

## Report to Committee of the Whole

**Date:** 4/13/2026  
**From:** Brittany Mulhern, Consultant Planner  
**Re:** Use of Unopened Road Allowances Policy

### RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Committee of the Whole accept this report for information.

AND FURTHER THAT the Committee of the Whole recommends to the Council of the Corporation of the Village of Merrickville-Wolford to approve the Use of Unopened Road Allowances Policy.

### BACKGROUND

Cunningham Swan prepared a policy document titled "Use of Unopened Road Allowances Policy" relating to the use of unopened road allowances in the Village. This policy was presented to Council at the November 24, 2025 Council meeting where staff were directed by Council to provide more detailed information on the policy. Staff provided a detailed review of the policy as requested at the January 12<sup>th</sup> Committee of the Whole Meeting.

At the January meeting Council directed staff to remove the road allowance closure sections of the policy noting that Council had recently passed a separate road allowance closure policy. Council further directed staff to focus on a usage policy with criteria related to farm accesses, process for minor improvements, and oversight by staff, while ensuring that agreements would protect abutting landowners.

### POLICY OVERVIEW

The purpose of the revised policy is to establish clear direction to the public and staff for use of unopened road allowances. All sections related to the closure of a road allowance have been removed as per Council's direction. The policy has also been adapted to the format utilized for the 2025 Road Closure Policy.

The policy now includes differentiation between Agricultural Access and Private Driveway:

**"Agricultural Access"** means a driveway over an Unopened Road Allowance with the primary purpose being for access to agricultural lands.

**“Private Driveway”** means access over an Unopened Road Allowance with the primary purpose being for access to non-agricultural lands.

The main differences between the Agricultural Access and the Private Driveway is that Private Driveways are restricted to shorter distances along a road allowance and that the Clerk is delegated authority to enter into agreements with applicants for Agricultural Access requests provided there are no identified concerns.

The policy additionally provides a detailed overview of the process involved in the request to use a road allowance and clarifies the requirements for both Encroachment Agreements and License Agreements.

### CONCLUSION

The policy provides clear direction to staff, Council and the public on the use of unopened road allowances. The policy outlines permitted uses for unopened road allowances and outlines a procedure for any requests for usage, while protecting the Village from liability through the use of appropriate agreements.

### ATTACHMENTS

- Use of Unopened Road Allowances Policy

Submitted by:

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Brittany Mulhern, Fotenn Planning +Design

Approved by:

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Darlene Plumley, CAO