



Staff Report to Council - for Direction

Title: Off Road Vehicle Bylaw-Bruce County Roads

From: Adam Stanley, Director of Transportation and Environmental Services

Date: May 2, 2024

Staff Recommendation:

That a by-law be introduced to regulate and control the movement of off-road vehicles on sections of roads under the County's jurisdiction.

Report Summary:

An update of the County's off-road vehicle bylaw was considered essential to expand on the use of County roads (shoulders) for off-road vehicle activities. This update aims to improve connectivity and access to essential services for community stakeholders by permitting off-road vehicles on all County roads, except for roads listed on schedule "A" of the by-law.

The proposed bylaw includes several changes from the 2021 by-law, including permitting off-road vehicles on additional roads across the County, as well as including language that would allow the County to issue fines and charges, should it be necessary. The proposed by-law also includes detailed definitions and clearer language about where riders can operate off-road vehicles in the County's right-of-way. The by-law regulates use of all off-road vehicles on County roads, including snowmobiles.

If approved, the proposed bylaw would take effect on July 1, 2024. The timing to implement the bylaw allows staff time to work with the courts to establish set fines.

The changes in the bylaw will benefit residents by facilitating easier access to recreational trails, farm operations and in town services, ensuring a balanced approach to off-road vehicle use that considers both recreational enjoyment and public safety.

While off-road vehicle usage on County roads is anticipated to remain limited, effective monitoring will be implemented to ensure any issues related to public safety and sustainable use of county road networks are addressed.

Background:

Allowing off-road vehicles to access a range of County roads will benefit multiple stakeholders and boost tourism by providing easier access to town supplies such as food and

fuel. This is particularly beneficial for those exploring remote trails or participating in outdoor activities, ensuring they have access to necessary amenities when needed.

This update also provides crucial farm access, offering farmers more efficient and legal routes to reach their fields and manage agricultural operations effectively. Whether it's commuting to the local trail network, or accessing agricultural land, residents will experience greater convenience and connectivity.

Although off-road vehicle access offers numerous benefits, it also introduces safety and infrastructure challenges that must be diligently addressed through effective monitoring, infrastructure planning, and public education. Balancing these factors is essential to ensure responsible and sustainable off-road vehicle use within county road networks.

Financial/Staffing/Legal/IT Considerations:

There are no financial, staffing, legal, IT considerations with this report.

Interdepartmental Consultation:

Office of the CAO (Clerk) was consulted on revision of bylaw.

Link to Strategic Goals and Objectives:

Community and Partnerships - Build a strong and inclusive community

Link to Departmental Plan Goals and Objectives, if any:

Bruce County Active Transportation and Recreational Trails Master Plan
Goal 2. Create Trail Loops and Connections

Report Author:

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Departmental Approval:

Adam Stanley, Director of Transportation and Environmental Services

Approved for Submission:

Claire Dodds, Commissioner Community Development