

Nfld. & Labrador

No ticket to ride: Corner Brook plans to make ATVs legal on some city streets

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All-terrain vehicle changes in Corner Brook come after lobby effort by ATVers and tour operators



[Bernice Hillier](#) · CBC News · Posted: May 15, 2019 9:29 AM NT | Last Updated: May 15



The City of Corner Brook did a test run of ATVs through the downtown core in April. Broadway was selected as part of the designated route for ATVs. (City of Corner Brook/Facebook)

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People who drive cars, SUVs, and trucks in Corner Brook could soon have some company on the road, as the city plans to implement a pilot project to allow all-terrain vehicles on some streets.

ATVs, such as quads and side-by-sides, would not have unlimited access but, starting June 1, will be allowed on a designated route along the city's waterfront and through the downtown core.

This route would enable riders to get from east to west through the city, access that is not available right now.

"It's great news. It brings people right to the heart of our city," said tour operator Craig Borden, who operates a power sport retail store, Rugged Edge.



ATVs in parking spots next to traditional road vehicles could become a more common sight in Corner Brook, if the city's proposed bylaw passes on May 27. (Craig Borden/Submitted)

No roadblocks to cash flow

But the change in a city bylaw to allow ATVs isn't being done out of the goodness of council's heart or to meet the needs of a few unhappy riders.

Mayor Jim Parsons said there's an economic reason at the root of this decision, which will be voted on by council on May 27.

"We think we're really missing out on some tourism dollars there," said Parsons.

It brings people right to the heart of our city.- Craig Borden

Borden said it's hard to know what the impact could be on the city's economy, given the thousands of people who own ATVs but have not been able to drive through the city in the past.

Instead, many ATV riders either had to sneak through the city illegally, or have their machines trailered around the city.

"We're missing out," said Borden, who lists gas stations, drug stores, grocery stores, motels and hotels as just some of the businesses that could benefit from ATVs coming through the city.

Parsons said he's been told by hoteliers that ATV access could mean hundreds more bookings per year at accommodations in the city.



Corner Brook Mayor Jim Parsons says people will only be able to ride their ATVs along a designated route in the city. (Colleen Connors/CBC)

Borden's been lobbying for the easier access by ATV riders, but he said the city's proposed bylaw exceeds his expectations.

He said he thought the city might start by introducing ATVs to roads on the outskirts of Corner Brook, but added it's now evident to him that this idea of ATVs and other vehicles co-existing has been fully embraced by council.

Safety first

That doesn't mean the city doesn't have concerns.

Parsons said the lucrative market from attracting ATVers doesn't override the importance of safety.

"The first thing is to make it safe, and we don't want to bother residents, so that's why we're sticking to a very specific route," said Parsons.

"You cannot just get out your ATV from your house and start driving around the city."



Craig Borden offers ATV tours through his business, Rugged Edge. (Colleen Connors/CBC)

ATVs that are used on city streets will have to be registered with Service NL and carry insurance for public liability, and drivers will have to have a valid driver's licence.

Parsons says the ATV bylaw will also allow them to be operated only between 7 a.m. and 10 p.m., and only from June to October.

I've probably had more inquiries about people that want to come through the town on ATV than I've ever had on snowmobiling. - *Craig Borden*

In addition, there will be a speed limit of 40 kilometres per hour for ATVs on roads.

"We feel that this is a very cautious, measured approach, and will be safe for everyone," said Parsons.

Keeping the ATVs in line

Parsons said the city will be sharing responsibility for enforcement with the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary.

Clear signage will be one of the safeguards so people know where ATVs are permitted and where they are not allowed, he said.

"We think that we can enforce it effectively."



In the past, ATV owners often had to bypass Corner Brook by putting their machines on a trailer due to the lack of a route through the city. This trailer of ATVs is parked at a rest stop on the Trans-Canada Highway overlooking Corner Brook. (Craig Borden/Submitted)

Lots of interest

While the bylaw hasn't even been enacted yet, Borden said he's already getting phone calls and messages from people who are excited about the change or who have questions about how it will work.

He said even he didn't realize the level of interest in riding ATVs to Corner Brook would be so high.

"I've probably had more inquiries about people that want to come through the town on ATV than I've ever had on snowmobiling, which has me blown away," said Borden.

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