

Municipality of Chatham-Kent
Infrastructure and Engineering Services
Engineering

To: Mayor and Members of Council
From: Marissa Mascaro Amyotte, Director, Engineering
Date: August 11, 2025
Subject: Golf Cart Pilot Program - Eriean

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

1. The Municipality authorize the operation of Golf Carts on roads in the Golf Cart Permit Area in Eriean.
2. The Golf Cart By-law, attached as Appendix A, be approved.
3. The Golf Cart By-law Set Fines, attached as Appendix B, be approved and submitted to the Ministry of the Attorney General for final approval.
4. Amendments to By-law 157-2024 User Fee By-law, attached as Appendix C, be approved.
5. A request be made to the Ontario Ministry of Transportation to consider the inclusion of Mitchell's Bay as part of any future intake to the Golf Cart Pilot Program.

Background

Golf Cart Pilot Program Overview

In June 2021, the Province of Ontario established a pilot program under the Highway Traffic Act to allow golf carts (also known as golf cars) to be used on road in areas designated in the Golf Cart Pilot Program regulation. General information on the pilot program is available at <https://www.ontario.ca/page/golf-cart-pilot-program>.

On initial approval of the Golf Cart Pilot Program regulation ([O. Reg. 407/21: Pilot Project – Golf Cars](#)), the program included the Township of Pelee (Pelee Island) and the Township of Huron-Kinloss. In 2024, the program was expanded to include the community of Lighthouse Cove in the Municipality of Lakeshore.

In June 2025, the program was further expanded to include the Community of Eriean in Chatham-Kent and Bois Blanc (“Boblo”) Island in the Township of Amherstburg.

All pilot programs under the Highway Traffic Act have a maximum duration of 10 years. The Golf Cart Pilot Program will expire on June 3, 2031. Unless permanent changes are made to the Highway Traffic Act by that time, the use of golf carts on highways in the pilot program areas would not be permitted once the pilot program expires.

Previous Reports and Motions

At the December 5, 2022 meeting of Council, the following motion was carried:

“Whereas on June 3, 2020, the Ministry of Transportation Ontario (MTO) introduced a new pilot project for golf carts, legally referred to as “golf cars”. The pilot project under Ontario Regulation 407/21 Pilot Project – Golf Cars sets out the broad regulatory framework to allow golf cars on roads on Pelee Island and in Huron-Kinloss and includes operator and vehicle requirements.

“And whereas the pilot is intended to assess these vehicles over a period of ten years in order to examine their ability to safely integrate with other vehicle types and determine whether existing rules of the road are adequate.

“And whereas there are no plans or communications on opportunities to grow or expand on this pilot project allowing other Municipalities to participate.

“Therefore, be it resolved that Chatham-Kent authorize a letter to appropriate Ministers and MPP’s for possible inclusion of Chatham-Kent communities, like Mitchell’s Bay and Eriean, to be added to the Golf Carts pilot project.”

Following this motion, staff contacted the Ministry of Transportation. The Ministry notified Chatham-Kent in October of 2023 that they had decided not to move forward with the proposal at that time and that the pilot will remain status quo and not be expanded to additional municipalities.

In May of 2025, the Ministry invited Chatham-Kent staff to meet and discuss a proposal for Eriean to be added to the Golf Cart Pilot Program. On June 20, 2025, the Ministry notified the municipality that Eriean had been approved effective immediately, subject to the pilot regulation (Ontario Reg. 407/21) which sets out the broad regulatory framework, including specific operator and vehicle safety requirements and the passing of a by-law to allow for their use.

Driver and Vehicle Requirements

Drivers of golf carts operating on the roadway are required to follow all normal rules of the road under the Highway Traffic Act. The Golf Cart Pilot Program regulation also gives specific requirements for golf carts:

- **Driver and passenger requirements:**
 - Minimum license Class: G
 - Minimum passenger age: 8 years old
 - Maximum number of occupants: 6 people or the number of seating positions, whichever is less
- **Rules of the road:**
 - Golf carts are not permitted outside the designated area
 - Golf carts must be driven in the right-hand lane or as close as possible to right-hand curb or edge of roadway
 - Golf carts must not be operated on roads with a speed limit higher than 50 km/h (note: in the Eriean designated area, all roads have a speed limit of 50 km/h)
 - No towing of trailers, other vehicles, or other devices
 - No carrying of any combustible fuels
 - If a golf cart is equipped with seat belts, they must be used
- **Required vehicle equipment:**
 - Steering wheel (i.e. golf carts with tiller-style steering are not eligible)
 - Four wheels and tires (i.e. 3-wheeled golf carts are not eligible)
 - Rear-view mirror
 - Slow-moving vehicle sign
 - Turn signal lights
 - Brake lights
 - Daytime running lights
 - Headlights (if operated from 30 minutes before dusk to 30 minutes after dawn)
 - Reflectors

Comments

Administration recommends that the golf cart pilot program in Eriean be approved. The proposed boundary of the program area is shown in Figure 1, marked in green. The proposed area includes the entire community of Eriean as set out in the Official Plan, as well as the adjacent built-up area along Eriean Road / Ross Lane that has a similar level of development as the area within the official community boundary. All roads in the proposed program area have a maximum speed limit of 50 km/h, which is compliant with the requirements of the Highway Traffic Act pilot program regulation.

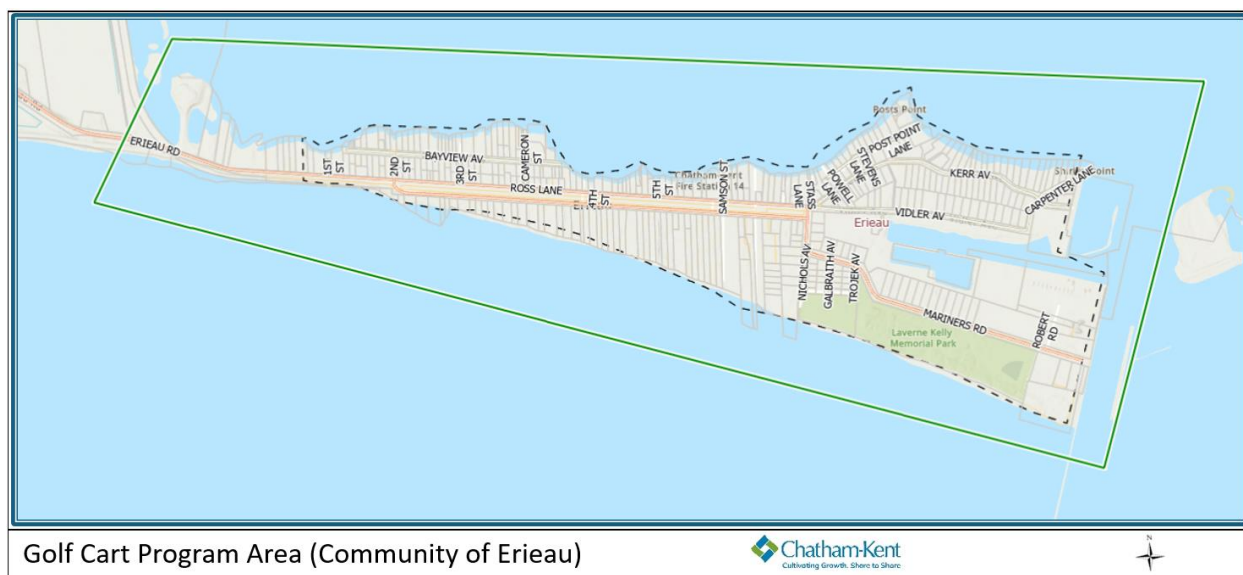


Figure 1: Golf Cart Program Area

Participation in this pilot program permits the use of golf carts on the roadways only. No changes to the Parks By-law 19-2016, which prohibits golf carts and other motor vehicles in parks outside of park driveways and parking lots, are proposed.

Community Comparison

The following municipalities are the current participants in the Golf Cart Pilot Program:

- Town of Amherstburg
- Municipality of Lakeshore
- Township of Huron-Kinloss
- Township of Pelee

In the cases of Amherstburg and Lakeshore, the pilot program is specific to one designated area in each municipality (Amherstburg: Bois Blanc / “Bob-lo” Island, Lakeshore: Lighthouse Cove community). For Huron-Kinloss and Pelee, the pilot program covers all low-speed (50 km/h or lower) roads in the municipality.

Key features of each municipality’s programs are summarized in Table 1. The recommendations of this report reflect a similar approach to other municipalities participating in the pilot program and registration fees set based on cost recovery.

Table 1: Community Comparison

Item	Amherstburg	Lakeshore	Pelee	Huron-Kinloss	Chatham-Kent (Proposed)
Vehicle Registration Required?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
2025 Annual Registration Fee (excluding HST)	\$75	\$75	\$103 (residential) \$155 (commercial)	\$60	\$100
Minimum Insurance	\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000	\$1,000,000	Not required	\$2,000,000
Operating Period	Apr. 1 to Nov. 30*	Apr. 1 to Nov. 30*	Apr. 1 to Nov. 15	Apr. 1 to Nov. 30*	Apr. 1 to Nov. 30*

*Maximum period allowed by the Golf Cart Pilot Program regulation.

Program Implementation

Subject to Council approval of the recommendations of this report, the Golf Cart Pilot Program can be launched rapidly, with the aim of having 2025 permits issued to applicants before the end of August. Information on the program including how to apply for a permit and rules for participation will be communicated to the public through a webpage on the municipal website along with posts on the municipality's social media channels, and media releases.

Planned signage for the program can be implemented quickly after approval of the program, including signs on Erieau Road at the entry and exit of the Golf Cart Program Area notifying road users of the program and the boundary. To discourage golf cart use in unauthorized areas, "no motorized vehicles" signs will be placed at entrances to the Erieau Boulevard Trail as well as other trails and parks in the project area.

Following the 2025 Golf Cart Pilot Program operating season, staff will review the costs and effort required to administer the program. If necessary, revisions to fees will be proposed at that time with a separate report to Council.

Council Term Priorities

This report supports the following Council Term Priorities:

Consultation

			
Deliver Excellent Service	Promote Safety & Well-Being	Grow Our Community	Ensure Environmental Sustainability
2d			5c

Internal consultation was carried out with Legal, Licensing, Parks, Public Works, and the Chatham-Kent Police Service.

External consultation was carried out with staff of the Town of Amherstburg, the Municipality of Lakeshore, and the Township of Pelee to confirm aspects of their programs and discuss their experience participating in the Golf Cart Pilot Program.

Communication

Subject to Council's approval of the recommendation, a page will be added to the Chatham-Kent website with information on the pilot program and links to an online golf cart permit application. A communication campaign will be carried out including media releases and social media posts advising drivers, property owners, and golf cart owners and operators about the program.

Signage will be placed on Eriean Road at the entrance and exit of the golf cart program area. "No motorized vehicles" signs will be placed at entrances to the Eriean Boulevard Trail, Eriean Shore Trail, McGeachy Pond Trail, and Eriean Marsh Trail to deter golf cart use on these trails.

As a condition of participation in the Golf Cart Pilot Program, annual reporting to the Ministry of Transportation is required. Staff will provide the required reports to the Ministry.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Justice (DEIJ)

The proposed golf cart program may have DEIJ impacts:

- **Liability insurance:** The typical method for obtaining liability insurance for a personally owned golf cart is as an add-on to a homeowner's policy, so individuals who are not homeowners (or do not have homeowner's insurance) may encounter barriers to participation in this program. However, due to the public benefit that the insurance requirement represents, staff recommend that an insurance requirement be included in the program.

- **Vehicle equipment:** Many existing golf carts do not have all of the vehicle equipment required by the Highway Traffic Act's golf cart pilot program (e.g. headlights, brake lights, turn signals). To participate in this program, some residents who already own golf carts may need to either purchase new golf carts or modify their existing golf carts, which would create an economic barrier to participation. These requirements cannot be waived by the Municipality since they are mandated by the Highway Traffic Act regulation.

Financial Implications

The estimated cost for recommended signage for the Eriean Golf Cart Pilot Program is \$3,100. This estimate represents the cost to supply and install signs in both directions on Eriean Road at the boundary of the program area as well as a total of 18 "no motorized vehicles" signs at entrances to parks and trails in the program area. Capital project 24ENG1105 Miscellaneous Traffic Projects has sufficient funds to carry out this work.

The proposed permit fee is set on a cost-recovery basis based on the expected effort required to review applications and administer permitting for the program. Proposed fees are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2: Proposed Fees

Item	2025 Fee (excluding HST)	2026 Fee (excluding HST)	2027 Fee (excluding HST)
Golf Carts Permit fee – annual	\$100.00	\$101.50	\$103.50
Golf Carts Replacement Validation Sticker	\$20.00	\$20.50	\$21.00

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Consulted and confirmed the content of the consultation section of the report by:

Sgt. Jason Herder, Patrol Sergeant, Chatham-Kent Police Service

Ian Clark, Manager, Parks, Recreation and Cemeteries

Ryan Brown, Director, Public Works

Attachments:

Appendix A: Proposed Golf Cart By-law

Appendix B: Schedule A to Golf Cart By-law

Appendix C: Set Fines – Proposed Golf Cart By-law

Appendix D: Proposed Amendment – User Fee By-law