Some steps to start the Process

Talk to your neighbours about establishing a ratepayers group in your area, define the boundaries your Ratepayers Group will represent.

Meet with the newest founder members and establish your interim leadership. You will need some “seed money” to start the group, we had founder members fund the costs associated with starting the group (website, incorporation, signage, etc).

Fill out the Forms listing your members and their addresses, establish your constitution (see sample) outlining your mandate, officers, and general regulations of your Group, complete the notice of Ratepayers Group.

INCORPORATE YOUR RATEPAYERS GROUP – you should incorporate your Ratepayers Group with the Province on Ontario (incorporate as a non-profit organization). ONLY INCORPORATED RATEPAYERS GROUPS HAVE OFFICIAL STATUS AT THE ONTARIO LAND TRIBUNALS. Don’t skip this step! This includes a name search, and completing the articles of incorporation.

There are a few steps you must take to incorporate your non-profit:

* checking [NUANS](https://www.nuans.com/auth/app/scr/corp/nuans/public/resources/search.html?lang=eng) (Newly Upgraded Name Search), to make sure your nonprofit’s name isn’t already taken
* gather supporting information, for example, the name and addresses of all incorporators, office address, and debit or credit card information to pay the fee
* fill out the [online application form](https://www.ontario.ca/page/ontario-business-registry) or [paper application form](https://www.forms.ssb.gov.on.ca/mbs/ssb/forms/ssbforms.nsf/FormDetail?OpenForm&ACT=RDR&TAB=PROFILE&SRCH=&ENV=WWE&TIT=Incorporate&NO=5270E)

Notify your local Council person, the Mayor, and the Town Clerk of the forming of your association. It is helpful to establish a collaborative relationship with the stakeholders, invite your Council person to your meetings, etc. Provide any documents the Town Clerk request (members list, etc.)

Open a bank account under for your Ratepayers Group, with signing authority with the current electorate. This account will be for membership fees, and will be used to cover operating expenses.

Plan for your first official ratepayers meeting – this may have to be via zoom because of Covid restrictions – most ratepayers groups meet 2-4 times per year, depending on circumstances. One of these meetings should include voting on the year(s) executive.

SPREAD THE WORD! Use avenues available to you to grow your membership – door to door canvassing, announcements on local community Facebook groups, notify the local press. Think about creating a website to post information and keep members updated.