

**ORDINANCE NO. 2026-01**

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF CLEAR LAKE, INDIANA, REGULATING  
THE OPERATION OF UTILITY TERRAIN VEHICLES ON TOWN STREETS**

WHEREAS, Indiana Code § 9-21-1-3(a)(14), authorizes local authorities to regulate or prohibit the operation of off-road vehicles on highways under the authority's jurisdiction in accordance with Indiana Code § 9-21-1-3.3(a); and

WHEREAS, Indiana Code § 14-16-1-22, authorizes counties, cities, and towns to pass ordinances regulating the operation of off-road vehicles, subject to the requirements and limitations set forth in Indiana Code Title 14, Article 16, Chapter 1; AND

WHEREAS, the Town Council desires to adopt such an ordinance to promote the safety of persons and property within the Town of Clear Lake; provide for the responsible enjoyment and operation of Utility Terrain Vehicles on designated town streets; establish rules and regulations consistent with Indiana state law governing off-road vehicles.

NOW THEREFORE, be it Ordained by the Town Council of the Town of Clear Lake, Indiana, that:

**1. DEFINITIONS.**

For the purposes of this Ordinance, the following terms shall have the meanings ascribed to them:

- A. **"Utility Terrain Vehicle" or "UTV"** means an Off-Road Vehicle designed primarily for utility or recreational purposes, typically featuring side-by-side seating, a steering wheel, and cargo capacity.
- B. **"Town Street"** means any street, road, or alley within the corporate limits of the Town of Clear Lake that is maintained by the Town and open for public vehicular travel, excluding state highways within town limits.
- C. **"Operator"** means any person who operates or is in actual physical control of a Utility Terrain Vehicle.
- D. **"Owner"** means a person, other than a lienholder, who has title to a Utility Terrain Vehicle or has legal possession or use of a Utility Terrain Vehicle.
- E. **"State Highway"** means any highway designated as a state highway by the Indiana Department of Transportation, including but not limited to all U.S. and State Routes within the Town limits.
- F. **"Department"** means the Indiana Department of Natural Resources.

## **2. STREETS FOR UTV OPERATION.**

A. Subject to the requirements and restrictions set forth in this Ordinance, Utility Terrain Vehicles may be operated on all Town Streets within the corporate limits of the Town of Clear Lake, except as provided in subsection B below.

B. Utility Terrain Vehicles may not be operated on State Highways within the Town limits, except for the purpose of crossing such highways perpendicularly at intersections with Town Streets, in compliance with Indiana Code § 14-16-1-20(a)(2).

C. When crossing a State Highway at an intersection with a Town Street:

1. The operator must bring the UTV to a complete stop before entering the State Highway;
2. The operator must yield the right-of-way to all traffic on the State Highway;
3. The crossing must be made at the most direct angle possible, approximately perpendicular to the State Highway; and
4. The crossing must be made only when it can be completed safely.

## **3. SIGNAGE REQUIREMENTS.**

A. In accordance with Indiana Code § 9-21-1-3(b), this Ordinance shall become effective upon the posting of signs giving notice of these local traffic regulations at the entrances to Town Streets or parts of Town Streets affected by this Ordinance.

B. The Town shall erect and maintain appropriate traffic control signs at:

1. The corporate boundary limits of the Town on all streets entering the Town;
2. Intersections where Town Streets meet State Highways, if appropriate.

C. Sign Content: Signs shall provide clear notice that:

1. UTVs are permitted on Town Streets (or prohibited on specific streets, as applicable);
2. Operators must comply with all traffic laws; and
3. State registration, driver's license, and insurance are required.

## **4. OPERATOR REQUIREMENTS.**

No person shall operate a Utility Terrain Vehicle on a Town Street unless the following requirements are met:

A. Driver's License: The operator must possess a valid motor vehicle operator's license issued by the State of Indiana or another state, as required by Indiana Code § 14-16-1-20(c). A learner's permit does not satisfy this requirement.

B. Age Restrictions:

1. No person under fourteen (14) years of age may operate a UTV on Town Streets under any circumstances.

2. Operators between fourteen (14) and seventeen (17) years of age may operate a UTV on Town Streets only under the immediate supervision of a person eighteen (18) years of age or older who possesses a valid driver's license and is seated in the UTV.

## **5. VEHICLE REGISTRATION AND EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS.**

A. Every UTV operated on Town Streets must be registered with the Indiana Department of Natural Resources as required by Indiana Code § 14-16-1-8, and the registration decals must be properly displayed on both sides of the forward half of the vehicle. The Certificate of Registration must be carried in or on the vehicle at all times during operation on Town Streets.

B. In accordance with Indiana Code § 14-16-1-21:

1. A UTV may not be operated between sunset and sunrise unless equipped with at least one (1) headlight and one (1) taillight in working order;

2. Headlights and taillights must be illuminated when required.

C. In accordance with Indiana Code § 14-16-1-21, a UTV must be equipped with adequate brakes capable of producing deceleration at fourteen (14) feet per second on level ground at a speed of twenty (20) miles per hour.

D. Operators must signal all turns and lane changes, either by:

1. Using turn signals installed on the UTV; or

2. Using appropriate hand signals as prescribed by Indiana traffic law if the UTV is not equipped with turn signals.

E. A UTV must be equipped with a muffler in good working order. No person shall operate a UTV with a defective or modified muffler that amplifies or increases noise levels above those produced by the original equipment manufacturer's specifications.

F. No UTV may carry more passengers than the number for which it is designed and equipped by the manufacturer. All passengers must remain seated in designated seating positions with all body parts inside the vehicle's occupant protection structure while the vehicle is in motion.

**6. INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS.**

A. Every person who operates a UTV on Town Streets must maintain liability insurance covering the operation of the UTV with minimum coverage required by State law.

B. Proof of insurance must be carried in or on the vehicle at all times and must be presented upon request of any law enforcement officer.

**7. OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS AND RESTRICTIONS.**

UTV operators must obey all applicable Indiana traffic laws, regulations, and ordinances, including but not limited to:

- A. All posted speed limits and traffic control devices;
- B. Right-of-way rules;
- C. Lane usage and turning regulations;
- D. Stopping requirements at stop signs; and
- E. All other rules of the road applicable to motor vehicle operators.

**8. VIOLATIONS AND PENALTIES.**

A. Violation Defined: Any person who violates any provision of this Ordinance shall be subject to the penalties set forth in this Section.

B. Penalties: Violations of this Ordinance shall be subject to:

1. A civil penalty of fines and penalties as follows: 1st offense \$100.00 fine; 2nd offense \$200.00 fine; each additional offense \$300.00 fine.

2. Prosecution as an infraction or misdemeanor under Indiana law, as applicable, with penalties as prescribed by Indiana Code Title 14, Article 16, Chapter 1.

Any fees or fines collected under this ordinance shall be deposited in the Town of Clear Lake General Fund.

**9. COMPLIANCE WITH STATE LAW.**

This Ordinance is enacted pursuant to and in compliance with:

A. Indiana Code § 9-21-1-3(a)(14) and § 9-21-1-3.3(a), which authorize local authorities to regulate the operation of off-road vehicles on highways under their jurisdiction, provided such ordinances do not conflict with or duplicate state law or conflict with driver's licensing requirements; and

B. Indiana Code § 14-16-1-22 and Title 14, Article 16, Chapter 1, which govern the regulation of off-road vehicles.

All provisions of this Ordinance must be interpreted and applied in a manner consistent with applicable state laws. In the event of any conflict between this Ordinance and state law, state law shall prevail.

**10. SEVERABILITY.**

If any section, subsection, sentence, clause, or phrase of this Ordinance is for any reason held to be invalid or unconstitutional by a court of competent jurisdiction, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this Ordinance. The Town Council hereby declares that it would have adopted this Ordinance and each section, subsection, sentence, clause, and phrase thereof, irrespective of the fact that any one or more sections, subsections, sentences, clauses, or phrases be declared invalid or unconstitutional.

**11. EFFECTIVE DATE.**

A. This Ordinance shall be in full force and effect from and after its passage by the Town Council and publication as required by law.

B. Notwithstanding subsection A, pursuant to Indiana Code § 9-21-1-3(b), the traffic regulations contained in this Ordinance shall become effective only upon the posting of signs as required by Section 6 of this Ordinance giving notice of these local traffic regulations at the entrances to Town Streets or parts of Town Streets affected by this Ordinance.

**PASSED AND ADOPTED** by the Town Council of the Town of Clear Lake, Indiana, this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2026.


\_\_\_\_\_  
Molly Weber, President

  
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Dan Rippe, Vice President

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
George Schenkel, Board Member

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Brent Schlosser, Board Member

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Bert Elliot, Board Member

ATTEST:   
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Nathan Striker, Clerk-Treasurer