

Document 2 – Nation Valley ATV Club presentation to ARAC on 30 September 2011

My name is Kris Gough. I am a lifelong resident of Ward 20. I will be speaking on behalf of the Nation Valley ATV Club of which I am a member. I am here today to ask the City of Ottawa to grant our club permission to develop an ATV trail system in the rural areas of the city.

This city owns and operates multi-use pathways, bike paths, ski trails and grants permission for city owned land to be used by snowmobile clubs to facilitate their network of trails. However, there are currently no legal ATV trails within city boundaries.

With our winters getting warmer and shorter, industry sale figures show a major shift from snowmobiles to ATV's as the recreational vehicle of choice due to their year round and multi-terrain capabilities.

So, where do all these machines ride? In the south end of the city, ATV's have in the past ridden on the abandoned railway bed....now the multi-use pathway along with the numerous unopened city owned road allowances.

We concede our machines are not a good mix for the multi-use pathway during the non-winter months and have been working diligently to ensure our membership does not ride on them. We have also been reporting misuse to the Ottawa Police to ensure that ATV's are not seen in a negative light. The low to non-existent reports of illegal ATV use on the new pathways hopefully proves that we have been successful.

However, we still require somewhere to safely ride.

We are asking the city to use to vast network of unopened road allowances as part of our trail system. These road allowances can be seen in historic township maps dating back to 1879 which means they haven't been utilized in over 132 years. It is our goal to develop these lands to be a year round multi-use ATV trail.

We are also asking for the city to follow the trend of the majority of rural based municipalities in Ontario and pass a bylaw that allows ATV's to drive on the side of rural roads. This would allow our trail to be continuous and link the road allowances together. Section 191.8 of the highway traffic act gives Municipalities the authority to determine whether or not off-road vehicles should be allowed access to roads under their authority. While some municipalities have elected to use a blanket type policy allowing ATV use on all secondary roads, we believe a more conservative approach... which lists specific roads which can be used... is the proper direction to take.

As you can see from the proposed route, we have worked diligently to avoid homes and populated areas. Our goal is to have a north/south trail connecting to an east/west route which will allow all major villages to join our existing trail network in North Dundas.

With a trail backbone in place using city land, our eventual plan is to approach private land owners to utilize their property to further avoid populated area and roads. However, to accomplish this, we require a basic trail system to first be in place.

By providing a legal opportunity, we reduce illegal activity.

Our intent is for the Ottawa trail system to be truly multi-use. With the exception of dirt bikes and 4X4 off road vehicles, we encourage everyone to use our trail system....even snowmobiles. Our proposed east/west link will also provide an alternative route for the residents of Greely to access the Osgoode Multi-use pathway instead of using busy roads that lack sidewalks.

Funding has also been recently been granted by the local Shroomfest organization to help develop these trails.

Our club membership mirrors that of the local snowmobile club. Members must be licenced, insured and of legal age to operate an ATV in Ontario. All members must ride legally plated ATV's. Our trail passes are valid for one calendar year and allow access to any regulated ATV trail province wide. 75% of our annual membership fee is re-invested back into trail development and maintenance. We also warden and maintain our trails year round.

On June 29th, 2011, the City of Sudbury passed a bylaw, which authorizes the use of all-terrain vehicles on some City of Greater Sudbury roads. As Sudbury has both an urban and rural mix comparable to Ottawa, we feel this bylaw would be an excellent example to model a local trail system on.

Your 2011-2014 Council Priorities lists rural tourism development under Index EP1. ATV's bring tourism to rural areas. From buying machines and parts from local ATV dealers like Al Johnston's in Metcalfe, to supporting restaurants in Osgoode like the Red Dot Café....ATV trails bring riders...who spend money when they ride in rural areas.

In closing, think of the charitable contributions the local snowmobile club brings to our community through rallies and rides which they accomplish during the winter. Now imagine the good an organized ATV club could do year round.

Thank You