

Ontario Golf Cart Pilot Program: Best Practice Municipal Guidelines for Pelee Island and Huron-Kinloss

Ontario has created a ten-year pilot framework for permitting the use of golf carts (legally referred to as "golf cars" in regulation) on-road on Pelee Island and in Huron-Kinloss.

Both municipalities must pass a by-law to permit golf cart use and may set out specific requirements, including additional safety requirements, based on what is best for their communities. Municipalities are in the best position to determine the needs of their communities.

The Province has established the broad regulatory framework for golf carts. This includes the following vehicle and operating requirements:

Provincial Requirements

Provincial Vehicle Requirements

The golf cart can be electric or gas-powered and must:

- have two to six seats
- meet safety equipment requirements including a steering wheel, service brakes, parking or emergency brakes, rear-view mirror, horn, good-quality tires, daytime running lights, turn signals, brake lights, and reflectors
- display a slow-moving vehicle sign
- have daytime running lamps that are always illuminated
- not able to attain a speed of 32 km/h or greater

Golf carts used as part of the pilot program must meet certain industry standards outlined in the [ANSI/ILTV A Z130.1-2012 Golf Cars – Safety & Performance Specifications](#). Vehicle owners must meet certain requirements in Part II: Maintenance and Operations, as outlined in the [pilot regulation](#), and manufacturers must meet all requirements in Part III: Manufacturer's Requirements. If the vehicle is manufactured with seat belts, the seat belts must be worn by the driver and all passengers.

Provincial Operating Requirements

- No drugs or alcohol permitted when operating a golf cart (consequences under the Criminal Code of Canada and/or the *Highway Traffic Act* (HTA) may apply)
- Operated by a driver with a valid A, B, C, D, E, F or G licence
- Cannot carry passengers under eight years of age
- Maximum road speed limit of 50 km/h
- Allow crossing at a controlled intersection (where there is a traffic control signal, stop sign and/or other traffic control devices (e.g., yield signs) and traffic is controlled in all directions) that includes a road having a speed limit greater than 50km/h but not greater than 80 km/h
- Only permitted to operate between April 1 and November 30 each year
- Cannot tow other vehicles
- Cannot be used for a driver's licence road test
- Can be operated at any time of day
- During the period that begins one-half hour before sunset and ends one half-hour after sunrise vehicles are required to have adequate nighttime lighting
- Must be operated in the right-most lane, unless making a left turn
- Cannot carry any combustible fuel while being driven.

Considerations for Pelee Island and Huron-Kinloss

Municipal Operating Parameters

Pelee Island and Huron-Kinloss may wish to consider developing operating parameters for golf cart companies and operators and clearly communicating with companies about their expectations and requirements around contracts, business licences, operating agreements, etc. These municipalities may also wish to take into consideration the points outlined below:

- What are the most appropriate mechanisms to monitor, track and report on the use of golf carts under the pilot (e.g., business licencing), including collisions?
- How will golf carts integrate with other road users?
- What data municipalities may require from commercial operators?

- What mechanism is in place for citizens to provide feedback or complaints (i.e., surveys, municipal office or web site)
- Other local matters as may be appropriate.

Parking and Signage

The pilot program requires golf carts to be parked in parking spots for motor vehicles. Golf carts are not permitted to stop in places of passage for motor vehicles or pedestrians. In addition, municipalities may wish to consider clearly defining where golf carts can park (e.g., setting up designated parking locations). Road signs around the municipality alerting other road users to the presence of golf carts in the municipality may be a helpful visual indication for other traffic to know they may encounter these types of vehicles on-road. Clear signage will also help with public awareness of these vehicles on road.

Municipalities may consider:

- Where and when should vehicles be permitted to stop/park?
- Should there be overnight responsibility for golf cart parking non-compliance?
- What penalty structure should apply if a golf cart is not parked in a designated location?
- What type of signage is required and its location?

Liability

Municipalities may consider:

- Since golf carts will not be required to have vehicle permits, licence plates or a policy of auto insurance, municipalities may want to consider appropriate operating environments within the municipality for golf carts. This would include:
- Identifying where golf carts should operate in their local jurisdiction including limiting golf carts to roads with lower traffic volumes and where they pose limited risk to vulnerable road users.
- Educating the public about the use of golf carts within their municipalities.
- Developing municipal operating parameters as noted in this best practices document for golf cart companies and operators and clearly communicate with

companies about their expectations and requirements around contracts, business licences, operating agreements.

- Developing mechanisms to monitor, track and report on the use of golf carts under the pilot (e.g., business licencing), including collisions.

The HTA rules of the road apply to the operation of golf carts in Ontario. Penalties in HTA s. 228(8) also apply to violations of the pilot regulation (fine of \$250 to \$2,500). By-law offences may also apply. There are serious consequences for a golf cart operator impaired by drugs, alcohol or both under the *Criminal Code of Canada* as well as consequences under the HTA.

Data Collection

The Ministry of Transportation (MTO) requires data from municipalities to evaluate this pilot and determine any potential amendments required, if needed. Municipalities are required to provide information annually by March 1 of each year to the ministry at REO@ontario.ca.

Data of interest would include the number of golf carts being used on the roads, and the number of companies renting out golf carts.

MTO will be evaluating the pilot program and will require accurate and reliable data on all golf cart collisions to do this effectively. Police must remit incident/collision and injury-related data to the Registrar within 10 days of the collision using the standardized Motor Vehicle Collision Report.

More Information

This document is a guide only. For official purposes, please refer to the Ontario legislation including the *Highway Traffic Act* and its regulations. For more information, please visit [Ontario.ca/MTO](https://ontario.ca/MTO).