

Strathbogie Shire Council
Road Management Plan 2025 Review
1 July 2025



Strathbogie
SHIRE COUNCIL

Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the places we live, work and play.

We recognise and respect the enduring relationships they have with their lands and waters and we pay respects to the Elders past, present and emerging.

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Next review	2029
Responsible Officer	Director Sustainable Infrastructure

Road Management Plan 2025 Review

Introduction

Council has an established Road Management Plan (RMP) under the *Road Management Act 2004*. The RMP is a plan that details the inspection regime, defect intervention levels and defect repair response times for all nominated road related assets under Council management. Compliance with the current RMP limits Council's public liability to legal action from claims for damages for incidents with these assets. The RMP ensures that the community is informed about how Council manages its road assets. The RMP also enables the community to comment to Council about the level of service Council offers in terms of intervention associated with roads and road related assets.

The RMP was initially adopted by Council on 16 November 2004. It was subsequently reviewed and amended by Council on 20 September 2005, 15 May 2007, 19 June 2012, February 2014, April 2017 and September 2021. As outlined in Section 8 of the Road Management (General) Regulations 2016, an incoming Council must review the RMP within six months after each general election or by the next 30 June, whichever is later, unless the Minister administering that Act extends the period under section 125(4) of that Act.

The Municipal Association Victoria's (MAV) main role is to advocate for local government interests, provide policy and strategic advice and to support Councils. They also provide insurance services on behalf of Councils. One of the key areas of concern for the MAV and Councils is risk and liability and MAV provide support and advice in relation to the requirements, developments and management of the Road Management Plan.

In preparation for the review the MAV ran workshops and outlined to Councils that incidents and claims in relation to assets management through the Road Management Plan have risen by over 80% since 2018 and that resultant payout has risen by over 200%

The highest risk area and the areas that lead to the most claims are hazards that lead to trips and falls. Taking this into consideration the MAV conducted a review of the data captured from the 79 Victorian Councils in 2022. The areas that they focused on were:

- Proactive inspection frequencies
- Reactive inspection frequencies
- Footpath defect intervention levels
- Defect repair timeframes.

The review also identified concerns in relation discrepancies and lack of clarity across the Road Management Plan developed by each of the member Councils. Taking this into account the MAV developed two standard templates, one for rural Councils and one for metropolitan Councils.

The MAV recommended to all member Councils to consider changing their Road Management Plan to this new format as it provides consistency across Councils and closes some gaps in relation to management of risk and liability. We have heeded this advice and our proposed RMP has been based on the standard template for rural Councils.

Review Process

Officers commenced a review of the existing RMP plan in late 2024. The review group comprised: Oliver McNulty, Director Sustainable Infrastructure; Brian Doyle, Manager Operations; Gavin Williams, Operations Coordinator; Kate Thompson, Principal Property Officer; Brett Andrews, Services Inspector, Chris Bishop Assets Officers and Lyn Cooper, Asset Planning Administration Officer.

As a first step the current RMP was converted to the MAV standard template for rural councils. The plan was then examined by the review group keeping in mind the following:

- The RMP is a document available to the community and is a document that the Council can communicate to the community how the roads and road related infrastructure is managed
- To serve this audience well the RMP needs to be in simple language, include only necessary information and be unambiguous
- The RMP must be set up in a format to ensure that the officers who work with the document in inspecting and carrying out the identified tasks within the RMP are clear and measurable
- That this is a document that Council will refer to when framing the budget for works to road assets on an annual basis.

Over several meetings, members of the review group made comments on the draft RMP taking into the account the points above. These comments and an initial draft of an amended RMP was issued for further comment.

As part of this review process officers considered and referred to other items as part of the review process:

- *The Road management Act 2004*
- The Road management (General) Guidelines
- Vicroads papers and guidance documents relating to RMP's
- MAV papers and guidance documents relating to RMP's
- Papers outlining legal opinion in relation to the creation of RMP's
- Feedback from Councils insurers
- Plans and documents prepared by other similar rural Councils
- Council Policies.

At these meetings each section of the RMP was discussed in detail taking into account each of the items above.

The outcomes of this review process were presented to Council at a briefing session held on 1 July 2025. The draft amended RMP was presented at a Council Meeting on 15 July and approved to go on public exhibition inviting feedback from community members. The feedback period commenced on 23 July and closed on 4 September 2025 in accordance with requirements of the *Road Management (General) Regulations 2016 Part 3 Division 1 Regulation 9 (4)*

Review

Overview

Officers asked themselves the question what is the purpose of the RMP? This was discussed with reference to the documents listed above taking into context the experience of the group around the table.

In summary it was discussed that the RMP:

- Provides a mechanism through which Council can manage its legal liability
- Outlines when Council will undertake works on hazards either identified through inspection or via a community request
- Provides our community with a clear and transparent understanding of what Council will or will not do
- Annual budget is established based upon the inspection cycles and intervention levels outlined.

A key decision was made at this stage to clarify that the RMP was a document to manage hazardous defects within roads and road related infrastructure. It has been clarified which assets were included for inspection under the RMP. These are:

- Roads – Sealed Surface
- Roads – Pavement
- Gravel Roads
- Pathways
- Kerb and Channels
- Bridges and Major Culverts
- Signage (regulatory and warning)
- Roadside vegetation within the sightline zone at sealed road intersection

All other road and road related infrastructure which would not be considered as being high risk items are managed under operational processes.

In summary, the changes from the Last Road Management Plan (2021) are:

- Content and layout moved to the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) standard template for rural Councils
- Clarification around assets which we inspect and maintain
- Maps outlining which pathways are covered by the plan
- A review of inspection times and response times across all road and road related infrastructure assets

Following is a more detailed listing of changes.

Road Hierarchy

Council's existing asset system categorises roads by functional classification and road class. The functional classification was either: link; collector; access; access – property only; or fire access. Road class was based on the number of vehicles per day and ranged from 0 (unformed), 1 (<50vpd) to 4 (>500 vpd). For example a Link road with 50-150vpd would be categorised as L2.

In the interests of simplicity and clarity, the review group determined that roads should be categorised as Link, Collector, Access or Limited Access Track.

Inspection Frequencies

A review of proactive inspection times was conducted by the review group. Taking into account the number of staff with sufficient expertise to conduct the inspections and the extent of the network, the following changes were recommended:

Asset Group	Hierarchy Category	Reactive Inspection Timeframe WD = Working Days H = Hours	Proactive Inspection Frequency M = Months	Night Inspections Y = Years	Comment
Sealed Roads	Link	5WD	3M	1Y	
Unsealed Roads	Collector	5WD	4M	1Y	Increased from three months
Regulatory, Warning and Hazard Signs	Access	10WD	12M	n/a	Increased from three months
	Limited Access Track	12WD	Reactive only	n/a	Was twelve months
Pathways	Priority 1	5WD	6M	n/a	
	Priority 2	10WD	12M	n/a	
Concrete and Stone Kerb and Channel	Link	5WD	12M when either adjacent road or footpath is	n/a	New

			inspected		
	Collector	5WD	12M when either adjacent road or footpath is inspected	n/a	New
	Access	10WD	12M when either adjacent road or footpath is inspected	n/a	New

Intervention Levels and Response Times

Key features of the plan are tables that set out:

- An inspection regime
- Types of road maintenance activities with respective “intervention level” and “response times” for the maintenance requirement.

The review considered the “reasonableness” of these standards by comparing these maintenance requirements to the plans of the other like Councils. This benchmarking found that there is considerable variation in some measures across those Councils and Strathbogie’s measures were not in the extreme of the variation. This comparison did not conclude that Strathbogie’s measure were “unreasonable”

The review also considered the measures Strathbogie has in place are reasonable given its capacity to resource the required work within the required response times. Also, the budget available for Council to undertake routine maintenance of its roads is consistent with the requirements of the plan.

Notwithstanding the above, the review has identified that a number of intervention levels and response times are recommended to be adjusted. A table of these recommended adjustments is provided below:

Sealed Roads

Defect type	Description / Intervention Level	Repair timeframes by hierarchy WD = Working Days W = Weeks M = Months				Comment
		Link	Collector	Access	Limited Access Tracks	
Pothole	Potholes in sealed pavement >100 mm in depth and >300 mm in diameter Potholes located in dedicated/marked bicycle lanes >50 mm depth and >300 mm diameter.	2W	1M	3M	n/a	Was 2W / 2W / 1M / 2M For all items Limited Access Tracks set to n/a as there are no sealed limited access tracks.
Edge break	Edge break in the traffic lane greater than 20m in length and greater than 200mm across the lane	1M	3M	3M	n/a	Was 2W / 2W / 1M/ 2M

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Edge / shoulder drop	Edge drop off in the traffic lane greater than 10m in length and greater than 100mm in depth	1M	2M	3M	n/a	Was 2W / 2W / 1M/ 2M
Depressions / deformations	Depression / deformations in the traffic lane of a sealed pavement >100 mm in depth under a 3m long straight edge	1M	2M	3M	n/a	Was 2W / 2W / 1M/ 2M
Missing pit lids	Missing Council drainage pit lids	2WD	2WD	4WD	n/a	New
Damaged pit lids	Damaged Council drainage pit lids (such that they are potentially structurally unsound)	1W	2W	4W	n/a	New
Roadside Vegetation – Overhead clearance	Vegetation intruding into the road envelope <5 m over the	1M	3M	3M	n/a	Was 6M for link and ‘as resources allow’ for others

	trafficable portion of all sealed roads					
Roadside Vegetation – Obstructing sightlines	Vegetation that is obstructing sightlines to intersections or regulatory, warning and hazard signs	1M	3M	6M	n/a	new

Unsealed Roads

Defect type	Description / Intervention Level	Repair timeframes by hierarchy WD = Working Days W = Weeks M = Months				Comment
		Link	Collector	Access	Limited Access Track	
Pothole	Potholes in unsealed pavement >100 mm in depth and >500 mm in diameter	n/a	1M	2M	4M	Previous intervention level description simplified and timeframes were 2M / 3M / 3M /6M For all items related to Link roads: there are no unsealed link roads so set to n/a
Wheel ruts / scouring	Wheel ruts or scouring on an unsealed road >100 mm in depth	n/a	1M	2M	4M	Was > 150mm Timeframes were 3M / 3M / 6M / 6M
Corrugations	Continuous corrugations on an unsealed road greater than 150mm in length >75 mm in depth	n/a	1M	2M	4M	Timeframes were 3M / 3M / 6M / 6M
Roadside Vegetation – Overhead clearance	Vegetation intruding into the road envelope <5 m over the trafficable portion of all	n/a	6M	12M	12M	Added

	roads					
Roadside Vegetation – Obstructing sightlines	Vegetation that is obstructing sightlines to intersections or regulatory, warning and hazard signs.	n/a	3M	6M	6M	new

Traffic Control Devices

Defect type	Description / Intervention Level	Repair timeframes by hierarchy WD = Working Days W = Weeks M = Months				Comments
		Link	Collector	Access	Limited Access Track	
Missing / Damaged Signage	Regulatory, warning and hazard signs missing, illegible or damaged making them substantially ineffective.	1M	2M	3M	4M	Was within 1 month if missing or substantially ineffective
Missing / Damaged Guard Rail or fencing	Guard rail/fence damaged or missing making them substantially ineffective (intervention may include temporary traffic control measures)	1M	3M	6M	n/a	new

Missing / Damaged Pavement markings	Pavement markings at critical locations (refer to definitions table for critical locations) which are missing or faded making them substantially ineffective.	1M	3M	4M	n/a	Was Annual Program subject to funding
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Pathways

Defect type	Description / Intervention Level	Repair timeframes by hierarchy WD = Working Days W = Weeks M = Months		Comment
		Priority 1 – High Use Areas	Priority 2 – Other areas	
Vertical Displacement	Vertical Displacement >25 mm in height	2W	1M	Was > 20mm abrupt step Was – refer to program
Loose segmented pavers	Loose and unstable segmented pavers (i.e. bluestone, bricks, etc.) that move underfoot	2W	1M	new
Cracking	Cracking in pathways >40 mm wide	2W	1M	new
Undulations	Undulations (depressions / bumps) >75 mm in depth/height under a 1.5m straight edge	1M	6W	new

Dislodged / missing pieces / potholes	Dislodged or missing pieces or potholes >300 mm in length/width and >25 mm in depth	2W	1M	new
Missing pit lids	Missing Council drainage pit lids	2WD	2WD	new
Damaged pit lids	Damaged Council drainage pit lids (such that they are potentially structurally unsound)	1M	1M	new
Vegetation overhead clearance	Vegetation intruding into the pathway envelope <2.5 m over pathway surface	6M	6M	new
Dislodged / missing tactile indicator	Damaged or missing	1M	2M	new

* Pram crossings / ramps providing transition between road and pathway levels are treated as part of the pathway for the purposes of the application of description / intervention levels.

Kerb and Channel

Defect type	Description / Intervention Level	Repair timeframes by hierarchy WD = Working Days W = Weeks M = Months				Comment
		Link	Collector	Access	Limited Access Track	
Vertical Displacement	Vertical displacement – uplift section (measured by risk assessment against the defect presented)	2M	2M	6M	n/a	New
Horizontal Displacement	Horizontal displacement section (measured by risk assessment against the defect presented)	2M	2M	6M	n/a	New

Bridges and Culverts

Defect type	Description / Intervention Level	Repair timeframes by hierarchy WD = Working Days W = Weeks M = Months				Comment
		Link	Collector	Access	Limited Access Track	
Bridge & culvert defects	Visible damage likely to pose an immediate and significant risk to members of the public	2W	4W	2M	3M	Was < 25% capacity Timeframes were 3M / 3M / 6M / 6M

Road Register

The road register accompanies the Road Management Plan. It contains a listing of roads that Council is responsible for. The review found that the register is not kept up to date on a regular basis. Recent efforts by Council to put increased emphasis on asset management should drive improved accuracy of asset data including the register of roads and systems to support maintenance of that data.

Community Submissions

The review was advertised in the government gazette, local newspapers and Council's web site indicating that submissions may be made to Council from 23 July 2025 to 4 August 2025. A total of 6 submissions were received.

The issues raised in the six submissions did not relate to the matters covered by the plan. In summary:

- One related to an upgrade of a floodway
- One related to inspecting and grading a specific road
- One related to how we grade our roads
- One related to a speed change on a specific road and litter
- Two related to a request for specific road to be added to the Road Register

Therefore, no amendments to the plan were proposed.

Supplementary Edition

Maps showing our footpath network were included to make it clear which footpaths are covered by the RMP, e.g. footpaths in recreation reserves are not part of road related infrastructure and are not covered by the plan. The RMP also contains new images that clearly identify who is responsible for each asset within the road reserve, such as private driveways, footpaths etc.

Summary

Council is required to update its Road Management Plan every four years, with each new Council.

The content and layout of the Road Management Plan 2025 is in the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) template (Rural), the assets which we inspect and maintain have been clarified and inspection times and response times across all road and road related infrastructure assets have been reviewed and updated to reflect the capacity of current staffing and budget.

The draft Road Management Plan 2025 was placed on public exhibition inviting formal submissions from community members from 23 July 2025 to 11.59pm on 4 September 2025.

Six submissions were received; however, as none were related to the content of the Road Management Plan, no amendment to the plan is proposed. These submissions will be reviewed by the Director Sustainable Infrastructure and actioned as appropriate.