



Annual Report – 2025

Planning & Development

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Purpose

The RM of Mervin No. 499 is committed to keeping ratepayers, developers, and all other stakeholders informed about the growth and changes taking place in our municipality each year. Since 2022, we have produced an annual report designed to clearly present development statistics and trends. This report highlights key information such as permits issued, subdivision referrals, development appeals, and other notable data. The following pages summarize information collected and compiled throughout the year to create the 2025 Planning & Development Annual Report.

Development Permits

The RM issued a total of 122 development permits in 2025 which include both permitted and discretionary use permits.

The RM received 54 discretionary use permits in 2025, which is a slight decrease from the 60 received in 2024. The high percentage of discretionary use permits is a direct result of Bylaw 2023-22 and Bylaw 2023-23 which allow for the permitting of Recreational Vehicles on vacant lots while work towards dwelling construction is being completed. As more principal residential buildings are constructed, the number of discretionary use permits should trend downward. Recreational Vehicle Permits account for 87% of the discretionary use permits in 2025.

Number of Approved Discretionary Use Permits by Division - 2025

Division	1	2	3	4	5	6
Total	0	1	0	22	29	2

Building Permits

Construction activity increased throughout 2025 resulting in another busy year for Planning & Development. During the year, the RM experienced a significant amount of building activity as the total number of building permits issued was 69. This is an increase from the 66 building permits that were issued in 2024 and the 51 issued in 2023.

Division 4 had the highest amount of building permits issued with 51 permits throughout 2025, contributing to 74% of overall building permits. This is due to the high level of development taking place at Turtle Lake and Brightsand Lake. The remaining divisions saw development most often in the form of new dwellings or accessory structures.

Approved Building Permits by Division – 2025

Division	1	2	3	4	5	6
Number of Permits	2	0	1	51	10	5
Construction Value	\$48,500	\$0	\$250,000	\$7,963,218	\$1,270,000	\$674,000

Permits in the Lakeshore Development and Conservation Districts accounted for 85% of the total building permits issued by the RM in 2025. Permits for new principal residential buildings make up nearly half of all permits issued throughout the Lakeshore and Conservation districts. These types of permits include single detached dwellings, RTM's, moved residences, and mobile homes.

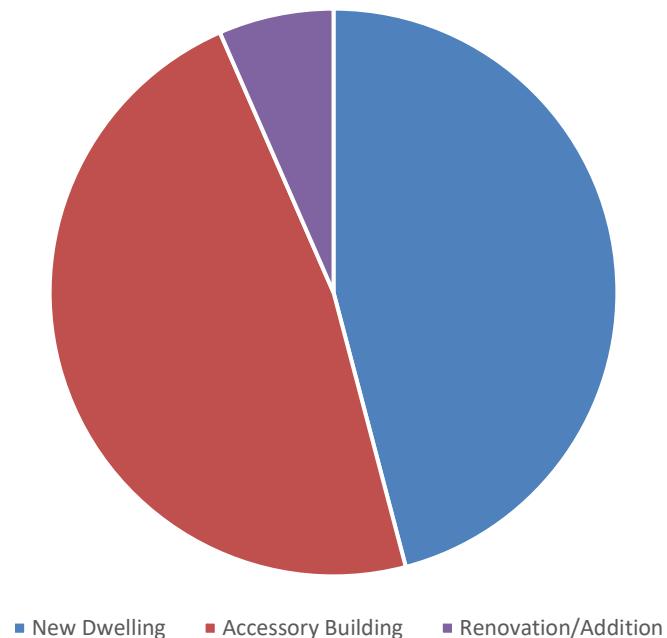
The RM issued a total of 28 permits for new dwellings across all zoning districts.

Approved Building Permits by Quarter – 2025

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	TOTAL
Number of Permits	13	25	24	7	69
Construction Value	\$2,093,500	\$2,093,100	\$4,530,118	\$1,489,000	\$10,205,718

The 2025 value of construction totals \$10,205,718.00, generating permit fees of \$18,419.80 to the municipality. This is quite an increase from the \$7,467,950 construction value in 2024. The RM continues to receive building permit applications well after the busy construction season and into fall, thus resulting in our busiest Q3 since before 2022. The RM continues to see most building permit activity in the form of residential permits. This includes new dwellings, accessory buildings, and renovations.

RM of Mervin No. 499 Residential Building Permits - 2025



The RM Planning Department continues to work closely with JWS Inspection Services and Svoboda Homes Construction & Inspections to address building permits. This includes receiving new permits, completing inspections, and closing files where deficiencies have been resolved.

Subdivisions

Subdivision applications are referred to the RM by the Community Planning Branch of the Ministry of Government Relations for comments regarding compliance with the Official Community Plan, Zoning Bylaw, and other planning policies. This table summarizes the number of subdivision applications received in 2025 in each division.

Subdivision Applications by Division – 2025

Division	1	2	3	4	5	6
Subdivision Applications	0	0	0	2	1	3

The RM received 6 subdivision referrals in 2025, which is significantly less than the 14 applications received in 2024. Most subdivision applications were single parcel subdivisions for residential purposes but also included one road subdivision and one parcel tie removal. It is common for subdivision applications to cross over from year to year and therefore not all 6 applications received comment from the RM in 2025 but will in 2026.

Subdivision Servicing Fees

The Planning and Development Act, 2007, makes provision for Council to charge subdivision servicing fees to recover the municipality's cost of upgrading public infrastructure that directly or indirectly serves a proposed subdivision. In 2025, a total of \$18,060.00 was paid to the municipality in subdivision servicing fees to support future upgrades relating to roads and wastewater. This is a decrease from the \$31,820.00 that was received in 2024 and can be directly attributed to the decreased number of subdivision applications. In addition to this, \$70,417.55 was contributed to the dedicated lands reserve account for cash in lieu of Municipal Reserve land dedication. These funds currently sit in dedicated reserve accounts.

The RM's subdivision servicing fees had not been reviewed since 2014. As such, a study with Wallace Insights was completed in 2024 to determine what the cost of municipal infrastructure upgrades would be incurred over the next ten years following subdivision projections. This study guided the RM to develop the policy that was passed by Council during the May 6, 2025, Regular Council Meeting and will be in effect January 1, 2026.

The Planning and Development Act allows municipalities to charge subdivision servicing fees for roads, drainage, waterworks, sewage works, recreation, and engineering, planning and legal fees. The previous subdivision servicing fees only included separate fees for future upgrades or construction of sewage works and roads. The new policy includes a flat rate fee that encompasses roads, drainage, sewage works, engineering, planning, and legal fees and includes an inflation projection from 2025-2035 ensuring sustainability of the policy and

associated fees. A full copy of the fee study is available on the RM website.

Development Appeals Board

Since the RM of Mervin has an approved Zoning Bylaw in place, the Planning & Development Act requires that a Development Appeals Board (DAB) be established. The function of a Development Appeals Board is to hear appeals where an appellant disagrees with certain development-related decisions made by a municipality. In its role as an adjudicator, a Development Appeals Board is expected to be fair and impartial. Examples of appeals include requests for minor variances to the standards of the Zoning Bylaw, misapplication of the Zoning Bylaw, and wrongful refusal of a development permit.

In 2025, a total of 2 appeal applications were received by the Development Appeals Board. This is a decrease from the 6 appeals that were received and heard by the Board in 2024.

Of the 2 appeals, the first one was regarding a dwelling that was in contravention of the rear setback by 53%. This contravention exceeded the 10% Minor Variance allowance given to Council as outlined in the Zoning Bylaw. The DAB denied the appeal and ordered that the structure be brought into compliance no later than twelve months after the effective date of decision.

The second appeal was regarding an accessory structure that had been erected without a permit and also contravened the Zoning Bylaw. The appellant appealed the rejected development permit. Following the appeal hearing, the DAB decided that the structure was to be removed from the site by a specified deadline. The appellant made appeal to the Saskatchewan Municipal Board Planning Appeals Committee (PAC) based on the DAB decision which will be heard in 2026.

The RM also responded to an appeal made to the Saskatchewan Municipal Board Planning Appeals Committee relating to an unpermitted Seasonal Campground. This had previously been heard at the Development Appeals Board level in which the DAB decided that the appellants must either obtain an approved development permit from the RM or remove the campground. The Planning Appeals Committee ruled to uphold the decision of the Development Appeals Board and that the Appellants must either remove the unpermitted campground in its entirety or obtain an approved permit by a specified deadline.

RM of Mervin Planning & Development Department Update

Throughout 2025, the RM Planning Department worked on several projects, most of which have been multi-year endeavors. These projects were approved with a focus of better understanding development pressures, updating bylaws and policies to be representative of current times, and ensuring a safe and sustainable municipality.

Work was done in 2025 regarding an in-depth review and overhaul of the 1994 Zoning Bylaw and Official Community Plan alongside Geoverra. A great amount of work was completed including the thorough review of existing documents, various methods of public engagement, as well as future projects related to population, land suitability, and asset management. The project will be completed and adopted by Council in 2026 following the final report of the

Turtle Lake Lakeshore and Watershed Management Study.

In 2025, the RM of Mervin, the Resort Village of Kivimaa-Moonlight Bay, Resort Village of Turtle View, and Thunderchild First Nation were successful in their application to complete a comprehensive Lakeshore and Watershed Management study of Turtle Lake through the Targeted Sector Support Initiative. The study will conclude in 2026 and will be influential towards future decision making.

As the RM of Mervin grows, our priority is to guide that growth in ways that protect our community's character and resources. Through ongoing research, planning initiatives, and public input, we're laying the groundwork for thoughtful, sustainable development. In 2026, the Planning & Development Department will not only continue these efforts but also investigate new economic development opportunities to keep our municipality balanced, resilient, and positioned for long-term success.

