

Roading



To help lower future rates and keep services sustainable, Council is reviewing whether services should stay the same, change, be reduced or stop.

Council maintains and develops the local transport network so people and goods can move freely and safely around the district. Our local road network covers more than 1,300km with around two-thirds unsealed. The network includes 357 bridges with 99 large culverts, 5.6 km of retaining walls, 70.5 km of footpaths and 1,545 streetlights. State highways are managed separately by Waka Kotahi - NZ Transport Agency.

Why is this important?

Roading is Council's largest area of spending and one of our most valued and visible services. It supports community connectivity, safety, and economic activity, but must remain affordable for ratepayers.

What are the challenges?

Ruapehu has a large transport network, challenging terrain, harsh weather conditions and a small, spread-out population. This makes roads, bridges and other transport assets expensive to maintain. While Council currently receives significant Government funding, future funding levels are uncertain. At the same time, costs for maintaining and replacing transport assets continue to increase.

Help us decide spending priorities

To help manage these pressures, Council is reviewing what we deliver across the network. This means considering where investment should be prioritised, what level of service is appropriate for different roads, and whether some costs should be shared differently. What trade-offs would you be prepared to accept to help keep rates affordable while maintaining a safe and reliable road network?

Main roads (Class 1)

These are the roads that carry most traffic and are most important for the economy, emergency access and connecting communities. They include:

- **Primary roads** - collect traffic from neighbourhoods and feed it onto larger roads
- **Secondary roads** - connect smaller towns and communities to larger roads
- **Access roads** - provide direct access to a property or area (e.g. Ohakune Mountain Road)

425km of roads are Class 1 roads (341 km sealed, 84 km unsealed).

390 km is rural, with 33 km urban.

78% of all journeys take place on Class 1 roads.

1. Should Council prioritise investment on Class 1 roads over lower-use roads?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure ☐

2. Should rural Class 1 roads receive a greater share of funding than urban Class 1 roads?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure ☐

Low-volume roads (Class 2)

These roads carry relatively little traffic but make up most of the network.

- 867km of roads (135 km sealed, 732 km unsealed)
- 789 km rural, 78 km urban.
- Around 22% of all journeys occur on these roads.

To reduce costs, Council could provide a lower level of service, which could mean things like less frequent grading with rougher road surfaces, or reduced metalling.



3. Should Council reduce service levels on some low-volume roads?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure ☐

Single-property roads (Class 3)

Ruapehu has 35 km of unsealed rural roads that serve only one property. Council is considering whether maintenance and repair of these roads should become the responsibility of the property owner.

4. Should Council stop maintaining roads that serve only one property?

They would become “paper roads,” with maintenance and repair becoming the property owner’s responsibility.

Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure ☐

5. If you answered NO, would you support this where the property is unoccupied or has limited public benefit?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure ☐

Bridges

Ruapehu has 357 bridges. Many were built in the early 1900s to support farming expansion and now need replacing. We currently have 17 weight restricted and 6 speed restricted bridges. By 2034, 11 bridges and 34 major culverts are due for renewal. One urgent example is the Mangateitei Road rail over-bridge, near Ohakune. Replacement costs have risen sharply - up 38% between 2020 and 2023, and further since - and Council’s bridge depreciation costs have climbed to \$1.8 million a year.

Council is considering whether bridges serving only one or very few properties should become the responsibility of those property owners.

6. Should Council stop maintaining or replacing low-use bridges that serve only one or two properties?

Responsibility would transfer to the affected property owners.

Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure ☐

7. If you answered NO, would you support this where the property is unoccupied or has limited public benefit?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure ☐

Sealing roads

A small number of unsealed roads (6.7 km) in or near urban areas are under pressure to be sealed, to reduce dust and improve amenity. If residents wish to advance a road up the priority order they can currently pay the cost of the local share. Given Council’s financial pressures, new road sealing of this type is unlikely to be affordable unless local residents contribute to the cost.

8. Should Council remove these projects from its work programme unless residents fund the local share of the cost?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure ☐

Other Feedback

9. Do you have any other feedback about Roothing?

10. Where do you live?

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| ☐ Taumarunui | ☐ Ohura | ☐ Ongarue |
| ☐ Owango | ☐ Waimarino | ☐ Rangataua |
| ☐ Ohakune | ☐ Raetihi | ☐ Waouru |
| ☐ Other | | |