

# Memo

**To:** Mayor & Council  
**From:** Jim Wheeler, City Manager  
**Date:** May 11, 2020  
**Re:** ATV Park Opening and Potential Opening of City Streets to ATV Use in 2020

The City's COVID-19 Task Force considered the question of whether or not the City should open City streets to ATV use concurrent with the State's opening of the Jericho ATV Park on May 23rd. There are pros and cons to opening and not opening which we expect to discuss at the May 11, 2020 City Council Meeting. In advance of the meeting, the Task Force felt the best way it could help the Council with this was to provide a range of options. Following are some options for consideration and discussion:

## Option 1

As the Council knows, the State's efforts on "re-opening" are intentionally planned to be incremental. The reasoning behind this is so that too much is not opened too soon in manner that could lead to increased infections at a rate that is not manageable.

The Council could take a similar, incremental approach by not opening City streets until after we are able to observe what opening the ATV Park looks like. One aspect to observe will be how many visitors go to the park and how far they are travelling from. The State would not open Rte. 110 to ATV's under this option.

## Option 2

This option would be to open City streets to ATV's for the purpose of Berlin Residents accessing the ATV Park. Under this option, the City would close all City parking lots to trailering and ATV use, including the parking lot on Rte. 110. This would mean that people trailering to the park would have to use the State parking lot that is within the park. The State would open Rte. 110 to ATV's under this option.

## Option 3

This option would be to open City streets to ATV's for the purpose of Berlin Residents accessing the ATV Park. Under this option, the City would close all City parking lots, except the Rte. 110 lot, to trailering and ATV use. This would mean that people trailering to use park could use the State parking lot that is within the park or the City lot on Rte. 110 but they could not park in town to unload at a City lot. The State would open Rte. 110 to ATV's under this option.

## Option 4

This option would be to open City streets to ATV's for the purpose of Berlin Residents accessing the ATV Park and not close any parking lots. In this case, non-residents may use an in town lot to load and unload their ATV's. The State would open Rte. 110 to ATV's under this option.

**From:** Dan Malone [<mailto:dan.malone@ne.rr.com>]  
**Sent:** Friday, May 08, 2020 1:14 PM  
**To:** Jim Wheeler <[jwheeler@berlinnh.gov](mailto:jwheeler@berlinnh.gov)>  
**Subject:** Support for trails

Hi Jim,

As per your request, please except this e-mail as support for opening the city trails for OHRV's on or about May 23rd.

Dear Mr. Mayor, City Councilors and City Manager,

As you may know, in the Governor's Stay at Home 2.0, State Parks section, item #11 Off-highway Recreational Vehicles, the state is only opening a portion of Jericho MT State park, approx. 80 miles or so. The only parking will be located at the Jericho MT State Park Welcome Center. This parking area will only support approx. 200 trucks and trailers for un-loading.

At this time, the State is not allowing OHRV traffic or parking on Route 110 on May 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2020. We have had hundreds of questions from residents of Berlin as well as other area's about this.

The Androscoggin Valley ATV Club feels that the residents of Berlin are being left out of enjoying the OHRV trails. The first ride of the year is the one that a lot of people look forward to. Getting out and enjoying the best trails with some the greatest views in New Hampshire.

Not everybody has trailers to load and unload up at Jericho. A lot of people love the freedom that the City of Berlin has entrusted in them to be able to ride right there house to the trail. We treasure that freedom.

On behalf of the members of the Androscoggin Valley ATV Club, we ask that the City of Berlin consider opening the streets and parking's of Berlin to allow OHRV's to be able to get to Jericho MT State Park on May 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2020.

Sincerely

Dan Malone  
Trail Administrator  
Androscoggin Valley ATV Club  
Berlin, NH 03570  
603-728-9801



As parks open, infected persons will come. They will go to stores and restaurant take-outs and the virus will eventually transmit to workers and residents at our jails and nursing homes That's at least one third of Berlin's population. Once there, it will spread to most all employees and their families and then the rest of us.

There are 3 points at which it can be stopped. Either we keep ATVers out of the stores, or require testing for all institutions regularly, and staff, isolating infected workers before they can infect the larger community. Or we get tough on the locals and store employees who don't practice CDC guidelines, and who admit people w/o masks

Last week 100 residents of a Derry nursing home tested positive. So did 27 of the staff! In two more weeks we will see their community cases rise unless the staff was lucky enough to have been caught early.

Without social distancing, every infected person infects 3 others (CDC). The federal prison, alone, has over 300 employees who go home every night. They are mostly NOT wearing masks in the community cuz I see them w/o any. They probably skirt other precautions, too. If the state prison and nursing home workers are as lax, we are in for big trouble.

My wife is an RN at one of these institutions and has 3 known high risk factors. So do I. I know that she will not abandon her post to save herself. So if it erupts in her institution, she and I will both be casualties. So my plea is in part self-interested.

I resent the message by Chris Christie and our State Senator that we are expendable to save the economy. Our economy is shot if this thing grabs a hold here. Stopping the spread now is the only path to long term economic viability.

If CDC guidelines are followed, deaths will be negligible. Greece and South Korea proved this. Your job is to protect us. Please do it. Our governor is useless.

Thanks.

Ted Bosen  
13 Bisson Rd  
Berlin

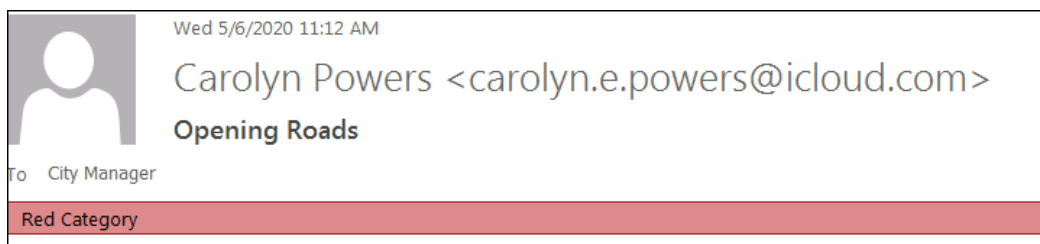


Good morning,

I hope this note finds you well in these unprecedented and chaotic times. I'm writing in regards to the discussion around opening city streets to ATV use on May 23rd. I believe doing so would not be inline or supportive of the stay at home orders. In these days is it crucial that folks are maintaining social distance, which mostly means staying at home besides essential work, errands, or exercise. Backyards and sidewalks are being utilized now more than ever as a way for the residents of Berlin to get outside, get fresh air, and sunshine. The noise that is brought by ATVs significantly impacts the quality of life in neighborhoods. Even with the slow easing of the stay at home mandates in the coming weeks/months, older and at risk individuals will need to be in isolation for much longer, really until there is a vaccine, and I believe we should protect the quality of life these folks have in their own homes. They should be granted the ability to leave their windows open, sit in their backyard to read in peace, and have dinner with their family without having to stop conversation for a passing cluster of ATVs. I understand that we as a city sacrifice these things for economic gains each summer, however, those gains aren't on the table right now, so I urge you to prioritize the quality of life of your residents living, and isolating, in the neighborhoods of Berlin at this time. Give them the gift of birdsong, and wind chimes, and children laughing a few yards down, uninterrupted by the brapppp brap brappppp of an ATV.

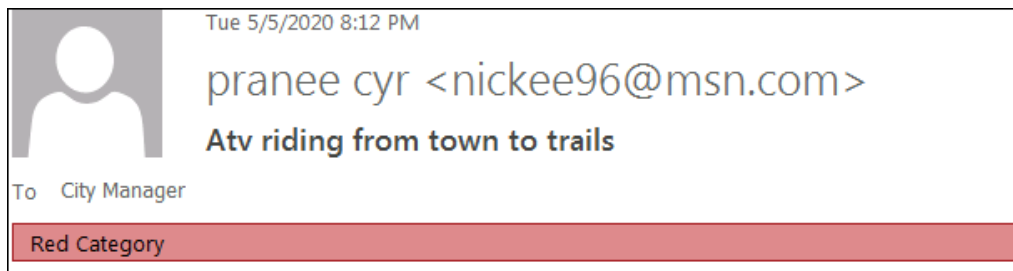
Thank you for your time and consideration. Be well,

Christy

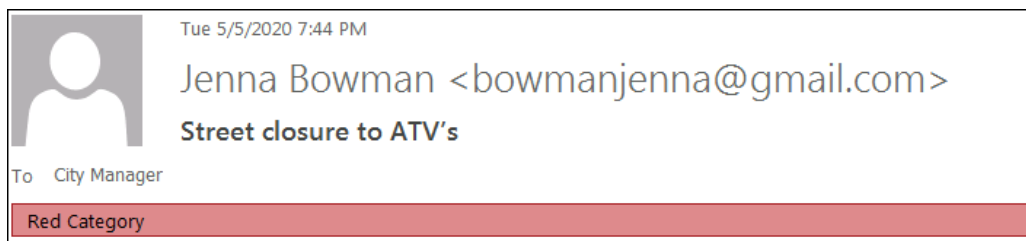


I honestly do believe that it doesn't make any sense to keep the roads closed to ATV's because then we would have to congregate into one area to park while we are trying to stay at a distance. So with that being said, I think it would be more logical to open the roads for ATV's. Thank you for your time and have a great day.

Sincerely  
Carolyn



Hi, i would like this read to whomever is making the decision weather or not to open streets in Berlin to atv use starting May 23rd. I am among the high risk people that have been staying home and using proper PPE When and if I or anyone in my family have to go out for supplies. My family members and myself have been waiting patiently for opening day, bought all new atv's (that i havent been able to ride yet) and purchased my home on petrograd 3 years ago because of the fact we could ride our ATV's from our house to all the trails, to the in-laws house down the street , ect. I understand that this is a very serious matter, but was a little confused as to why we would want everyone to park in the same area. I do not even have a trailer to get all our machines up the Jericho, which makes us sad. We are very happy that Jericho is opening so that we can get Out into the fresh air and enjoy riding, but please allow us who live in Berlin the ability to ride from our houses. Thank you  
Pranee Cyr Powers



Hello,  
It would make sense, if the State closed many area trail systems and State roads, that city streets would also be closed to ATV access. From my understanding, city streets were allowed to access trails, and for riders to access stores.

Do we want to attract people to the area to ride the city streets?

I'm in favor of closing city streets to OHRV and ATV access.

Thank you,  
Jenna Bowman

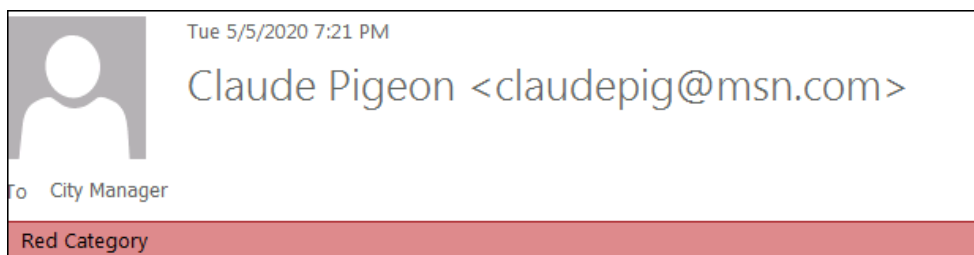


It would make sense, if the State closed many area trail systems and State roads, that city streets would also be closed to ATV access. From my understanding, city streets were allowed to access trails, and for riders to access stores.

Do we want to attract people to the area to ride the city streets?

I'm in favor of closing city streets to OHRV and ATV access.

Matt Bowman



To the Berlin City Council et al,

Dear friends,

As you deliberate the question of ATV use on our streets during the COVID period, I would like to express my opinions on the matter:

My first point is that the stated reasoning in originally allowing ATVs on our streets was for access to the trail system. It was then expanded to gain access to gasoline and restaurants. In the absence of trails to access, I think this is where it should stop. Use of ATVs as second vehicles was an unanticipated and, in my opinion, undesirable result of Berlin's open arms approach to ATVs. If ATVs are allowed to use the streets, we will be left with all the resulting problems without any of the original justification. Let's uphold the intent of the law.

My next concern is that not only will we have locals using the streets for their ATVs, but riders from outside the area, will turn Berlin into their new park. A situation which is already untenable to a large part of your constituency will be exacerbated and made even worse.

NHF&G's job will be made even more difficult if street use is allowed. Access to many entry points will be eliminated if street use is curtailed. NHF&G will have an easier time of locating

and stopping offenders. However, if you permit street use, their job will be made much more difficult. Berlin has accesses from rt 110, Success Rd, the Avenues, Cascade Hill, several east side streets, the Dead River/Berlin High School area, Cate's Hill, Hutchins St. and dozens of private back yard accesses. Some of these are controllable but many are not.

If the underlying reason for the state's action is to protect the public health, why shouldn't we be afforded the same level of protection? If Berlin develops into a hotspot for COVID, and your friends and relatives are affected, how will you feel about your actions?

According to ATV registrations, riders are not a majority of Berlin's population. What could justify gambling with our well being for the enjoyment of a minority of people who want to drive around Berlin's streets on ATVs? There is no necessity, these people all have cars for essential travel.

I hope you can hear the reasonable arguments as they are being drowned out by the loudest ones.

As Always,

Claude Pigeon  
A concerned citizen



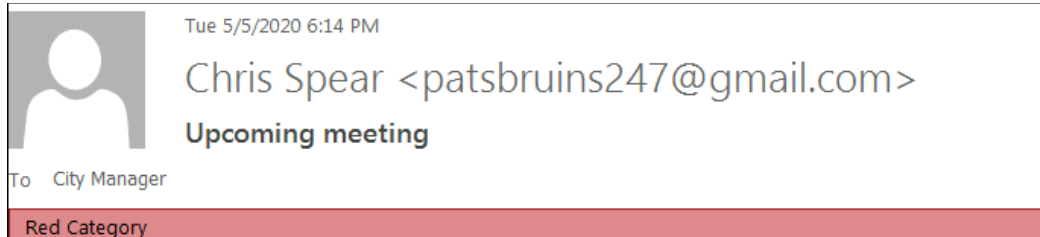
On Tue, May 5, 2020, 6:48 PM Steven Gaudet <[steveg5456@gmail.com](mailto:steveg5456@gmail.com)> wrote:  
Hello my name is Steven Gaudet, these are some of my thoughts about the choices that have been made for the trails opening May 23rd. I'd love to explain more but this sums alot of it up. I'd very much like this read to whom ever is in charge please.

Kind Thanks, Steve

Rt 110 and Berlin City, this is a very stressfully thing for people not to be able to go from their homes and go to the trails and still not park on RT 110 rather then have everyone (together) park in the same place all day everyday. This is about keeping the virus away from NH and instead of letting people travel to and from and them homes and not park on RT 110 which is much safer sense everyone has been in quarantine in their homes. I think we should still be able to have parking if need be however, I think letting the residents of Berlin leave their homes and be able to stay away from parking areas thus making it easier to have a less chance of the anyone getting the virus. Traveling on RT 110 for Residents will be easier and not take the risk of everyone going in one spot. This is a VERY popular hobby and will attract all sorts of everyone you can think of to here. It's great income and setting things in place like this is a great. Idea however I



think it's going over the top not allowing Berlin residents to travel to and from the safety of their homes to the trails and then back without having interactions with the public safely is something that should be brought up and talked about. Please, this is a very exciting time for a lot of people and I agree we can't rush this matter whatsoever and take our time however closing of a road that is used to make less interactions when heading to a trail head is not the best route and makes things more difficult for the people who are trying to ride and enjoy this beautiful state. I understand I am young and just want to ride however I'm coming at this situation from a state wide perspective if you allow people to not interact in a parking lot and travel to and from their destination then it's less risk.



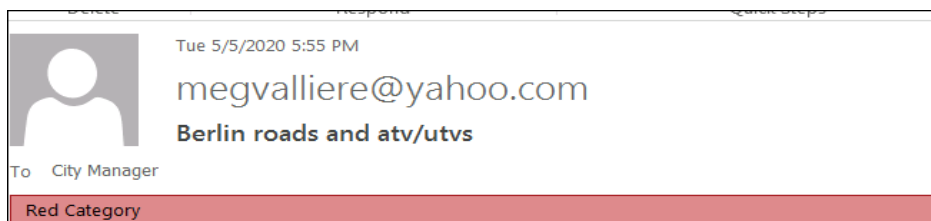
Hello

I'll try to keep this short but want to add input in support of opening OHV riding on the 23rd. My outlook on this is the state is trying to limit exposure... If that is the case yet stores are still open for take out all shutting down OHV on the roads that are normally open to them is doing is hurting business income. People can still take their vehicles to the same stores so it doesn't limit anything so why not open the trails and accept the revenue?

Hopefully you can either take this as support if someone else asks the same question or present it.

Thank you for your time!

Chris



I was disappointed when I saw on facebook that the roads and Route 110 were closed by the state which meant four wheeling also would be delayed. I get it that you don't want people coming into our community from other towns and states with this pandemic. [ent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#). Other recreational activities have been given the ok.....with social distancing of course. I suggest Berlin residents with atv/utvs show a special ticket on their machine as proof of residency in order to ride our local trails.

Please consider this idea. Thank you.

Meg