



ROAD MANAGEMENT PLAN 2021-2025

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Golden Plains Shire spans the Traditional lands of the Wadawurrung and Eastern Maar people. We acknowledge them as the Traditional Owners and Custodians.

Council pays its respects to Wadawurrung Elders past, present and emerging. Council also respects Eastern Maar Elders past, present and emerging.

Council extends that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People who are part of the Golden Plains Shire.

*Image: Sunset over Bunjil's Lookout in Maude.
Artwork: 'Wabdallah' by Shu Brown*



DOCUMENT CONTROL

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	Project Manager: Malcolm McKenzie
	Author: Adam Lehmann
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This Road Management Plan is owned and managed by:

Golden Plains Shire Council
2 Pope Street
Bannockburn VIC 3331

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GOLDEN PLAINS SHIRE COUNCIL ROAD MANAGEMENT PLAN 2021-2025

The Golden Plains Shire Council manages, in accordance with its Road Management Plan 2021-2025 (Road Management Plan or RMP), the roads (including any ancillary areas) for which it has responsibility pursuant to the *Road Management Act 2004* (Road Management Act or Act or RMA).

Council's responsibility under the Act also extends to the management of roads, such as service roads and dedicated parking lanes alongside declared arterial roads, for which the Council is also the responsible road authority.

The Golden Plains Shire Council's Register of Public Roads (available at Council's offices during normal working hours) provides additional details of each of the roads for which Council is responsible, however, the Register is not an 'incorporated document in this Road Management Plan.

This Road Management Plan also includes the following:

- Golden Plains Shire Council's 'Road Management System', which sets out details of the management system to be implemented by Council in the discharge of its duty to inspect, maintain and repair public roads pursuant to the RMA.
- (As 'incorporated documents' in this Road Management Plan), Council's Intervention Standards, which are the standards (dealing with intervention levels and response timelines) in accordance with which Council will perform its road management functions.

Council's Road Management Plan has been prepared in accordance with Division 5 of Part 4 of the RMA.

Council appreciates information from the public regarding any road or traffic hazards. The 24-hour contact phone number is 1300 363 036 or email enquiries@gplains.vic.gov.au

Notwithstanding that this Road Management Plan is a publicly available document, any queries in relation to or requests to view this Road Management Plan should be directed to:

Director Infrastructure
& Development
Golden Plains Shire Council
2 Pope Street
Bannockburn VIC 3331

Further information is also available on Council's website at www.goldenplains.vic.gov.au



GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Unless the context or subject matter otherwise requires (including in relation to the Glossary set out in this Road Management Plan), the terms used in this Road Management Plan have the same meaning as the definitions included in the *Road Management Act 2004*, the relevant Regulations and Codes of Practice made under the *Road Management Act 2004*, the *Local Government Act 1989* or as defined by other technical guidelines.

Unless the context or subject matter requires otherwise, the following terms in this Road Management Plan have the following meanings:

Term	Definition
Arterial roads	Freeways, highways and declared main roads that are managed by the State Government through VicRoads.
Code of Practice	Supporting document to the legislation, which provides practical guidance to a road authority in the making of a RMP.
Consent applications	Applications made by other road authorities, private contractor and utilities companies to perform works on Council-managed roads.
‘Exceptional Circumstances’ clause	A clause included in the RMP that describes the conditions under which a Council can suspend its maintenance and inspection responsibilities under the RMP due to the occurrence of events outside their control.
	The ‘Exceptional Circumstances’ clause also details the process for reinstating the RMP.
Hazard/defect description	Refers to a change to the road or footpath surface that introduces a hazard to public safety. Common terminology includes; pothole, lift, shove, lip, crazing, depression, etc.
Infrastructure managers	Infrastructure manager means: a) In relation to road infrastructure, the relevant members of Council staff; or b) In relation to non-road infrastructure, the person or body that is responsible for the provision, installation, maintenance or operation of the non-road infrastructure.
Intervention standard	The size of a defect at which Council has determined that the defect will be rectified.
Level of Service	Describes the outputs or objectives an organisation or activity intends to deliver to its customers.
Municipal roads	Roads for which Council is the responsible road authority
Non-road infrastructure	Includes infrastructure in, on, under or over a road that is not road infrastructure.
	The RMA provides examples of non-road infrastructure that includes: gas pipes, water and sewerage pipes, cables, electricity poles, bus shelters, rail infrastructure, public telephones, mailboxes, roadside furniture and fences erected by utilities or providers of public transport.
Other roads	Includes roads in State Government reserves and roads on private property.
	Council is not responsible for the care and maintenance of these roads.
Path or pathway	The definition of pathway provided in the RMA captures both ‘footpaths’ and ‘shared pathways’ as outlined below: It includes a footpath, bicycle path or other area constructed or developed by a responsible road authority for use by members of the public other than with a motor vehicle but does not include any path: a) which has not been constructed by a responsible road authority; or b) which connects to other land.

Term	Definition
Proactive inspections	Inspections performed as part of a scheduled program, according to the classification of roads, which is based on the road classification, volume of traffic etc., for the purpose of identifying defects above intervention and to provide a record that the road has been inspected
Reactive inspections	Inspections performed in response to a customer request or notification about the condition of the road, in order to assess whether the road contains a RMP hazard that has reached the relevant intervention level.
Register of Public Roads	List of roads within a municipality that a Council is responsible for. Council is required to keep a register under section 19 of the RMA.
Responsible road authority	The organisation responsible for the management of the road, as determined under section 37 of the RMA.
Road	Includes a street, right of way, cul de sac, by-pass, bridge or ford, footpath, bicycle path or other land or works forming part of the road.
Road infrastructure	The infrastructure which forms part of a roadway, pathway or shoulder, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structures forming part of the roadway, pathway or shoulder; and the road-related infrastructure; and Materials from which a roadway, pathway or shoulder is made; such as asphalt, bitumen, gravel, lane markers and lines.
Road Management Act (RMA)	<i>Road Management Act 2004 (Vic)</i> The Act provides a statutory framework for the management of the road network in Victoria.
Road Management Plan (RMP)	A policy document developed by a Council to assist in the management of its road-related duties and responsibilities, as defined in the RMA.
Road infrastructure	Infrastructure which is installed by the relevant road authority for road related purposes to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate the operation or use of the roadway or pathway; or Support or protect the roadway or pathway. Examples: Traffic islands, traffic management signage, traffic control sign, traffic light, kerb and channel, a bridge, culvert or ford, road drain or embankment, a noise wall, gate, post or board installed on the road reserve.
Road reserve	All of the area of land that is within the boundaries of a road.
Roadside	Any land that is within the boundaries of a road (other than the shoulders of the road) which is not a roadway or a pathway and includes the land on which any vehicle crossing or pathway which connects from a roadway or pathway on a road to other land has been constructed.
Timelines	In determining timelines, Council takes into consideration factors including finances and resources available. Timelines are goals only where Council endeavours to achieve such timelines 'as soon as reasonably practicable' thereafter.
Works manager	Means any person or body that is responsible for the conduct of works in, on, under or over a road. This includes all works whether related to road infrastructure or non-road infrastructure.

Table 1 - Glossary of Terms



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

This Road Management Plan is a policy document of the Council that:

- Describes the public road assets and the road and road-related infrastructure within road reserves for which Council is responsible;
- Outlines Council's road management system, sets intervention levels, inspection and response standards, and maintenance and repair standards; and
- Sets out the review, audit and amendment processes the Council will implement to ensure that its responsibilities under the RMA are met in a timely and efficient manner.

Council, as a road authority (and as a defence to any proceedings for damages against Council resulting from the performance or non-performance of a road management function in respect of a public road) is entitled to rely on and prove a defence that Council had taken such care as in all the circumstances was reasonably required to ensure that the relevant part of a public road was not dangerous for traffic (defence).

For the purposes of the defence, Council may rely on a policy which is reasonably based, and which has otherwise been complied with.

This Road Management Plan is, and comprises, that policy.

The implementation and management of this Road Management Plan is otherwise, and separately, consistent with

Council's various other strategic and corporate plans and policies.

However, and notwithstanding Council's other strategic and corporate plans and policies, this Road Management Plan is and at all times remains a stand-alone and all-encompassing policy document

of Council (for the inspection, repair and maintenance of public roads, paths and road and road-related infrastructure) within the municipality of the Golden Plains Shire and without recourse to any other policy, practice, or procedure of Council in relation to the performance or non-performance of Council's public road, path and road infrastructure management functions.

If, and to the extent, any other policy, practice or procedure of Council:

- Requires (or purports to require) any act, matter or thing to be done by or on behalf of the Council in relation to the performance or non-performance of Council's public road, path and road infrastructure management functions; and
- Adopts (or purports to adopt) a standard which is or may be in conflict, or inconsistent, with the standards specified in, and by, this Road Management Plan (other standards)

The standards specified by this Road Management Plan prevail over the other standards to the extent of such conflict or inconsistency, and the other standards are of no force or effect.

This Road Management Plan in relation to the construction, inspection, maintenance and repair of those public roads within the municipality the Golden Plains Shire Council for which Council is the responsible road authority (including in relation to suitable prioritisations for the maintenance and repair of road infrastructure on public roads) is a policy document of the Council and is based substantially on financial, economic, political, social or environmental considerations.

Council formally records that the funding which it has provided to implement this Road Management Plan has been substantially influenced by (and the Council has expressly taken into account) budgetary allocations and the constraints which they entail in terms of the allocation of Council resources.

Council has a substantial network of variously classified roads and the following infrastructure may be impacted by the requirements of the RMA:

Asset Description	Asset Quantity	Units
Sealed Roads	1,011.2	km
Unsealed roads	716.4	Km
Kerb and channel	57.5	Km
Pathways	154.8	Km
Bridges and major drainage structures	139	Count

Table 2 - Road Asset Quantities

Note: These figures are accurate as at 30 June 2020.

1.2 PURPOSE

In accordance with section 50 of the RMA, the purpose of this Plan is to:

- Establish a management system for the road management functions of the Council which is based on policy and operational objectives and available resources; and
- Specify the relevant standards in relation to the discharge of duties in the performance of those road management functions.

This Road Management Plan sets out the management system that Council proposes to implement in the discharge of its statutory duty to inspect, maintain and repair public roads for which Council is responsible.

This Plan also reflects the 'local government charter' and the purposes and objectives of Council as specified under sections 3A and 3C of the *Local Government Act 1989*. Other legislation which also relates to this Plan includes the *Road Safety Act 1986* and the *Transport Act 1983*.

With respect to the discharge by Council of its duties under the RMA, and otherwise in accordance with this Road Management Plan, Council records that it considers, for the purposes of section 39 of the Act, it has adopted and made a reasonable policy decision in relation to the management of public roads in the municipal district (policy decision).

Council considers that the policy decision is otherwise one which accords to the requirements of section 103(b) of the Act, which relevantly provides that:

'for the purposes of any proceeding ... an act or omission which is in accordance with a policy determined by the relevant road authority under section 39 does not constitute a wrongful exercise or failure unless the policy is so unreasonable that no road authority in the road authority's position acting reasonably could have made that policy.'

1.3 KEY STAKEHOLDERS

In preparing this Road Management Plan, Council has considered the interests of key stakeholder groups in the community (as both users of the road network and affected by the network) including:

- The community in general (for recreation, sport, leisure, education and business);
- Residents and businesses adjoining the road network;
- Pedestrians;
- Users of a range of miscellaneous smaller, lightweight vehicles such as bicycles, motorised buggies, wheelchairs and prams;
- Vehicle users using motorised vehicles such as trucks, buses, commercial vehicles, cars and motorcycles;
- Tourists and visitors to the area;
- Utilities as described in section 3 of the RMA;

- School, bus and public transport operators;
- Emergency agencies including the police, fire brigade, ambulance and the Vic SES;
- Council as the responsible road authority;
- State and Federal Government that periodically provide support funding to assist with management of the network;
- Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning; and
- Parks Victoria.

1.4 REGISTER OF PUBLIC ROADS

The Register of Public Roads (which determines the public roads which Council must inspect, maintain and repair) must include:

- The name of each public road;
- The date on which the road became a public road;
- If a public road ceases to be a public road, the date on which the road ceased to be a public road;
- The classification, if any, of the public road;
- The reference to any plan or instrument that fixes or varies the boundaries of a public road;
- Any ancillary areas; and
- A reference to any arrangement under which road management functions are transferred to or from another road authority.

1.5 OBLIGATIONS OF ROAD USERS

All road users have separate obligations with respect to their use of a road which is set out in section 17A of the *Road Safety Act 1986* as follows:

- 1 A person who drives a motor vehicle on a highway must drive in a safe manner having regard to all the relevant factors including (without limiting the generality) the:
 - a) physical characteristics of the road
 - b) prevailing weather conditions
 - c) level of visibility
 - d) condition of the motor vehicle
 - e) prevailing traffic conditions
 - f) relevant road laws and advisory signs
 - g) physical and mental condition of driver.
- 2 A road user other than a person driving a motor vehicle must use a highway in a safe manner having regard to all the relevant factors.
- 3 A road user must:
 - a) have regard to the rights of other road users and take reasonable care to avoid any conduct that may endanger the safety or welfare of other road users

- b) have regard to the rights of the community and infrastructure managers in relation to road infrastructure and non-road infrastructure on the road reserve and take reasonable care to avoid any conduct that may damage road infrastructure and non-road infrastructure on the road reserve
- c) have regard to the rights of the community in relation to the road reserve and take reasonable action to avoid conduct that may harm the environment of the road reserve.

1.6 DELEGATIONS

Under Council's Instrument of Delegation to Members of Council Staff, the Chief Executive Officer has delegated various functions under the RMA and the relevant Regulations and Codes of Practice made under that Act to respective Council officers.

This allows Council, through various responsible members of staff, to respond quickly to technical and administrative matters under the Plan.





2. ROAD MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

The Road Management Plan is one of the supporting documents of the Road Management System. This system also includes the asset management activities associated with roads and related infrastructure. Policies are also incorporated into the system to ensure the roads are managed for the optimal benefit of the community.

DEVELOPMENT OF STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES AND THE ROAD MANAGEMENT PLAN

Each road and path have a hierarchy allocated to them which has been established based on their level of importance and risk exposure. These assets are held in Council's Asset System. The details of the roads are published in the Register of Public Roads and the set of performance targets, standards and guidelines which are applicable are updated in accordance with the Road Management Plan review schedule or as otherwise required.

Council's maintenance and works programs are established to extend the life of the asset, and primarily include:

- Reactive maintenance;
- Planned maintenance; and
- Road rehabilitation.

Key risks, priorities, hazards and defects that are not dealt with as part of the above maintenance programs are detailed in the Road Management Plan which identifies defects or hazards generated by age, usage and or weather or other conditions.

Standards and guidelines are created to allow Council to respond within financial, economic, political, social or environmental considerations.

IMPLEMENTING THE ROAD MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Road Management plan is implemented through the inspection regime in Section 3 and the Intervention Standards and response times in Appendix 1: Intervention Standards.

2.1 REGULATIONS AND CODE OF PRACTICE

During the review and preparation of this Road Management Plan, Council has taken into consideration the relevant regulations made under the RMA, other relevant statutory rules and the guidelines set out in the relevant Codes of Practice, and it will continue to have regard to these regulations, rules and codes (as they may change from time to time) in the performance of Council's road management functions.

The following Codes of Practice and Regulations that relate to this Road Management Plan are set out below and can be viewed via the VicRoads website at www.vicroads.vic.gov.au

- Code of Practice No. S 201 Road Management Plans;
- Code of Practice No. S 267 Operational Responsibility for Public Roads;
- Code of Practice No. S 269 Management of Infrastructure in Road Reserves;
- Code of Practice No. S 351 for Worksite Safety- Traffic Management;

- *Road Management (General) Regulations 2016;*
- *Road Management (Works and Infrastructure) Regulations 2015;*
- *Road Safety Road Rules 2009;* and
- *Road Safety (Traffic Management) Regulations 2009.*

Section 24(4) of the RMA also provides that:

A Code of Practice cannot:

- a) impose a duty on any person or*
- b) direct how any matter or thing is to be done or*
- c) create an enforceable legal right or*
- d) impose any liability or penalty.*

2.2 NEW SUBDIVISIONAL ROADS

Roads created due to subdivision developments or changes in the existing road network are incorporated on a regular basis into Council's Register of Public Roads by Council's Asset Management Coordinator.

Until a subdivisional road under the *Subdivision Act 1988* is adopted as a public road on Council's Register of Public Roads (on the basis that Council has determined that the road is 'reasonably required for general public use'), Council in the exercise of its discretions over public highways does not assume responsibility for the inspection, maintenance and repair of those roads.

Council's current policy and practice is not to adopt a new subdivisional road as a 'public road' until the date of practical completion of the approved subdivision works. The date of practical completion will be followed with the issue of the statement of compliance and is to be agreed to in writing by Council's delegated officer when the subdivisional works are considered satisfactory, on which date the whole of the works are considered to have entered into the maintenance period. The maintenance period shall be not less than three months.

2.3 REGISTRATION OF PUBLIC ROADS

Council's Register of Public Roads lists those municipal roads which Council considers are public roads and for which the Golden Plains Shire Council is the coordinating and responsible road authority.

Council's Register of Public Roads is compiled (and roads are registered on the Register) in accordance with the principles outlined in Council's Register of Public Roads Guidelines.

These guidelines assist Council in determining whether a road is 'reasonably required for general public use' within the meaning of section 17(3) of the RMA. They are set out in Appendix 3: Register of Public Roads Guidelines.

2.4 STATE ROADS

The following State roads within the municipality are managed by VicRoads. Council retains responsibility for nature strips, outer separators and service roads (if any) on declared arterial roads unless otherwise agreed with VicRoads.

Declared arterial roads located within Golden Plains Shire are:

- Ceres Road
- Colac-Ballarat Road
- Friend In Hand Road
- Fyansford-Gheringhap Road
- Inverleigh-Shelford Road
- Inverleigh-Winchelsea Road
- Lismore-Scarsdale Road
- Rokewood-Shelford Road
- Rokewood-Skipton Road
- Shelford-Bannockburn Road
- Geelong-Ballan Road, and
- Steiglitz Tourist Road

2.5 MUNICIPAL ROADS

Within Golden Plains Shire, Council is the coordinating road authority for municipal roads and VicRoads is the coordinating road authority for State roads (declared arterial roads).

A municipal road is any road which is not a State road, including any road which is:

- A road referred to in section 205 of the *Local Government Act 1989*; or
- A road declared by VicRoads to be a municipal road under section 14(1)(b) of the RMA; or
- Part of a Crown land reserve under the *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978* and Council is the relevant Committee of Management.

2.6 DEMARCATION OF RESPONSIBILITIES

Assets on Public Roads Managed by Council

Road infrastructure on public roads in Council's municipal district for which Council is responsible pursuant to the RMA includes:

- Road surface, pavement, and formation;
- Surface drainage systems; including open drains, kerb and channel, and minor culverts;
- Footpaths; including shared paths, bicycle paths;
- Parking areas; and
- Bridges and major drainage structures.

State Roads

An arterial road is a road that is declared to be an arterial road under section 14 of the RMA. Arterial roads are roads previously classified by VicRoads as a declared main road or State highway.

VicRoads is the coordinating and responsible road authority in respect of declared arterial roads. Council may also be responsible on declared arterial roads in both urban and rural areas for any part of the roadway not used by through traffic (e.g. dedicated parking lanes), any service roads, the outer separators (the median strip between the roadway and service road), any pathways and the roadside nature strips in urban areas.

The RMA and the *Ministerial Code of Practice – 'Operational Responsibility for Public Roads'* (the 'Code') provide clarity and

practical guidance in relation to the demarcation of responsibilities between Council and VicRoads in respect of freeways and declared arterial roads. The Code defines, in general terms, the demarcation of responsibility for arterial road reserves as described in the following figures:

Additional guidance for clarifying or determining how the operational responsibility for different parts or elements of a road reserve are allocated between road authorities is given in the *Code of Practice – ‘Operational Responsibility for Public Roads’*. A copy of the Code can be viewed via the VicRoads website at www.vicroads.vic.gov.au.

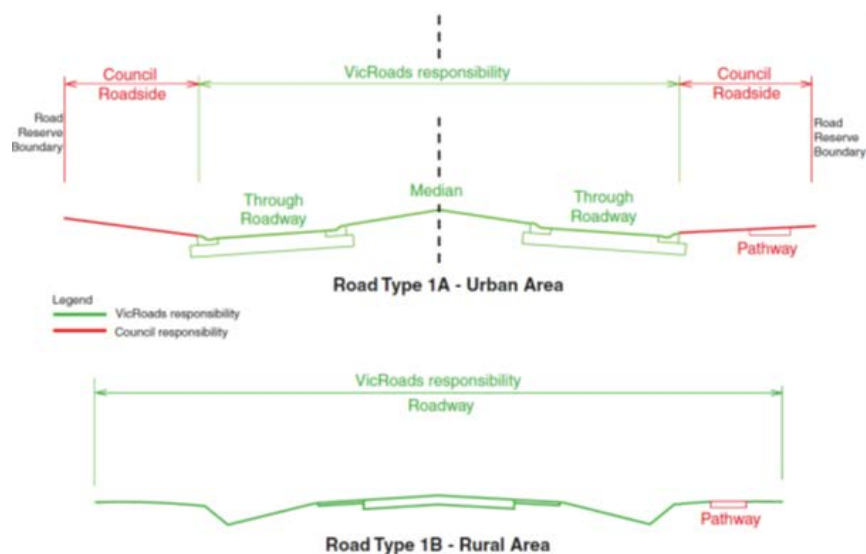


Figure 1 - Demarcation Arrangements for Typical Rural Arterial Roads

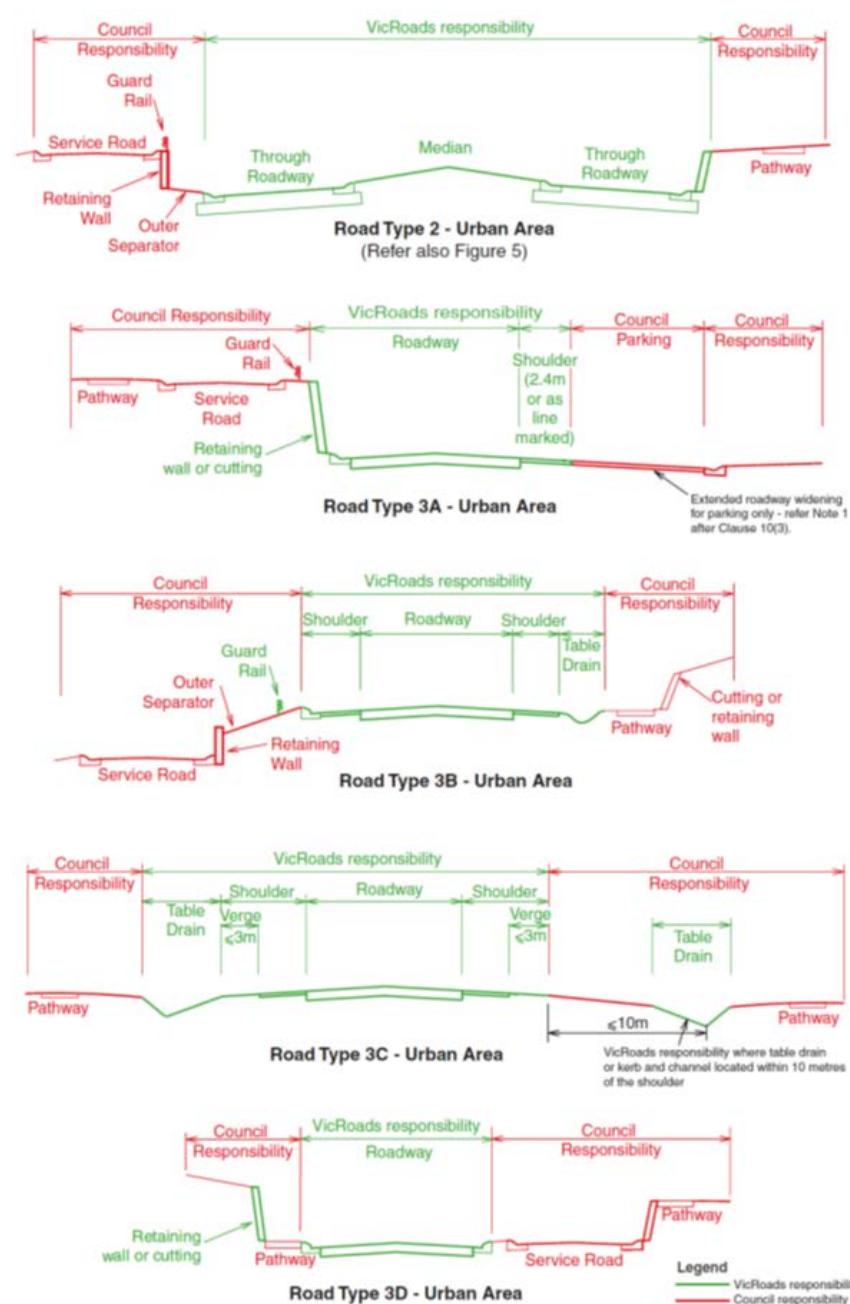


Figure 2 - Demarcation Arrangements Urban Arterial Roads

Boundary Roads

Golden Plains Shire Council has various agreements in place regarding maintenance responsibilities of shared roads and bridges with adjoining Councils. These agreements, formal or informal, define which boundary roads or bridges Council is responsible for maintaining.

The costs of capital works and periodic maintenance are shared equally between the Councils. These agreements are subject to further revision and improvement and where available can be viewed at the Golden Plains Shire Council offices.

Agreements exist between Golden Plains Shire Council and its seven (7) neighbouring Councils, these being;

- City of Ballarat;
- City of Greater Geelong;
- Colac Otway Shire;
- Corangamite Shire;
- Moorabool Shire
- Pyrenees Shire; and
- Surf Coast Shire.

Private Roads

There are a number of private roads within Golden Plains Shire that are linked to Council's road network, but which are not registered as public roads on Council's Register of Public Roads or are otherwise considered to be private roads.

Under section 107 of the RMA, Council does not have a statutory duty or a common law duty to perform road management functions in respect of a public highway which is not a public road or in respect of a private road.

Rail Tracks

The management of safety risks at road rail interfaces is undertaken in accordance with Safety Interface Agreements (RSA's). All maintenance activities, pavement construction and maintenance of roads at level crossings within a distance of 2.44 metres from each side of the outer rails are the responsibility of the railway authority. The railway authority is responsible to erect and maintain railway crossing position signs together with other signs, warning devices, gates, boom barriers, lights, etc., located at the crossing.

Council is responsible for the erection and maintenance of advance warning signs and all pavement markings associated with crossings on roads under its control.

The relevant rail authority is also responsible for road bridges over railway lines and rail bridges over roads. Road over rail bridges within Golden Plains Shire are in Peel Street (Inverleigh), Spring Creek Road (Bannockburn), Hills Road (Batesford) and Quarry Road (Lethbridge). The rail over road bridge is located at O'Connor Road (Lethbridge).

Utility Assets

Non-road infrastructure assets located within a road reserve are not the responsibility of Council but are the responsibility of the person or body (utility provider) that oversees the provision, installation, maintenance or operation of the non-road infrastructure asset.

Non-road infrastructure assets within a road reserve include gas pipes, water and sewerage pipes, cables, electricity poles and cables, public telephones and mailboxes.

The Ministerial Code of Practice – 'Management of Infrastructure in Road Reserves' identifies benchmarks of good practice for utility providers and Council who are expected to work together cooperatively to facilitate the installation, maintenance and operation of non-road infrastructure assets within road reserves.

Service authorities have an obligation to reinstate any disturbed nature strip areas to a condition that existed prior to any excavation works in relation to the installation or maintenance of their infrastructure.

Asset Type	Infrastructure Manager
Power supply	Powercor
Street lighting	Powercor (Council pays an ongoing charge for maintenance)
Traffic signal installations	VicRoads
Telecommunications infrastructure	Telstra
Water and sewerage infrastructure	Barwon Water and Central Highlands Water
Gas infrastructure	GasNet Australia Pty Ltd
National Broadband Network	NBN

Table 3 - Service Authority Responsibilities

Vehicle Crossings

Generally, in urban areas the adjoining property owner is responsible for maintaining the portion of a vehicle crossing (i.e. driveway) located between the carriageway and the abutting footpath.

Where there is no footpath, the property owner is responsible for that part of the driveway which extends from carriageway to the fence line.

The limits of responsibility for vehicle crossings located within urban areas is shown in Figure 3.

This also applies to vehicle crossings located in rural areas where the property owner is responsible for all of that part of the driveway between the road edge and the fence line.

The limits of responsibility for vehicle crossings located within rural areas is shown in Figure 4.

The property owner is also responsible for the maintenance of the immediate surrounds impacted on by the vehicle crossing to ensure that it is in a safe condition.

Vehicle crossings must comply with Council's specifications and standards. These specifications and standards can be accessed online at www.goldenplains.vic.gov.au or upon request at one of Council's Customer Service Centres during normal working hours.



Figure 3 - Typical Vehicle Crossing Layout (Urban)



Figure 4 - Typical Vehicle Crossing Layout (Rural)

Property Stormwater Drains

Property stormwater drains are constructed within the road reserve from the property boundary to a discharge outlet in the kerb, table drain or connected directly to Council's underground drainage system.

Property drainage lines are the responsibility of the owner of the property being served to maintain their function including the connection to Council's underground drainage system or outlet into the kerb and channel or table drain.

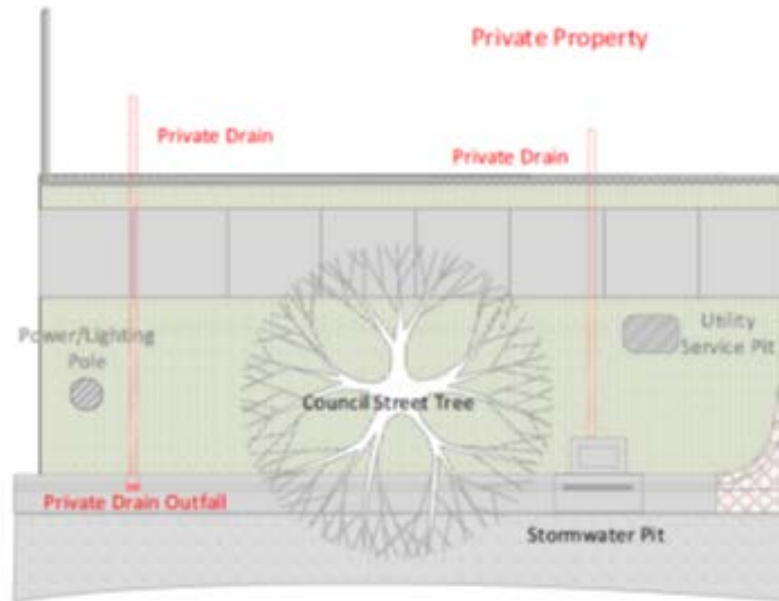


Figure 5 - Property Drain Responsibility

Nature Strips, Infill Areas and Vegetation

Nature strips and infill areas are those residual areas between the edge of road or back of kerb and the property boundary not occupied by a footpath or vehicle crossing. These are normally sown to grass and may contain other features such as street trees and utility poles and underground services.

Nature strips are not recognised as a road related asset and are therefore not formally inspected or maintained to a standard defined under Council's Road Management Plan.

Consequently, Council may only undertake works on a nature strip where there is an obvious safety or amenity issue either reported as a customer request or identified through programmed inspection activities.

Responsibility for maintenance of the nature strip areas is generally left to the abutting property owner as part of the presentation of their property and general appearance of the local streetscape.

Street trees within the road reserve are, however, managed by Council. An abutting owner has the responsibility to keep a road or footpath clear of vegetation growing from their property.

Council may direct the property owner to trim any overhanging branches under provisions of its Local Laws.

Stock Underpasses

A stock underpass is generally a box culvert type structure constructed for the purpose of providing a safe under-road crossing.

A landowner that constructs a stock underpass on a local road must first sign a section 173 Agreement (*Planning and Environment Act 1987*) with Council that includes

requirements for the landowner to maintain the structure. A cattle underpass shall be designed in accordance with all relevant VicRoads guidelines, Australian Standards, and other applicable design codes.

Council has a responsibility to maintain the road pavement areas, seal markings and guideposts across the stock underpass. Responsibility for the maintenance of the structure, including attachments such as guardrail, stock lanes, fencing and stock underpass drainage remains with the landowner for the duration of the agreement.

Regardless of maintenance obligations, Council has a duty of care to ensure that these assets are in a condition safe to the general community. There often exists a point of conflict with residents who have an expectation that Council will maintain these assets as they are within the road reserve.

Fire Access Tracks

Designated fire access tracks throughout the Golden Plains Shire are specific purpose access tracks not intended for general access and provide only occasional access to non-residential property.

These are maintained by Council where Council has agreed to do so as a community emergency service and they are listed in the Municipal Fire Prevention Strategy.

Fire access tracks are maintained to the standard as defined by Municipal Fire Prevention Plan and as funded by the Municipal Fire Prevention budget.

2.7 CONSENT TO PERFORM WORKS IN ROAD RESERVES

Any person who wants to undertake works in the road reserve must obtain consent from the relevant road authority.

For works on local roads a permit must be obtained from Council. For works beside arterial roads, a permit from VicRoads is also required.

Infrastructure Managers with assets within the road are exempt from obtaining consent under emergency conditions as specified in the *Road Management (Works and Infrastructure) Regulations 2015*, otherwise consent is required from Council.

Advice and application forms are available online at www.goldenplains.vic.gov.au or upon request at Council's Customer Service Centres during normal working hours.

If the necessary consents are not obtained prior to commencement of eligible works in the road reserve, penalties may apply in accordance with the RMA.

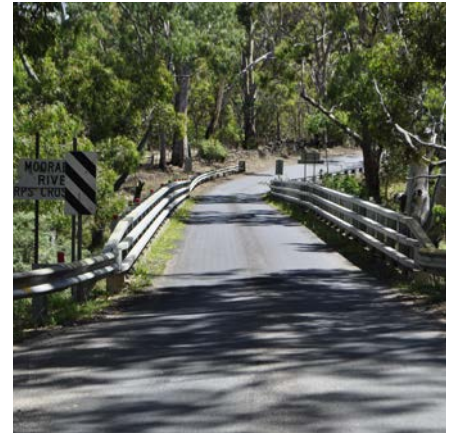
Fees and penalties are indexed annually by the State Government.

2.7.1 WORKS WITHIN ROAD RESERVES BY OTHERS

The Works Manager responsible for delivery works within a road reserve is responsible for the condition of Council's road infrastructure from the commencement of work until reinstatement is satisfactorily achieved. The Works Manager is responsible for the reinstatement of all areas disturbed by the works, including any roadway, pathway or roadside area to meet Council's requirements.

Until post reinstatement certification is provided by Council, the Works Manager will be deemed to be responsible for the area of works. In situations where hazards or damaged assets are identified through inspection, and have been caused by others undertaking works in the road reserve, Council will make a record of the inspection finding and provide notice to the Works Manager to rectify the issues at their cost as per Schedule 7 of the RMA.

Management and intervention relating to hazards or damaged assets that are under the responsibility of a Works Manager or others, as outlined above, are considered to be outside of Council's responsibilities under the Road Management Plan.





3. INSPECTION STANDARDS AND SERVICE LEVELS

3.1 GENERAL

The foundation of Council's Management Plan includes the setting of appropriate and reasonable standards as they relate to the inspection, maintenance and repair of road assets.

In managing the local road system, Council seeks to establish levels of service to meet the expectations of road users and the local community. The Road Management Plan seeks to balance the competing influences that impact on the level of service adopted by Council. These include economic, technical, social, safety and environmental influences.

The levels of service defined by the Road Management Plan identify the following activities:

- Inspection of roads and footpaths;
- Intervention standards; and
- Management controls and response times.

In establishing the levels of service set out in this RMP, Council has given regard to the objectives and outcomes established in the Council Plan, the Strategic Resource Plan, the road infrastructure asset management plans, and applicable Council policies and procedures.

3.2 INSPECTIONS

The main reason for the inspection of road assets (including bridges, footpaths, cycle paths and shared paths) is to identify any hazard and act accordingly, in the interests of public safety, to minimise any risk of injury to the asset user.

Council and the community collectively identify any road asset defects. Inspections of road assets are performed in the modes as follows:

- Proactive inspections;
- Reactive inspections; and
- Incident inspections.

3.2.1 PROACTIVE INSPECTIONS

Proactive inspections identify any hazards generated by usage and/or weather, or other conditions. Trained works officers are best placed to identify any hazards and document routine maintenance response actions during visual routine inspections.

Defects found during these inspections are checked against the maintenance intervention levels for the appropriate asset classification.

Where response actions are appropriate, the defects are scheduled for repair and/or replacement where reasonably practicable.

Hazards identified upon inspection will be made safe using temporary or permanent safety measures or warnings as per the timeframes in Appendix 1: Intervention Standards.

Roads	Day Inspection	Night Inspection
Link	100% of network every 12 months	100% of network every 24 months
Collector	100% of network every 12 months	100% of network every 24 months
Access	100% of network every 12 months	100% of network every 24 months
Fire Access	Not inspected	Not inspected
Unmade Road	Not inspected	Not inspected
Pathways	Day Inspection	Night Inspection
Commercial	100% of network every 12 months	Not inspected
Township and Rural	100% of network every 12 months	Not inspected
Bridges		
All road classifications	Annually with a maximum interval of 12 months. Inspection shall also be carried out after flooding or bushfire events as soon as reasonably practicable on impacted infrastructure.	

Table 4 - Network Proactive Inspection Frequencies

Note: All bridge inspections are to be in accordance with Level 1 – Routine Maintenance Inspection to VicRoads standards.

The scheduling of Proactive Inspections in accordance with the inspection intervals is the responsibility of the –Works Manager. The inspections may be carried out by Council’s own asset inspection staff or by contractors.

Inspection data is collected during the inspection and imported into a maintenance management system for the generation of works instructions and ultimately the completion of action, reporting and recording.

3.2.2 REACTIVE INSPECTIONS

Reactive inspections are initiated by the community who notify Council of a concern or hazard with respect to a road asset.

Trained works officers are best placed to identify any hazards and document response actions during visual inspections. Where response actions are appropriate, they are scheduled for repair.

Hazards identified upon inspection will be made safe using temporary or permanent safety measures or warnings as per the timeframes in Appendix 1: Intervention Standards.

All Road , Bridge and Footpath Classifications	Reactive Inspection Response Time
Inspect Customer Requests	5 working days
Attend Safety Call Outs	4 hours

Table 5 - Network Reactive Inspection Response Time

3.2.3 INCIDENT INSPECTIONS

These are inspections carried out to comply with the requirements of section 116 of the RMA. Incident inspections are required to be undertaken within 14 days of the receipt of a written notice of incident.

The inspection enables an incident condition report to be prepared for use in legal proceedings and the gathering of information for the analysis of the causes of accidents and the planning and implementation of road management and safety measures.

A report is prepared detailing the outcomes of this inspection, providing the following:

- A description of the condition of the relevant section of the public road or infrastructure providing adequate photographic evidence of the site of the incident;
- Reference to Council’s Road Management Plan and in particular the levels of service relating to the public road or infrastructure;
- A summary of, or any reference to, any records relating to the condition of the road or infrastructure from inspections and reports; and
- A summary of inspections relating to the condition and maintenance of that part of the public road or infrastructure conducted in the 12 months prior to the incident.

Notice of Incident

If a person proposes to commence legal proceedings or wishes to make a claim for damages in relation to an incident arising from the condition of a public road or infrastructure on a public road then the person must give written notice of the incident to Council within 30 days of its occurrence.

This notice must provide enough information to enable Council to undertake an inspection and prepare a condition report. Details to be included on a notice of incident are, but not limited to:

- Nature of, and any defect that may have contributed to the incident;
- Brief description of the location of the incident;
- Date, time and prevailing weather conditions at which the incident occurred; and
- Any other information that may be deemed to be applicable.

Your Rights

Members of the public have the right to travel on roads.

Council, as a responsible road authority, is not liable for loss or damage arising out of all incidents on roads. Council is unlikely to be liable to pay compensation:

- If the incident did not occur on a road for which Council is responsible for. Council’s Register of Public Roads contains a full list of the roads that it manages;
- For tar damage;

- For damage caused by the condition of non-road infrastructure that is not the responsibility of Council (e.g. railway tracks, electricity poles, utility pit lids, or public phones, etc.);
- For property damage of an amount less than the threshold amount specified by section 110 of the RMA. The threshold amount is indexed annually in accordance with the Consumer Price Index. (Note: Where Council is liable to pay compensation for property damage, the payment is reduced by the threshold amount. The threshold amount does not apply to damage arising from personal injury or to any claim that may involve a contractor engaged by Council); or
- If Council has complied fully with the standards established in its Road Management Plan.

3.3 REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE STANDARDS

The standards of repair and maintenance applicable to the road infrastructure subject to Council's Road Management Plan are detailed in Appendix 1: Intervention Standards and encompass:

- a) The circumstances under which intervention action is to be taken with respect to repair or maintenance needs for defects reported or found on inspection; and
- b) Provision, as far as practicable, for the unpredictable (e.g. emergencies, natural disasters, etc).

When a defect is identified by Council that does exceed the stated intervention standard then these will be addressed through an intervention action.

From time to time, Council may, at its discretion, choose to address a defect that is below its intervention standards through programmed maintenance activities. It is important to note that this forms part of Council's long-term asset preservation and service strategy does not mean that such a defect represented an unreasonable hazard.

3.4 EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Council, under a normal operating environment, will make every endeavour to deliver all aspects of its Road Management Plan.

However, in the event of natural disasters and other events including, but not limited to, fires, floods, droughts, pandemic or similar, together with human factors, such as a lack of Council staff or suitably qualified Contractors, because of section 83 of the *Victorian Wrongs Act 1958*, as amended, Council reserves the right to suspend compliance with its Road Management Plan.

In the event that Council's Chief Executive Officer (CEO), has to, pursuant to section 83 of the above Act, consider the limited financial resources of Council and its other conflicting priorities, meaning the standards of Council's Plan cannot be met, the Director Assets and Amenity will be advised in writing that some, or all, of the services

delivered under the Plan are to be suspended until further notice.

Once the events beyond the control of Council have abated, or if the events have partly abated, Council's CEO will provide direction to the Director Assets and Amenity as to which aspects of Council's Road Management Plan are to be reactivated and when.

Council statements to residents about the suspension or reduction of the services under the Road Management Plan will include reference to how the work that will be done has been prioritised, and the period for which it is likely to be affected.

3.5 EXTREME OR CODE RED DAYS

Council's priority on any day declared as Extreme or Code Red by the Country Fire Authority is for the safety of its employees, Councillors, contractors and volunteers. On these days, Council's Code Red and Extreme Fire Danger Policy will apply and have precedence over any aspect of the Road Management Plan.



4. AUDIT AND REVIEW

The Road Management Plan will be reviewed following Council elections in accordance with the *Road Management (General) Regulations 2016*, having regard to:

- Asset performance following delivery of maintenance and renewal programs;
- The available financial resources of Council;
- The level of achievement of asset management strategies against the expected benefits to road users, stakeholders and the community; and
- The consideration of any external factors that are likely to influence the contents of the Road Management Plan.

Regular internal assessment of performance to standards will be conducted to ensure compliance with the Road Management Plan including:

- Ensure that proactive and reactive inspections are carried out in accordance with the Road Management Plan levels of service;

- New or changed risks are appropriately assessed;
- Condition assessments are recorded; and
- The best value maintenance and renewal techniques and processes are used where possible.

APPENDIX 1: INTERVENTION STANDARDS

Description of Hazard	Intervention Standard	Response Times		
		Link Road	Collector Road	Access Road
Sealed Roads				
Potholes	Potholes in traffic lane of a sealed pavement greater than 300mm in diameter or greater than 100mm deep	1 month	6 weeks	2 months
Deformation	Greater than 100mm under a 3m straight edge	1 month	2 months	3 months
Edge drops	Edge drops onto unsealed shoulder greater than 100mm for greater than 20m length of seal.	1 month	2 months	3 months
Obstructions	Materials fallen from vehicles, dead animals, wet clay and other slippery substances, hazardous materials, accumulation of dirt or granular materials on the traffic lane of sealed roads	1 week	1 week	1 week
	Ponding of water greater than 300mm deep, fallen trees, oil spills, stray livestock.	24 hours	24 hours	24 hours
Unsealed Roads				
Potholes	Potholes in the traffic lane of an unsealed pavement greater than 400mm diameter and 100mm deep.	6 weeks	6 weeks	3 months
Corrugations	Deformations greater than 65mm for more than 30% of 1km road length	1 month	3 months	6 months
Roadsides				
Trees, shrubs and grassed areas	Tree obstructing safe sight distances, restricts viewing of warning signage, or assessed to be in an unsafe condition causing hazard to traffic or public.	1 month	2 months	3 months
	Vegetation intruding within an envelope over roadways from the back of shoulder and/or kerb and a minimum of 5m height clearance over pavement and the trafficable portion of shoulders.	6 months	12 months	24 months
Road Related Infrastructure				
Safety signs*	Safety signs missing, illegible or damaged making them substantially ineffective	2 weeks	1 month	3 months
Guideposts	Missing or damaged at a critical location making them substantially ineffective	1 month	2 months	3 months
Safety barriers and fencing	Missing or damaged at a critical location making them substantially ineffective	3 months	6 months	12 months
Local Area Traffic Management Devices	Missing or damaged at a critical location making them substantially ineffective	3 months	6 months	12 months
Line and pavement markings	Missing, illegible or confusing at a critical location	3 months	6 months	12 months
Drainage pits	Damaged or missing drainage pit lids, surrounds, grates, in pedestrian areas or traffic lanes.	Make safe in 24 hours	Make safe in 24 hours	Make safe in 24 hours

Description of Hazard	Intervention Standard	Response Times		
		Link Road	Collector Road	Access Road
Structures				
Bridges and structures^	Visible damage affecting structural performance likely to affect road user or public safety	24 hours	24 hours	1 week
		Commercial		Township and Rural
Pathways				
Pathway surface	Defective pedestrian areas with a step greater than 25mm	2 months		4 months
Vegetation	Vegetation which presents a physical hazard to the public over pedestrian/bicycle paths, intruding into a clearance envelope between the edges of path and a minimum of 2.4m height clearance over path.	6 months		12 months

Table 6 - Intervention Standards

Notes: Hazard removal work may include the provision of traffic control (including the installation of warning signs and other traffic management devices), installation of barricading or repair of the hazard. The choice of response will be determined by the availability of resources and considered in the context of other competing priorities

Grading of unsealed roads may not occur during dry seasonal periods where there is insufficient moisture content within the pavement materials. Council does not schedule any road grading between the months of December and February due to the usually dry conditions and high additional cost for water supply.

** Safety Signs: Are roads signs that provide road users with advice on the safe use of the road. For example, a regulatory, warning sign or hazard marker.*

[^] Structures: Bridges, culverts, or other designated structures (e.g. retaining walls, etc.) that are managed by Council.

APPENDIX 2: HIERARCHIES

ROAD HIERARCHY AND CLASSIFICATION FOR MUNICIPAL ROADS

Based on factors such as functionality, traffic volumes, traffic type and accessibility, Council has developed a road hierarchy system for the municipal (local) road network. Levels of service are dependent the road hierarchy classification.

Road Hierarchy

Road Hierarchy		Explanatory Notes
Identifier	Name	
LR	Link Road	Those roads which supplement the arterial roads by providing through traffic movement to an individually determined limit that is sensitive to roadway characteristics and abutting land uses. These have been categorised based on their primary function as main routes between localities and/or towns within the Shire as well as traffic count data.
Rural (CR) and Urban (CU)	Collector Road	Important local roads whose function is to distribute traffic between the arterial roads and the local road system and to provide access to abutting property. Rural and Urban Roads.
Rural (AR) and Urban (AU)	Access Road	Those roads and streets not having a significant through traffic function, whose function is to provide access to abutting property. Rural and Urban Roads.
AF	Fire Access	Designated fire access tracks throughout the Shire. Access (AF) roads consist primarily of Fire Access Tracks that are open for traffic in a controlled level of service, however are infrequently used or dry weather access only. <i>Maintenance of these roads is only carried out as agreed with CFA.</i>
UN	Unmade Road	Road Reserve not intended for general access. All year-round access is not guaranteed.
		Includes unmade road reserves, those subject to lease or license or roads located on Crown Land, for which Council is not the Committee of Management.
		These roads are not maintained by Council and are not listed on Council's Register of Public Roads.

Table 7 - Road Hierarchy

PATHWAY HIERARCHY

Footpaths, cycle paths and shared paths have been grouped into the following classifications:

Pathway Hierarchy

Pathway Hierarchy		Explanatory Notes
Identifier	Name	
FC	Commercial	Footpaths in commercial/business areas and/or adjacent to schools
FT	Township	Footpaths and/or bicycle paths within townships
FR	Rural	Footpaths and/or bicycle paths in rural areas

Table 8 - Pathway Hierarchy

Note: The Ballarat--Skipton Rail Trail does not form part of the Road Management Plan, however, it is still subject to annual proactive inspections and periodic maintenance activities.

APPENDIX 3: REGISTER OF PUBLIC ROADS GUIDELINES

Golden Plains Shire Council, pursuant to the requirements of the RMA is the Coordinating Road Authority for all municipal roads within the municipality.

These roads are listed on the Council's Register of Public Roads, as public roads for which Council is responsible.

Council has determined that those roads and footpaths on the Register of Public Roads are those that are considered as being reasonably required for public use. If a road does not appear on the Register of Public Roads, it is deemed that the Council is not responsible for that road including any road-related infrastructure.

The Register of Public Roads is made in accordance with Section 19(1) of the RMA. The Register of Public Roads forms part of Council's Road Management Plan which is made in accordance with Division 5 of the RMA. Clause 1 of Schedule 1 of the RMA prescribes the matters which must be included in a Register of Public Roads. Such matters include, but are not limited to:

- a) The name of each public road or, if a road is unnamed, a description which enables the particular road to be easily identified;*
- b) If a road becomes a public road after 1 July 2004, the date on which the road became a public road;*
- c) If a public road ceases to be a public road, the date on which the road ceased to be a public road;*

- d) The classification, if any, of the public road;*
- e) The reference of any plan or instrument made on or after 1 July 2004 that fixes or varies the boundaries of a public road;*
- f) Any ancillary areas;*
- g) A reference to any arrangement under which road management functions in respect of any part of a public road or ancillary area is transferred to or from another road authority;*

Criteria for Determining Whether a Road is Reasonably Required for General Public Use

The following criteria will be used to assess whether any section of road is "reasonably required for general public use" and should therefore be included in Council's Register of Public Roads.

a) Mandatory Requirement

The road must be a public road. That is the road must be:

- Declared to be a public highway under section 204(1) of the *Local Government Act 1989*;
- Declared to be a municipal road under section 14(1) of the RMA; or
- A public highway under section 24(2)(c) of the *Subdivision Act 1988*.

It should be noted that roads that are public roads (or public highways) are not necessarily going to be deemed to be 'reasonably required for public use' and therefore will not necessarily be included on Council's Register of Public Roads.

b) Non-Mandatory requirements

The following guiding principles will be used to determine whether a road is 'reasonably required for general public use' within the meaning of section 17(3) of the RMA.

The road must satisfy at least 7 of the following 10 criteria:

- Provides primary access to at least one full-time occupied residence;
- Is named and signed;
- Has previously been constructed by and/or maintained by Council;
- Contains public utilities (i.e., Powercor, Telstra, etc);
- Provides clear benefit to several property owners (not just one);
- Is required for fire access purposes;
- Connects into and forms part of the wider network of public roads;
- Is fenced on both sides;
- Is required for vehicular use; or
- The road is the only means of access to abutting property/properties.

Updating the Register of Public Roads

The Register of Public Roads will be updated to include or remove a road from the Register of Public Roads.

Other situations requiring update of the Register of Public Roads include:

- Assets inherited via subdivisions and land developments;
- Amendment of the physical characteristics of an asset(s) resulting from capital works;
- Assets transferred to Golden Plains Shire Council by government bodies such as VicRoads;
- Any change in agreement with adjoining municipalities; or
- Discontinuance of a road.

Status After Registration

The registration of a road on the Register of Public Roads results in the road becoming a 'public road' within the meaning of the RMA (refer section 17(1)(e)). This imposes a statutory duty on Council to inspect, maintain and repair the road in accordance with Council's Road Management Plan (refer section 40(1) of the RMA).

The RMA does not impose a statutory duty to upgrade a road or to maintain a road to a higher standard than to which the road is constructed (refer section 40(2) of the RMA).

Council's Road Management Plan does not address capital investment or upgrade decisions to improve the standard of a road. Any road upgrade requirements must be considered and prioritised within Council's annual budget and capital works planning frameworks.

In some instances, Council may seek a contribution towards the cost of road upgrades from property owners who derive the benefit of access along the road. Inclusion of a road on the Public Road Register does not preclude funding being sought from property owners, when an upgrade is required, in the form of Special Charge Schemes.

Road Removal Obligations

Council must remove a road from its Register of Public Roads if a decision has been made that the road is no longer reasonably required for general public use (refer section 17(4) of the RMA).

Status After Removal

The removal of a road from the Register of Public Roads does not affect the:

- Status of the road as a public highway; or
- Right of public use of the public highway (see section 17(5) of the RMA).

Accessing the Register of Public Roads

An up-to-date copy of the Register of Public Roads can be viewed at any of Council's Customer Service Centres or by visiting Council's website at

www.goldenplains.vic.gov.au



GOLDEN PLAINS SHIRE

2 Pope Street, Bannockburn, VIC 3331
19 Heales Street, Smythesdale, VIC 3351

PO Box 111, Bannockburn, VIC 3331

☎ 5220 7111

@ enquiries@gplains.vic.gov.au

💻 goldenplains.vic.gov.au

CUSTOMER SERVICE HOURS
Bannockburn Customer Service Centre
8.30am to 5pm, Monday to Friday

The Well, Smythesdale
8.30am to 5pm, Monday to Friday

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