

Policy No.:	IS001	<i>IS001 – Sealing of Unsealed Roads Policy</i>
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Adopted by:	Moorabool Shire Council	

1. Purpose and Scope of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Establish clear guidelines and principles for the assessment of warrants and cost apportionment for upgrading unsealed roads to sealed road status.
- Facilitate the application of equitable and reasonable principles when determining whether an unsealed road should be sealed.
- Provide guidance to Council and officers to manage and evaluate requests to seal unsealed roads.
- Establish the criteria for determining and prioritising which unmade roads are to be considered for construction on an objective needs basis within the scope of Council budget affordability.

2. Policy

2.1 Introduction

Moorabool Shire has an extensive proportion of its road network that is unsealed. The Council acknowledges that it does not necessarily have the financial resources or receive enough external grants funding to meet all of the infrastructure demands in the municipality or to meet the community demand for the development of unsealed roads to a sealed standard.

The cost to seal an unsealed road is not simply the cost of bitumen spray. It generally involves:

- Constructing and/or increasing the pavement depth depending on heavy vehicle traffic loading
- Reconstructing driveways and drainage including widening of culverts
- Addressing environmental issues such as removal of trees and other native vegetation
- Primer and final seal.

This policy provides guidance on how Council determines which unsealed roads are to be developed. It establishes general criteria to be applied when determining the unsealed roads that may be developed within the parameters of financial affordability. The intent of the policy is to ensure that assessments are applied consistently and objectively, thus ensuring a transparent, methodical and equitable approach in recommending and allocating resources for the sealing of unsealed roads.

2.2 Warrants

The 'Unsealed Roads Manual - Guide to Good Practice', March 2009 by the Australian Roads Research Board (ARRB) outlines key principles in applying economic evaluations

as a method to justify the sealing of a road and shall be used as a guide. The principles demonstrate that it is generally not economically warranted to seal a gravel road carrying fewer than 100 vehicles per day, whereas if the road is carrying over 250 vehicles per day it will probably be justified. In between the 100 and 250 vehicles per day is where additional social, practical or maintenance criteria may influence the warrants of sealing of these roads even though the economic benefit falls short.

2.3 Policy Objectives

To provide:

- A consistent, transparent and equitable approach in the prioritisation of unmade roads for development.
- Guidance and direction in applying the criteria for the development of unmade roads.
- To ensure that solutions developed are cost effective, affordable and of a standard that meets community expectations.
- To ensure that the development of necessary infrastructure projects occur in a controlled, managed manner. This will involve the prioritisation of projects, having regard factors such as:
 - Risk, health and safety
 - Amenity
 - Environment
 - Demonstrated need; and
 - Financial
- To inform the relative priority and consideration of sealing of unsealed roads within the parameters of available financial resources allocated through the budgeting process

2.4 Policy Implementation

- Proactive sealing of unsealed roads will generally not be pursued for economic and fiscal reasons.
- Unsealed roads that carry in excess of 250 vehicles per day will be automatically referred to the long term Capital Improvement Program for prioritisation in accordance with the Capital Works Evaluation Guidelines.
- Unsealed roads that carry less than 100 vehicles per day will generally not be considered for sealing unless there is a contribution from adjacent land owners in accordance with the Special Rates and Charges Scheme provisions.
- Unsealed roads that carry between 100 and 250 vehicles per day must meet at least 5 of the following criteria before being considered for sealing unless there is a contribution from adjacent land owners in accordance with the Special Rates and Charges Scheme provisions.
 - Casualty crash 5 year history
 - Longitudinal gradient in excess of 5%
 - Heavy vehicles percentage in excess of 15%
 - School bus route
 - Development density greater than 50 houses per kilometre
 - Average house setback less than 20m from road reserve (dust problems)
 - Reactive maintenance more than 3 time per annum.
- Other factors that will be considered when assessing requests for sealing of unsealed roads will be:
 - Links to existing sealed roads
 - Road hierarchy classification
 - Planning Scheme and future development potential

- Traffic generators
- Soil type
- Customer request history
- Road condition and maintenance costs
- Road geometry and road safety
- Roadside vegetation and biodiversity
- Contour distance
- All candidate projects will be referred to the long term Capital Improvement Program for prioritisation in accordance with the Capital Works Evaluation Guidelines.
- Construction of unsealed roads to a sealed standard will have reference to engineering guidelines and best practice for design and construction.

3. Process

The sealing of unsealed roads process may be initiated by Council representatives, members of the public, residents within the area, or Council officers. The final outcome of many proposals will depend to a large degree on the priority placed upon the work, the level of community support, available funding and cash flow resources

When a Special Rates and Charge process is to be pursued, this shall be in accordance with Special Rates and Charges Policy.

4. Precedents

Many Councils adopt a Sealing of Unsealed Roads Policy providing guidance in relation to how requests for sealing will be assessed and/or seeking property owner contributions toward infrastructure projects. A small number of unsealed roads have been sealed previously in this Shire.

5. Related Legislation/Policies/Guidelines

- Local Government Act 1989 and subsequent amendments
- Special Rates and Charges Policy
- Community Engagement Framework
- Council Policies
- Unsealed Roads Manual: Guidelines to Good Practice – ARRB
- Capital Works Evaluation Guidelines

6. Council Plan Reference – Key Performance Area

Key Result Area 3 Enhanced Infrastructure and Natural and Built Environment

Ensure current and future infrastructure meets the needs to the community

Construct physical infrastructure to appropriate standards.

7. Review

This policy will be reviewed in 2020.

8. Definitions

Unsealed Road	An unformed, formed, or formed and gravelled road that
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	does not have a wearing course, such as a sprayed bitumen seal, to protect the road pavement.
Sealed Road	A road with a pavement of imported stabilised in-situ material (pavement of crushed rock and/or natural gravels) and a waterproof seal. The sealed surface may comprise bitumen, asphalt, chip seal, concrete or pavers to hold the road surface together. The road shoulder may or may not be sealed
Special Rate or Charge Scheme	A financial arrangement, between Council and property owners as set out in the Local Government Act, to provide funds in relation to necessary infrastructure works that Council considers is or will be of special benefit to persons required to pay the special rate or charge.
Property	Refers to property in the form of land.
Council	Moorabool Shire Council
Shire	The Moorabool municipality, its Councillors, Council staff, residents and ratepayers.