

TOWN OF RICHLAND

DRIVEWAY PERMIT PROCESS

Chronological Applicant Guide and Inspection Checklist

Purpose

This guide summarizes the order of steps an applicant should follow from the initial driveway permit application through final inspection and approval. It is intended to accompany the Town of Richland Driveway Ordinance 2026-06 and does not replace the ordinance or any permit condition.

Step	Action	Required completion or result
1	Complete the application	Fill out every applicable line and attach an adequate plot plan.
2	Schedule the on-site meeting	Contact the Town Office or Driveway Inspector for the initial inspection.
3	Complete initial inspection and review	Review the proposed access, drainage, culvert needs, permit process, and inspection checklist.
4	Submit the application packet	Provide the application, plot plan, checklist, application fee, and required terms or acknowledgments.
5	Town Board review	The Board approves, conditionally approves, or denies the application.
6	Receive the permit packet	If approved, receive the driveway placard and current permit-process, checklist, and ordinance materials.
7	Construct and undergo periodic inspections	Build according to the permit; complete monthly or other required inspections and correct deficiencies.
8	Request final inspection	After completion, request final inspection; final approval is documented before occupancy approval.

Applicant reminder

Do not begin work that requires a permit until the required permit has been issued. Keep the permit materials and current inspection checklist available at the project site. Contact the Town Office or Driveway Inspector whenever an inspection is required or a project condition changes.

TOWN OF RICHLAND DRIVEWAY ORDINANCE 2026-06

Sec. 1-1 Purpose and Authority A) Authority. This rule is created based on Wisconsin

State Laws 60.555, 60.627, and 144.266. B) Purpose. We created this rule to protect public health, safety, and our natural resources. The Town of Richland controls how driveways are built so that emergency vehicles (like fire trucks and ambulances) can reach every home, our Town roads don't get damaged by washouts, and rainwater is managed properly. C) If Part of the Rule is Invalid. If a judge ever decides that one part of this rule is illegal, the rest of the rule stays in place. D) Permit Fee. The Town Board will set the cost of the driveway permit. E) Start Date. This rule takes effect immediately after it is approved and published. Any old driveway rules, including Ordinance 2021-2 and Ordinance 2025-01, are canceled and replaced by this one.

Sec. 1-2 Simple Definitions A) Field Access Driveways: Dirt or gravel paths used only for

farming that do not lead to a house or building. B) Structure: Any building, house, well, or septic system that requires a building or zoning permit from the building inspector or the Town. C) Unnecessary Hardship: When a property owner can prove that following this rule makes it completely impossible to use their land. D) Shared Driveway: A driveway used by more than one house. E) Public Right-of-Way: The land the Town controls for the public road. This is usually 33 feet measuring outward from the center line of the road.

Sec. 1-3 Exceptions A) Field access driveways do not need to follow the strict erosion

control rules, as long as they do not wash out, cause damage, or dump dirt and rocks onto the Town road, the Town road right-of-way, or the Town ditches. If a farm driveway starts damaging any of the above, the Town can force the owner to fix it using the mandatory rules in this document.

Sec. 1-4 Getting a Permit Before you start building a driveway, you must fill out an

application and get a permit from the Town Board. You need to provide:

A simple map showing where the driveway will connect to the road, how close it is to neighbors, and how steep and wide it will be.

A list of all contractors who will be working on the driveway and the building project, including their names, company names, and phone numbers. If your contractor changes during the project, you must update this list with the Town Office within 7 days.

The Town needs this contractor information so that if a Stop Work Order or other enforcement action is issued, the Town can contact the contractors directly.

Permits are good for one year. If you need more time, you must ask in writing before the year is up.

Sec. 1-5 Driveway Rules and Measurements These rules apply to all new driveways

leading to a building. They also apply if you are turning an old farm path into a driveway for a new house.

1-5.1 MANDATORY RULES (WITHIN THE PUBLIC RIGHT-OF-WAY)

To protect our Town roads and make sure emergency vehicles can get in, the following rules are MANDATORY for the part of your driveway that sits on Town land (the first 33 feet from the center of the road):

A) Gravel Depth: The driveway base must have at least 4 inches of large breaker rock covered by 4 inches of crushed gravel. (Shared driveways need 6 inches of breaker rock and 6 inches of crushed gravel.)

B) Slope at the Road: The driveway must slope slightly away from the Town road (between 1% and 5% drop). The first 12 feet of the driveway cannot be steeper than a 5% grade.

C) Dip Before the Culvert: You must create a slight dip in the driveway right before the culvert. This stops water and gravel from washing out onto the Town road.

D) Width at the Road: Where the driveway meets the Town road, it must be at least 20 feet wide but no more than 30 feet wide. It must stay this wide for the first 20 feet of the driveway.

E) Culverts (Drainage Pipes): If the Town says you need a culvert under your driveway, it must be at least 18 inches in diameter. Property owners are responsible for their own culverts. This includes keeping the culvert clean and free-flowing at all times. If your culvert gets plugged with leaves, dirt, rocks, or other debris, it is your responsibility to clear it out.

Here is how the timeline works if there is a problem:

Day 1: The Town notifies you of the problem (plugged, crushed, rusted, etc.).

Within 14 days: You must respond with your plan to fix it and a date when it will be done.

Within 30 days of the original notice: The work must be completed.

If you do not respond within 14 days, or the work is not done within 30 days:

The Town will send a final 7-day notice stating that the Town will be coming in to do the work.

After that 7 days passes: The Town will hire someone to fix the problem and bill you for all time and materials.

If the bill is not paid by November 1st: The amount will be added to your property tax bill as a special charge.

F) Spacing: Your driveway must be at least 100 feet away from the next driveway.

G) Erosion Control: Any dirt you move near the road must be seeded, mulched, or protected so mud does not wash onto the Town road, into the Town ditches, or damage the Town right-of-way. The Town can require you to put down a cash bond to guarantee this gets done.

1-5.2 RECOMMENDED GUIDELINES (ON YOUR PRIVATE PROPERTY)

For the rest of your driveway that sits on your private land, the Town strongly RECOMMENDS the following guidelines. These are not strictly enforced, but following them ensures fire trucks and ambulances can actually reach your house in an emergency.

Important Exception: If any condition on the private portion of your driveway is directly causing damage, erosion, debris, or water runoff that affects the Town road, the Town road

right-of-way, or the Town ditches, the Town may require you to correct that specific problem — even though it is on your private land. For example, if your driveway is too steep beyond the right-of-way and that steepness is washing gravel and water down onto the Town road or filling up the ditches, the Town can require you to fix it. The same enforcement timelines and penalties in Sec. 1-10 apply in this situation.

A) Steepness: Try to keep the driveway slope under 10%.

B) Curves: Curves should be wide enough for a fire truck to turn (at least a 40-foot radius).

C) Width and Clearance: The driving path should be at least 12 feet wide. You should clear trees and branches so you have an opening that is 24 feet wide and 18 feet high.

D) Turn-Around: If your driveway is long, you should build a turn-around at the end (like a circle or a T-shape) so emergency vehicles don't have to back all the way out.

E) Landscaping: Try to follow the natural shape of the land and avoid digging into very steep hillsides.

1-5.3 SHARED DRIVEWAYS

Normally, a driveway is for one house. The Town Board might allow up to three houses to share a driveway. If you share a driveway, you must record a legal agreement at the County Courthouse that says the driveway path is 66 feet wide, and the neighbors must have a written agreement on how they will split the cost of plowing and repairs.

Sec. 1-5.4 PRE-EXISTING DRIVEWAYS

Driveways that existed before this ordinance was adopted are not required to meet the full standards of this ordinance. They are “grandfathered in.” However, no driveway — old or new — is allowed to damage the Town road, the Town road right-of-way, or the Town ditches. If a pre-existing driveway is actively causing a problem (such as spilling gravel, mud, sand, or debris onto the Town road, causing water to drain onto the road surface, plugging or damaging the ditches, or eroding the right-of-way), the Town may require the owner to fix that specific problem. The owner is NOT required to rebuild the entire driveway to new standards — only to correct the issue that is affecting the Town road, right-of-way, or ditches.

The following timeline applies to pre-existing driveway problems:

Day 1: The Town notifies the owner describing the specific problem.

Within 14 days: The owner must respond with a plan to fix it.

Within 30 days of the original notice: The fix must be completed.

If the owner does not respond within 14 days, or the fix is not done within 30 days: The Town will send a final 7-day notice that the Town intends to correct the problem itself.

After that 7 days passes: The Town may enter the right-of-way, hire a contractor to fix the problem, and bill the owner for all costs.

If the bill is not paid by November 1st: The amount will be added to the property tax bill as a special charge.

After the owner completes the corrective work, they must contact the Town Office to schedule a reinspection. The Town Inspector must come out within four (4) working days to confirm the problem has been fixed. The matter is not considered resolved until the

Inspector confirms in writing that the issue has been corrected.

This section does not apply to any driveway that triggers the full ordinance by building a new structure or making changes that require a building permit (see Sec. 1-5 above).

Sec. 1-6 Driveway Inspector The Town Board will appoint a Driveway Inspector. This can be a Board Member or an independent contractor hired by the Town who understands road construction.

The Town has ultimate authority over the public road right-of-way. The Town road, the Town road right-of-way, and the Town ditches belong to the public. The Town has absolute and final authority over what happens within that space. No outside person, no outside opinion, no engineer's letter, no surveyor's report, and no other entity overrides the Town's authority within the road right-of-way. Nobody overrides the Town on its own roads. The Town Driveway Inspector's determination is final. Outside opinions, third-party reports, letters from engineers, or any other outside input do not override, delay, or change the Inspector's findings. The Town has the final say on whether a driveway is in compliance — no exceptions. The only way to formally challenge an Inspector's decision is through the appeal process described in Sec. 1-9 (filing a formal appeal with the Town Board under state law). Until that appeal is heard and decided, all enforcement actions remain in full effect.

Sec. 1-7 Chronological Driveway Permit and Inspection Process

The following process shall be followed from the beginning of a driveway permit application through final approval. The applicant is responsible for completing each step and providing the required information to the Town Office or Driveway Inspector.

Step 1: Obtain and Complete the Application. The homeowner or applicant shall obtain a current copy of the Town driveway permit application and complete every applicable line. The application shall include an adequate plot plan showing the proposed driveway location, its connection to the public road, nearby driveways, and other information required by the Town. The applicant shall attach the plot plan and any other required supporting materials.

Step 2: Schedule the On-Site Meeting. After completing the application and supporting materials, the homeowner or applicant shall contact the Town Office or Driveway Inspector to schedule an on-site meeting and initial inspection. The Driveway Inspector shall review the proposed location, access, drainage, culvert needs, and other applicable requirements.

Step 3: Complete the Initial Inspection and Review. During the on-site meeting, the Driveway Inspector shall review the proposed driveway and go over the driveway permit process and the current on-site inspection checklist with the homeowner or applicant. The Inspector shall identify any information, measurements, corrections, or additional materials needed before the application can be submitted for Town Board consideration.

Step 4: Submit the Application Packet. The homeowner or applicant shall provide the completed application, plot plan, completed or reviewed inspection checklist, required application fee, and any required acknowledgments or terms to the Town Office, the Town Clerk, or the Driveway Inspector, as directed. An incomplete application packet may be returned for correction before it is placed on the Town Board agenda.

Step 5: Town Board Review and Decision. The application information shall be presented to the Town Board at a meeting. The Town Board shall review the application and supporting materials and shall approve, conditionally approve, or deny the application in accordance with this ordinance and applicable law.

Step 6: Permit Issuance and Applicant Packet. No building permit for a structure served by the proposed driveway may be issued until the Town has issued the Driveway Permit. If the application is approved and the Driveway Permit is issued, the Town shall provide the homeowner or applicant with a driveway placard or other permit notice for display as directed by the Town. The applicant shall also receive, or be given access to, the current driveway permit process, the current on-site inspection checklist, and the current version of this ordinance. The applicant shall keep these materials available at the project site.

Step 7: Construction and Periodic Inspections. After the permit is issued, construction shall proceed in accordance with the permit and this ordinance. The Town may conduct monthly or other periodic inspections using the Town's established inspection form. The applicant shall maintain required erosion-control measures and shall correct any deficiencies identified by the Driveway Inspector. A Stop Work Order or other enforcement action may be issued as provided in this ordinance when required conditions are not met.

Step 8: Final Inspection and Completion. When the driveway and related construction are complete, the homeowner or applicant shall contact the Town Office to schedule the final inspection. The Driveway Inspector shall verify completion of the applicable mandatory requirements, including right-of-way dimensions, culvert and drainage work, erosion control, and site restoration. Final approval shall be documented by the Town. The Occupancy Permit shall not be released until the requirements of this ordinance and the final inspection have been satisfied.

The timelines and inspection requirements in this section supplement the standards in this ordinance. If a conflict exists, the more specific mandatory requirement elsewhere in this ordinance controls.

Sec. 1-8 Exceptions to the Rule (Variances) If following these rules makes it completely impossible to build on your land, the Town Board can grant an exception, as long as it does not create a safety hazard.

Sec. 1-9 Disagreements If you disagree with the Driveway Inspector's decision, you can appeal to the Town Board following state law (Chapter 68).

Sec. 1-10 Strict Enforcement and Fines

Sec. 1-10A Permit Consequences and Complete Reapplication

Any violation of this ordinance, any permit condition, any approved plan, or any written direction of the Town relating to the driveway may result in an immediate Stop Work Order and suspension of all construction and site work related to the property, subject to any notice, hearing, and appeal rights required by Wisconsin law.

The Town may suspend, revoke, or refuse to renew any permit issued by the Town that depends on compliance with this ordinance, including a driveway permit, building permit, occupancy permit, road-access permit, erosion-control approval, or other related Town approval. The Town shall also notify or formally request action from the governmental authority that issued any permit outside the Town's authority, including a sanitary permit, zoning approval, or other county or state permit, when the violation may affect that permit. The Town shall not represent that it can revoke a permit issued by another governmental authority.

No building permit for a structure served by a proposed or existing driveway may be issued until the Town has issued the required Driveway Permit. If the Driveway Permit is suspended or revoked, or if the driveway is constructed or maintained in violation of this ordinance or the Driveway Permit, the Town shall promptly notify the building inspector and require the building inspector, to the extent authorized by law and following any required notice or hearing, to suspend or revoke the related building permit. No construction may continue and no occupancy approval may be issued while the related driveway violation remains unresolved.

A permit consequence may apply when an applicant, property owner, contractor, or other person acting for the project: (1) begins work before the required permit is issued; (2) provides materially incomplete, inaccurate, or misleading information; (3) fails to follow the approved application, plot plan, inspection checklist, permit condition,

or this ordinance; (4) fails to appear for or complete a required inspection; (5) fails to correct a violation within the time allowed; or (6) continues work after a Stop Work Order or other written directive.

When a Driveway Permit is revoked, all approvals based on that permit are void to the extent allowed by law. The property owner must stop work, correct or remove noncompliant work as directed, and complete the application process again from the beginning. A complete reapplication requires a new application, new or updated plot plan, payment of all applicable fees, a new initial inspection, review of the current inspection checklist, Town Board consideration, and issuance of a new permit before work resumes. No prior inspection, approval, permit, or payment creates a right to rely on the former permit after revocation.

The Town may withhold or decline to recommend release of a building permit, sanitary-related approval, or occupancy permit until all driveway violations and related violations are corrected, all required re-inspections are passed, all lawful fees, fines, bonds, and costs are paid, and all required permits have been properly reissued by the authority with jurisdiction. Nothing in this section limits the independent authority of the County, State, or another permitting authority to administer, suspend, revoke, or reissue its own permits.

The Town may require the owner to pay the Town's reasonable costs of inspections, re-inspections, notices, engineering or legal review, emergency correction, contractor services, and enforcement, to the extent authorized by law. The Town may pursue all other lawful remedies, including special charges, court action, injunctions, and collection of costs. No informal promise, outside opinion, or partial correction waives these requirements. The Town takes the mandatory rules (the ones

affecting the public road right-of-way) very seriously. If you break these rules, the Town will use the following tools:

1. Stop Work Orders: The Town will order all construction on your property to stop immediately.
2. Withholding Permits: You will not get a building permit to start, and you will not get an Occupancy Permit to move in, until the driveway is fixed.
3. Daily Fines: The Town will fine you between 25.00 and up to 1,000.00 for every single day the driveway remains out of compliance.
4. Court Action: The Town can take you to court to force you to fix it, or the Town can fix it themselves and send you the bill.

Enforcement Timeline: If the Town finds your driveway is out of compliance with the mandatory rules, the following timeline applies:

Day 1: The Town notifies you of the violation.

Within 14 days: You must respond with a plan to fix it and a date when it will be done.

Within 30 days of the original notice: The corrective work must be completed.

If you do not respond within 14 days, or the work is not done within 30 days:

Daily fines begin at 25.00 and up to 1,000.00 per day, and the Town will send a final 7-day notice that the Town intends to correct the problem itself.

After that 7 days passes: The Town may enter the right-of-way, hire a contractor to fix the problem, and bill you for all costs.

If the bill is not paid by November 1st: The amount will be added to your property tax bill as a special charge.

Lifting a Stop Work Order: A Stop Work Order does not expire on its own. Once a Stop Work Order has been issued, it remains in effect until the owner completes the corrective work, all fines are paid in full, and the owner notifies the Town Office that the work is done. The Town Inspector must come out within four (4) working days to reinspect. Only after the

Inspector confirms the problem has been fixed and all fines have been paid will the Stop Work Order be lifted in writing. Construction may not resume until the owner has the written release in hand.

Violating a Stop Work Order: A Stop Work Order is non-negotiable. If a homeowner or contractor continues to build after a Stop Work Order has been issued, the following will happen immediately and without exception:

Daily fines will be assessed at the maximum rate of \$1,000.00 per day, starting from the date of the original Stop Work Order.

The Town will revoke the Driveway Permit. Once revoked, the homeowner must reapply from scratch and pay a new permit fee.

The Town will formally request that the building inspector revoke the building permit for the structure.

The Town will permanently refuse to issue Final Driveway Approval until all violations are corrected, all fines are paid in full, and a new permit is issued.

The Town will notify all contractors on file (see Sec. 1-4) that a Stop Work Order is in effect. Any contractor who continues working after being notified may also be subject to fines.

The Town will pursue all legal remedies available under Wisconsin law, including court action to force compliance.

There are no exceptions, extensions, or negotiations once a Stop Work Order has been violated. The homeowner will not receive an Occupancy Permit until every dollar in fines is paid and the driveway is brought into full compliance.

Outside opinions do not matter. Hiring your own engineer, surveyor, or any other third party to write a letter or report disagreeing with the Town's findings will not stop, delay, or override enforcement. The Town Driveway Inspector and the Town Board have the final say. No outside opinion changes that. The only formal path to challenge a decision is the appeal process under Sec. 1-9 and Wisconsin state law (Chapter 68). Contacting outside parties, complaining to the County, or seeking other opinions does not suspend your obligations, does not stop the fines from running, and does not delay the Town from taking action.

By applying for a permit, you agree to let the town driveway inspector, all board members, and patrolmen onto your property to check the driveway. If your driveway does not meet these rules, emergency vehicles like ambulances and fire trucks are not expected to risk their equipment trying to use it.

Sec. 1-11 Valid Forms of Communication For all notices, responses, and communications required under this ordinance, the following methods are all considered valid and legally sufficient:

In person (verbal): A face-to-face conversation with the property owner, confirmed by a written note in the Town's file documenting the date, time, and what was said.

Email: An email sent to the address on file with the Town Office. An email is considered delivered the day it is sent.

U.S. Mail: A letter sent to the mailing address on file. A mailed letter is considered

delivered 5 days after it is postmarked.

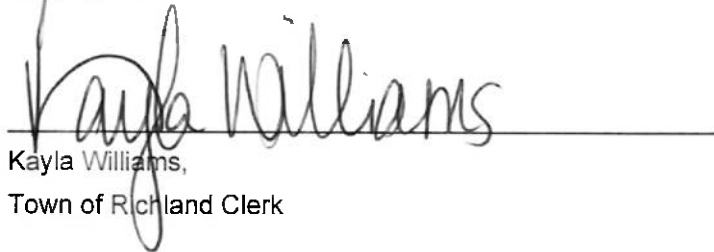
Phone call: A phone call to the number on file, confirmed by a written note in the Town's file documenting the date, time, and what was discussed.

The Town may use any one or more of these methods. The property owner may respond using any of these methods. Because mail delivery in today's world can take up to 14 days or more, the Town will make every reasonable effort to also notify by email or phone when time-sensitive enforcement actions are involved.

Adopted this __10__ day of __September__, 2026 By the Town Board of the Town of Richland,
Richland County WI

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "J. Williams", written over a horizontal line.

Chairperson

A handwritten signature in black ink, clearly legible as "Kayla Williams", written over a horizontal line.

Kayla Williams,
Town of Richland Clerk

DIAGRAMS

(Diagram #4 reflects the corrected standard: 4" Breaker Run and 4" Road Gravel)

DIAGRAM 1: Horizontal Curve Radius

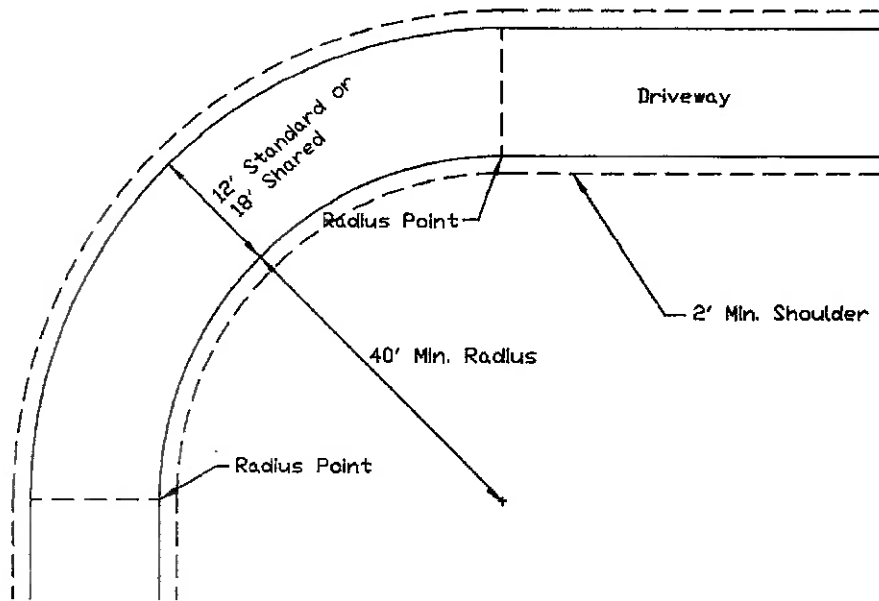


DIAGRAM 2: Driveway pull off and Abutting Public Highways

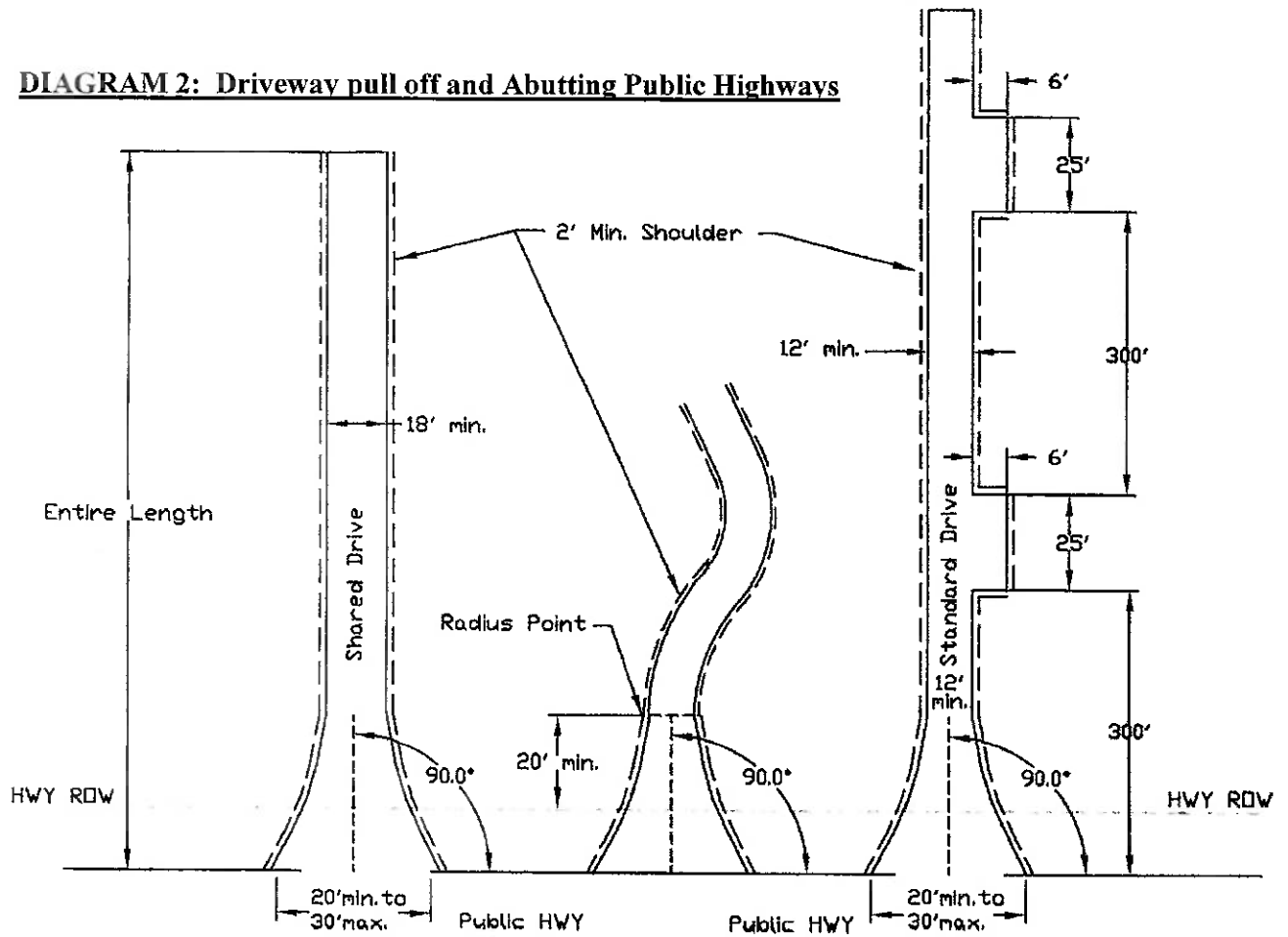


DIAGRAM #3: Minimum Driveway Turn Around Options

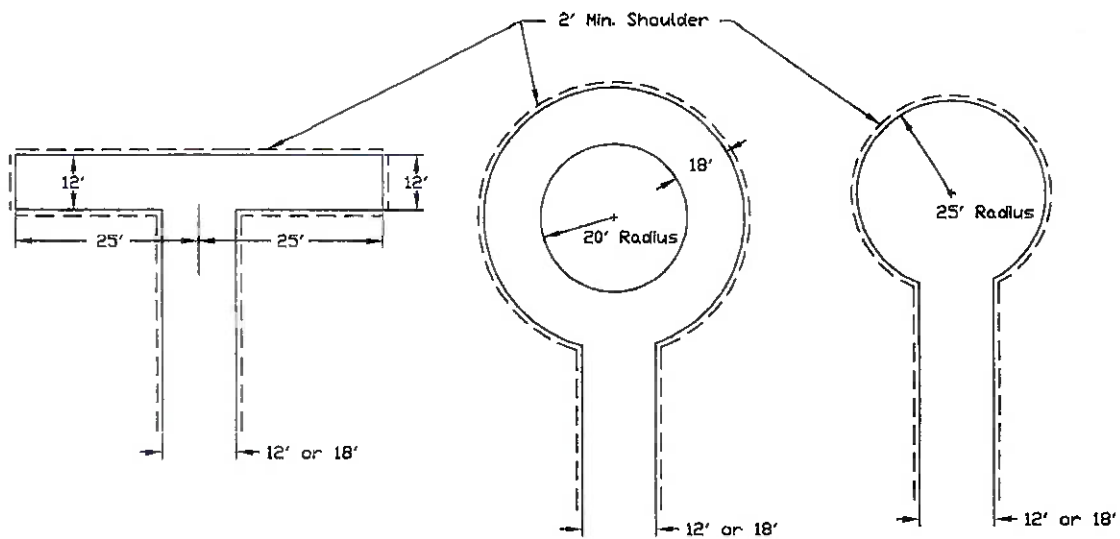


DIAGRAM #4: Typical Cross Section of a Driveway

