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**RECOMMENDATION:**

THAT Council approve the recommended changes to the current draft policy and direct that an updated policy along with road listing be brought to the next available MSC for review.

**BACKGROUND:**

This project has been underway since late 2019. It originated in response to wider waste program reviews which highlighted an inconsistent approach to private road curbside collection across Rideau Lakes – importantly, mostly year-round service approvals.

Coming to this file fresh, I took the opportunity to step back and review the draft policy and project direction, considering its intended purposes. In some respects, the project has grown beyond a response to the original issue – a standard that would allow staff to review and approve/deny requests for year-round private road service (i.e. add winter service). Up to now approvals have been ad hoc, and eventually a moratorium was placed on new winter service requests pending a policy.

I believe the public feedback during the extensive comment periods has reflected this confusion about intent and purpose, and confusion as to why a historic service that has been provided without significant incident cannot be continued and is now deemed 'unsafe'. I tend to agree this seems arbitrary, considering performance history is an important part of assessing a program's viability.

Several policy ideas have been proposed below. An updated draft and road listing has not been provided with this report in an effort to avoid further confusion and mis-information. Being 'on' and 'off' different iterations of the list since November has appreciably caused concern and confusion amongst residents. I recommend that a definitive list be developed following final policy direction. The above noted, the proposed policy approach is far more inclusive of existing serviced roads. Based on the last list, dated June 18, under 10 of the over 230 roads that currently receive some level of service are shown to have road widths under 9ft.

**DISCUSSION:**

I believe a practical approach should be taken to finalizing and updating the service standard policy. It is important to focus on what is required operationally 'in the real world' to support and balance safe operations and effective service.

With this lens in place, a major opportunity I see is to apply different standards for road width for summer service and winter service. In the summer, when a driver can see the road edge clearly and there are less issues with soft shoulders and flooded ditches a road base can be safe for use with minimal extra width beyond the width from tire to tire. Our trucks have an 8ft wide tire to tire footprint. Accordingly, I believe a 9ft road base width would be an adequate minimum for summer service.

In the winter, when the shoulders are obscured, width is somewhat taken up by snowbanks, and freeze-thaw can cause soft shoulders, a wider road base would be prudent. Accordingly, I believe a 11ft road base width would be an appropriate minimum for winter service.

The road width is the primary cause of many roads currently receiving summer service, losing this service under the draft policy. I believe the reasoning above is defensible 'in the real world' and will pull many of these roads back into summer service. Then, if there is a desire to expand to include winter service, some upgrades may be required.

I think there is also some flexibility related to turnarounds that can be provided. Again, in my mind, in the summer when things are dry, a smaller grass area would be just as workable as a gravel area. In the winter/spring, a larger gravel area (to avoid rutting etc.) may be required.

I am also not certain a dedicated turnaround is required. I tend to think if folks are given a clear expectation of what is needed to provide service plus have an accountability framework – most issues can be avoided. In this case having a 'three strikes' approach to a turnaround may be a good accountability framework. Basically, if the identified turnaround is not clear of cars and trailers on the pick-up day, a photo will be taken by the driver and the issue reported to a defined road contact. If it occurs three times in any given season/year, service will be curtailed for that road/segment of road until the next season. I think this approach may provide the right incentive to support self policing while also understanding mistakes happen and people usually need a few chances.

The above concept will however require a defined road contact for any road that does not wish to, or is unable to, provide a dedicated turnaround. This will create some administrative burden for both parties but will be mitigated if they have an established road association. Much like the private road grant program, perhaps this will provide encouragement for roads that do not have an association to form one.

#### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

The proposed policy standards above would likely expand the number of roads that would be able to receive summer and winter service. However, it is not anticipated that this would create a material financial impact (such as the need for a new truck and operator).

ATTACHMENTS:

None

e-approved

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Mike Dwyer  
CAO

August 20, 2020

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DATE