



STAFF REPORT

Meeting Date: January 21, 2026
Author: John Walsh, City Administrator
Reviewed: Ashley Wigod, City Attorney's Office
Department: City Administrator's Office
Subject: Class IV ATVs
Type of Item: Proposed Ordinance

Background: Based on interest from the community, at the November 18, 2025, City Council Work Session, the Mayor proposed an ordinance to authorize Class IV ATVs to be driven on City streets. Public comments was taken. City Councilors discussed the proposed ordinance and the public comments. City Council voted to direct the City Administrator and City Attorney's Office to review the ordinance and comments made at the meeting, and provide feedback to City Council.

Class IV ATVs are not street legal in Oregon and are not able to get a license plate. However, cities may adopt their own ordinance that permits Class IV ATV's on City streets other than State highways and posting notice that ATV's are allowed. There are a handful of cities that allow Class IV ATVs on city streets, including Lakeview, Sumpter, Detroit, John Day, and Sweet Home.

The City Administrator and City Attorney's Office reviewed the proposed ordinance and comments and developed the attached proposed ordinance, which is substantially similar in nature, but with additional structure to accomplish the goals envisioned.

Here is a summary of the proposed ordinance presented at this Council meeting. Additional questions and research are identified for further discussion.

1. Purpose - authorize the operation of Class IV All-Terrain Vehicles on City Streets, as defined, within the City of St. Helens.
2. City Permit Required
 - a. Permit term was proposed for 6 months in prior draft
 - b. Permit Fee
 - i. A fee must be developed to cover the cost of administering the permit (application, review of application, approval or denial, appeals, posting signs at entrances to City and enforcing the ordinance)
 - c. Application must include
 - i. State of Oregon Permit issued under ORS 390.577
 - ii. Financial Responsibility, including minimum liability insurance required by law, which is
 1. Proof of age
 2. Valid Drivers License
 3. Proof of ownership of ATV
 4. Bodily Injury Liability: \$25,000 per person and \$50,000 per crash.
 5. Property Damage Liability: \$20,000 per crash.

6. Personal Injury Protection (PIP): \$15,000 per person for medical expenses.
7. Uninsured Motorist Coverage: \$25,000 per person and \$50,000 per crash for bodily injury.
3. Minimum Age 18 years old
4. Safety equipment and personal equipment required by law including rear facing mirror, muffler, brakes, headlights (after hours), taillights, (afterhours) helmets, eye protection, seat belts; brake lights?
5. Location of operation
6. Hours of operation
7. Enforcement – cited to municipal court
8. Appeals of permit denials, suspensions or revocations with independent officer, hired by City Administrator

Questions for discussion and further research:

1. Term of permit?
2. Is ownership of an ATV required to obtain an operator permit?
3. What safety equipment is recommended? Brake lights were not proposed to be required – is that recommended?

Recommendation:

1. It is recommended that the City Council direct the City Administrator to update the ordinance based on the discussion at this meeting and present it to City Council for further review.
2. It is recommended that the City Council direct the City Administrator to evaluate the costs associated with administering and enforcing this ordinance and propose a fee resolution for the Class IV Permit fee that reasonably compensates the City for those costs.

Recommended Motion:

1. I make a motion directing the City Administrator to update the ordinance based on the discussion at this meeting and present it to City Council for adoption.
2. I make a motion directing the City Administrator to evaluate the costs associated with administering and enforcing this ordinance and propose a fee resolution for the Class IV Permit fee that reasonably compensates the City for those costs.