal with Minor Variances and Consents. A common issue seen almost every month is the re-development of the shoreline properties. Most of the original development took place between 1930 and 1960. The lots were small to maximize the waterfront and for the most part the buildings were one to two bedroom seasonal cottages. Today the cottages are being renovated or torn down and replaced with large permanent homes. These large homes and small lots provide us with "Variances" which are, at times, complex.

Development in the areas adjacent to the lands of the Rama First Nation and Casino Rama present another complicated issue. Although designated as an area of growth, it is also an environmentally fragile area near the lakes. The Committee works with the Lake Simcoe Conservation Authority, the County of Simcoe and the Township to ensure the best possible decisions for the applicants and ensuring the development will not be detrimental to our natural resources.



Municipal Office – Township of Ramara

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OACA would like to thank Doug Cooper of the Committee of Adjustment of the Township of Ramara for submitting this information to "Municipality of the Month". More information can be found on the Township's website at www.ramara.ca.

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