



Rural Roads Management Policy

Local Government Act 2009

1. POLICY STATEMENT

Townsville City Council will prioritise expenditure on the maintenance of rural roads having regard to the level of public use and function of each road.

2. PRINCIPLES

Council seeks to maximise public access to all parts of the city while maintaining rural roads in a financially sustainable way that is appropriate to the level and nature of the use of the rural road.

3. SCOPE

This policy applies to all rural roads, both sealed and unsealed, in the Townsville local government area.

4. RESPONSIBILITY

The Director Infrastructure & Operations, General Manager Engineering and Asset Infrastructure Planning and General Manager Construction Maintenance and Operations are responsible for ensuring that this policy is understood and adhered to.

5. DEFINITIONS

Public Use – means the use of a road by persons other than those gaining access to properties that they own or that they work upon.

Road Reserve – means an area of land under council's control, dedicated, notified or declared to be a road for public uses. An area may be a road reserve even though it does not need to contain a formed road. The road reserve extends from the property boundary on one side to the property boundary on the other side.

Rural Road - A rural road is generally a low use road in rural zones of the Townsville local government area. It may be an unsealed road, or a narrow sealed road with gravel shoulders.

A rural road that is maintained by Council has been accepted onto the asset register. In some cases rural roads are not within road reserves, but in no case will Council accept responsibility for creating or maintaining a rural road that is upon private land unless Council has in writing committed to do so because Council regards that as being in the public interest.

Unsealed Road – Unsealed roads are primarily located in sparsely developed areas and are usually a formed road with a gravel surface.

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6. POLICY

6.1. RURAL ROAD MAINTENANCE

Council undertakes annual condition assessments across the rural road network to determine the level of work required over the next 12 months.

For unsealed roads, required works may consist of grading, resheeting (addition of more gravel), or reprofiling the road to assist in drainage on or beside the road.

For sealed rural roads, works may consist of patching or resealing sealed sections, adding more gravel to the shoulder of the road, or reprofiling adjacent drainage.

6.2. UNSEALED ROAD MAINTENANCE STANDARDS

Council will endeavour to maintain unsealed roads to a standard of at least one grading per year, with a second grading considered based on performance, use and maintenance history. The level of grading is based on the condition of the road, safety, volume and type of traffic on the road, drainage and stormwater. Council will program works in a manner which allows crews to move in a cyclical planned approach throughout the network – however for works required out of sequence due to poor condition of the road, a crew will be made available to attend to undertake the urgent works.

6.3. FENCES, GATES AND OTHER ACCESS RESTRICTIONS OVER ROADS

Rural roads should remain open to the public and Council will only consider the closure of a road reserve, or use of a gate or grid in extenuating circumstances. Council will assess applications for approvals to erect or maintain a fence or gate on a rural road by reviewing the use of the road for the general public and may cancel any approved restrictions over roads at any time.

Council will not accept that public access to a rural road should be restricted by a locked gate or a fence that is continuous across the road in order to:

- enhance privacy of a property accessed by that road;
- assist in the management of stock.

Council will not maintain roads that are restricted by fences or locked gates unless there are exceptional circumstances, generally relating to an ongoing high level of public use of the road.

6.4. ROADSIDE SLASHING

Slashing of roadsides is programmed across the network, with most roads slashed up to 5 times per year. Some lower use roads will be slashed less frequently, depending on use and considering the safety of road users.

Full width slashing (fence-line to fence-line) occurs prior to and after the wet season. Other programmed slashing will be up to two slasher widths.

Rain events may impact on this schedule, with early or late rains causing more growth, and making it difficult to slash through wet roadside areas. Council will reschedule the slashing program based on need and when it is safe to operate in these areas.

6.5. DISASTER EVENTS

Townsville is a dry tropics environment however is prone to events such as monsoons, cyclones and flooding in the wet season which may have a detrimental impact on the road network. In a disaster event, funding is available through the State and Federal Government Disaster Recover Funding Arrangements (DRFA), administered through the Queensland Reconstruction Authority (QRA).

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To ensure funding requirements are met, after an event Council works closely with the QRA to make roads safe for use through the emergency works program. Full rehabilitation of roads to prior condition is a longer process and may take up to 18 months to 2 years to complete in order to ensure all funding requirements are met including approvals, inspections, and reporting.

7. LEGAL PARAMETERS

Local Government Act 2009

Local Law No.1 (Administration) 2011

Subordinate Local Law 1.16 (Gates and Grids) 2011

Local Law No. 4 (Local Government Controlled Areas, Facilities and Roads) 2011

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8. ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

Application for Fence/Gate Approval Procedure

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