



The Mainstreeter
The Community Voice of Old Ottawa East since 1985

Editorial Policy

A. Introduction

Community newspapers, such as *The Mainstreeter*, provide a service to their local community. Since their primary role is to inform residents of the communities they serve, they are usually free and published at regular intervals. Local newspapers provide timely content about community activities and are characterized by demonstrable levels of local engagement (usually supported by volunteer labour), and by the local focus of their coverage.

Moreover, as the community newspaper of Old Ottawa East, *The Mainstreeter* is about the extraordinary people who reside in our neighbourhoods; we tell their stories, express their viewpoints and profile their achievements.

The Mainstreeter is a standalone, non-profit corporate entity overseen by a dedicated, volunteer Board of Directors and a staff of volunteer journalists and photographers who contribute to the editorial content of the newspaper each issue. The editor is responsible for maintaining the editorial independence of *The Mainstreeter* and establishing the overall “voice and perspective” of the newspaper, assisted in that regard by the Board of Directors. Decisions on what does and does not appear in the pages of *The Mainstreeter* are those of the editor, guided by editorial and advertising policies developed and approved by the Board of Directors.

Subject always to its overriding independence and impartiality, *The Mainstreeter* facilitates the communications of community organizations and the community’s political representatives, provides information and news coverage about issues and developments of relevance to the community and engages residents and readers to participate in neighbourhood affairs and events.

B. Essential Content

The Mainstreeter exists to serve the residents of Old Ottawa East.

Editorial content of *The Mainstreeter* shall reflect the population, cultural and geographic diversity of the community, and adhere to the caring, sharing and community-based values of Old Ottawa East.

The Mainstreeter shall provide timely information about community developments, organizations, events and meetings and feature entertaining accounts of the people who live, work or volunteer their time in and around Old Ottawa East.

While mindful of its editorial independence, *The Mainstreeter* shall facilitate the communications of Old Ottawa East community organizations, and their various committees and subcommittees, including the Old Ottawa East Community Association, the Community Activities Group, Sustainable Living Ottawa East, the Farmers' Market, the Children's Garden, and community schools and churches. At its option, and as determined by the Board of Directors, *The Mainstreeter* may enter into content agreements with any community organization which, amongst other things, establish arrangements and terms by which these organizations can access the pages of *The Mainstreeter* to publicize or promote their activities on a regular or recurring basis, subject to space constraints.

The Mainstreeter shall provide information about the nomination and election of municipal, provincial, and federal representatives of the community, and reportage when their responsibilities or their actions affect our community.

The Mainstreeter shall cover news in our community, regarding topics such as, but not limited to, transportation/traffic, businesses, residential and commercial development, and community institutions and organizations (e.g. neighbourhood schools, Saint Paul University, faith organizations).

Beyond informing Old Ottawa East residents of timely news, developments and events of relevance and interest to them, *The Mainstreeter* shall also endeavour to offer engaging and entertaining content to its readers, including feature articles, interviews, columns, opinion content, photographic images and in-depth reports and series. Examples might include feature articles on Old Ottawa East neighbourhoods and neighbours, historical articles about the community or its founders, interviews with individuals discussing subjects of interest to the community, and specialized content relating to arts and culture, food and drink, and environmental issues with a community focus or connection.

The Mainstreeter shall not allow editorial attacks upon individuals and shall not publish any article deemed to be improper or inappropriate because of potential injury to one or more individuals, businesses, organizations or to the community at large. It is the editor's responsibility to enforce any content restrictions of this kind, assisted in that regard by the Board of Directors.

The publication in *The Mainstreeter* of photographic images of children under the age of 16 who are clearly recognizable must be approved by the parents or guardians of the children. In addition, any editorial content including photo captions or cutlines associated with any such photographic images should refer only to the first name of the child(ren) in question.

The Mainstreeter will not publish articles, information or photographic images that are libelous, slanderous, obscene, or otherwise contrary to law.

C. Content Guidelines

C. 1. Geographic coverage of content

The Mainstreeter is the community newspaper of Old Ottawa East, and the majority of its content shall focus on Old Ottawa East residents or political and other representatives, institutions, organizations, places, events, and concerns.

When its content includes topics outside the boundaries of Old Ottawa East, *The Mainstreeter* articles shall focus to the extent possible on the impacts/interest of this content to community members. Topics outside the boundaries of Old Ottawa East may also be published in *The Mainstreeter* when the content would be of interest and/or relevance to Old Ottawa East residents or engages the interest of readers in multiple communities, including Old Ottawa East. Our volunteer reporters and photographers need not necessarily reside within Old Ottawa East.

C. 2. French language content in The Mainstreeter

The Mainstreeter shall endeavour to publish French-language articles (either translated or original) when possible, with a goal of publishing articles in the French-language that relate to or are of relevance or of interest to the French-language population of Old Ottawa East.

C. 3. Content mix (advertising, non-advertising)

Ideally, advertising content will comprise between 35 and 45% of any printed issue of *The Mainstreeter*.

C. 4. Infomercials/Advertorials

Infomercial or advertorial content has the unacceptable tendency to blur the lines between news/information, on the one hand, and advertising, on the other hand, and has for its primary purpose the promotion of a business or service, which is more appropriately done through conventional commercial advertising. As such, it is not acceptable editorial content in *The Mainstreeter*.

Accordingly, *The Mainstreeter* will not run any articles provided by a business or service provider which promote that business or service as a primary or integral aspect of the content. Rather, *The Mainstreeter* readily accepts commercial advertisements in print or online and digital formats from business and service providers, subject to established rates and the terms of our Advertising Policy.

The Mainstreeter may publish a “Business Beat” article, column or page, with news and information about community businesses and/or their proprietors of interest and relevance to our readers, provided it is written and edited by staff of *The Mainstreeter*, and not by staff of the business in question.

The use of *The Mainstreeter* name or graphic design or imagery associated with *The Mainstreeter* will not be permitted in any submitted content for publication, except with the express prior written consent of the editor or the Board of Directors.

C. 5. Letters to the Editor

Letters to the Editor submitted to *The Mainstreeter* will generally be published in the next following issue of the newspaper, subject to space constraints and lawfulness of the letter’s content. However, the decision to publish any Letter to the Editor rests entirely with and at the discretion of the editor. If several letters are submitted on a particular subject, the editor will, to the extent possible, ensure a balance between conflicting points of view.

Upon receipt of a Letter to the Editor, *The Mainstreeter* will confirm the identity of the letter writer. At the editor’s discretion, the letter may undergo minor editing for style, length, grammar, clarity or ease of understanding. The editor will contact the writer if a letter needs substantial edits.

The editor shall seek a response from individuals, businesses or organizations that are the subject of significant criticism or allegations of wrongdoing or incompetence and print or report their response.

C. 6. Pre-election issues of The Mainstreeter

The issue preceding municipal, provincial, or federal elections shall include information on the candidates seeking election to represent the community of Old Ottawa East. The candidates may simply be identified, or their candidacy, their campaigns, their policies and their priorities may be described more fully, depending on time and space constraints for *The Mainstreeter* issue, and on the responsiveness of the candidates.

In its nomination and pre-election coverage, *The Mainstreeter* shall seek to ensure equal and fair treatment of all political candidates, subject to the accessibility and responsiveness of the candidates.

C. 7. Attribution

The Mainstreeter will generally identify the writer(s) of the articles and provide photo credits for the photographic images included in the newspaper. At the editor's discretion, some articles in *The Mainstreeter* may be identified under a "MAINSTREETER STAFF" byline instead of the writer's name.

Articles appearing below a writer's byline will not undergo substantial pre-publication editing without the writer's approval. If the writer wishes to remove his/her byline from the article in its edited form, the editor will ensure the article is published under a "MAINSTREETER STAFF" byline instead of the writer's name.

C. 8. Web-based content

Web-based content on www.mainstreeter.ca and contents included in *The Mainstreeter's* e-newsletter shall comply with this editorial policy and reflect the mandate and objectives of *The Mainstreeter's* hardcopy publication.

The on-line digital version of *The Mainstreeter* and *The Mainstreeter's* e-newsletter will be managed to allow community members more "real time" voice and opinion on issues of relevance and importance to Old Ottawa East.

Any on-line, web-based content accepted by the web manager is subject to the approval of *The Mainstreeter's* editor.

Web-based content on www.mainstreeter.ca and contents included in *The Mainstreeter's* e-newsletter may differ in length and format from the hardcopy version, at the discretion of the web manager and *The Mainstreeter* editor.

C. 8. AI-based or originated content

[Policy under development]

D. Complaints/Dispute Resolution

Complaints against *The Mainstreeter* may be made to an Editorial Advisory Committee, which will consider the complaint(s) based on adherence to this policy document, and provide recommendations for action, if needed, to *The Mainstreeter's* Board of Directors.

The Mainstreeter's Board will appoint the Editorial Advisory Committee, which will consist of two members of *The Mainstreeter* Board and three additional persons who reside in Old Ottawa East and are not otherwise associated with *The Mainstreeter*.

E. Editor

The editor will determine whether content submitted for publication needs to be edited for length, spelling, style, or grammar. Similarly, the editor will determine whether any such content should be restricted as contrary to this policy, including due to possible violation of laws, and/or to personal attacks on one or more individuals, businesses, organizations or to the community at large.

The editor will inform the writer if a submission requires significant editing or content restrictions. The editor will not alter the intent or direction of an article without agreement from the author.

Any article, feature, editorial or other opinion content written by the editor will be indicated as such either by the editor's name or else the words "The Editor" in the by-line or in association with the content.

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