

## 1. Policy Statement

This Policy details Council's requirements for footpath inspections. The objective of this Policy is to:

- Provide safe access for pedestrians and other users of Council's footpaths;
- Efficiently allocate available funding and resources for the maintenance and repair of the footpaths;
- Develop a priority for repairs;
- Minimise the ongoing maintenance problems by using effective repair treatments;
- Program repair work in association with Council's Capital Works Program;
- Develop procedures for the reporting of injuries caused by tripping on footpaths and requests for repairs to damaged footpath;
- Develop a system for recording and reporting on the condition of Council's footpaths and reported injuries; and
- Set the level of service for Council's footpath maintenance.

## 2. Scope

Council has recognised that slips, trips and falls associated with the footpath network form a significant percentage of public liability claims received by councils within Queensland.

This Policy applies to all footpaths, walkways and walking trails maintained by Council.

## 3. Responsibility

### *Chief Executive Officer*

The Chief Executive Officer has the overall responsibility for the implementation and execution of this Policy.

### *Directors, Managers and Team Leaders*

Directors, Managers and Team Leaders are responsible for making known the required standards and for enforcing these in accordance with this Policy.

### *Asset and Infrastructure Team*

The Asset and Infrastructure team is responsible for ensuring that footpath inspections are conducted on schedule.

### *Infrastructure Operations Team*

The Infrastructure Operations team is responsible for carrying out any rectification works or maintenance.

## 4. Definitions

**Cracking** is significant cracking along footpath for a distance of at least 5 metres or sharp jagged edges.

**Edge Drop** is the vertical distance from the footpath to the surrounding area.

**Footpath** is a path (usually concrete) constructed adjacent to a council road for commercial and or recreational purposes.

**Overhanging Vegetation** is an overhead obstruction that is within 2.5 metres vertical distance of the footpath.

**Pathway** this comprises of all footpaths, walkways and walking trails as defined under this Policy.

**Potholing/Ponding** for the purpose of this Policy is a hole at least 10 mm deep and 100mm wide.

**Slippery Surface** is a surface which is deemed to be slippery due to the presence of water or any extraneous material.

**Vertical Displacement** is the vertical distance between two sections of footpath, between the footpath and a potential trip hazard or a sharp jagged edge (i.e cracked tile).

**Walking Trail** is a path (usually gravel) which has been constructed primarily for recreational purposes.

**Walkway** is a path (usually a hard surface e.g. concrete or asphalt) constructed in parks, recreational areas, etc.

## 5. Policy

Inspections are a formalised assessment of the footpath, walkway and walking trail network to identify hazards that may require repair and/or maintenance. There are two types of inspections:

- Scheduled – set at regular intervals depending on the asset hierarchy; and
- Reactive – in response to a service request or incident.

### 5.1 Footpath, Walkway and Walking Trail Hierarchy

The network is divided according to the frequency of usage. The assets are classified below into a hierarchy of five distinct classes as shown in Table 1 - Pathway Hierarchy.

Each hierarchical class has been assigned an inspection frequency. Any new assets built or acquired by Council will be assigned a Hierarchy Class by the Asset Manager at the time.

**Table 1 - Pathway Hierarchy**

Hierarchy Class	Asset Type	Type Description	Scheduled Inspection Frequency
1	Highly trafficked footpaths: All footpaths adjacent to commercial businesses in the CBD area	Footpaths provided on both sides of the road adjacent to commercial business in the CBD area.	Twice Yearly
2	Footpaths or walkways with medium levels of pedestrian traffic and/or those that are located near vulnerable users.	Footpaths or walkways regularly used by seniors, children and by the general public to access community services. Examples include footpaths that service retirement homes, carparks, schools, hospitals, swimming pools.	Twice Yearly
3	Footpaths or walkways infrequently used	Footpaths or walkways located adjacent to lower trafficked shire roads or within parks/reserve areas.	Twice Yearly
4	High-Traffic Walking Trails	Grass or gravel walking trails more frequently used, and in some instances providing linkage to the low-traffic walking trails. Generally located in parks or reserves.	Yearly
5	Low-Traffic Walking Trails	Grass or gravel walking trails deemed as less frequently used generally located in parks or reserves.	Yearly

A defect inspection may be triggered on pathways affected by any natural disaster event as deemed necessary by Director of Infrastructure and Utilities Services (DIUS) and resources permit.

All hierarchies are defined on Council's Pathway Hierarchy mapping. Any changes to the Pathway Hierarchy mapping requires adoption by Council.

## 5.2 Scheduled Inspections

Scheduled inspections are undertaken in accordance with Table 1 - Pathway Hierarchy, which is dependent on the allocated hierarchy. As per Council's Asset Management Plan, a detailed register of all footpath locations is to be kept within Council's asset register and GIS System.

When conducting inspections all hazards are recorded using GPS location. The recorded defects then can be given a prioritisation ranking (High, Medium, Low and Acceptable) using the Footpath Prioritisation Matrix as shown by Table 2 – Pathway Defect Prioritisation Matrix. The purpose of the matrix is to assign a ranking priority to each defect so that repair works can be assigned accordingly. All defects of a High and Medium ranking must be raised with the Operations Department. All low rating vertical displacement defects must also be raised with the operations team as well. By using the Defect Prioritisation Ranking (High, Medium, Low and Acceptable) obtained from Table 2 – Pathway Defect Prioritisation Matrix, an appropriate response to each defect can be given using Table 3 – Response to Defects.

During the inspections, the defect is to be raised within Reflect, including supporting documentation e.g. photos. In addition to routine inspections, reactive inspections are undertaken based on complaints, requests and reports received via Council's Customer Request Management system. Additional inspections after events such as flooding, cyclones, etc may be necessary. The procedure for conducting reactive and additional inspections is the same as routine inspections.

## 5.3 Reactive Inspection

Reactive inspections should be undertaken upon receiving a customer service request or when Council has become aware of a potential concern or incident. The following information must be entered on the request in the customer service request system following the inspection:

- A copy of an inspection record, including photographs of the defect, response times and any actions taken to rectify or make the area safe. High and medium ranking defects, with the exception of low vertical displacement defects, will be notified to the Operations Team through a Reflect report. Once Operations have been notified of the defect the process will be considered closed at the inspection level;
- A copy of operations team inspection record with response times and any actions taken to rectify or make the area safe again to close out any open inspection actions; and
- Record of conversation or correspondence informing the complainant of the outcome any future works have been programmed to rectify the concern.

## 5.4 Footpath Defects and Response Times

**Table 2 - Pathway Defect Prioritisation Matrix**

HIERARCHY CLASS	DEFECTS									
	VERTICAL DISPLACEMENT					EDGE DROPS		POTHOLING /PONDING	OVERHANGING VEGETATION	SLIPPERY SURFACE
	<5mm	5-10mm	10-20mm	20-30mm	>30mm	<50mm	>50mm OVER 5m LENGTH			
1	Acceptable	Low	Medium	High	High	Acceptable	Low	High	Medium	High
2	Acceptable	Acceptable	Low	Medium	High	Acceptable	Low	Medium	Medium	High
3	Acceptable	Acceptable	Low	Medium	High	Acceptable	Low	Medium	Medium	Medium
4	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Medium	Acceptable	Low	Low	Medium	Low
5	Unsealed Walking Trails – Risk Evaluation*					N/A	N/A	Low	Medium	N/A

\* No specific vertical displacement has been specified for Hierarchy Class 5 walking trails. Any vertical displacement (eg. tree roots, scouring) would be evaluated during the inspection and identified if they are beyond a reasonable expectation for a walking trail. This applies to walking trails that are unsealed for both hierarchies 4 and 5.

**Table 3 - Response to Defects**


Footpath Risk Action Response		
Priority	Control Mechanism	Response Time
Acceptable	No further action required	N/A
Low	Consideration should be given as to whether action needs to be taken	As resources permit
Medium	Make safer	Three days
	Program into maintenance works	15 days
High	Make Safe – Paint yellow, barricading, etc	Eight hours
	Effect Immediate Response (either temporary or permanent repairs)	48 hours

## 6. Legal Parameters

- *Local Government Act 2009;*
- Regulations under the Act; and
- Austroads Guide to Road Design Part 6A - Paths for Walking and Cycling.

## 7. Associated Documents

- LGM Liability Footpath Guide 2017; and
- Pathway Hierarchy Mapping.

DOCUMENT HISTORY AND STATUS					
Action	Name		Position	Signed	Date
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Policy Version	03	Initial Adopted	Version	N/A	Current Version Adopted
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