

TOWN OF COLUMBUS, COLUMBIA COUNTY, WISCONSIN

ORDINANCE NO. 2025-3

DRIVEWAY AND CULVERT ORDINANCE

SECTION 1 – PURPOSE

The purpose of this ordinance is to regulate the location, design, construction, and maintenance of driveways and culverts within the Town of Columbus to:

- Promote the safe and efficient movement of traffic;
- Protect town roads from damage;
- Ensure proper drainage and erosion control;
- Provide adequate access for emergency vehicles; and
- Comply with applicable Wisconsin Statutes and Columbia County Highway Department standards.

This ordinance is enacted under the authority of **Wis. Stat. §§ 60.22(3), 61.34, 83.027, and 86.07(2)**, and **Wis. Admin. Code Trans 231**.

SECTION 2 – PERMIT REQUIRED

1. **Permit requirement.**

No person shall construct, reconstruct, relocate, or alter a driveway or install, remove, or replace a culvert that connects to any Town road without first obtaining a **Driveway Permit** from the Town of Columbus.

2. **Other jurisdictions.**

- Driveway access to a **County Highway** also requires a permit from the **Columbia County Highway Department**.
- Driveway access to a **State Trunk Highway** requires a permit from the **Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT)** under **Trans 231**.

3. **Permit prior to building.**

A driveway permit must be approved **before** a building permit is issued for any new structure that requires vehicular access.

SECTION 3 – APPLICATION PROCEDURE

1. The applicant shall file a **Town of Columbus Driveway Permit Application** with the Town Clerk.
2. Each application shall include:
 - Name, address, and contact information of the property owner.
 - Legal description and parcel number of the property.
 - A **scaled site map or sketch** showing:
 - Driveway location relative to property lines, road intersections, and existing structures;
 - Proposed width, length, slope, and culvert location;
 - Natural drainage and ditches.
 - The required **permit fee**, established by Town Board resolution.
3. No construction may begin until the permit has been reviewed and approved by the Town Board or its designee.

SECTION 4 – DESIGN STANDARDS

| Feature | Requirement |
|--|--|
| Driveway Width at Road Edge | Minimum 16 feet , maximum 24 feet (residential). Commercial or farm access up to 35 feet if approved. |
| Travel Surface Width | Minimum 12 feet . |
| Maximum Grade | 12% , unless a variance is granted for unique topography. |
| Minimum Slope Away from Roadway | 2% for first 10 feet from road shoulder. |
| Culvert Diameter | Minimum 15 inches , or larger if required by Town for adequate drainage. |
| Culvert Length | Minimum 30 feet , with flared or tapered ends recommended. |

| Feature | Requirement |
|----------------------------|--|
| Surface Material | Gravel, crushed stone, asphalt, or concrete capable of supporting emergency vehicles. |
| Radius at Road Edge | 10–20 feet depending on use and location. |
| Sight Distance | Must comply with Wis. Admin. Code Trans 231.03 based on posted speed limits. |
| Setback from Intersections | Minimum 100 feet from any road intersection (measured from right-of-way lines). |

SECTION 5 – LOCATION AND ACCESS LIMITATIONS

1. Only **one driveway per parcel** shall be permitted unless additional access is approved by the Town Board for safety or topographical reasons.
2. Shared driveways serving two or more properties are encouraged where practical.
3. Driveways shall not be located where they would interfere with culverts, bridges, drainageways, or traffic control devices.

SECTION 6 – CONSTRUCTION AND INSPECTION

1. No work shall begin until the applicant receives written permit approval.
2. The applicant shall notify the Town Clerk at least **48 hours before** commencing construction for inspection of the grade and culvert placement.
3. Upon completion, the driveway shall be inspected to ensure compliance with the permit and this ordinance.
4. If deficiencies are found, the Town may require corrections prior to final approval.

SECTION 7 – MAINTENANCE

1. Property owners are responsible for maintaining their driveway and culvert in safe and serviceable condition.
2. Maintenance shall include:

- Cleaning or replacement of culverts when obstructed;
 - Preventing erosion or water runoff onto the Town road;
 - Repairing damaged surfaces to prevent hazards.
3. If the owner fails to maintain the driveway or culvert, the Town may perform the work and charge the cost to the property as a **special charge under Wis. Stat. § 66.0627**.
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SECTION 8 – ENFORCEMENT AND PENALTIES

1. Any person constructing or altering a driveway without a permit or in violation of this ordinance shall:
- Receive a **stop-work order**;
 - Be subject to a **forfeiture of not less than \$100 nor more than \$500**, plus costs; and
 - Be responsible for restoring the site to compliance at their own expense.
2. Each day a violation continues constitutes a separate offense.
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SECTION 9 – VARIANCES

The Town Board may grant a variance where strict application of this ordinance is impractical due to terrain or unique site conditions, provided that such variance does not compromise public safety, drainage, or roadway integrity.

SECTION 10 – SEVERABILITY

If any provision of this ordinance is found invalid or unenforceable, the remainder shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 11 – EFFECTIVE DATE

This ordinance shall take effect upon passage by the Town Board of the Town of Columbus and publication as required by Wisconsin Statutes.

Adopted this 13th day of October, 2025 by the Town Board of the Town of Columbus,
Columbia County, Wisconsin.

Town Chairperson:

Dan [Signature]

Supervisor:

Edward Wojcik

Supervisor:

Harold [Signature]

Town Clerk:

Walter [Signature]