



STAFF REPORT

Prepared by: Dawn Recoskie, Public Works and Fire Services Coordinator **Report No.:** PW-07-2025

Agenda date: March 10, 2025

Subject: Off-Road Vehicle By-law 1597/23 – Phase 2 Review

Recommendation:

That Council provides direction to staff.

Background:

Phase 1

On July 4, 2023 Council of the Corporation of the Town of Petawawa adopted By-law 1597/23, Being a By-law to Regulate and Govern the Operation of All-Terrain, Multi-Purpose and Recreational Off-Road Vehicles (ORVs) on Highways Under the Jurisdiction of the Corporation of the Town of Petawawa.

This by-law established the Town of Petawawa designated routes, being:

- Black Bay Road, from Petawawa Boulevard westerly to Highway 17;
- Black Bay Road, from Highway 17 easterly to Petawawa Boulevard; and
- All Town of Petawawa Municipal roads west of Highway 17.

This by-law also established designated routes on portions of both County of Renfrew municipal roads and Town of Petawawa municipal roads, to access core services (food, lodging, or fuel) at five (5) designated intersections:

- Doran Road (CR-26)/Petawawa Boulevard (CR-51)/Mohns Avenue;
- Murphy Road (CR-37)/Petawawa Boulevard (CR-51)/Civic Centre Road;
- Canadian Forces Drive/Petawawa Boulevard (CR-51);
- Town Centre Boulevard/Petawawa Boulevard (CR-51)/Limestone Trail; and
- Black Bay Road/Petawawa Boulevard (CR-51)/Gutzman Road.

Phase 2

On June 3, 2024 Council of the Corporation of the Town of Petawawa adopted By-law 1664/24, Being a By-law to Amend By-law 1597/23.

This amendment was adopted to establish an **Algonquin Trail Off-Road Vehicle Access Route** for Petawawa residents who live on the designated residential streets to access the Algonquin Trail from their homes and vice versa, without having to trailer their ORVs. This encompassed five (5) rural areas of Petawawa from Charles Street southerly to Golf Course Road, and residents were expected to take the shortest most direct route to access the Algonquin Trail and to return to their place of residence from the Algonquin Trail.

Phase 1 and Phase 2 only permitted “**Off-Road Vehicles (ORVs)**” including “**All-Terrain Vehicles**”, “**Multi-Purpose Off-Highway Utility Vehicles**”, and “**Recreational Off-Highway Vehicles**” to travel on the designated routes.



“**Extreme Terrain Vehicles**” and “**Off-Road Motorcycles**” were prohibited from operating on the designated routes.



Discussion:

Renfrew County ATV Club

The request to allow ORVs to operate on municipal roads initially came from the Renfrew County ATV Club in March 2023. Following Phase 1 of the ORV By-law, the RCATV met with staff in January 2024 to discuss Phase 2 indicating the group’s goal, with Council’s support, is to ultimately allow Petawawa residents access to the Algonquin Trail directly from their home without having to trailer their ORVs to the current trailhead at the end of Norman Street, noting there is limited parking available at the trailhead.

Staff received correspondence (Attachment #1) from the RCATV in October 2024 indicating their interest in seeing Council move forward with Phase 3 of the ORV By-law to allow all Petawawa residents to access the Algonquin Trail directly from their residence without having to trailer their machines.

Liability

Risk management continues to be an area of concern for staff and the Town's insurer. The Town's insurance provider continues to recommend caution toward allowing recreational vehicles to be operated on highways in built up urban areas, due to the potential for liability for the Town.

During Phase 1 Public Works staff conducted a road inspection report on Black Bay Road in June 2023. Prior to implementing Phase 2, Public Works staff conducted road inspection reports on the rural roads defined as **Algonquin Trail Off-Road Vehicle Access Route** in March and April 2024. As part of Phase 3, should Council wish to expand the designated routes, staff recommends that road inspection reports be conducted on the new routes to establish a baseline for comparative purposes and to identify and mitigate any hazards.

Concerns from the OPP

As previously communicated, the OPP's primary concerns regarding the operation of ORVs on municipal roads are as follows:

- Under provincial regulations, ORVs cannot drive faster than 20 km/hr in a 50 km/hr zone, which means ORV operators will drive considerably slower than the flow of traffic and risk incidents.
- In an environment with curbs, sidewalks, and multi-use pathways, there is no shoulder for ORVs to pull over and allow vehicles to pass.
- ORVs are not designed for asphalt roads and can have difficulty maneuvering in a busy traffic environment.
- ORVs typically do not have access to urban centres in Ontario municipalities. Those that do, typically have an established route through some urban areas but do not allow ORVs on all roads.

Despite the concerns noted above, the Upper Ottawa Valley OPP will continue to support the decisions of Council.

Collision Statistics and Calls for Service

From 2015 to 2023, there were 7 collisions on roads within the municipal boundaries of the Town of Petawawa (excluding Highway 17) involving ORVs. In 2024 there were 2 collisions.

From 2015 to 2024 there was a total of 281 calls for service to the Upper Ottawa Valley OPP Detachment area (excluding the City of Pembroke) regarding ORVs. Some of the categories for calls for service included: speeding, motor vehicle collision, stolen vehicles/theft, traffic enforcement, impaired driving, traffic complaints, trespass to property, break and enter, and mischief among others. Below are the number of calls for

service per year pertaining to ORVs for the Upper Ottawa Valley OPP Detachment area (excluding the City of Pembroke):

- 2015 – 18 calls for service;
- 2016 – 12 calls for service;
- 2017 – 22 calls for service;
- 2018 – 25 calls for service;
- 2019 – 26 calls for service;
- 2020 – 74 calls for service;
- 2021 – 27 calls for service;
- 2022 – 35 calls for service;
- 2023 – 20 calls for service; and
- 2024 – 22 calls for service.

Of the 22 calls for service in 2024, the UOVOPP highlighted the following calls that occurred within the Town of Petawawa: there was one (1) ORV (ATV) related impaired driving investigation; four (4) provincial offences related specifically to ORMs (dirt bikes); one (1) traffic complaint regarding an ORV (ATV); and one (1) traffic complaint regarding an ORM (dirt bike).

Speeding (Algonquin Trail)

During the month of October 2024, the BlackCat speed monitors were set up along the Algonquin Trail between Portage Road and Airport Road to gather speed statistics in the 20 km/h zone and the 50 km/h zone. The 20 km/h zone stretches from Portage Road to Town Centre Boulevard; the 50 km/h zone covers Town Centre Boulevard to Airport Road and beyond. Unfortunately, the BlackCat speed monitor cannot define the type of vehicle that is being recorded, so speeding statistics can be attributed to ORVs, off-road motorcycles, bicycles, and e-bikes etc.

Date & Location	20 km/h zone	50 km/h zone
October 1 to 5, 2024 Algonquin Trail across from Dundonald Drive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 61% speeding • Highest speed recorded 80 km/h • 85% of vehicles travelling 38.9 km/h 	
October 1 to 7, 2024 Algonquin Trail across from 2757 Petawawa Boulevard (Mac's)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 17% speeding • Highest speed recorded 100 km/h • 85% of vehicles travelling 50.9 km/h

October 8 to 15, 2024 Algonquin Trail across from 2321 Petawawa Boulevard (Pine View)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 34% speeding • Highest speed recorded 104 km/h • 85% of vehicles travelling 59.9 km/h
October 8 to 15, 2024 Algonquin Trail across from 25 Civic Centre Road (Shoppers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 72% speeding • Highest speed recorded 84 km/h • 85% of vehicles travelling 32.9 km/h 	
October 18 to 22, 2024 Algonquin Trail across from Dundonald Drive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 62% speeding • Highest speed recorded 96 km/h • 85% of vehicles travelling 37.9 km/h 	
October 18 to 22, 2024 Algonquin Trail across from 2757 Petawawa Boulevard (Mac's)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 23% speeding • Highest speed recorded 92 km/h • 85% of vehicles travelling 54.9 km/h

The OPP SAVE (Snowmobile, ATV and Vessel Enforcement) Team patrolled the Algonquin Trail and feeder trails on Friday, November 22, 2024 and Saturday, November 23, 2024 and interacted with five (5) ORVs and one (1) hunter. No Provincial Offences Notices were issued due to the limited interactions, likely related to the time of the season and the weather that weekend (rainy and gloomy). The Upper Ottawa Valley OPP will be submitting a request to the OPP SAVE Team to conduct an early spring patrol on the Algonquin Trail and feeder trails as well.

County of Renfrew (Algonquin Trail)

In May 2024 the County of Renfrew amended the rules of use on the Algonquin Trail to permit the operation of off-road motorcycles (dirt bikes). Off-road motorcycles must be properly licensed, insured, and have a valid trail permit to access the Algonquin Trail.

In December 2024 the County of Renfrew announced the completion of a new section of the Algonquin Trail through Garrison Petawawa. This significant project creates a scenic, continuous recreational trail from Arnprior to Deep River, linking the Ottawa Valley Recreational Trail (OVRT) from Smiths Falls to Deep River.

Community Implications

Following the adoption of Phase 2 of the Off-Road Vehicle By-law in June 2024, staff received very few complaints from residents.

- Staff received two (2) inquiries from residents wanting to know the new rules and the designated routes for ORVs. They don't live on the designated routes and would like to see Council implement a Phase 3, so they don't have to trailer their ORVs.
- Staff received a complaint from a resident about dirt bikes operating on the Algonquin Trail and driving on Laurentian Drive.
- Staff received a complaint from a resident about other residents on Sunset Crescent who have other ATV riders travel to their address to gather, and then leave from there to travel to the Algonquin Trail. Complained about the noise and the increase in ATV traffic on the once quiet road.
- Staff received a complaint from a resident about ORVs speeding on Laurentian Drive.
- Staff received a complaint from a resident about the hours that ORVs are permitted to operate. He doesn't like the 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. restriction. It should be open 24 hours like cars.
- Staff received a complaint from a resident about the use of aftermarket exhausts on both ORVs and snowmobiles on the Algonquin Trail.
- Staff received a telephone call from a resident inquiring why they couldn't drive their dirt bike (off-road motorcycle) on the designated routes.
- Staff received one written letter from a resident requesting Council implement a Phase 3 of the ORV By-law, so they don't have to trailer their ORV to the Algonquin Trail (noting they only live 750 metres away from the trail).

Off-Road Motorcycles (dirt bikes)

Under the Town's current ORV By-law, "**Extreme Terrain Vehicles**" and "**Off-Road Motorcycles**" are prohibited from operating on the designated routes (municipal roads).

O. Reg. 316/03: Operation of Off-Road Vehicles on Highways, permits the operation of "extreme terrain vehicles" or "off-road motorcycles" on a municipal road, only if a by-law made by the Council of the municipality specifically permits the operation of that particular class of vehicle on the highway or part of the highway.

Off-road motorcycles (ORMs) must comply with the following regulations for the ORM to operate on a municipal road:

- Must have a headlight and rear brake lights if operating on a municipal road during the period that begins one-half hour before sunset and ends one-half hour after sunrise (if operating during daylight hours with good visibility, a headlight is not required);
- Must have a headlight and rear brake lights if operating on a municipal road during any period where, due to insufficient light or unfavourable atmospheric

conditions, persons and vehicles on the highway are not clearly discernible at a distance of 150 metres or less;

- Cannot have a passenger on the ORM;
- Must comply with speed limit requirements (maximum 20 km/h if the established speed limit for motor vehicles is not greater than 50 km/h; or maximum 50 km/h if the established speed limit for motor vehicles is greater than 50 km/h);
- Must follow the same rules of the road as other ORVs (Section 24 of *O. Reg. 316/03*);
- Must have valid insurance and be licenced under Section 5 of the *Off-Road Vehicles Act* (green licence plate) or Section 7 of the *Highway Traffic Act* (blue motorcycle licence plate);
- Must have a valid driver's license (minimum M2);
- Must wear a helmet;

Since staff has not received inquiries regarding the operation of “extreme terrain vehicles” on municipal roads, the above narrative only refers to “off-road motorcycles”.

Options for Consideration:

Should Council wish to expand the designated routes for the operation of ORVs on municipal roads within the Town of Petawawa, staff recommends that road inspection reports be conducted on the new routes to establish a baseline for comparative purposes and to identify and mitigate any hazards.

Should Council wish to expand the designated routes for the operation of ORVs to encompass all municipal roads, staff recommends the following:

- That Appendix “A”, Town of Petawawa Designated Routes, be amended to include the addition of Murphy Road from Doran Road to Highway 17 to alleviate some of the ORV traffic on Black Bay Road;
- That Appendix “B”, County of Renfrew Designated Routes, remains unchanged;
- That Appendix “C”, Algonquin Trail Off-Road Vehicle Access Route, be amended to include all municipal roads east of Highway 17 (excluding Black Bay Road, Garwin Street [portion south-west of Petawawa Boulevard], Sharon Street [portion south-west of Petawawa Boulevard], and Murphy Road from Doran Road to Highway 17, and any other roads Council wishes to exclude, such as school zones and Len Hopkins Drive), meaning the roads east of Highway 17 are intended for use by residents who live on those roads to travel from their homes to the Algonquin Trail and vice versa, the operation of ORVs on municipal roads is a privilege and should not be used to operate ORVs “just for fun”;

- That ORVs be restricted from travelling along Petawawa Boulevard from 2991 Petawawa Boulevard north-west to Paquette Road;
- Permission will need to be granted from the County of Renfrew to allow the operation of ORVs on Doran Road, Laurentian Drive, Murphy Road, Paquette Road, Petawawa Boulevard (from Town Centre Boulevard southerly to Golf Course Road) and Victoria Street;
- It should be noted that the Town’s ORV By-law does not apply to any road on Garrison Petawawa’s north and south townsites, nor to any private roads within the municipality (Cedar Trail, Cherry Lane, Koss Lane, MacGregor Bay Trail, Rocky Lane, and Shady Lane).

Should Council wish to allow the operation of “off-road motorcycles” and/or “extreme terrain vehicles” on municipal roads, staff will amend the by-law accordingly.

Council may wish to allow for public consultation prior to making any decisions regarding the expansion of designated routes or the addition of “off-road motorcycles” and/or “extreme terrain vehicles” prior to implementing Phase 3 of the ORV By-law.

Direction:

Staff is seeking direction from Council regarding the following:

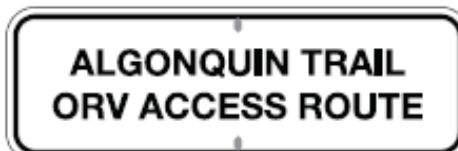
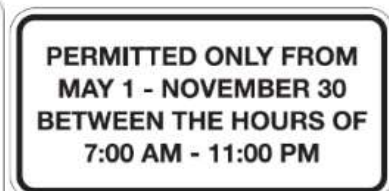
- Does Council want to expand the existing designated ORV routes?
 - If so, how should the designated ORV routes be altered/expanded?
- Does Council want to allow the operation of “off-road motorcycles” and/or “extreme terrain vehicles” on municipal roads?
- Does Council want to communicate with residents via a public survey prior to making any amendments to the ORV By-law for Phase 3?

Following direction from Council, staff can prepare the necessary amendments to the ORV By-law for Council’s review at a future meeting.

Financial Implication:

Following the adoption of By-law 1664/24, staff purchased and installed signage at a rate of \$1,866.65 plus HST:

- 10 green signs – ATVs permitted;
- 10 Algonquin Trail ORV Access Route signs;
- 10 dates/hours tab signs;
- 10 QR code tab signs;
- 16 Max 20 km/h signs; and
- 16 Max 50 km/h signs.



The County of Renfrew installed signage at its own expense on Doran Road (portion between Evergreen Drive and Achray Road; one green sign and one red sign).

Depending on the direction received from Council, new signage may need to be purchased (such as green signs with appropriate tabs). The number of signs is dependent upon the direction received from Council. The QR code has been well received by the public; staff is hopeful to retain the same QR code if the designated routes are altered/expanded (a new QR code tab sign would cost approximately \$20.00 + HST per sign).

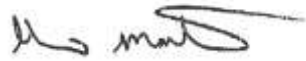
Signature:



Date: March 4, 2025

Dawn Recoskie, Public Works and Fire Services Coordinator

Reviewed by:



Date: March 4, 2025

Chris Mantha, Director of Public Works

Approved by:



Date: March 5, 2025

Scott Randolph, Chief Administrative Officer

Attachment #1: RCATV Correspondence

Attachment #2: Consolidated Version of By-law 1597/23, as amended by By-law 1664/24 on June 3, 2024

Attachment #3: Approved Set Fine Schedule