RMP 2021 REVIEW REPORT

Road Management Plan 2021

Abstract

City of Stonnington (Council) has voluntarily prepared and maintains their current Road Management Plan 2021 in accordance with the statutory requirements and now in accordance with Section 54(5) of the Road Management Act 2004 and the Road Management (General) Regulations 2016 Division 1, Reg 8, conducts a review of this plan in conjunction with the Council Plan.

Sam Ortisi

Contents

0.0 Executive Summary 3
1.0 Introduction 5
1.1 Purpose of the review 5
2.0 The Review 7
2.1 Review Team 7
2.2 Review Process 7
2.3 Scope 7
3.0 Road Management Plan 8
3.1 Content of the RMP 9
4.0 Meetings and Work Shops 9
4.1 Internal Stakeholders 9
4.2 External Stakeholders 11
4.3 Benchmarking 11
4.3.1 Benchmarking Councils 11
4.3.2 Scope 12
4.3.3 Evaluation Results 12
5.0 General Findings 13
5.1 Content of Road Management Plan 2021 13
5.2 Infrastructure/Asset Management System 15
5.2.1 Process Flow (Proactive Hazards Inspection) 16
5.2.1.1 Observation 16
5.2.2 Process Flow (Reactive Hazards Inspections) 17
5.2.3 Finding and Recommendations 17
5.3 Planned Hazard Inspection Frequencies 18
5.3.1 Recommendation 18
The following Terms have the same meaning: 19
5.3.2 Other Proposed Inspections 20
It is also recommended that consideration is given to the inclusion of: 20
5.4 Hazard Description, Intervention Levels and Response Times 20
5.4.1 Proposed Definitions 21
5.5 Service Standards and Response Times 22
5.5.1 Public Roads Standard - Comparison of existing Vs Recommended 22
5.5.2 Public Footpaths/Pathways Standard Comparison of existing Vs Recommended 22

5.5.3 Comparison of existing Vs Recommended Public Statutory Road Signs and Statutory Line Markings Standard 23
5.4.4 Comparison of existing Vs Recommended Kerb and Channel 24
5.4.5 Comparison of existing Vs Recommended Street Furniture and Traffic Devices 24
5.4.6 Comparison of existing Vs Recommended for Overhang Vegetation 25
5.4.7 Comparison of existing Vs Recommended Drainage Assets 26
6.0 Summary 26

0.0 Executive Summary

An independent auditor conducted a detailed review of Council Road Management Plan 2021. This review report presents the outcomes of the review and provides recommendations including suggested changes to repair timelines for the Council's consideration of when amending the RMP.

The review has identified several key elements of the current Road Management Plan 2021 namely inspection frequencies, defect classifications, intervention levels, maintenance standards, and associated response timelines that are no longer considered appropriate when benchmarked against peer municipalities, MAV Insurance data, and emerging claims trends.

In addition to these substantive issues, the review also identified opportunities for administrative improvements to the RMP. These include updates to wording, data references, definitional clarity, and contextual descriptions within the Maintenance Management System. The basis and rationale for these findings are detailed below.

Pursuant to **Regulation 9 of the Road Management (General) Regulations 2016**, the Council has a statutory obligation to ensure that the standards and priorities set for the inspection, maintenance, and repair of roads and road classes covered by the RMP remain appropriate. This requirement forms the legal foundation for periodic review and, where necessary, amendment of the Plan.

Given that the findings relate to the determination of inspection, maintenance, and repair standards under **Section 41 of the Road Management Act 2004**, the Council is further required under **Regulation 10(1)** to issue a formal notice of its intention to amend the RMP. This notice must be published in both the *Victoria Government Gazette* and a daily newspaper generally circulating in the area to which the RMP applies.

The nature of the findings particularly those involving inspection frequencies, response timelines, and improved definitional clarity falls within the scope of amendments contemplated under Regulation 10. Accordingly, the statutory public notice requirement applies, subject to the limited exemption available under **Regulation 11**.

Regulation 11 provides that the public notice provisions do not apply where the Chief Executive Officer (or equivalent officer) of the road authority certifies in writing that the proposed amendments will result in a standard that is higher than that previously determined under Section 41 of the Act. Given that the proposed amendments reflect an enhancement of existing service levels, Council may consider whether this exemption applies. This determination should be supported by formal legal review and written certification from the Chief Executive Officer.

Notwithstanding the potential availability of this exemption, proceeding with public notification and consultation is recommended. The prescribed 28-day public notice period offers considerable legal and governance benefits, including:

- Enhancing transparency and public accountability.
- Enabling road users, residents, and key stakeholders to review proposed changes and provide feedback based on lived experience and local conditions; and

- Supporting the development of a revised RMP that appropriately balances public safety, practical service delivery, and financial sustainability.

Key Outcomes of the Review of the City of Stonnington's Road Management Plan (RMP) 2021

Section 5 of this report outlines the key findings and recommendations resulting from the review of the City of Stonnington's Road Management Plan 2021. The review has been undertaken in accordance with the principles and requirements of the Road Management Act 2004. In summary, the following recommendations are presented for consideration:

- That the City of Stonnington (Council) reviews its current governance and accountability framework for the RMP to ensure alignment with best practice asset management principles, and to support transparent and effective decision-making under the Road Management Act 2004.
- That Council considers the adoption of an Integrated Infrastructure Management System to serve as a single point of truth for asset data and performance monitoring. This system would enhance the Council's ability to discharge its obligations as a Coordinating Road Authority in a consistent and auditable manner.
- That the Council tests and validates the current inspection frequencies, defect classifications, intervention levels, maintenance standards, and response times, to confirm they are safe, achievable, reasonable, affordable, and appropriate in the context of community expectations and available resources.
- That an internal audit program be introduced to monitor the Council's performance against the Road Management Plan and report on the state of compliance, thereby supporting continuous improvement in service delivery.
- That current maintenance practices be reviewed to assess the reasonableness and practicality of the existing balance between reactive and preventative maintenance activities, with a view to improving long-term asset sustainability and cost-effectiveness.
- That Council considers the formal adoption of these recommendations as the next phase of the review process.

Importantly, these recommendations, if adopted, are intended to enhance the existing level of service provided under the RMP. They do not remove or reduce any of the Council's established obligations or commitments as set out in the Road Management Plan 2021.

1.0 Introduction

The City of Stonnington (Council) has proactively developed and continues to maintain its Road Management Plan 2021 (RMP) in accordance with the Road Management Act 2004 (RMA). The Act assigns both general functions and specific powers to road authorities, with particular emphasis on Part 4, Division 5 (Sections 49–55). These provisions form the legislative basis for the voluntary development and maintenance of a Council Road Management Plan, which sets out the standards and policies by which councils discharge their road management responsibilities.

Council's Road Management Plan 2021 is its principal policy instrument for fulfilling its obligations as a coordinating road authority under the RMA. All subordinate documents such as policies, procedures, and operational guidelines governing hazard inspections and the rectification of defects within the municipal road network must align with the service levels and responsibilities outlined in the RMP.

In accordance with section 54(5) of the Road Management Act 2004 and Regulation 8 of the Road Management (General) Regulations 2016, Council has undertaken a statutory review of the RMP. This review was conducted concurrently with the development or review of Council's Plan, as required under the Local Government Act 2020 (LGA 2020). Beyond meeting legislative obligations, the review offers Council an opportunity to assess and refine its road maintenance practices to ensure continuous improvement and enhanced service delivery to the community.

Regulation 8 of the Road Management (General) Regulations 2016 states:

"Each incoming municipal council must review its road management plan during the same period as it is developing or reviewing its Council Plan under the *Local Government Act 2020*."

Additionally, section 90(3) of the *Local Government Act 2020* provides:

"A Council must develop or review the Council Plan in accordance with its deliberative engagement practices and adopt the Council Plan by 31 October in the year following a general election."

The independent review was conducted in accordance with Regulation 9(1), which requires a road authority, when reviewing its Road Management Plan, to ensure that the standards and priorities for the inspection, maintenance, and repair of roads are appropriate. For the purpose of this review, *appropriate* was interpreted through the lens of reasonableness and practicability—evaluating whether the Council's strategic, tactical, and operational approaches are not only reasonable and practicable, but also financially sustainable.

A comprehensive and systematic methodology was employed, involving the critical examination of existing documentation, systems, personnel, and records associated with the RMP.

1.1 Purpose of the review

The purpose of the review is to ensure that the standards in relation to, and the priorities given to the inspection, maintenance and repair of the roads and classes of road to which the Council's RMP applies are achievable, reasonable, affordable, and appropriate.

The review employed a comprehensive and systematic methodology, critically examining existing documentation, systems, personnel, and records associated with the RMP. The objective was to assess compliance, effectiveness, consistency, and opportunities for continuous improvement. Key focus areas of the review included:

- **Current Policies:** A detailed analysis of the existing policies governing the inspection, maintenance, and repair of the road network, ensuring they remain fit for purpose and aligned with Council's Plan, Asset Plan and Long-Term Financial Plan.
- **Roles and Accountability:** A rigorous review of roles and responsibilities at each stage of the Maintenance Management System, ensuring clear accountability and alignment with Council's delegation and authority.
- **Standards and Outcomes:** A comprehensive assessment of current maintenance standards, the frequency of activities, prioritisation of works and their direct impact on community outcomes, focusing on optimising both efficiency and effectiveness.
- **Maintenance Management Systems:** A review of the entire maintenance management system, scrutinising practices, personnel, and the governance framework that ensures robust compliance with the RMP.
- **Claims Data Analysis:** A thorough evaluation of claims data, CRM complaints, and community feedback, identifying key areas for improvement to enhance satisfaction and resolve concerns more effectively.
- **Scope and Boundaries:** A precise assessment of the current scope and boundaries of responsibilities, ensuring clear delineation and full alignment with regulatory requirements.
- **Coordination with External Parties:** An in-depth examination of how maintenance works are coordinated with utilities, service authorities, and other road network asset owners, optimising collaboration for combined outcomes.
- **Public Roads Register:** A meticulous review of the methods used to manage the public roads register, ensuring data accuracy, transparency, and accountability.

2.0 The Review

2.1 Review Team

The Council's Asset Management Team lead the review process, engaging with relevant internal and external stakeholders to ensure the RMP reflects the strategic objectives of the updated Council Plan and comply with all applicable statutory requirements.

The following sections set out the statutory framework, procedural requirements, and methodology for the conduct of this review.

2.2 Review Process

Pursuant to a decision made by the authorised Council delegate to commence the statutory review[1] process, the review team, planned, communicated (consultation and engagement with internal Council departments and external stakeholders) and conducted the review of the current Road Management Plan 2021 as summarised in Fig 1 below.

The review process was aligned and undertaken in accordance with Regulation 9 (1), and the Code of Practice – Road Management Plans.

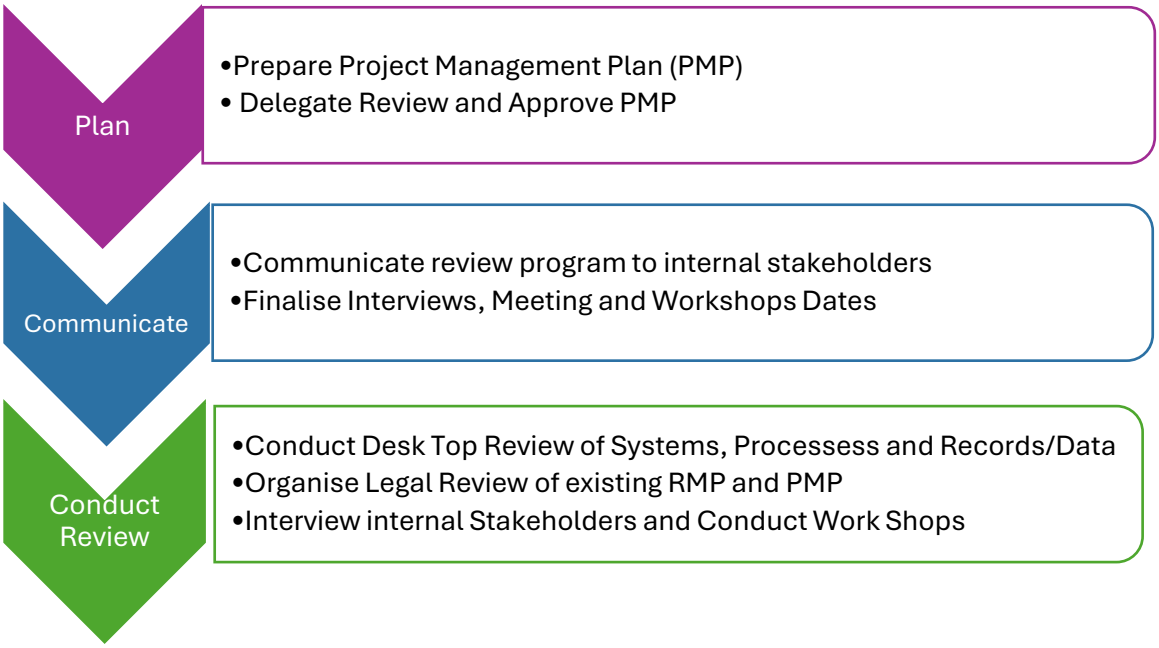


Fig 1. Review Process Steps

2.3 Scope

The review team has conducted a comprehensive assessment of all components of the road infrastructure management system that assist in the delivery of the services related to the inspection, maintenance, and repairs of road and roadside hazards. This review aligns with the principles outlined in the *Code of Practice for Road Management*

[1] Refer to Section 54(5) of the RM Act 2004

The review incorporates:

- Legal and regulatory analysis,
- Comparative assessment with peer councils, and
- Benchmarking of current practices.

It also evaluates the adopted Levels of Service to ensure that the standards for inspection, maintenance, and repair of relevant road classes remain reasonable, appropriate, achievable, and financially sustainable.

In view of the requirements set out in Regulation 9(1) the review process evaluated:

- the effectiveness of the system(s) in use for service planning, conducting, assessing hazards and defects, maintenance treatment practices for reducing and or eliminating hazards, reporting and follow ups.
- the appropriateness and relevance of the current standards, inspection frequencies, defect classification, intervention levels, maintenance practices and adopted timelines to reduce the hazards and or removal of the defect. The following elements were incorporated into this element of the review:
    - the number of claims, complaints, and requests over the previous four years.
    - the current scope and boundary responsibilities.
    - the coordination of works by utilities, service authorities, and road network asset owners.
    - the methods used to manage the public roads register.
    - the methods used to manage road related and non-related assets including, traffic lights, crossings, tactile indicators, bus shelters,

Further to the review process in Fig 1 and the activities listed the review team also looked at:

- the current audit process of the system(s), RMP data and performance.
- the Council Annual Community Survey 2024 – Roads and Footpaths.
- the MAV Insurance Advise and
- the comparative assessment of the neighbouring Municipalities RMP's.

3.0 Road Management Plan

The Road Management Plan is Councils adopted policy document from a legal risk management and public liability perspective and:

- Can be used as a defence[2] to prove that reasonable care was taken in any proceeding against the Council resulting from the performance or non-performance of a road management function in respect of a public road.
- Encompasses an economic framework set by Council for maintaining and controlling activities on road infrastructure within the road reserve based on meeting reasonable maintenance standards, differing inspection frequencies and reasonable response time for reducing the hazard to an acceptable level.
- Takes into consideration the affordability, available resources and management system used to discharge its duty to inspect, maintain and repair defects.
- Is a dynamic document and is subject to continuous improvement, changing legislative requirements and economic, social, environmental, and climatic impacts.
- Is developed in consultation with the internal and external stakeholders.

3.1 Content of the RMP

The R M Act under Part 4, Division 5, Sections 49 – 55 set out the minimum requirements for the content of the RMP. The Act also gave rise to the Code of Practice RMP for the purpose of Defence against Civil Liabilities brought against Council (Road Authority) under Part 6 Section 105 - Defence to provide that reasonable care was taken.

The RMP was compared against the requirements set out in the Code of Practice with respect to:

- Road Infrastructure Management System, which sets out details of the management system and policies to be implemented by the Council in the discharge of its duty to inspect, maintain and repair roads.
- Road Maintenance Standards, which are the standards in accordance with which the Council (road authority) performs its road management functions.
- Implementing the maintenance program (resources, internal/external).
- Hazard and Defect Categories.
- Intervention Standards/levels.
- Response Times.
- Continued improvement (Reviews and Audits).

4.0 Meetings and Work Shops

4.1 Internal Stakeholders

The accompanying table (Table 1) provides a detailed summary of the workshops and meetings conducted as part of the Road Management Plan review process. It outlines the topics covered, participating stakeholder groups, and key outcomes from each session. The workshops served as a platform for consultation and collaboration, enabling the review team to gather valuable feedback from internal departments, and contractor. The common themes identified during the

[2] The legal effect of a Code of Practice is set out in section 24(4) and section 27 of the Act. A Code of Practice is admissible in evidence in any proceeding to which the Act or section 99Aof the Road Safety Act 1986 applies.

workshops, included the reasonability of the standards, prioritisation of maintenance tasks, resource allocation, accountability, service level expectations and consistency on response times, all have been instrumental in shaping the findings presented in Section 5 of this report. The table highlights the diverse input received and reflects a transparent, inclusive approach to decision-making.

Workshops No. & Meetings	Department	Topics Reviewed	Code of Practice /other Reference
1	Asset Management	Content, systems, standards, scope, policies, audits, analysis of data, reporting, accountability, and plans.	Road Management Plan And CoP for Road Management Plans S 7.1 – 7.4
2	Proactive Inspection Contractor	Planning, Inspection, data collection tool and Reporting.	Contract Specification
3	Environment and Infrastructure	Responsibilities for public roads. Works on road reserve.	Operational Responsibilities for public Roads Road Management (Works and Infrastructure) Regulation Management of Infrastructure on Road Reserve
4	Infrastructure Maintenance	Maintenance Management System for Inspection Maintenance and Repairs. (Owners and accountable for the delivery of the Plan).	Road Management Plan And CoP for Road Management Plans S 7.4 and 7.5
5	Liveability and Amenities	Drainage, Vehicle Crossings, Roads, Trees,	Local Laws
6	Risk and Governance	Insurance Claims	Act Part 6, Division 5
7	Parks and Environment	Tree Management Policies and Framework.	CoP for Road Management Plans S 7.4

Table 1 – List of Meetings and Workshops

4.2 External Stakeholders

The MAV Insurance provided a comparative assessment of Councils Standards and response times and indicated that several recommended changes be made to the current standards.

The MAV Insurance conducted a Road Management Review knowledge Session covering the following topics:

- Legislative Compliance,
- Reasonable Standards,
- Clarity and Consistency and
- Appropriate Scope.

The MAV Insurance at the end of the knowledge session issued the MAV Insurance Standard Template and current comparative assessment of Councils RMP against the MAV Insurance Template and recommendations.

Council tasked Macquarie Local Government Lawyers to conduct a limited review of the current version of the Road Management Plan 2021. The recommendations from the external consultation and review have been considered and recommendations documented in Section 5.

4.3 Benchmarking

Benchmarking has been conducted to determine how the content (administration component) and standards for inspection frequencies, defect categories, intervention standards and defect response times (operational components) set out in the RMP compare with other neighbouring councils.

4.3.1 Benchmarking Councils

The Councils selected (refer below) for the comparative review and bench marking included those neighbouring municipalities that in general have similar road infrastructure.

Benchmark Councils
City of Port Phillips
City of Yarra
City of Glen Eira
City of Monash
Boroondara City Council

4.3.2 Scope

The scope under review included:

- Standards for inspection, type of maintenance and strategies, types of repairs applied to defects on roadways, pathways, road infrastructure, and related assets.
- Prioritisation for inspection, maintenance, and repair activities.
- Description of the road network and infrastructure types covered by the RMP.
- Inspection methodologies appropriate to each infrastructure.
- Intervention levels or service targets to be achieved.
- The maintenance management system that enables Council to meet its duty of care
- A classification of assets included in the Road Register and
- Any formal agreements with other municipalities, road authorities, utilities, or service providers.

4.3.3 Evaluation Results

The review acknowledges that the comparative assessment and benchmarking exercise conducted against neighbouring municipalities revealed that while the administrative content of Road Management Plans (RMPs) is consistent across councils, variation exists in the design and implementation of their respective Maintenance Management Systems (MMS). These operational differences reflect a range of factors, including varying levels of system maturity, strategic priorities, available resources, infrastructure diversity, and technological capabilities.

Some councils have adopted advanced, integrated MMS platforms to support the delivery of the services featuring real-time data collection, predictive analytics, and Geographic Information System (GIS) integration to support proactive and data-driven maintenance planning. Others operate more traditional systems that rely on manual processes, basic record-keeping, and largely reactive maintenance responses. While certain MMS focus on asset lifecycle costing, condition-based performance indicators, and long-term sustainability, others prioritise regulatory compliance, minimum service levels, or community responsiveness. This variation highlights that there is no universal or prescriptive model for maintenance management each council's approach is shaped by its unique operational objectives, financial constraints, and strategic vision.

The benchmarking exercise further identified that the City of Stonnington’s inspection frequencies and response times generally align with the ranges adopted by neighbouring councils. However, some key areas for further consideration for continued improvements in service delivery include:

a) Aligning proactive and reactive response times for similar hazard types in line with neighbouring municipalities.
b) Standardising inspection program and frequencies across different asset classes and municipal zones.
c) The use and definition of a “make safe” provision between hazard identification and full rectification based on a site hazard risk assessment and prioritisation.
d) Clarification and consistency in defining response times and intervention actions.

These findings suggest that there is an opportunity from this review to improve in delivering the services in compliance with the statutory requirements by enhancing Stonnington's MMS through alignment with emerging best practices in asset management, increased use of technology, and refinement of service level definitions to improve efficiency, accountability, and community outcomes as documented in Section 5 Findings.

These recommended improvements focus on aligning the Road Management Plan with current industry benchmarks, reducing potential liability exposure, embedding reasonable maintenance management practices, and enhancing service delivery standards.

5.0 General Findings

5.1 Content of Road Management Plan 2021

The Review has identified that, while the *Road Management Plan 2021* remains generally satisfactory in terms of overall content, several key operational components namely, inspection frequencies, defect classifications, intervention levels, maintenance standards, and associated response times are no longer aligned with contemporary standards or expectations. This misalignment arises primarily from ambiguities in definition and interpretation, particularly when benchmarked against the practices of neighbouring municipalities, data from MAV Insurance recommendations, resident satisfaction survey results, and recent trends in claims.

Critically, under **section 105 of the** *Road Management Act 2004* (Vic), a road authority may avail itself of a statutory defence against civil liability in certain circumstances, provided that it can **demonstrate adherence to a reasonable system of inspection and maintenance** as outlined in its Road Management Plan. In order to maintain the integrity and defensibility of Council's position under this provision, it is essential that the operational standards within the RMP are reviewed in line with Local Government practices and community expectations.

Accordingly, based on the information collected during the review, and with due consideration of relevant claims data and liability exposure, it is recommended that Council initiate an improvement program to elevate both the administrative and operational elements of the Plan. The proposed changes aim to ensure that the levels of service defined—particularly in terms of inspection regimes, intervention criteria, and response timeframes—are not only reasonable and appropriate but also demonstrably so within the broader legal and policy framework.

Table 2 provides a list of items identified during the review and proposed improvements for further consideration prior to amending the RMP.

Item No.	Review Item	Current RMP Reference	Findings and Recommendations.	Recommended improvements to the current RMP2021	Remarks
1	Document Year	Front Page	Update the front page to reflect up dated RMP.	Change to 2025	Administrative Change. No impact.
2	Executive Summary	Page (ii)	Revise wording to reflect changes in the past four years.	Revise the executive summary and include recommendations from Legal review and comparative assessments.	Administrative Change. No impact.
3	Terms and Definitions	Page (iv)	The need to be concise with respect to the definitions	Review wording of response time, temporary repairs and include provision of making safe.	Minimise the potential to interpret what are the measures for response. Impacts on the operational response
4	Introduction	Page 1	The information is now outdated after four years of activities and update is required	Update the current Introduction to reflect the status of the municipality.	The update will consider the changes in the organisational responsibilities, changes in the statistics and other relevant information considered important to be included.
5	Regulatory Framework	Section 1.2	The current information is incomplete	Include the complete regulatory framework	Administrative Change. No impact.
6	Road Infrastructure covered and excluded	Section 3.3 and 3.4	The current wording does not clearly define all road assets included and or excluded from the RMP	Revise the current list and include: Bridges and Major Culverts Tactile Indicators	Operational changes that can improve the level of service.
7	Demarcation	Section 3.4	Not adequately covered. Compliance with the Code of Practice	Revise Section 3.4 to include Councils Responsibilities with respect to boundaries and interface agreements	Refer to Code of Practices Responsibilities for Public Roads. Administrative Change. No impact.
8	Road Register	Section 4	The procedures require a review and update.	Nil	Administrative Change. No impact.
				Replace the existing process flow	

9	Systems and Processes	Section 6	The current system flow diagram does not provide adequate information.	diagram with a flow diagram that integrates the reactive and proactive inspections and incorporates a make safe provision.	Administrative Change. Provides better representation of the system. Include the provision of System Audits
10	Review and Amendments	Section 9	The information needs to be updated	Update.	Administrative Change. No impact.
11	Proactive Inspection – Proactive Inspections Frequency	Appendix B	Improve Inspection Frequency for: Statutory Line Marking. Statutory Signs. **Include Inspection of:** Road Bridges Night Inspection Drainage Pit Inspection (**major roads only**)	Frequency changes from 48 months to 12 or 6 months pending on road classification. Standardised as above. Level 1 Inspection – 12 months Major Roads – 12 months Frequency aligned with Road Classification	Improved level of service by standardising Inspection Frequencies.
12	Defect Intervention Levels and Response Times	Appendix C	The six to 12 months response times can be improved to reduce the risk of injuries and property damage.	Investigate the options aligned with the MAV Insurance recommendations and benchmark data.	Operational Changes – Improved Level of service and reduced risk exposure to road hazards.

Table 2 – List of Meetings and Workshops

5.2 Infrastructure/Asset Management System

The review identified that Council has implemented a basic IT management system (the System) to support the delivery of services under the *Road Management Plan 2021* (RMP), particularly in relation to the planning, tracking, and traceability of defect inspections and rectifications. However, this System currently operates in isolation from both the asset management system and the customer service/complaints management platform. This lack of integration creates inefficiencies, resulting in resource-intensive and time-consuming data collection processes, especially for analysis and reporting. Furthermore, the reliance on manual data transfer between systems increases the likelihood of transcription errors due to multiple human touchpoints.

It was also observed that Council's current maintenance practices are predominantly reactive, with a strong focus on isolated responses to unplanned maintenance requests. This approach does not align with best practice asset management principles, which advocate for a more balanced maintenance strategy optimising the mix between planned (proactive) and unplanned (reactive) maintenance to improve long-term serviceability, reduce lifecycle costs, and ensure public safety.

Benchmarking against neighbouring councils revealed that the strategic use of a "make safe" provision has proven effective in mitigating immediate hazards to an acceptable risk level, while deferring more extensive works to a program of repairs. This approach not only reduces the need for costly reactive repairs but also supports the principles of sustainable asset management as promoted under the *Road Management Act 2004*, particularly the requirement to adopt maintenance practices that are reasonable, practicable, and financially sustainable.

Council should consider adopting a more integrated and proactive maintenance framework, including greater use of "make safe" measures, improved system integration, and the development of a forward-looking maintenance program. This would better support the optimisation of maintenance activities, reduce reliance on reactive interventions, and minimise unnecessary asset replacement thereby improving efficiency and aligning more closely with the objectives of the *Road Management Act 2004* (Refer to the Proactive and Reactive Process Flows below)

5.2.1 Process Flow (Proactive Hazards Inspection)

The process flows below outline the current methodology used to capture defect data, assess against the intervention levels, type of intervention required, target timeframes for intervention and issue of Work Order to Infrastructure Maintenance.



Process Flow 1 - Current RMP Methodology Proactive Inspections and Repairs

5.2.1.1 Observation

The proactive inspection process begins with the identification of the zones to be inspected, followed by the calibration of the mobile data collection tool used to record and report defects that exceed the defined intervention levels (refer to Process Flow 1). This tool, known as *Konect*, supports field inspections by enabling inspectors to capture real-time data, identify and track defects, and timestamp observations for audit and compliance purposes.

The review confirmed that *Konect* can be leveraged by the Infrastructure Maintenance team, providing them with real-time access to inspection data. Key features of the tool include live

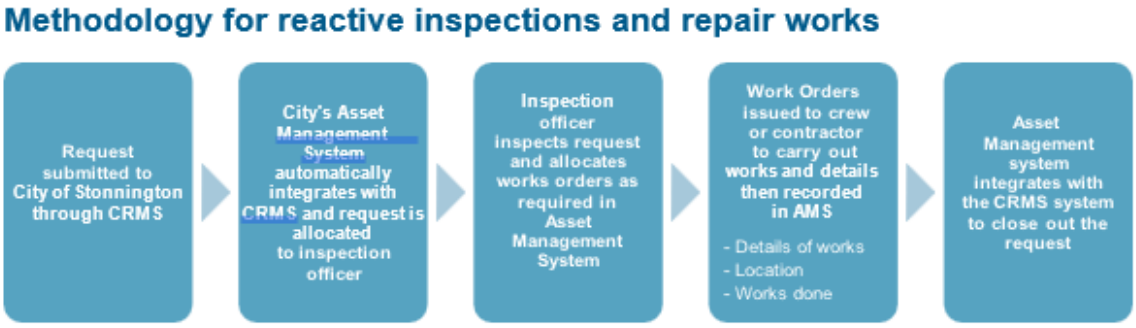
mapping, mobile data entry, and automatic uploading of field observations to a secure, cloud-based central database.

However, the review also identified a limitation in the current process. Data collected via *Konect* is manually transcribed into *Asset Master*, Council's asset register, where it is then converted into work orders. This lengthy process can be optimised by providing IM direct access to Konect for planning and responding to road hazards in a planned and timely manner.

The review suggests that this is a methodology that can be subject to a LEAN [3]process that is founded on continued improvement and respect for people.

5.2.2 Process Flow (Reactive Hazards Inspections)

The Review identified that Tech One - Customer Relationship Response System (CRRM) is in use to record and capture all community requests. Maintenance requests are sent to the responsible department. Process Flow 2 shows the steps required to undertake the initial response to the CRRM.



Process Flow 2 - Current RMP Methodology Reactive Inspections and Repairs

5.2.3 Finding and Recommendations

The review suggests that the current maintenance methodologies (Refer to Figs 1 and 2) are ineffective and can be subject to a LEAN [4]process that is founded on continued improvement and respect for people.

The review informs on the current lack of integration of proactive and reactive works which results in a resource-intensive and time-consuming data collection process for analysis and reporting. Additionally, the reliance on manual data transfer between systems increases the risk of transcription errors due to multiple points of human intervention.

This process can be made more effective and efficient by moving towards best practice (optimisation) maintenance practices in support of cost-effective service delivery, compliance and risk management.

It is recommended that Council consider adopting an integrated management system capable of supporting the full delivery of outcomes under the Road Management Plan (RMP). A typical integrated maintenance management system is show in Figure 4. In general, to achieve best

[3] LEAN is a process used to improve business outcomes by reducing wasteful practices.
[4] LEAN is a process used to improve business outcomes by reducing wasteful practices.

practice maintenance practices Council should consider adopting a process that identifies and inspect a defect; carryout a public risk assessment of the defect; make safe the defect; carryout programmed repairs; refer maintenance activity to future renewal program.

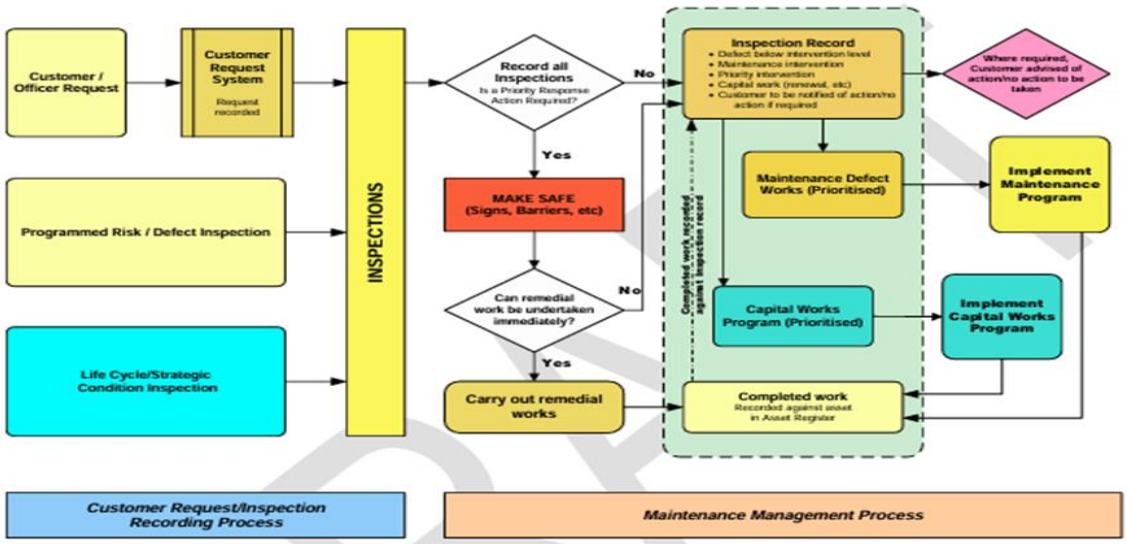


Figure 4 – Management System to Inspect, Repair and Maintain Roads

The review also identified the existence of difference in repair times (Refer to RMP, Appendix 3) for similar hazards on same asset class for proactive and reactive inspections that seem unreasonable when measured against neighbouring municipalities unless justified.

The RM Act states that" In conducting a review of its road management plan, a road authority must ensure that **the standards** in relation to, and the **priorities** to be given to, the inspection, maintenance and repair of the roads and classes of road to which the plan applies **are appropriate"**.

In compliance with this clause of the RM Act, recommended response times are provided or consideration and assessment prior to adoption (Refer to Tables 4 – 10 below).

5.3 Planned Hazard Inspection Frequencies

The review identified that several aspects of the planned hazard inspection frequencies, are no longer considered appropriate when benchmarked against neighbouring municipalities, MAV Insurance data, and recent claims trends.

5.3.1 Recommendation

Table 3 below provide recommendations[5] for improved planned inspection frequencies to align with industry practices and also part of the continued improvement process under the RM Act.

The recommendations are based on testing for reasonability when compared with neighbouring municipalities. The recommendation also includes exploring the options of moving to monthly

[5] Refer to the RMP Appendices B – Inspections Survey Frequency

inspections of zones across the municipality over a 12-month period as to provide a smoothing effect on data collection and reporting.

Planned Inspection Frequencies	Stonnington Current Standards	Boroondara	Glen Eira	Monash	Port Phillip	Yarra	Proposed Change to RMP 2021
Major Roads (Collector/Distributor) Pavement, shoulder, bicycle lanes and surface (Various Material).	6 months	6 months	12 months	12 months	**months/6 month**	**13 months**	Nil
Minor Roads (local) pavement, shoulder and surface (Various Material).	12 months	12 months	36 months	**24 months**	**12 months**	**36 months**	Nil
major Constructed Laneways, Right of Ways (Various Material).	48 months	**12 months**	72 months	**24 months**	**24 months**	**39 months**	24 months
Major Footpath and Shared pathways Shoping Centres and Arterial Roads	6 months	6 months	6 / 12 months	3 / 6 month	3/6 months	**7/26 months**	Nil
Minor Footpath and shared pathways (Pedestrian/Local areas) Various	12 months	12 months	12 /36 months	12 months	12 months	**26months**	Nil
Kerb and Channel Major/Collector Roads (Various Material).	6 months	12 months	12 months	**12 months**	**3/6 months**	**7 months**	Nil
Kerb and Channel Minor / Local Roads (Various Material)	12 months	12 months	36 months	**24 months**	**12 month**	**26 months**	Nil
Statutory line marking - Major and Minor Roads excluding parking bays.	48 months	12 months	**12 /36 months**	24 months	**3/6 months, 12 months**	26 months	Major Roads - 6 months, Minor Roads - 12 months
Signage (Regulatory) Major and Minor Roads.	12 months	6 months	12/36 months	24 months	**3/6 months and 12 months**	26 months	Major Roads - 6 months, Minor Roads -12 months
Area Information Signs	12months						Nil
Street Furniture - Major Roads and Minor/ Local	12 months	12 months	**N/A**	24 months	**3/6 months and 12 months**	N/A	Nil
Drainage Assets - Major and Minor Roads	Reactive	12 months	12 months	24 months	**3/ 6 months, 12 months**	N/A	Nil
Road Side Overhang Vegitation (Council Managed)	12 months						Council's Policy - Major Roads ; 12 month and Local Roads 24 months
Footpath Overhang Vegetation (Public Space)	12 months						Council's Policy - Major Roads ; 12 month and Local Roads 24 months
Ovehang Vegetation from private properties.	Reactive						Local Laws
Traffic Control Devices	12 months	6 months	**12/36 months**	**3 weeks**	**months, 12 mor**	N/A	Nil
Bridges (level 1 Inspection)		6 months	N/A	**12/48 months**	12 months	12 months	Level 1 - 12 months

Table 3 – Proposed Changes to Hazard Inspection Frequencies

The following Terms have the same meaning:

a) Major Road is the same as a Collector Road. This also includes service roads adjacent to Arterial Roads.
b) Minor Road is the same as a Local Road

c) Major Footpath is the same as a high usage footpath.
d) Minor Footpath is the same as low usage footpath.

5.3.2 Other Proposed Inspections

It is also recommended that consideration is given to the inclusion of:

a) Night Inspection Frequency: 1 – Every 12 months.

Night Inspections	Inspection undertaken in accordance with a formal programmed inspection schedule to assess the reflectivity of road signage, cat's eyes and roadside guideposts, and the visibility of line marking at night for all Council Major Roads	Conducted via a slow-moving vehicle with standard driving lights (low beam), with visibility/legibility/reflectivity assessed by eye from distances specified respective of each asset defect type. Performed by a dedicated Plan inspector.

b) Bridge Inspections – Level 1 – Every 12 months

In accordance with the VicRoads Bridge Inspection Manual and associated Maintenance Standards, Council undertakes Level 1 bridge inspections across its network on an annual basis. These inspections are conducted as routine visual assessments to identify any obvious defects, structural deterioration, or safety concerns. Inspections are performed by trained staff and do not require access equipment or structural analysis. Where deterioration, damage, or other risks are observed, the bridge may be referred for a Level 2 inspection to assess the condition in greater detail. All findings are recorded and prioritised in the Council's maintenance system, with appropriate make-safe or maintenance actions initiated as required to ensure continued public safety and asset performance.

c) Drainage Pit Inspections – Major Roads – Every 12 Months

Council should consider undertaking routine visual inspections of stormwater drainage pits located on collector roads to ensure effective drainage function and public safety. These inspections are carried out on a proactive basis, typically every 12 to 24 months, aligned with the asset's risk rating and network importance. The inspections assess pit grates, lids, debris build-up, structural integrity, and any signs of blockage or failure. Where issues are identified, reactive maintenance is triggered in accordance with Council's intervention and response time standards. Pits on collector roads are prioritised due to their strategic function in conveying traffic and managing higher stormwater volumes compared to local roads.

5.4 Hazard Description, Intervention Levels and Response Times

In addition to the findings and recommendations outlined in Subsection 5.3, the review has identified that several components of the current Road Management Plan 2021 specifically maintenance standards and associated response timelines are no longer appropriate when benchmarked against neighbouring municipalities, MAV Insurance data, and recent trends in public liability claims.

The recommendations set out in Tables 4 – 10 are based on testing for reasonability when compared with neighbouring municipalities. The following terms are reference in the Tables below and defined for clarity.

5.4.1 Proposed Definitions

For the purposes of this review and clarity, the following definitions are introduced:

Defect: A localised physical condition of a road or road-related infrastructure that deviates from the intended design, construction, or performance standard. A defect may include, but is not limited to, surface cracking, potholes, displaced joints, uneven footpaths, damaged kerbs, or missing signage. Defects are assessed against defined intervention levels within this Road Management Plan and may not necessarily constitute an immediate safety risk.

Hazard: Any condition, defect, obstruction, or environmental factor on or near the road network that poses a foreseeable risk of harm or injury to road users or damage to property. A hazard may arise from a defect exceeding its intervention level or from other circumstances such as storm debris, flooding, overgrown vegetation, or unauthorised works. Hazards require an initial risk-based assessment and may trigger a "make-safe" or immediate response action in accordance with this Plan.

Initial Response: The time taken from the receipt of a report of a hazard or defect to the point at which Council undertakes an initial triage, site inspection (if required), and preliminary public safety risk assessment. This response may be conducted through various means, including in-person inspection, photographic evidence, or remote evaluation.

Target Time for Initial Response: The specified timeframe within which a Council Officer is expected to attend the reported location (if required), confirm the presence of a defect or hazard, and assess its risk level to determine appropriate action in accordance with the Road Management Plan.

Response Time: refers to the period between the identification (or deemed awareness) of a hazard/defect and the initiation or completion of appropriate action to make safe and/or repair the defect, in accordance with the intervention levels and service standards established in the Road Management Plan. This is also known as the Response Time to Repair.

Make Safe: Maintenance intervention measures intended to minimise localised risk until a defect can be repaired or returned to a functional status. May include warning signage, asset closure, or other appropriate measure.

Make Safe typically involves prompt and make safe interventions such as:

- Placing warning signs or barricades.
- Temporarily filling potholes.
- Clearing debris.
- Removing fallen trees or objects off the road or footpath.
- Closing the road or footpath to the public.

The term is often used during emergency or urgent response situations where a full repair may not be immediately possible, but temporary measures are needed to safeguard road users.

5.5 Service Standards and Response Times

It is recommended that Council consider standardising response timeframes for both proactive and reactive inspections where the same level of risk is identified, to ensure consistency, public safety, and a reasonable and practicable service standard.

5.5.1 Public Roads Standard - Comparison of existing Vs Recommended

The current response time standards for identified hazards, as outlined in Table 4 of the RMP 2021, range from **5 to 20 days for Reactive Maintenance** and **6 to 12 months for Proactive Maintenance**.

Benchmarking against neighbouring municipalities indicates that response times of up to **thirty (30) working days** are common for comparable risk categories, supporting the feasibility of this recommendation.

Asset/Hazard Description/Intervention level	Asset Category Roads	Initial Response Time	Response Time to repair
Potholes Defect must exceed both the depth of 50mm and diameter of 300mm to be determined as exceeding the intervention level. Laneway defects must exceed 100mm depth for constructed laneway.	Major (high activity)	3 Working Days	20 Working Days
	Collector and Local (low activity)	5 Working Days	30 Working Days
	Laneway (Constructed)	5 Working Days	40 Working Days
Ruts, depression, and edge breaks. Significant rutting and abrupt distortion in the road surface, missing or eroded road pavement surface along road edge, exceeding 150mm laterally,1m length and 50mm below surrounding pavement surface (100mm depth for constructed laneways)	Major (high activity)	3 Working Days	20 Working Days
	Collector and Local (low activity)	5 Working Days	30 Working Days
	Laneway (Un constructed	5 Working Days	40 Working Days

Table 4 –Recommended break up in response time - Roads.

5.5.2 Public Footpaths/Pathways Standard Comparison of existing Vs Recommended

The current response time for identified hazards, as outlined in Table 5 of the RMP 2021 range from **5 to 20 days for Reactive Maintenance** and **6 to 12 months for Proactive Maintenance**.

Standardising response timelines for defects presenting the same level of risk regardless of whether they are identified through proactive or reactive inspections will support a more **reasonable, practicable, and risk-aligned approach** to public safety.

Benchmarking indicates that neighbouring municipalities apply response timeframes of up to **sixty (60) working days** for similar risk categories.

Asset/Hazard Description/Intervention level – Asset Category **Footpaths/pathways**		Initial Response Time	Response Time to Repair
Potholes Diameter > 300mm and Depth > 50mm. Missing pavement: Area > 2 square metres. Lip raised > 25mm; cracks > 25mm over a length of 1.2 m; Edge drop > 75mm and tree roots horizontal displacement > 100mm over a length of 1.2 m.	High activity area	3 Working Days	40 Working Days
	Low activity area	3 Working Days	80 Working Days

Table 5 – Recommended break up in response time – Footpaths/pathways.

5.5.3 Comparison of existing Vs Recommended Public Statutory Road Signs and Statutory Line Markings Standard

The current response time for identified hazards, as outlined in Table 6 of the RMP 2021 range from 10 to 30 days for Reactive Maintenance and up to 12 months for Proactive Maintenance.

Aligning response timeframes for defects of equivalent risk regardless of whether they are identified reactively or proactively will promote a consistent, reasonable, and practicable approach to managing public safety risks.

Comparative benchmarks from neighbouring municipalities indicate response timelines of up to eighty (80) working days for similar risk categories.

Asset/Hazard Description/Intervention level – Asset Category **Statutory Signs**	Initial Response Time	Response Time to Repair
Damaged, missing, illegible due to fading and or graffiti, obstructed, which includes a minimum viewing distance of 10m from which a sign must be legible, along with 60 per cent non-legibility. Signposts that are not vertical (>15 degrees from vertical). Graffiti covering Regulatory Sign face rendering it unreadable.	3 Working Days	60 Working Days
Asset/Hazard Description/Intervention level – Asset Category Statutory Line Markings	**Initial Response Time**	**Response Time to Repair and/or make safe**
Damaged, missing, illegible due to fading	3 days	80 Working Days

Table 6 – Recommended break up in response time – Regulatory Signs and Line markings.

5.4.4 Comparison of existing Vs Recommended Kerb and Channel

The current response time for identified hazards, as outlined in Table 7 of the RMP 2021 range from 5 to 20 days for Reactive Maintenance (across both major and minor roads) and 6 to 12 months for Proactive Maintenance, depending on the road classification.

It is recommended that response timeframes for proactive and reactive maintenance be standardised where the same level of risk is identified, to ensure consistency, fairness, and improved public safety outcomes.

Benchmarking indicates that neighbouring municipalities apply response timelines of up to 150 working days for comparable risk levels.

Asset/Hazard Description/Intervention level – Asset Category **Kerb and Channel**	Initial Response Time	Response Time to Repair and/or make safe
Kerb and channel failure areas exceeding both 300mm length and 25mm depth integrated (50mm depth for kerb separated from the footpath.	3 Working Days	60 Working Days
Missing sections: >200 mm and/or having an impact on the drainage function.	5 Working Days for Local Roads	80 Working Days Local Roads
Vertical Displacement > 100 mm posing a trip hazards and Horizontal displacement > 100mm causing localized ponding.	3 Working Days	30 Working Days Major Roads
Displaced kerb and channel sections exceeding both 150mm length and 75mm.	5 Working Days for Local Roads	60 Working Days Local Roads

Table 7 – Recommended break up in response time – Kerb and Channel

5.4.5 Comparison of existing Vs Recommended Street Furniture and Traffic Devices

Current Standards for response time for street furniture ranges from 10 working days Reactive Maintenance and 6 - 12 Months for Proactive Maintenance. The recommendation is to standardise the proactive and reactive response times.

The comparison timelines for neighbouring municipalities ranges up to 45 working days
The Traffic Devices were not previously included in the current RMP Appendix C

Asset/Hazard Description/Intervention level – Asset Category **Street Furniture and Traffic Devices**	Initial Response Time	Response Time to Repair and/or make safe
Street Furniture, the Council owned, damaged and hazardous: Seats, drinking fountains, bins, public art and sculpture, ticket machines.	3 Working Days	80 Working Days
Traffic Devices - Damaged, missing obstructed: traffic signals, pedestrian/children crossing / pavement markings, delineators, and traffic islands, roundabouts.	3 Working Days	45 Working Days

Table 8 – Recommended break up in response time – Street Furniture and Traffic Devices.

5.4.6 Comparison of existing Vs Recommended for Overhang Vegetation

Current Standards for response time for Vegetation on Roads ranges from one (1) month for Reactive Maintenance and 12 Months for Proactive Maintenance. The recommendation is to standardise the proactive and reactive response times.

The comparison timelines for neighbouring municipalities various greatly. The majority of the adjoining municipalities have adopted the Tree Pruning Policy and response times ranges from 30 to 45 working days

Asset/Hazard Description/Intervention level – Asset Category **Vegetation**	Initial Response Time	Response Time to Repair and/or make safe
Council managed overhang vegetation (Trees) will have pruning works carried out to maintain a minimum of 4.2m clearance over the centre of the carriageways, and not greater than 3.5m over driveways.	3 Working Days	45 Working Days
Vegetation is obstructing sightlines to intersections or regulatory, warning and hazard signs when viewed from <20 m	3 Working Days	45 Working Days
Vegetation intruding into footpaths envelope maintains a minimum overhead clearance of 2.5m and encroaching on 3m of sight lines.	3 Working Days	45 Working Days

Table 9 – current standard and response time – Vegetation

5.4.7 Comparison of existing Vs Recommended Drainage Assets

Current Standards for response time for Drainage assets is purely reactive which ranges from 3 – 10 days. It is recommended that the Council consider the introduction of a proactive annual pit inspection program to minimise the risk of blockages causing ponding, broken pit lids, dislodged causing harm to people or property.

Asset/Hazard Description/Intervention level – Asset Category **Drainage**	Initial Response Time	Response Time to Repair
Blockages in a City of Stonnington owned pit causing water to pond on the trafficable section of the road surface.	3 Working Days	100 Working Days
Damaged pit lid - substantially cracked, crushed and/or chipped lid	3 Working Days	100 Working Days

Table 10 – Recommended break up in response time – Drainage Assets

6.0 Summary

In accordance with section 54(5) of the Road Management Act 2004 and Regulation 9 of the Road Management (General) Regulations 2016, City of Stonnington conducted a review of its Road Management Plan 2021.

The purpose of the review was to assess whether the standards and priorities documented in the RMP:

- Reflect current community expectations and service levels,
- Align with available resources and risk profiles, and
- Remain compliant and consistent with legislative responsibilities and best practice.

The review assessed the effectiveness, efficiency, and governance of the current Road Management Plan, including standards, asset management, boundary responsibilities, and coordination with external authorities. It identified opportunities for improvement to ensure a safe, affordable, and consistent road network. While the report offers informed recommendations, the final decision to amend the Plan rests with the Council, as per section 54(6) of the Road Management Act 2004 (Vic), and must align with strategic goals, community needs, and available resources.

The review confirmed that:

- Core principles of the plan remain sound,
- Misalignments have emerged in response times, classification standards, and integration with asset management systems (e.g., Asset Master),
- Amendments are required to reflect contemporary operational and administrative practices, updated risk frameworks, and regulatory compliance alignment.

Based on the Desktop Review findings and recommendations documented in this Draft Review Report, it is recommended that Council now proceed with the formal amendment process under section 54 of the Act. The amendment will ensure that the Road Management Plan:

- Reflects contemporary operational practices and systems,
- Complies with statutory requirements and codes of practice, and
- Supports transparent, risk-based service delivery.

In accordance with section 54(6) of the Act and Regulation 10, Council may now proceed to amend the Road Management Plan.

Key steps include:

1. **Preparation of Draft Amendments**
    - Update the current RMP 2021 with the provisions regarding inspection and maintenance standards, and other administrative changes as documented in Section 5 of this Report.
    - Clarification of terminology, e.g., response time definitions, intervention levels.
    - Incorporation of references to current management systems).
2. **Public Notice of Intention to Amend**
    - Publish a notice of intention in a local newspaper and on Council's website.
    - State where the proposed amendments can be viewed.
    - Invite public submissions for a minimum of 28 days.
3. **Consideration of Submissions**
    - Assess public and stakeholder feedback.
    - Make further changes to the draft RMP if required.
4. **Adoption of Amended Road Management Plan**
    - Council resolution to adopt the final plan.
    - Publish a notice of adoption in accordance with Regulation 11.
5. **Record Keeping**
    - Maintain a copy of the amended Plan on Council's website.
    - Notify the Minister as required.