INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

Document Type	Strategy
Adopted by	Full Council / Chief Executive
Date Adopted	30 June 2025
Date Effective	1 July 2025
Responsible Department	Critical Services
Responsible Officer	General Manager Critical Services
To be reviewed	As a per of the Long-term Plan process, or by 30 June 2028

Contents

1. Executive Summary

Section 101B of the Local Government Act 2002 requires local authorities (councils) to develop an Infrastructure Strategy (IS). This document sets out the Gore District Council's (the Council) strategic direction for providing and managing infrastructure assets over the next 30 years and beyond. This strategy outlines a 30-year view of strategic issues, expenditure requirements and significant decisions that will need to be made.

The projects identified in the first ten years of the strategy are funded as part of the Council's Long-term Plan. There is less certainty around the issues and options for the period 2034 to 2055. The information in this infrastructure strategy is drafted as a supporting document to the Council's Long-term Plan 2025-2034. It has been refined to reflect feedback and decisions from the formal consultation process.

1.1. Asset Renewals

Ageing infrastructure assets mean that a large number of asset renewals are needed. The infrastructure installed during the mid-1900s is reaching the end of their effective lives, and there is now a growing number of assets requiring renewal.

While significant water leak detection and condition assessment work remains ongoing, a significant amount of water, wastewater and stormwater infrastructure still needs to be investigated and upgraded. $156 million is planned to be spent on renewals over the next 30 years. The Council will deliver $453 million in capital projects over the next 30 years. Expenditure on three waters infrastructure is the biggest component of the Council's planned capital works programme. This work is essential to meet the current and future needs of the Gore District's communities.

1.2. Climate Change

Based on current information, climate change is expected to affect Gore District in the following ways:

- Extended periods of dry weather
- Lower average annual rainfall may result in rivers with lower flows
- Low groundwater levels in shallow bores
- Increased intensive rainfall and flooding events

Learning to adapt to a changing environment and make decisions in the face of uncertainty will be important steps in addressing the impacts of climate change.

Identifying adaptive pathways to allow changes to be made in the future as circumstances change, will be key to appropriate infrastructure investment across a range of the Council's core services.

Following a Regional Climate Change Hui in July 2022, Environment Southland and Te Ao Mārama brought together a staff-level regional climate change working group, which has met regularly since October 2022. A governance-level regional climate change working group (RCCWG) was established in February 2023.

The RCCWG has developed a Regional Climate Change Strategy for the Southland region. The RCCWG is now looking to establish a Regional Framework for Action and local action plans specific to each Council across both adaptation and mitigation activities.

Climate change impacts are integrated into our activity management planning and therefore incorporated into our infrastructure planning estimates. Specific funding for climate change action outside of emissions

reporting is not yet identified and is being incorporated into our business-as-usual activities. Further funding discussions and considerations will occur ahead of the next Long-term Plan cycle.

1.3. Affordability

The Council needs to determine the priority of issues to be addressed and the associated timing and funding for the relevant infrastructure projects. These decisions need to take into account the costs and benefits of those projects over the short, medium and long term. Decisions made now must consider the costs and benefits for future generations as well as the current generation.

The Council is continually balancing the need to re-invest in the district with the need to minimise costs for ratepayers. Over the past four years, the Council has spent approximately $63.2 million in capital and $14.02 million in operating costs to continue providing services, renew and maintain infrastructure or improve services.

As a result, the district is approaching the end-of-life for many infrastructure assets that were built in Gore and Mataura during the mid-1900s.

Within this context, the Council will have to increase rates above the rate of inflation to service the district. All avenues need to be explored to keep rate increases at the minimum possible, but we need to acknowledge there is a national infrastructure crisis and it is likely that central government support will be required to address this challenge while maintaining some level of affordability.

In the interim, this Strategy is contingent on the Council being able to borrow more from the LGFA to achieve its capital programme in the medium to long term. As outlined in the Councils Financial Strategy, the Council has obtained a credit rating, which will allow the Council to borrow up to 280% of revenue. Whilst the Council could borrow up to 280% of revenue, it has set itself a self-imposed limit not to borrow more than 250% of revenue.

The assumption that has been applied throughout the financial forecasts is that the credit rating will be obtained by 30 June 2025, and the Council will have access to that funding.

This includes exploring alternative ways of funding the work that needs to be done, alongside prioritising capital investment (both in new assets and replacement of assets) and being prudent with day-to-day operational expenditure. This includes considering options such as a joint three waters CCO to deliver water services to create efficiencies. This needs to be done while trying to achieve the strategic priorities, regulatory obligations and community outcomes.

1.4. Our Infrastructure

This strategy covers infrastructure assets, and services provided GDC specifically:

- Roading
- Water
- Wastewater
- Stormwater

1.5. Our Challenges

The task of building, operating, and maintaining these infrastructure assets affordably and sustainably is becoming increasingly difficult in view of the following key challenges.

Legislative Environment

There have been increasing expectations from Central Government and the public about the standards to which services are provided. National standards and National Policy Statements require New Zealand's

drinking water standards to be met and seek increased wastewater and stormwater treatment and disposal standards.

Furthermore, Central Governments Local Water Done Well (LWDW) project seeks to enable Councils to create joint entities to deliver water services to communities. This process is currently ongoing as we work through this Long-term Plan and will have ongoing impacts on the delivery of services to Gore District communities. This creates significant uncertainty in terms of long-term planning for our three waters services. Although we are considering all the options under LWDW, we have developed this Infrastructure Strategy on the assumption that the delivery of three waters services stay with the Council as no decisions on the future of water services delivery have been made at this time.

Last year, the government also released its Government Policy Statement on Land Transport (GPS) and National Land Transport Programme (NLTP) providing the direction for roading activities between NZTA Waka Kotahi and Councils. The overall package of funding increased but the impact on certain work categories at a District Council level have seen significant cutbacks putting the current levels of service at risk.

Ageing Infrastructure

The district's infrastructure is ageing, and the asset should not be pushed beyond the efficiency threshold, which would mean maintaining the asset is more expensive than renewing it.

An increased investment in our road drainage maintenance is required to maximise the life of our underlying pavements.

Bridge inspections enabled the development of a robust forward plan of bridge renewal and component replacement.

Water and wastewater mains deteriorate over time and will present a bow wave of breakages or replacements. The mains will not be fit-for-purpose, and failure/breakages will be an ongoing issue resulting in increased interruptions and contamination opportunities.

Demographic Changes

Our population is ageing, and as a result, there is an increasing proportion of ratepayers who are on fixed incomes, placing greater pressure on the affordability of annual rates increases while addressing changes in levels of service and expectations.

As part of the 2025-2034 LTP development, the Council are using the 2024 & 2022 Infometrics Report to inform the district's demographics and projections. In 2024 the GDP for the Gore District was $1.019 million & 1.4% growth for the year.

In 2022 there was an average annual GDP growth forecasted at 0.9% per annum for the 2022-2034 period.

Primary sector remains the largest employer in the Gore District however there is a weak employment growth forecasted for 2022-2034, turning to decline in 2035-2055 period. This decline is expected in the primary sector and as the older proportion of Gore's population increases.

The latest population estimates and projections are based on 2018 Census results. The district's population has grown slowly since 2014 and is forecasted to continue to grow at 0.3% per annum over the next ten years before turning negative for the following ten years thereafter (Figure 1.1 and Figure 1.2). With the largest proportion of over 65s (20%) in the Southland Region, this is expected to be the cause of the forecasted population decline and decline in employment opportunities.

Growth is expected to continue in the Gore township at 0.4% per annum for the 2022-2034 period, Mataura's population is expected to remain steady and population decline in rural areas (Figure 1.2).

Figure 1.1: Gore District Population Growth (infometrics)

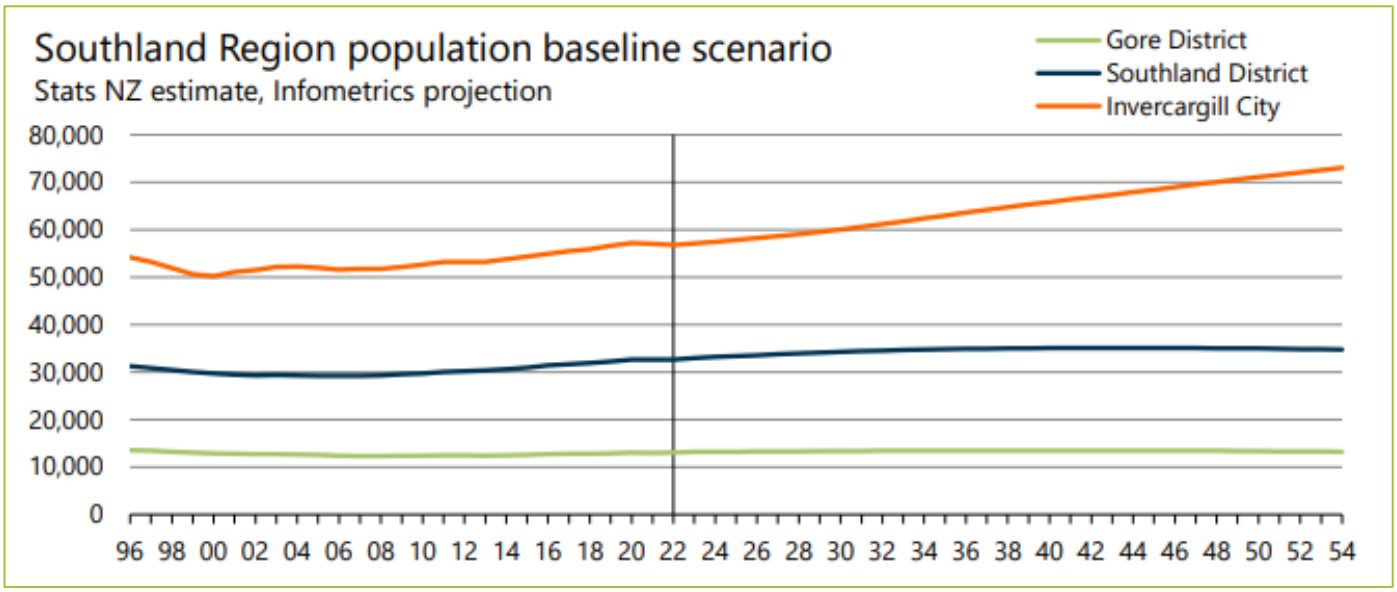


Figure 1.2: Gore District Population Growth (Infometrics)

Sub-district population

Stats NZ estimates, Infometrics baseline projection

Area	Population level			Population growth (annual % change)	
	2022	2034	2054	2022-2034	2034-2054
Gore district	**13,000**	**13,418**	**13,198**	**0.3%**	**-0.1%**
Gore	8,216	8,664	8,844	0.4%	0.1%
Mataura	1,717	1,722	1,578	0.0%	-0.4%
Gore rural	3,066	3,034	2,775	-0.1%	-0.4%

Over the next nine years the population is expected to grow slowly in the Gore township, whilst Mataura remains stable, and a population decline is experienced in the rural areas of the district. Net migration to the region has recently been negative caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. Given the region's natural increase is forecasted to become negative in the 2040s any population growth will be dependent on migration.

Household growth peaked in 2023 at 1.7% per annum as international borders opened which is expected to taper off to 0.3% per annum in 2029 with the number of households to begin slowly declining by late 2040s.

The average household size in Gore district is 2.33 which is expected to reduce slowly to 2.28 by the 2050s. Gore has the smallest household size in the Southland region, mostly due to its older population structure and greatest proportion of over 65s when compared to other Southland districts.

Employment in the district is heavily dependent upon local industries and if these were to close there would be a corresponding impact upon population and employment opportunities. While employment opportunities are forecasted to decrease in the future, this will coincide with an increasing ageing population who have retired and no longer work.

As outlined above, the growth projections for the district are minimal but there will still be pressure on infrastructure due to development. Due to the demographic changes outlined above, the district's housing stock is aging and no longer fit for purpose. This will potentially see a need for infill development, more

intensive housing options and there is still a demand for additional industrial land for commercial purposes. These all impact on the infrastructure needs for the future.

Other Challenges

Other challenges include:

- Infrastructure resilience
- New technologies

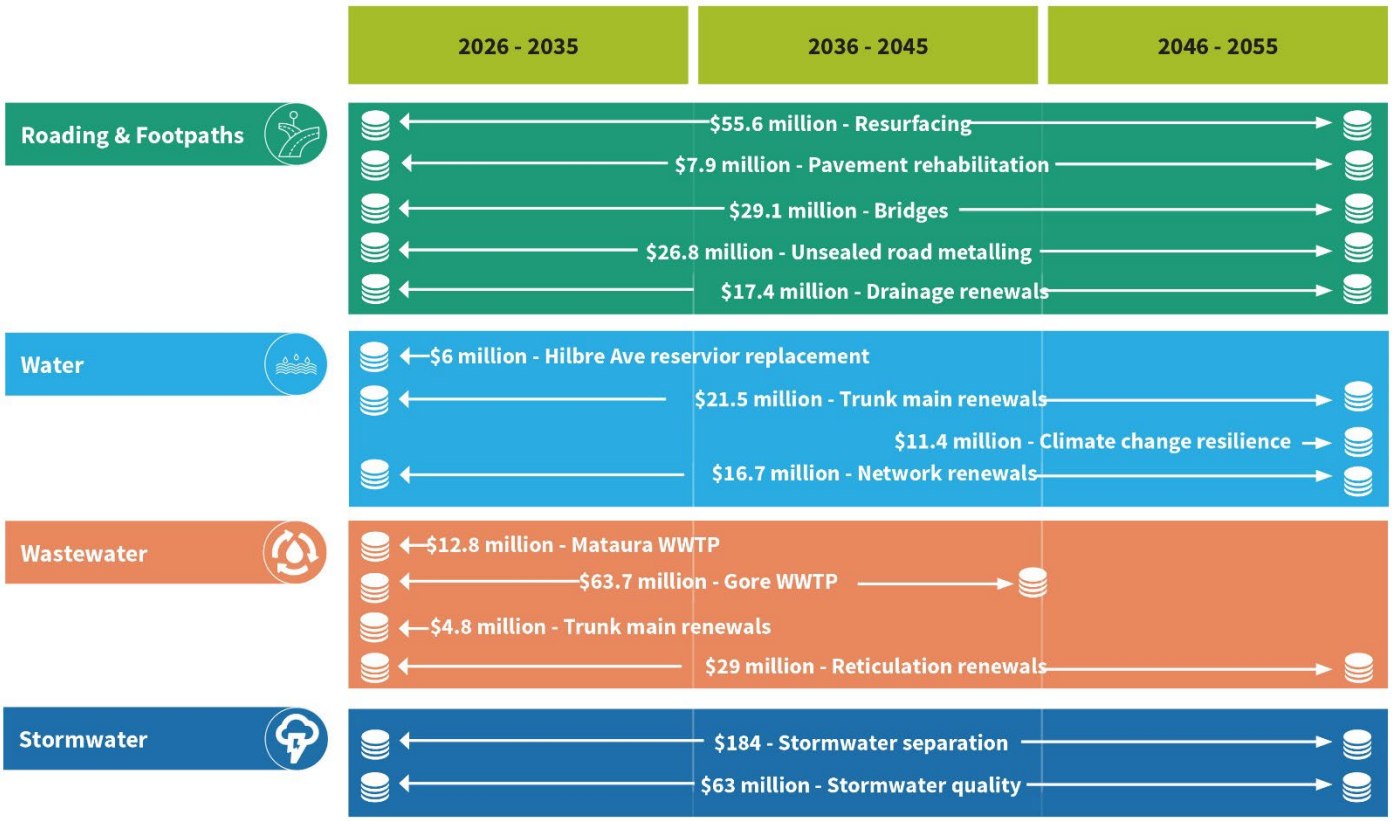
An extremely complex challenge for the Council is to manage affordability and sustainability in the context of the abovementioned challenges and our low ratepayer base.

The Council's response to the affordability challenge will focus on critical assets and activities. Council will use targeted rates for customers who benefit from paying for the service. The Financial Strategy will continue to reflect the need to balance ratepayer affordability against community needs and aspirations.

1.6. Key Infrastructure Issues

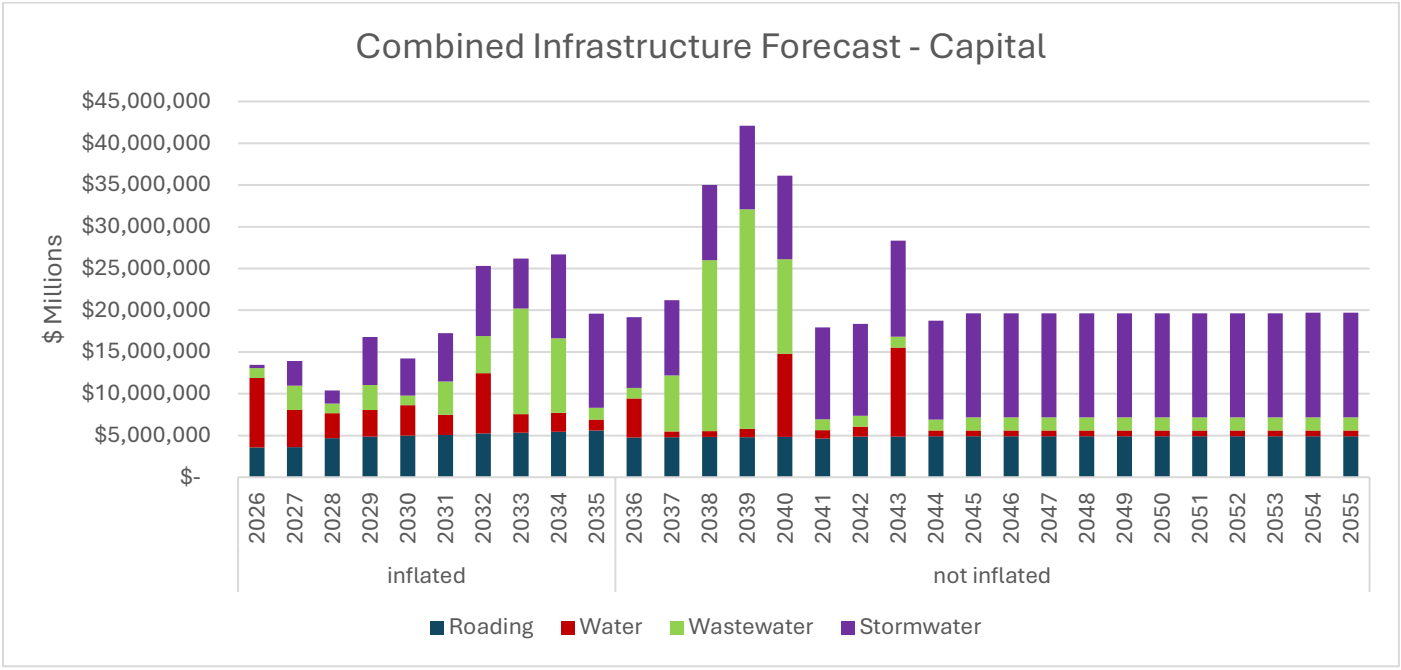
Taking a long-term view to the management of infrastructure assets and core services, the Council needs to make key strategic decisions in a timely manner. In addressing Community desires and priorities, the following key decisions have been identified.

Figure 1.3: Significant Infrastructure Decisions



The projected capital expenditure associated with the significant infrastructure assets are graphically represented below:

Figure 1.4: Combined Infrastructure Forecast



2. Introductions

This is Council's Infrastructure Strategy. The Infrastructure Strategy sets the 30-year direction for its infrastructure assets by identifying the significant infrastructure issues and the main options for managing those issues.

The financial forecasts in the Infrastructure Strategy are estimates, and the reliability of the forecasting decreases beyond ten years, and towards the 30-year planning horizon.

2.1. Strategy Layout

The Strategy document sections and corresponding LGA Act sections are tabled below:

Table 2.1: Strategy Layout

Strategy Section		LGA 2002 (Section 101B)
1	Executive Summary	
2	Identifies the purpose of the Infrastructure Strategy and the core infrastructure included in this Strategy	2(a) and 6
3	Describe the district/city and illustrate the linkage between strategic documents	2(a)
4	Describe the core infrastructure, its condition and performance while recording the significant assumptions, risks and mitigation	2, 3(e), 4 (c) & (d)
5	Discuss the emerging issues that will impact on the core infrastructure assets	3 (b) to 3(e)
6	Discuss Council's response to the emerging issues and the significant decisions to be made during the term of this Strategy	2(b), 4(b)
7	Identifies the response options for the significant issues and documents the benefits, cost, when and funding source	2(b); 3(a) to (e) & 4(a) to (c)
8	Identifies the costs associated with the actions proposed	4(a)

2.2. Purpose

The purpose of the Infrastructure Strategy (the Strategy), as required by the Local Government Act 2002, is to identify the significant infrastructure issues for the Council over the next thirty years, the principal options for managing these issues and the implications of the options. In this regard, it is intended to bring infrastructure management issues and their consequences, to the attention of the Council and its communities. Its 30-year focus assists in making explicit the longer-term options faced by the district and the consequences of investment and service level decisions.

The Strategy should be read alongside the Council's Financial Strategy, which provides context and guidelines against which to consider the Council's proposed expenditure. Funding sources are not the strategy's focus as the detail about how the Council intends to fund its activities can be found in the Revenue and Financing Policy.

2.3. Gore District Core Infrastructure Assets

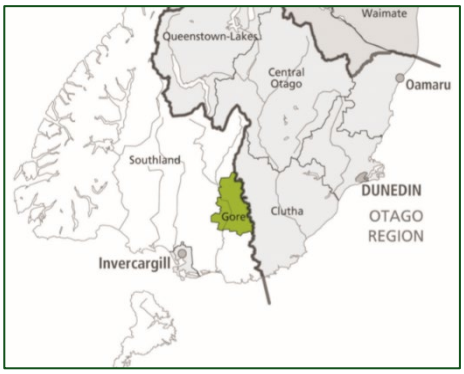
The Council Infrastructure Assets are tabled with 2022 replacement values below. The current valuations for the 2025 year are in progress and will be incorporated into the final LTP document and Infrastructure Strategy.

Table 2.2: Gore District key Assets

Asset	Description	Replacement Value	% of total
Roads and footpaths	Roads (arterial, collectors, local; curbs and gutters), bridges, footpaths	$456.9m	68%
Water	Water abstraction, treatment and distribution	$61.12m	9%
Wastewater	Wastewater collection, treatment and discharge	$114.89m	17%
Stormwater	Stormwater collection and discharge	$42.58m	6%
TOTAL		$675.49m	100%

3. Gore District

The Gore District is located within the Southland region and covers 1,251 km^2. Our neighbouring councils are Southland District and Clutha District. The main township of Gore is 50 minutes from Invercargill and 1.5 hours from Queenstown.



The Mataura River runs through the district with Gore and Mataura's townships situated on its banks. The river is a focus for the district and provides many recreational opportunities. The district has a strong agricultural-led economy with complementary industries established.

Our population in 2024 was estimated to be 13,200. We have 4,099 rating units in Gore, 884 rating units in Mataura and 1777 rural rating units. The urban rating units consist of 4,515 residential, 468 commercial and 15 industrial properties. Gore is the largest urban area with a population of 8,290. Mataura has a population of 1,770. Core activities are considered to be the delivery of roads, water, wastewater, and stormwater services.

3.1. Strategic Context

This Strategy aims to give effect to the Council's strategic direction.

Gore District Council Vision

Ensuring a sustainable future by growing the Gore District's economy through innovation, good planning and responsible financial management.

Gore District Council Community Outcomes

Achieving our mission will mean the following outcomes are achieved:

- Outcome One - Our communities have access to a range of quality facilities and services
- Outcome Two - Our District is supported by an innovative and diversified economy with local opportunities

- Outcome Three - Our urban and rural environments are people friendly, well planned and sustainable managed
- Outcome Four - Our communities have opportunities to celebrate and explore their heritage, identity and creativity.

The Infrastructure Strategy will help in part in delivering this by focusing on:

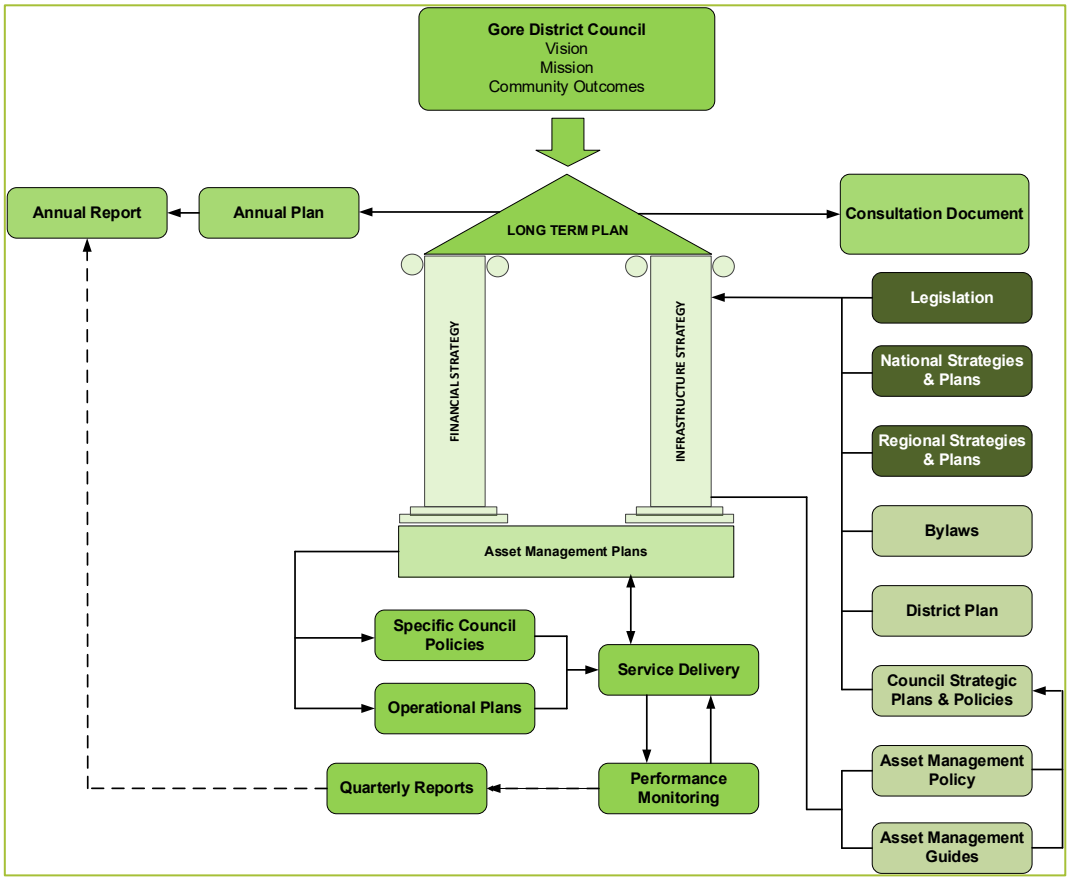
- Asset data - continuous validation, improvement of asset conditions and GIS layer update
- Meeting regulatory requirements
- Adapting to changing communities and finding alternative solutions
- Developing a better understanding of the reliability of prediction models for asset lives.
- Looking at establishing a joint three waters entity

This will put the Council in a better position to plan for the next LTP period by having more confidence in long term renewal investment decisions.

Linkage With Other Documents

The Infrastructure Strategy and Financial Strategy underpin the Long-term Plan. Planning for the activities included in the Infrastructure Strategy is covered within the relevant Activity Management Plans and is informed by other strategies, policies, plans and legislation, as shown in Figure 3.1 below.

Figure 3.1: Infrastructure Strategy- Linkages with other Documents



The Infrastructure Strategy and Financial Strategy form the pillars that support the Long-term Plan and Consultation document.

A number of other strategic and operational plans relate to and support the delivery of our infrastructure and are linked with this Strategy.

The Significance and Engagement Policy identifies the degree of significance attached to particular issues, proposals, assets, decisions and activities.

The Significance and Engagement Policy provides the criteria to determine significance and the approach to appropriate engagement. The Council considers the following assets, or a network of assets, to be strategic assets:

- Roading
- Water Supply
- Wastewater
- Stormwater

Financial Strategy

The Council has also developed a Financial Strategy which sets the financial parameters within which the Council needs to operate (such as debt levels, rates increases). The Infrastructure and Financial Strategies need to be aligned to ensure both are deliverable. Depending on the financial goals of the Council, the Infrastructure Strategy may need to consider options to balance the service delivery needs and programme of works against what is achievable financially.

In the interim, this Strategy is contingent on the Council being able to borrow more from the LGFA to achieve its capital programme in the medium to long term. As outlined in the Councils Financial Strategy, the Council has obtained a credit rating, which will allow the Council to borrow up to 280% of revenue. Whilst the Council could borrow up to 280% of revenue, it has set itself a self-imposed limit not to borrow more than 250% of revenue.

The assumption that has been applied throughout the financial forecasts is that the credit rating will be obtained by 30 June 2025, and the Council will have access to that funding.

The nine-year programme of work outlined in the Infrastructure Strategy is currently aligned with the Council's Financial Strategy.

Asset Management Policy

The objectives of the Council's Asset Management Policy are to:

- support continuous improvement in the asset management system to ensure service delivery is optimised to deliver agreed community outcomes and levels of service for residents, visitors and the environment;
- optimise expenditure over the life cycle of the assets;
- ensure risks are managed appropriately;
- provide confidence to the community and stakeholders of value for money; and
- integrate asset management into Council's strategic, tactical and operational planning frameworks, including corporate, financial, and business planning

The following principles guide activity management planning and decision making:

- Provision of a safe and healthy work environment.
- Effective consultation to determine appropriate levels of service
- Informed decision making using a lifecycle and risk management and inter-generational approach
- Transparent and accountable asset management decision making
- Professional development to improve asset management capability.
- Efficient and effective service delivery models

3.2. Gore District Council

Past

The Gore District Council was established in 1989 following the amalgamation of the Gore and Mataura Borough Councils and parts of Southland County Council.

Present

Our district consists of two prominent urban areas – Gore and Mataura. Gore is a well-established town, and the primary focus of businesses and industries is to service the robust agricultural sector in the surrounding rural areas. The district is known for the events that take place here such as the Hokonui Fashion Design Awards, Southern Field Days and Hokonui Moonshiners Festival. We have many recreational attractions that appeal to national and overseas visitors. The district is a very safe place to live and is very family friendly.

We are committed to prudently investing to create a vibrant and satisfying lifestyle, a place where people want to live, and where businesses want to establish. We are focused on providing our core services to our communities. We are financially responsible and consider affordability for our residents. We strive to improve our services for everyone in our district continuously. We are positive about facilitating appropriate growth in our district.

Affordability and balance will continue to be our theme for our services. Overall, economic and social changes are not expected to drive any significant changes in demand for services; however, rates are likely to be a key area of concern for our community over the next 30 years.

The district is divided into five electoral wards represented by a mayor, eleven ward councillors and one community board.

Future

We have aspirations and goals as a Council to continue to develop our communities and district to become an even better place to live and work by providing efficient, quality services and facilities that meet the affordable needs and aspirations of our community.

We want to continue to encourage more tourism ventures and attract more visitors. We have an ageing population who wish to remain active in society during their retirement, but they will expect different levels of service in the future. We want to continue to maintain facilities and recreational amenities that are exceptional for our district's size whilst meeting expected levels of service.

We wish to maximise our opportunities and encourage more industry and businesses to establish or grow within our district. This will create employment opportunities and attract new residents. To reach our goal, we need to ensure our core infrastructure is working effectively and efficiently whilst providing an affordable service that meets our residents' expectations. We want to combine best practice infrastructure management with enhancing our district's liveability.

4. Core Infrastructure

The core infrastructure is made up of:

- Roading
- Water
- Wastewater
- Stormwater.

4.1. Asset Description

The following is a brief summary of the Council's infrastructure assets for each group considered in the Strategy.

Roading

The roading network consists of 896km of roads, 130 bridges, 100km of footpaths, 1,601 streetlights, 124km of surface drainage and 3,835 culverts, mud-tanks and soak pits. There are also five State Highways in the district (SH-1, -90, -93, -94 and -96). The One Network Road Classification (ONRC) is a classification system that divides New Zealand's roads into six categories based on how busy they are and whether they connect to important destinations. Under ONRC our roads are classified as 24km primary collector, 167km secondary collector, 301km access and 405km low volume roads.

Our roads underpin Gore's ability to do business with the world. The agricultural, forestry, and manufacturing sectors, particularly primary production manufacturing (meat, milk powder, sawmill & panel products) are the top employers in the district and our roads provide connectivity between productive farmland, processing facilities and our workforce.

The roading team deliver both assets (such as roads, signs, footpaths, bridges and lighting) and non-asset functions (such as road safety promotion). Overall management of the facilities is provided by the Council, with operational work carried out by contractors. Funding for the management and maintenance of the roading and footpaths network is provided from rates, loans and user charges, together with the central government's financial assistance through NZTA. The Council also utilises professional engineering services to help develop and deliver its renewal and capital programmes.

It is anticipated that bridge maintenance/renewal and pavement rehabilitation needs will substantially increase over the next 10-20 years, as our bridges and pavements age and approach the end of their useful lives.

Water

The Council owns and operates the following water supply assets including:

- 4 water sources including 2 bore fields and 2 stream intakes
- 3 water treatment plants, 4 pump stations, 5 reservoirs
- Approximately 171 kilometres of water supply pipelines (126 km of mains and 45 km of laterals).

Over the past 10 – 15 years the Council has made steady progress in implementation of key infrastructure upgrades, renewals, and operations and maintenance of the water activity to ensure that safe drinking water is supplied to the community, meeting the regulatory environment.

The Council Water Supply Asset Management Plan (AMP) outlines the additional resources, processes and policies to ensure a long-term approach to the management of the service.

The Council faces several challenges in the delivery of the water service such as meeting the rapidly changing regulatory, legislative environment, in addition to increasing community expectations regarding safe drinking water. The potential environmental impact, ageing infrastructure asset-base, as well as being able to provide sufficient capacity for the community and industry add to these challenges.

The Council is focussed on delivering sustainable, cost-effective solutions that will support the community for the long term.

Furthermore, central governments Local Water Done Well (LWDW) project seeks to enable councils to create joint entities to deliver water services to communities. This process is currently ongoing as we work through this Long-term Plan and will have ongoing impacts on the delivery of services to Gore District communities. This creates significant uncertainty in terms of long-term planning for our three waters services. Although we are considering all the options under LWDW, we have developed this Infrastructure Strategy on the

assumption that the delivery of three waters services stay with the Council as no decisions on the future of water services delivery have been made at this time.

Wastewater

The Council owns and operates 126 kilometres of reticulation, 970 manholes, 16 pump stations and 3 treatment plants. The reticulation varies from 100mm to 1,000mm in diameter.

The Council is undertaking a process of continuous asset management improvement to ensure robust decision making and the achievement of goals and objectives on behalf of the community.

Over the past 10 – 15 years, the Council has made steady progress to ensure it is providing a core level of asset management capability. The Wastewater AMP outlines the additional resources, processes and policies to ensure a long-term approach to the management of the service. This provides the Council with a clear roadmap to move forward to achieve an intermediate to advanced level of asset management capability. This assists with the streamlined delivery of council services in addition to prudent financial management for the ultimate benefit of the community and the district.

The Council faces a number of ongoing challenges in the delivery of the wastewater service, such as separation of stormwater and wastewater flows, meeting the rapidly changing regulatory and legislative environment in addition to increasing community expectations.

The Council is focused on delivering sustainable, cost-effective solutions that will support the community for the long term.

Stormwater

The Council owns and operates 67.3 kilometres of piped reticulation, 500 manholes, and 4 pump stations. The reticulation varies from 100mm to 1,500mm in diameter.

Over the past 10 – 15 years the Council has made steady progress to ensure it is providing a core level of asset management capability. The Stormwater AMP outlines the additional resources, processes and policies to ensure a long-term approach to the management of the service. This assists with the streamlined delivery of council services in addition to prudent financial management for the ultimate benefit of the community and the district.

The Council faces several on-going challenges in the delivery of the stormwater service such as separation of stormwater and wastewater flows, meeting the rapidly changing regulatory and legislative environment in addition to increasing community expectations.

The Council is focussed on delivering sustainable, cost-effective solutions that will support the community for the long term.

4.2. Assumptions and Risk

Asset Life Cycle Assumptions

Asset information was updated last on 28 September 2022 and a fair value review undertaken in September 2023.

Maintenance and operations allocation is based on maintaining current service levels.

No backlogs in maintenance or renewals are currently identified. However, it is expected that as the Council improves the asset data management system, backlogs will be identified. This assumption is based on the number of reactive renewals that are being completed on an ad-hoc basis.

Levels of Service (LoS) Assumptions

LoS are key business drivers and influence all asset management decisions. Council's Wastewater, Water Supply and Stormwater activities contribute to all the Councils community outcomes.

Water Supply LoS

- Provide a quality, continuous, safe, uninterrupted, cost-effective and adequate urban water supply system accessible throughout the district's urban and commercial areas that comply with the Drinking Water Standards.
- Customers are provided with adequate safe drinking water with reasonable pressure and flow.
- Managing the effects of development upon the existing network and provide sustainable solutions for future generations and educating communities about water conservation and demand management.

Wastewater LoS

- To provide high quality, efficient and reliable wastewater systems that are affordable needs of the urban and commercial areas.
- Minimise any possible health hazards from the collection or management of wastewater
- Facilities provided are safe with no danger of accidental injury to users
- Protection of the environment by mitigating the quantity of contaminants discharged into receiving waters.

Stormwater LoS

- Provide a quality continuous, safe, uninterrupted, cost-effective and adequate urban stormwater systems accessible throughout the district's urban and commercial areas.
- Protection of public health and property by the collecting, conveying, appropriate treatment and disposal of stormwater run-off.
- Protection of the environment by mitigating the quantity of contaminants discharged into waterways.

We have a comprehensive approach to risk management across all of our activities. Independent assessments have been completed for our core infrastructure activities. The establishment of a risk framework has developed a risk-aware culture across our organisation. The framework applies a logical and systematic way of determining risks, their likely consequences and the most effective way of managing and monitoring risks to minimise potential losses and ensure optimal operation of services.

We are also continuing an organisational review on risk management to ensure our risk exposure is appropriately managed. We also have a designated Council subcommittee that considers risk associated with our activities.

Roading LoS

Much of the transportation programme planned over the next 30 years is greatly reliant on NZTA funding investment. If the level of investment changes significantly, this could substantially impact the programme the Council delivers and could affect the level of service provided.

The recent GPS and NLTP programme released by the Government in 2024 continues to create funding uncertainties for the roading activity. The Council has continued to focus on a back-to-basics approach to its roading programme but changes to funding in work categories through the GPS and NLTP are creating funding shortfalls in some key areas, particularly in bridge and footpath renewals. This has the potential to impact on these levels of service over time.

As part of this LTP, the Council has not factored in a LOS change across the transport activity. However, this will need to be assessed as part of the next LTP and based on discussions with NZTA, a decrease in LOS may be required in some areas of the transport programme.

Table 4.1: Significant Assumptions

Assumption	Risk	Level of uncertainty (Year 1-10)	Level of uncertainty (Year 11-30)	Potential impact consequence if assumption is wrong	Mitigation measures
Financial data, as provided in the 2022 asset valuation, using BERL inflationary index, has been used for planning purposes. (note: 2025 valuations are being developed and will be incorporated into final strategy)	BERL inflationary rates do not reflect actual market values	Medium	Medium	Financial forecasts for operational and capital programmes do not reflect actual market values.	
Outside of capital projects identified in the previous Strategy to replace/ improve assets, levels of service within the planning period shall remain the same.	Demand for services may change due to changes in zoning, and new industrial activities.	Medium	Medium	Unplanned increase or decrease in levels of service expectations. Non-forecast capital or operational expenditure	Review of Levels of Service triennially. Annual customer satisfaction survey to audit asset performance from residents' point of view. Quarterly levels of service performance reporting to the Council.
Growth predictions are based upon Statistics New Zealand data and historical data collated by the Council, e.g. consents data. The forecasts show the district will experience small growth. The district will experience slight growth, which will have minimal impact on the rating income. Initiatives from the Southland Regional Development Strategy and Industrial development like the Mataura Valley Milk plant will continue to attract people to the district. The average age of the population is older. The arrival of new migrants may create a more diverse society than at present, with more vibrancy, choice, and skill sets.	That population growth is higher or lower than projected, putting pressure on the Council to provide appropriate infrastructure and services. Major industry closes or does not perform well. Local young people keep leaving the district, and immigration does not continue at the same rate, resulting in a hole in the population.	Medium	Medium	Small population increase should be accommodated within existing system capacities. Where additional infrastructure is required, this will be a combination of development contributions and loan funded. Small decreases in the population may not necessarily result in a lower number of ratepayers as, on average, the number of people per house is decreasing. A consistent decline in population would adversely affect the ability of the Council to set rates at a level that was affordable to the community	Use of best information available for population forecasting. Financial Strategy considers affordability across the long term.
There will be no major legislative changes or change in government policy that will significantly impact the Council.	Legislative change is usually signalled over a reasonable time period. The risk is usually associated with uncertainty about implementation.	High	High	Unrealised impacts of legislation may create greater than expected impacts on operating budgets, staff workloads, increased time and resource availability. These may lead to additional or less costly for the resident or ratepayer.	The Council will regularly review existing and potential legislative change. The Council may jointly or independently submit on legislation where appropriate to encourage reduced or improved impacts. The Council will seek to achieve the most efficient and cost-effective way forward.
There will be no significant earthquakes, flooding, or other hazards outside of expected risk assessments.	The Council may not be adequately prepared or resourced to respond to a major natural disaster event or succession of events.	High	High	A significant natural event would demand immediate funding including significant unforeseen costs and resources to manage recovery and response rapidly.	The Council is part of Civil Defence planning preparing for natural hazard events. Any major natural disaster that results in significant repair costs to the Council is likely to be funded largely by insurance and/or government assistance. Additional borrowing required may also impact future rating levels.

Assumption	Risk	Level of uncertainty (Year 1-10)	Level of uncertainty (Year 11-30)	Potential impact consequence if assumption is wrong	Mitigation measures
The Council may be required to undertake significant capital works for 3 Waters and maintain asset ownership throughout the life of the Long-term Plan.	Conditions of consents are altered significantly requiring the Council to undertake significant capital works to 3 Waters infrastructure to meet compliance requirements.	High	High	Where requirements change or work is required for consent conditions, the Council would have to provide rate funding/loans to meet the capital project requirements or request a change of consent conditions.	The Council will monitor the development of relevant standards and review the impact on any significant changes. The Council works closely with Environment Southland and other agencies to understand and stay abreast of changing standards. The Council will use these standards when planning projects and undertaking monitoring. Compliance monitoring ensures that work is in accordance with new consent conditions.
New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA) requirements and specifications for the performance of subsidised work will not alter to the extent that they impact adversely on operating costs. The NZTA subsidy the Council has used in the LTP is: Years 1 - 3 61% Years 4 - 10 55% The Council will remain as a member of the Local Government Funding Agency for external borrowing. As outlined in the Councils Financial Strategy, the Council has obtained a credit rating, which will allow the Council to borrow up to 280% of revenue. Whilst the Council could borrow up to 280% of revenue, it has set itself a self-imposed limit not to borrow more than 250% of revenue. The assumption that has been applied throughout the financial forecasts is that the credit rating will be obtained by 30 June 2025, and the Council will have access to that funding.	Changes in subsidy rates and variations in criteria for inclusion in the subsidised works programme.	High	High	NZTA funding priorities may change as a result of the Land Transport Management Act 2003. Funding constraints on the NZTA may result in a revision and smaller programme of work.	The Council will review the budget annually through the LTP/Annual Plan process and may adjust work programmes/budgets where necessary.
Reform to the Three Waters System of funding and delivery pose a significant organisational change for the Council, staff, and the public. However, we are uncertain of what form these changes may take. Therefore, the budgets remain with Council for this Long-term Plan.	Three Waters Reform legislation results in the Council no longer delivering three waters services.	High	High	If the Councils commit to a joint entity under the 'Local Water Done Well' framework, the three waters activity has to be removed from the LTP and Council operations in the future.	

5. Thirty Year Strategy

This 30-year Infrastructure Strategy is part of the Council's continued shift from the traditional siloed approach of infrastructure provision to a collaborative strategic approach based on a well-informed understanding of stakeholder requirements obtained through appropriate engagement and supported by data-based analysis of asset condition and performance data to provide appropriate and effective assets to the community in the most efficient means practicable.

5.1. The Organisation's Priorities

The main theme of this Infrastructure Strategy is to demonstrate the Council as a responsible manager of key infrastructure.

To meet this objective, we need to provide the infrastructure that is affordable yet also performs appropriately. We want to continue to ensure our District is 'A Great Place to Live' by enhancing the liveability of our urban and rural areas.

At a high level, the Council's priorities are:

- At a minimum, maintaining existing levels of service
- Compliance with legislative requirements
- Replacing ageing infrastructure as appropriate
- Plan for and being able to respond to natural events and climate change
- Providing long term affordable services.

5.2. Asset and Service Management Strategy

In providing services to residents and visitors through the use of infrastructural assets, the Council has an Asset Management Policy (the policy). The current policy stated purpose is:

The policy outlines the principles, requirements, and responsibilities for undertaking asset management across the Council. Infrastructure assets underpin our standard of living and so the policy supports the Council's long term strategic goals, namely:

- Ensure that the Gore District remains a great place to live;
- Promote economic development;
- Protect our water resources and use them wisely;
- Maintain the quality infrastructure that we have; and

This policy links to the Council's Long-term Plan, Infrastructure and Financial Strategy and Asset Management Plans. It builds on the Council's strategic goals by promoting an integrated approach to managing service delivery and across all asset classes. It also promotes a sustainable development approach to reflect the changes to the purpose of the Local Government Act 2002.

5.3. Sustainable Service Delivery

Sustainability can be defined as meeting the needs of the current generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

The LGA 2002 requires Local Authorities to take a sustainable development approach while conducting its business.

Section 10 of the LGA 2002 states the purpose of local government is:

a. to enable democratic local decision-making and action by, and on behalf of, communities; and
b. to promote the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of communities in the present and for the future.

How will the Council respond to Affordability and Sustainability?

The Council would like to provide all services to a level of excellence. However, this is not a sustainable or affordable practice, and all services are managed, operated and maintained to an optimum level appropriate for that specific service. The Council endeavours to always act in the best interest of the community. As a result, affordability and sustainability are at the forefront of any plan, design, and operational tasks that the Council undertakes in relation to the assets and service provision.

The relationship between costs, levels of service and levels of satisfaction is close and will require careful balancing. In some cases, an effort may need to be put into lowering expectations rather than raising service levels. In any event, the Council will continue to pay close attention to managing any debt that it may take on in the next decade and the level of rates and fees and charges and the relationship of all of this to the cost of living.

The Council's response to the affordability challenge will focus on critical assets and activities. The Council will use targeted rates in order for customers who benefit pay for the service. The Southland Regional Development Strategy Action Plan includes a range of projects to give the region a broader and more resilient base by targeting population growth, economic diversity, and strengthening employment, skills and incomes. This forms part of the Council's response and aims to grow the rating base.

Furthermore, the Council will consider alternative revenue streams and increase existing revenue streams where possible. While keeping rates as affordable and sustainable as possible through prudent financial management that complements asset management. The Financial Strategy will continue to reflect the balancing of ratepayer affordability against community needs and aspirations.

The Council's approach to all challenges and emerging trends focus on affordability and sustainability. Managing affordability and sustainability is extremely complex in the context of:

- the intense infrastructure challenges the Council is facing
- our modest ratepayer base.

6. Managing Challenges and Emerging Trends

The task of building, operating and maintaining these infrastructure assets in an affordable and sustainable manner is becoming increasingly difficult in view of:

- Continually changing legislative environment
- Demographic changes
- Climate change
- Ageing infrastructure
- Infrastructure resilience
- Customer expectations
- New technologies.

6.1. Changing Legislative Environment

Any significant unannounced change in the regulatory or legislative environment poses a risk to the Council. The ever-changing legislative environment is discussed below:

Transport

The GPS on Land Transport sets the strategic direction, funding priorities, and investment framework for New Zealand's land transport system over a 10-year period. It is issued by the Government and guides investment from the National Land Transport Fund (NLTF), managed by Waka Kotahi (NZ Transport Agency).

Key elements of the GPS include:

- **Strategic Priorities**
  Outlines the Government's transport objectives, such as safety, resilience, economic productivity, environmental sustainability, and access.
- **Funding Allocation**
  Specifies how funding is distributed across activity classes like state highways, local roads, public transport, cycling and walking, and road safety.
- **Expectations for Waka Kotahi**
  Provides guidance for how Waka Kotahi develops the National Land Transport Programme (NLTP).

The three-yearly review cycle of the Government Policy Statement (GPS) on Land Transport and the resulting National Land Transport Programme (NLTP) creates several challenges for councils when planning for long-term (nine year) and strategic (30-year) transport infrastructure and services. Key challenges can include:

- Uncertainty in Funding Allocation
- Shifting Government Priorities
- Challenges for Major Infrastructure Projects
- Risk of Misalignment Between Local and National Plans
- Impacts on Co-Funding and Partnership Arrangements

While the three-yearly GPS cycle ensures flexibility, it creates significant uncertainty for councils, making long-term transport planning, budgeting, and project delivery more challenging. A more stable, long-term funding and policy framework could help councils plan more effectively over 10- and 30-year horizons.

Water

The New Zealand Government's Local Water Done Well (LWDW) programme proposes significant changes to the way water services are delivered and could particularly impact small rural councils.

Under the programme, councils will have autonomy in deciding how to manage their water services, whether by maintaining in-house operations, forming single or joint council-controlled organisations (CCOs), or partnering with consumer trusts. This flexibility allows councils to tailor their approach based on local needs, but it also introduces challenges in ensuring financial sustainability and regulatory compliance.

A key aspect of the programme is financial sustainability. Councils may have access to increased borrowing capacity, with water CCOs able to borrow more against their operating revenue, provided they meet prudent financial criteria. Additionally, revenue from water rates must be ring-fenced to ensure it is used solely for water infrastructure and service improvements. While these measures aim to provide long-term investment certainty, smaller councils may still struggle with financial viability, particularly if they lack a strong revenue base to support borrowing.

Regulatory oversight will also play a crucial role in the new framework. The Commerce Commission will oversee water service providers to ensure transparency and efficiency, while Taumata Arowai will continue enforcing drinking water standards. Compliance with these regulations may place additional pressure on small councils, as they will need to invest in infrastructure and management systems to meet higher service expectations. The government has indicated some flexibility in regulatory requirements for smaller suppliers, but the overall burden of compliance remains a challenge. It is also proposed that water users will be levied to fund these national regulatory entities.

Councils must submit their Water Services Delivery Plans (WSDPs) by September 2025, outlining how they will achieve sustainable and compliant water services. The Local Government Water Services Bill has established legislative settings, including financial sustainability requirements and regulatory frameworks. These timelines mean councils must act quickly to assess their options, form partnerships where needed and secure the necessary funding for future water service improvements.

For small rural councils, the LWDW programme presents both opportunities and challenges. While increased financial tools and flexible service models offer potential benefits, resource constraints and compliance costs may make implementation difficult. Collaboration with neighbouring councils through joint CCOs could provide a viable solution, enabling shared expertise and economies of scale. Ultimately, each council will need to carefully evaluate its capacity and develop a strategic approach to ensure it can meet the new requirements effectively.

Climate change

The Climate Change Response (Zero Carbon) Amendment Act 2019 significantly influences infrastructure planning for Councils by requiring long-term climate resilience and emissions reduction strategies. With infrastructure assets often having lifespans of 50 to 100 years, Councils must integrate climate risk assessments into their planning to ensure resilience against extreme weather, rising sea levels, and other climate-related threats. This means embedding future climate conditions into decision-making processes to protect critical assets.

The Act's net-zero emissions target by 2050 requires Councils to prioritize low-carbon infrastructure solutions. This includes investing in public transport, active transport networks like cycling and walking paths, and electrification of Council vehicle fleets. Infrastructure projects must align with the Government's Emissions Reduction Plan, ensuring funding and approvals favour sustainable developments that reduce carbon footprints.

Financial planning is also impacted, with climate-related risks needing to be accounted for in Long-Term Plans (LTPs) and Infrastructure Strategies. Increasing insurance costs and asset depreciation due to climate risks mean Councils must carefully manage their budgets. Additionally, access to Government funding through initiatives like the Climate Emergency Response Fund may incentivize projects that support emissions reduction and resilience.

Legal and policy requirements are evolving, with the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) directing Councils to assess and manage climate risks in asset planning. Future reforms to the Resource Management Act (RMA) will further embed climate considerations into infrastructure consenting, ensuring sustainable development becomes a core requirement.

Community engagement is also crucial, as Councils must involve the public in decision-making, particularly for infrastructure in high-risk areas such as coastal roads and water supply systems. Public expectations for sustainable infrastructure solutions, including low-carbon construction materials and nature-based approaches, are increasing. Ultimately, the Act pushes Councils to integrate climate resilience and emissions reduction into all aspects of infrastructure planning, ensuring long-term sustainability and adaptability to climate change.

Our response to Changing Legislative Environment

The evolving legislative landscape continues to drive the need for infrastructure upgrades, particularly in water supply, wastewater, and stormwater management. Key government directives impacting the Council include:

- Local Water Done Well reform
- Water Services Regulator (Taumata Arowai) and Economic Regulator (Commerce Commission)
- GPS for Land Transport and NLTP

These regulations impose higher standards for infrastructure management, operation, maintenance, monitoring, and reporting. Additionally, increasing community expectations are placing further pressure on Council to enhance service levels across all infrastructure assets. While governments may change over time, the focus on maintaining service levels and environmental outcomes is expected to remain a priority.

Council's Approach

To ensure compliance and long-term sustainability, the Council will:

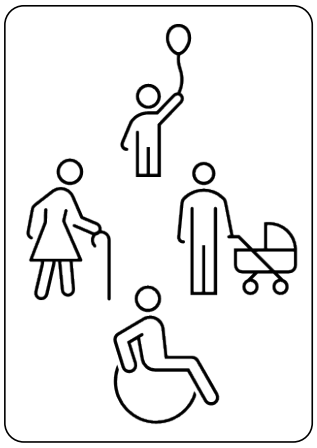
- Monitor legislative changes – Maintain a proactive approach to understanding and responding to new government requirements.
- Plan for future needs – Anticipate regulatory shifts and integrate them into infrastructure planning and investment strategies.
- Engage with regional partners – Work closely with Environment Southland to align with Regional Plan updates.
- Collaborate on economic and environmental initiatives – Participate in the Southland Economic Project and the Territorial Authority Working Party to support evidence-based decision-making for water quality and resource limits.

By staying agile and forward-thinking, the Council aims to meet evolving regulatory requirements while ensuring high-quality service delivery for the community.

6.2. Demographic Change

Population

The district's population is expected to experience only minor growth over the next 30 years. Gore continues to remain largely dependent on residents staying in the district rather than attracting significant numbers from outside. However, the percentage of residents born overseas continues to increase, reflecting increasing national diversity and indicating that Gore remains attractive to immigrants.



Population growth is not the main concern relating to the infrastructure of the Gore District. It is more likely that aging infrastructure and the need to upgrade to fit for purpose infrastructure will be more significant drivers for development.

Household Occupancy and Aging Population

Gore's household occupancy rate remains lower than the national average. With an aging population, there is an increasing demand for smaller housing options such as units. This trend may also result in more single-person households, influencing water demand on wastewater discharge, and stormwater runoff.

The aging population is expected to remain active for longer, with many seeking recreational and active travel opportunities. This demographic place a high value on safe, well-maintained footpaths and road infrastructure, reinforcing the need for continued investment in pedestrian-friendly assets. Funding in this area is limited under the new government direction and funding.

Economic Growth

The district's economy remains reliant on primary industries such as agriculture and forestry, with secondary industries, including manufacturing, also contributing significantly to GDP. While these sectors are subject to cyclical fluctuations, they continue to be the backbone of employment and economic stability.

The Council remains focused on enabling opportunities to add to the local employment base, and support for industries that provide both direct jobs and associated service industries. Ensuring affordability remains a key focus in financial planning, given the economic dependency on these core sectors.

Employment and Infrastructure Impacts

Employment remains closely tied to local industry, meaning economic shifts - such as changes in agriculture or manufacturing - could impact both population levels and infrastructure needs. Current employment levels remain stable, with low unemployment.

Future changes in industry and workforce distribution may place new demands on water supply infrastructure and other core services, requiring careful long-term planning to accommodate shifts in demand patterns.

Our response to Demographic Changes

The Council will continue to:

- Commission detailed population and household forecasts
- Maintain existing infrastructure and add on to existing systems where required
- Investigate options to grow our communities
- Review Levels of Service
- Consult with communities.

6.3. Climate Change

Climate change is an important consideration in the Council's long-term planning. Guidance from the New Zealand government, based on the best available climate science is used to support the planning.

The 2018 Southland Climate Change Impact Assessment report commissioned from NIWA by the four Southland Councils.

- Temperatures are likely to be 0.5˚C to 1.0˚C warmer by 2040 and 0.7˚C to 3.0˚C warmer by 2090.
- Southland is expected to become wetter. Projections show annual rainfall increasing by 5 to 20 per cent in the Southland region by 2090.
- The number of heavy rain days (i.e., days where the total precipitation exceeds 50mm) is projected to increase throughout the Southland region. Changes in sea level-rise are expected to be between 0.2-0.3 m by 2040 and increasing to 0.4-0.9 m by 2090. Putting aside storm events, those changes will result in an increasing percentage of normal high tides exceeding given present-day design for coastal infrastructure.

For Southland/Gore this means:

Flooding – Climate change is expected to increase the risk of flooding, landslides and erosion in Southland. The capacity of stormwater systems may be exceeded more frequently due to heavy rainfall events which could lead to surface flooding, damage to infrastructure and road closures.

Water availability – Water security is most likely to be an issue in parts of Southland where drought is already a major constraint. Droughts are likely to increase in both intensity and duration over time.

Coastal hazards – There is likely to be increased risk to coastal roads and infrastructure from coastal erosion and inundation, increasing storm events and sea-level rise.

Biosecurity – Warmer temperatures, particularly with milder winters, could increase the spread of pests and weeds.

Agriculture – Warmer temperatures, a longer growing season and significantly fewer frosts could provide opportunities to grow new crops. Farmers might benefit from faster growth of pasture and better growing conditions. However, these benefits may be limited by negative effects of climate change such as increased flood risk or greater frequency and intensity of storms.

The Council will factor these likely impacts into the planning for our infrastructure assets. It is expected that more information will be provided by Central Government to assist and guide local government in its decision making.

Our response to Climate Change

The impacts of climate change are real and present. Our long-term infrastructure planning must promote resilience to the effects of climate change to ensure we meet the future needs of communities.

The Council will:

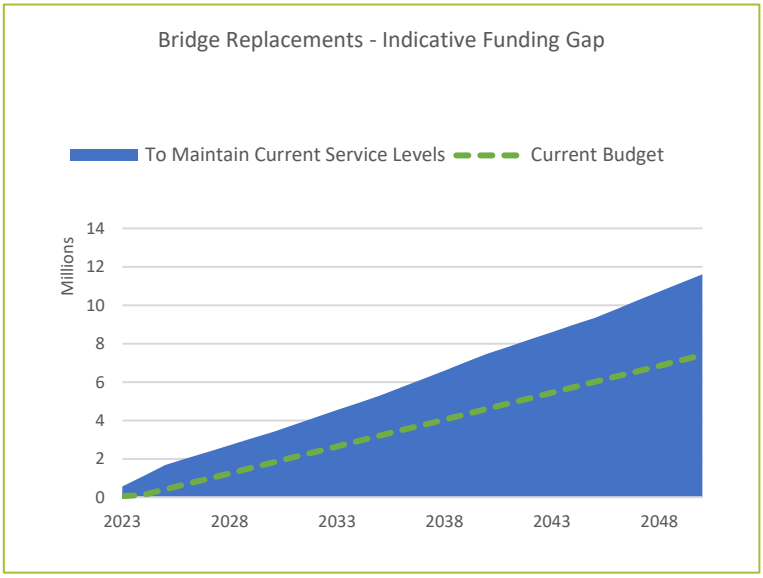
- Participate in the development of a regional climate model so as to base future decisions on a model commonly used across the province.
- Require engineers to be aware of changing weather patterns and to make every effort to acquire the latest available rainfall data when calculating hydraulic capacities for relevant infrastructure design.
- Work with other local authorities and Environment Southland to ensure a coordinated response.
- Work with Environment Southland on flood mitigation measures and emergency response.
- Develop a reserve fund to assist in responding to future climate change events.

6.4. Aging Infrastructure

The district's infrastructure is ageing, and the district is approaching an important period to ensure that its infrastructure assets continue to meet the current and future needs of the community.

Areas of the district have been built over decades, and today there are infrastructure (underground and aboveground) that is past its expected life. As infrastructure ages the reactive maintenance will increase. A key challenge for the district is the balance between reactive maintenance, programmed maintenance, and the inevitable rehabilitation or replacement of assets that have both physically and economically run past the point of repair.

We need our bridges to offer safe and reliable access into productive areas of our district. We would also like to enhance their weight capacity, where beneficial, to boost farm productivity with larger vehicles. However, of the 128 bridges we own, 48 (37%) have been identified as needing either replacement or major maintenance in the next 20 years. At least 8 posted bridges are due for replacement within the next 3 years.



Furthermore, a backlog of maintenance of approximately $450k has been verified in the latest bridge inspections, largely from the need to reallocate funds from this category into other areas, due to inflation.

This is considered further in section 7 – Significant Infrastructure Issues below.

Replacing all these bridges is unlikely to be affordable or economic. Council proposes to reinstate planned maintenance to maximise the life of existing bridges. It will also prioritise replacements and maintenance into accessways that optimise public value. This may mean possible divestment or closure of some bridges.

The majority of piped water assets were installed during the 1950s-80s. Assets that were built at the same time generally require renewal at the same time, causing peaks in renewals cost. As we are aware of the need for renewal planning to reduce the impact of a bow wave of pipe renewals, we have annual capital expenditure for replacing pipe that is reaching the end of its economic life. Renewal planning for piped assets is a work in progress.

Our renewal plans need to include consideration for capacity issues that may exist. Our Stormwater Management Plan has highlighted the need to include performance and capacity as part of our renewal planning. Our Water Treatment Plants in Gore and Matura have recently been upgraded and upgrades to our Wastewater Treatment Plants have been budgeted for in our 30-year forecasts.

Currently the condition of assets is ascertained when carrying out repairs or renewals. The Council plans to continue condition assessment of underground assets to aid the long-term planning of asset renewals. To date, the Council has undertaken areas of CCTV work on stormwater and wastewater pipes and samples of critical water mains is being undertaken to better understand the condition of these parts of our reticulated network. This all helps to provide better asset data for future decision making.

Our response to Aging Infrastructure

The Council will:

- Closely monitor maintenance costs to show trends in failing assets as a guide to optimum renewal times
- Identify critical assets, capture better data and maintenance information and use optimised decision-making processes for our capital programmes
- Assess condition and performance of assets
- Develop our asset management practices to better interpret information for planning purposes
- Improve and formalise condition monitoring
- Develop more reliable renewal programmes
- Drive our asset management interventions by data about the factors that determine the cost of service to our customers.

6.5. Infrastructure Resilience

Council customers have high expectations for the continued functionality and delivery of essential services. Ensuring resilience within our infrastructure strategy is critical to meeting these expectations, particularly in the face of increasing environmental, operational, and societal challenges. Resilience is not about preventing all failures but about acknowledging that failures will occur and designing systems that detect, absorb, and recover from disruptions effectively. It requires a proactive approach that balances preparedness, adaptability, and robust design to ensure continuity of service.

Resilience in infrastructure is not solely about physical assets - it is about people, communities, and the ability to adapt to changing conditions. Early detection and rapid recovery are essential, ensuring that failures are identified quickly, and solutions are implemented to restore service, even if the original system cannot be immediately re-established.

Simply duplicating assets does not equate to resilience; rather, a resilient system integrates flexibility and contingency planning to maintain essential service levels. Infrastructure resilience extends beyond natural hazard events to operational challenges where asset failures do not necessarily result in service failures.

The ability to adapt and continue functioning under different conditions is essential. Addressing vulnerabilities proactively, incorporating resilience into asset planning, and ensuring infrastructure investments align with long-term sustainability goals are key aspects of risk management and mitigation.

To strengthen resilience across our infrastructure network, the Council's strategy must integrate community engagement, robust built environments, disaster preparedness, and sustainable infrastructure planning. Strengthening neighbourhood connections enhances collective preparedness, while public education on household resilience, emergency planning, and self-sufficiency supports community-led initiatives.

Disaster preparedness and response capability require contingency plans for critical infrastructure failures, coordination of emergency response efforts across agencies and stakeholders, and investment in early warning systems and predictive analytics to enhance risk assessment. Sustainable and adaptive infrastructure planning must embed resilience thinking into long-term investments, prioritise nature-based solutions and sustainable construction practices, and evaluate asset lifecycle risks through resilience-focused maintenance strategies.

Our response to Infrastructure Resilience

Adverse events/natural disasters/climate change and the related impacts cannot be avoided and as a result the Council must factor this into long term planning, emergency management planning and determining the infrastructure requirements moving forward to ensure the community's expectations are met with regard to safe and reliable services and general wellbeing.

Both physical and system resilience are crucial. This means:

- Design and construction standards (where cost effective) that ensure infrastructure is able to withstand natural hazards and long-term changes in circumstances such as those resulting from climate change.
- Working with organisations and networks of organisations with the ability to identify hazards to share information, assess vulnerabilities, and plan for and respond to emergencies.
- Acknowledging the value of adaptability and redundancy in the network to improve business confidence.
- Identifying and managing cross-sector dependencies, such as power supply for communications infrastructure. Engineering Lifelines groups have already undertaken work in this area (NIP 2011).

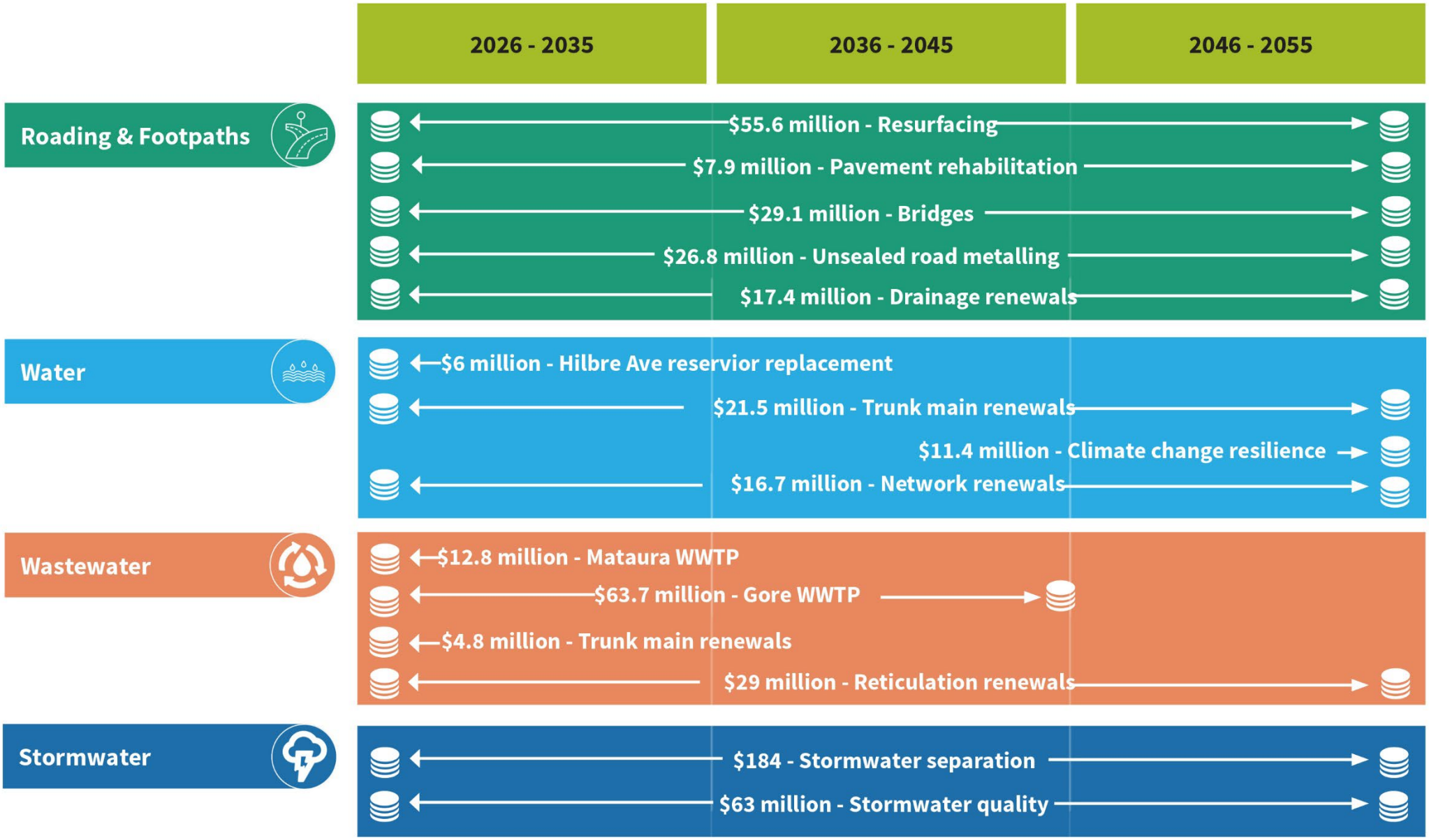
In order to improve resilience, the Council's approach will be to:

- Actively participate in CDEM planning and activities, at both regional and local levels
- Investigate options for alternative service provision and system redundancy
- Identify critical assets and ensure mitigation methods are developed
- Obtain insurance where this is deemed to be the most cost-effective approach
- Apply lessons learnt from Canterbury earthquakes and incorporate into planning, design and operation
- Complete organisation wide risk assessments & business continuity plans.

6.6. Significant Decisions Required

Taking a long-term view to the management of infrastructural assets, Gore District Council needs to make key decisions in a timely manner. In addressing community desires and priorities the following key decisions have been identified.

Figure 6.1: Significant Infrastructure Decisions



7. Significant Infrastructure Issues

The Local Government Act 2002 Section 101B – Infrastructure Strategy states:

(2) The purpose of the infrastructure strategy is to—

(a) identify significant infrastructure issues for the local authority over the period covered by the Strategy; and

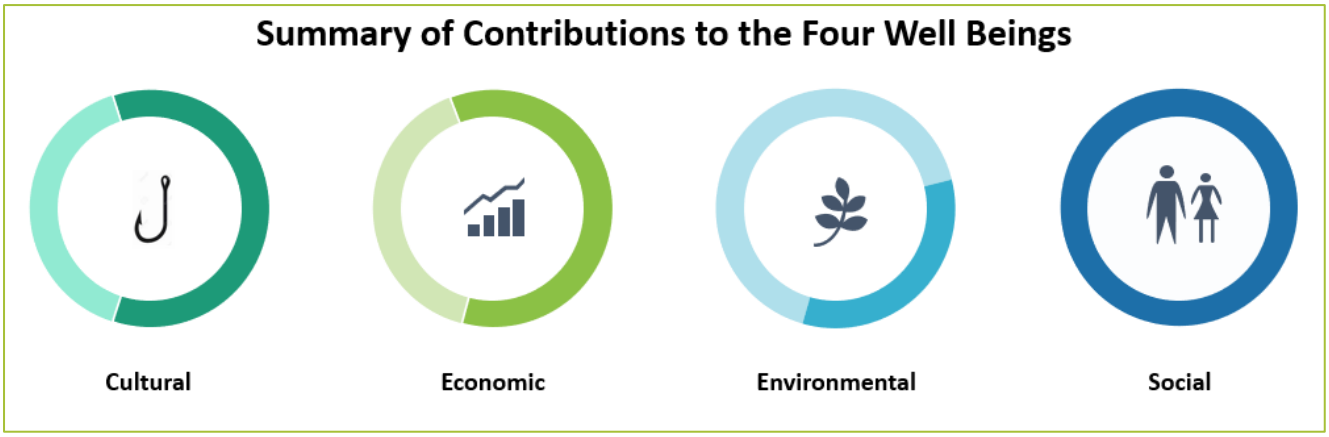
(b) identify the principal options for managing those issues and the implications of those options.

In developing this 30 Year Strategy, the Council identified the anticipated significant infrastructure issues over the 30 years and considered each significant action and its benefits. The significant infrastructure issues faced by Gore District Council with the benefits and costs are tabled below.

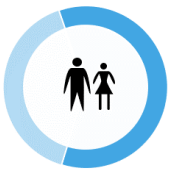
The Council acknowledges its broader role in looking after our communities than simply providing core services.

Each project identified in the Infrastructure Strategy includes an assessment of its contribution to the four well-beings. A summary of contributions to the Four Well-beings is graphically shown below:

Figure 7.1: Summary of Contributions to the Four Well Beings



The outer circle indicates the level of contribution as Low, Moderate and High as shown below.

Low	
Moderate	
High	

Roading

The Council's goal for the roading activity is:

- A transport system that is safe
- A transport system that delivers appropriate levels of service
- A transport system that supports economic activity and productivity
- A transport system that provides appropriate transport choices.

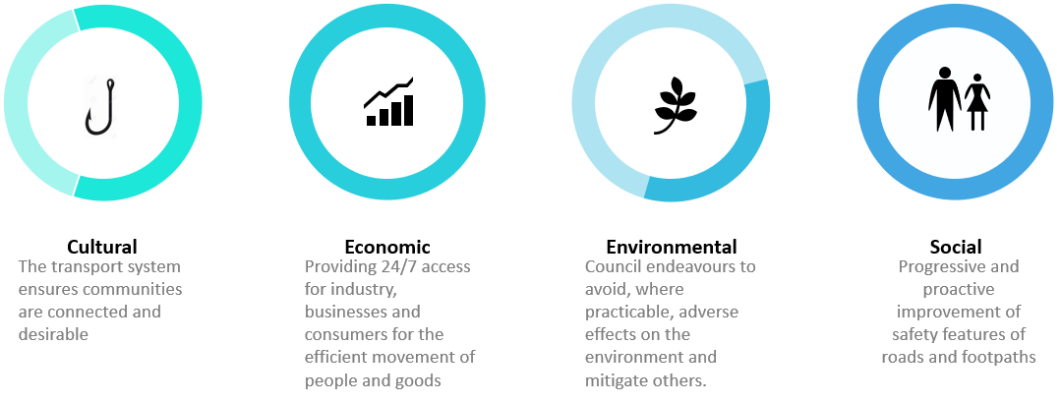
Significant infrastructure issues are tabled below. The highlighted option is the proposed approach for addressing the identified issue.

Roading Issue 1

Issue – Drainage
Drainage maintenance is undertaken to prevent water ponding on the shoulders and impeding the shedding of water from the road surface into kerbed channels or side surface water channels to be disposed of appropriately. This serves two purposes for the customer, firstly as a safety issue to eliminate water ponding on traffic lanes. Secondly, it protects the pavement and subgrade integrity by preventing saturation and shortening of its useful life. All culverts on sealed collector and access roads are inspected by the Contractor annually. We are continuing to improve our culvert inventory data to ensure all culverts are recorded in RAMM (Roading Asset and Maintenance Management Software). The annual inspection provides a maintenance programme for the culverts and other drainage infrastructure which is identified as not performing as it should. This work is carried out by our routine road maintenance contractor either by hand or by mechanical means. In the urban areas, drainage structures such as kerb and channel are cleaned regularly to avoid a build-up of detritus in the channel. We have over 1,300 mud tanks that are inspected routinely and cleaned, where necessary, on a twice-yearly basis by mechanical means under our Mechanical Cleaning Contract. Twice weekly sweeping of sections of our urban kerb and channels is also carried out under this contract. Only a 30% portion of the cost of this sweeping is eligible for NZTA subsidy the balance being unsubsidised expenditure.

Main Options	Implication of Options
Status Quo	Maintain current expenditure but adjust for inflation only (assume 3%). Pros: A marginal rates impact Cons: Pavement integrity decreases and reactive maintenance costs without drainage. Decision: Not recommended
Option 1 – Restore to sustainable levels	Increase the drainage budget by 10% over three years. Pros: Improved resilience to weather events Reduce long term maintenance costs Enhanced road safety Cons: Increase in roading rates. Decision: Recommended
Option 2 – Invest now for the future	Increase the drainage budget by 20% $240k over three years. Pros: Improved resilience to weather events Reduce long term maintenance costs Enhanced road safety Cons: Increase in roading rates Decision: Consider
Time period	2025 onwards
Cost	$441,900
What is the driver	LoS/Renewal
Assumption	That the useful life of significant assets will be the same as set out in the accounting policies of the Council

Project Contribution to the Four Well Beings

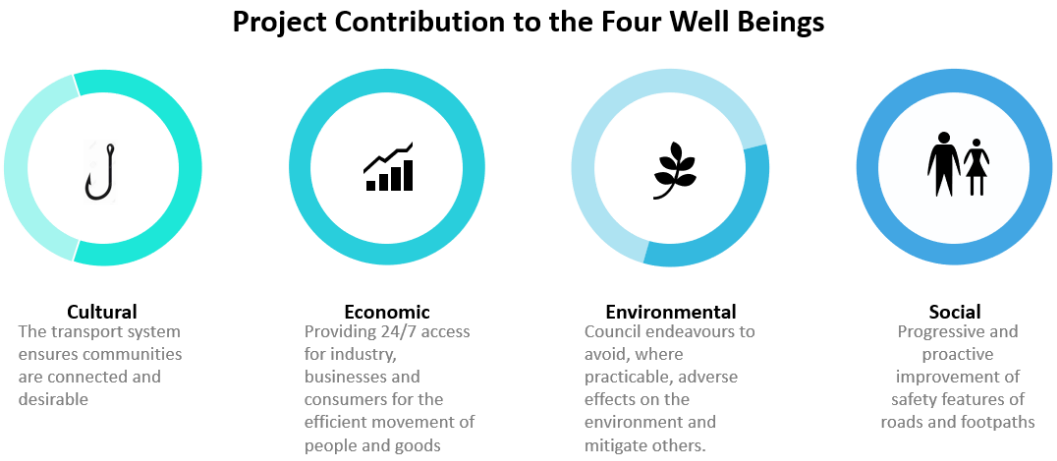


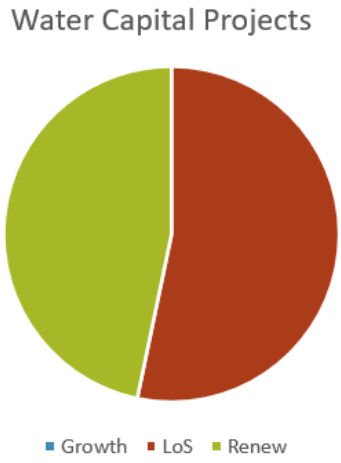
Roading Issue 2

Issue – Bridge Replacement
We want our bridges to offer safe, reliable and capable vehicle access into productive areas of our district. We would also like to enhance their loading capability where beneficial. As most of our bridges were built in quick succession, many of them are successively reaching the end of their useful lives. Budgetary constraints are forecast which will impact our ability to afford their ongoing maintenance and renewal. We propose to gain a deeper understanding of their condition and propose a programme of replacements that balances service levels with affordability.

Main Options	Implication of Options
Status Quo	Bridges will continue to deteriorate at a faster rate than our level of attendance. If bridge renewal investments remains the same, the levels of service will reduce, which will increase the risk of bridge failure. Several bridges will close in the short and long term. Not recommended
Option 1	Renewals - Additional $250k p.a. Replace 3 critical bridges Maintenance – Catch up $450k over five years. Still a medium to high risk of bridge closures and loading risk over the medium term. Not recommended
Option 2	Renewals - Additional $300k p.a. Replace 4 critical bridges Maintenance – Catch up $450k over three years. Still a medium risk of bridge closures and loading risk over the longer term. Recommended
Option 3	Renewals - Additional $500k p.a. Replace 6 critical bridges Maintenance – Catch up $450k over three years. Still a low to medium risk of bridge closures and loading risk over the longer term. Consider
Time period	2025 onwards
Cost	$375,000

What is the driver	LoS/Renewal
Assumption	That the useful life of significant assets will be the same as set out in the accounting policies of Council.





Water

The Council's goal for the water activity is:

- complete renewals at an appropriate time to optimise investment
- provide sustainable and safe water for domestic, commercial and industrial use, as well as for firefighting purposes
- improve water consumption through demand management practices

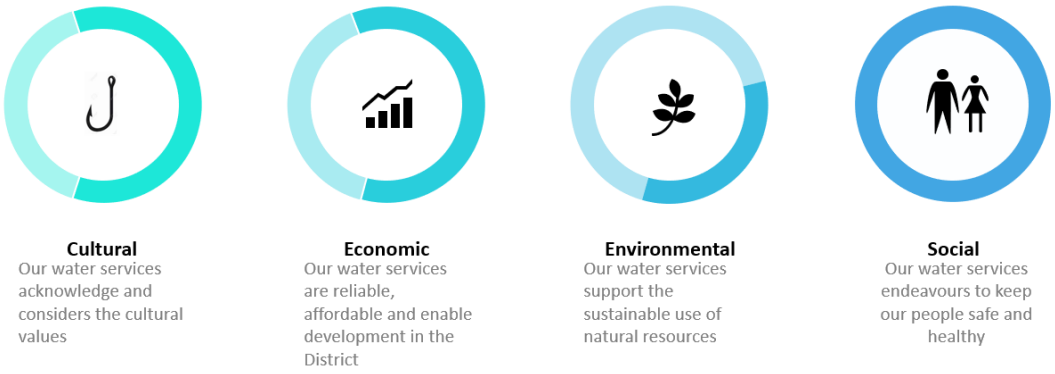
Significant infrastructure issues are tabled below. The highlighted option is the preferred approach for addressing the identified issue.

Water Supply Issue 1

Issue – Hilbre Reservoir Replacement
The Hilbre Avenue Reservoir has been identified as a critical risk during an earthquake, and it provides limited storage capacity, especially during high demand periods.

Main Options	Implication of Options
Option 1 - Status Quo	The asset has reached end of life and maintenance of the structures is now cost prohibitive. There is also a risk of failure during a natural hazard event.
Option 2 – Replace	Replace the existing reservoir with no increase in capacity will reduce the risk of failure during a natural event but not provide sufficient storage during high demand periods.
Option 3 – Increase investment	Replace the existing reservoir and increase capacity to optimise the treated water storage capacity and strengthen infrastructure resilience. Recommended
Time period	2025/2026
Cost	$6.0m Capex
What is the driver	LoS/Renewal
Assumption	That the useful life of significant assets will be the same as set out in the accounting policies of the Council. A new regulatory agency (Taumata Arowai) has been formed, with new regulatory standards for drinking water. It is assumed that the Council will continue to be responsible for delivering its existing range of water, wastewater and stormwater services.

Project Contribution to the Four Well Beings



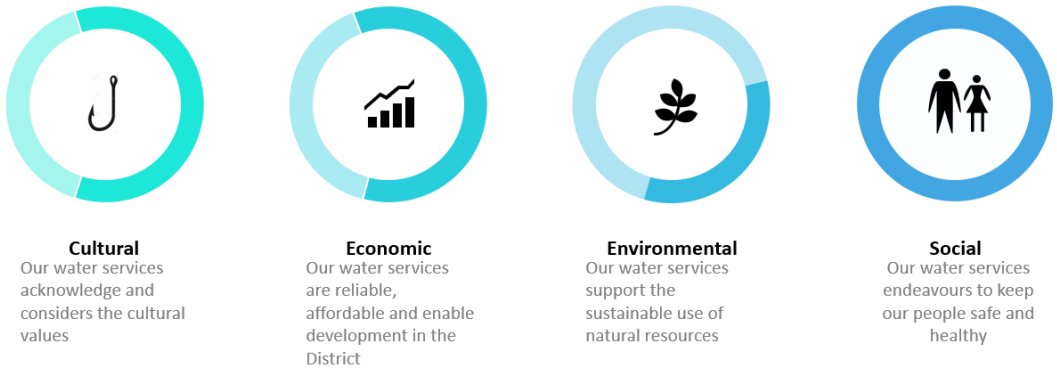
Water Supply Issue 2

Issue – Trunk Main Renewals
There are more than 10km of mains of DN250 and greater. This is mainly asbestos cement which will reach the end of its expected useful life within the next 10-20 years.

Main Options	Implication of Options
Option 1 - Status Quo	The mains will deteriorate over time and will present a bow wave of breakages or replacements. The trunk mains will not be fit-for-purpose and failure/breakages will be an ongoing issue resulting in increased interruptions and contamination opportunities.

Option 2 – Programmed trunk main renewals	Undertake condition assessment of critical pipelines and programme proactively trunk main renewals to ensure continuity of service and integrity of distribution network.
Time period	2025/26 to 2054/55
Cost	$21.5m Capex over 30 years
What is the driver	Renewal
Assumption	That the useful life of significant assets will be the same as set out in the accounting policies of the Council. A new regulatory agency (Taumata Arowai) has been formed, with new regulatory standards for drinking water. It is assumed that the Council will continue to be responsible for delivering its existing range of water, wastewater and stormwater services.

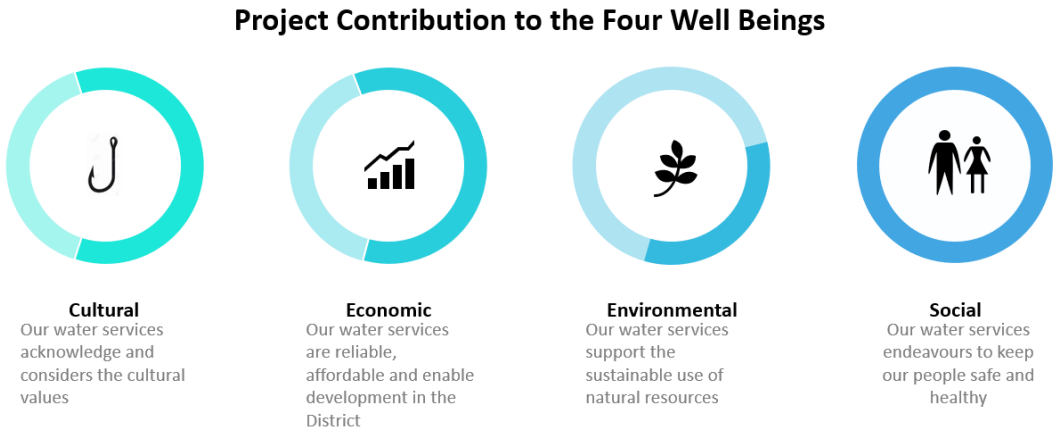
Project Contribution to the Four Well Beings

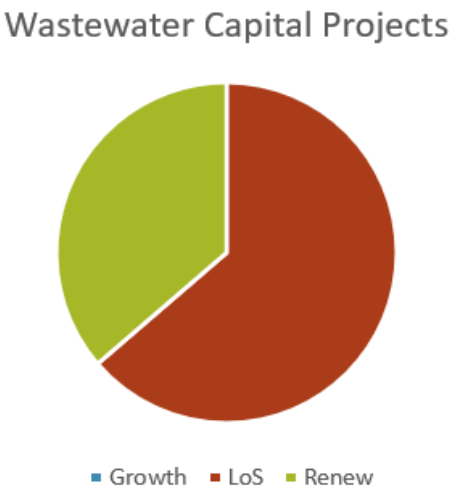


Water Supply Issue 3

Issue – Network Renewals	
There are more than 166km of mains of DN100 to DN 225. The majority of this is asbestos cement and Cast Iron, which will reach the end of its expected useful life within the next 30 years.	
Main Options	**Implication of Options**
Option 1 - Status Quo	The mains will deteriorate over time and will present a bow wave of breakages or replacements. The mains will not be fit-for-purpose, and failure/breakages will be an ongoing issue resulting in increased interruptions and contamination opportunities.
Option 2 – Programmed main renewals	Programme main renewals to ensure continuity of service and integrity of the distribution network.
Time period	2025/26 to 2054/55
Cost	$16.7m Capex over 30 years
What is the driver	Renewal

Assumption	That the useful life of significant assets will be the same as set out in the accounting policies of the Council. A new regulatory agency (Taumata Arowai) has been formed, with new regulatory standards for drinking water. It is assumed that the Council will continue to be responsible for delivering its existing range of water, wastewater and stormwater services





7.1. Wastewater

The Council's goal for the wastewater activity is:

- the collection, treatment and disposal of wastewater to safeguard public health and safety
- protect property
- minimising to the extent possible adverse environmental impacts.

Significant infrastructure issues are tabled below. The highlighted option is the preferred approach for addressing the identified issue.

Wastewater Issue 1

Issue – Mataura WWTP Upgrade	
The Mataura WWTP resource consent to discharge expired in 2021. The existing system is not expected to meet increased environmental standards. The discharge consent application has been submitted to Environment Southland but upgrades are scheduled to occur from 2030.	
Main Options	**Implication of Options**
Option 1 - Status Quo	Maintaining the existing system will not meet environmental standards and neither comply with regional rules. This will not contribute to social and cultural, and environmental well beings.
Option 2 – Upgrade Mataura WWTP	The Council has lodged WWTP renewal consents with Environment Southland based on a significant design process to meet legislative requirements including providing cultural treatment. Following the outcome of the consent process and consideration to the upcoming proposed national discharge standards, the Council will implement the necessary upgrade to the WWTP.
Time period	2030-2034
Cost	$12.8m Capex 2030/31 – 2033/34
What is the driver	LoS/Renewal
Assumption	That the useful life of significant assets will be the same as set out in the accounting policies of the Council. A new regulatory agency (Taumata Arowai) has been formed, with new regulatory standards for drinking water. It is assumed that the Council will continue to be responsible for delivering its existing range of water, wastewater and stormwater services.

Project Contribution to the Four Well Beings

Cultural
Our water services acknowledge and considers the cultural values

Economic
Our water services are reliable, affordable and enable development in the District

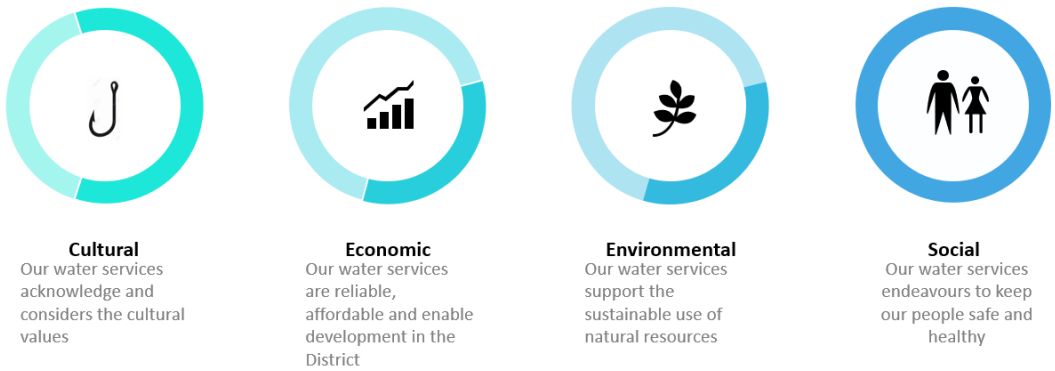
Environmental
Our water services support the sustainable use of natural resources

Social
Our water services endeavours to keep our people safe and healthy

Wastewater Issue 2

Issue – Gore WWTP Upgrade	
The Gore WWTP resource consent to discharge expired in 2023. The existing system is not expected to meet increased environmental standards. The discharge consent application has been submitted to Environment Southland but upgrades are scheduled to occur from 2030.	
Main Options	**Implication of Options**
Option 1 - Status Quo	Maintaining the existing system will not meet environmental standards and neither comply with regional rules. This will not contribute to social and cultural, and environmental well beings.
Option 2 – Upgrade Gore WWTP	The Council has lodged WWTP renewal consents with Environment Southland based on a significant design process to meet legislative requirements including providing cultural treatment. Following the outcome of the consent process and consideration to the upcoming proposed national discharge standards, the Council will implement the necessary upgrade to the WWTP.
Time period	2030-2040
Cost	$63.7m Capex 2030/31 – 2039/40
What is the driver	LoS/Renewal
Assumption	That the useful life of significant assets will be the same as set out in the accounting policies of the Council. A new regulatory agency (Taumata Arowai) has been formed, with new regulatory standards for drinking water. It is assumed that the Council will continue to be responsible for delivering its existing range of water, wastewater and stormwater services.

Project Contribution to the Four Well Beings



Cultural
Our water services acknowledge and considers the cultural values

Economic
Our water services are reliable, affordable and enable development in the District

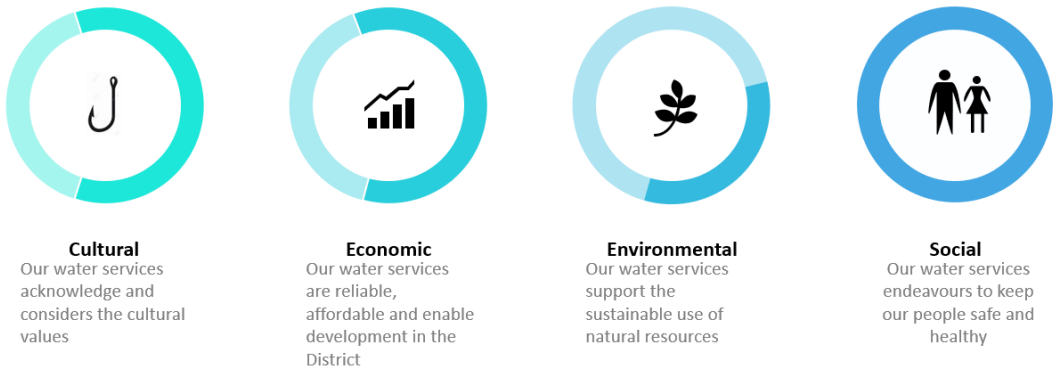
Environmental
Our water services support the sustainable use of natural resources

Social
Our water services endeavours to keep our people safe and healthy

Wastewater Issue 3

Issue – WW Trunk Main Renewals	
There are more than 6km of mains of DN600 and greater. This is mainly concrete pipe installed during the early 1900's. These mains will potentially reach the end of its expected useful lives within the next 10 years.	
Main Options	**Implication of Options**
Option 1 - Status Quo	The mains will deteriorate over time and will present a bow wave of breakages or replacements. The trunk mains will not be fit-for-purpose and failure/breakages will be an ongoing issue resulting in increased interruptions and environmental contamination opportunities.
Option 2 – Programmed trunk main renewals	Undertake a condition assessment and programme trunk main renewals to ensure continuity of service and integrity of the collection network
Time period	2025/26 to 2030/31
Cost	$4.8m Capex
What is the driver	Renewal
Assumption	That the useful life of significant assets will be the same as set out in the accounting policies of the Council. A new regulatory agency (Taumata Arowai) has been formed, with new regulatory standards for drinking water. It is assumed that the Council will continue to be responsible for delivering its existing range of water, wastewater and stormwater services.

Project Contribution to the Four Well Beings

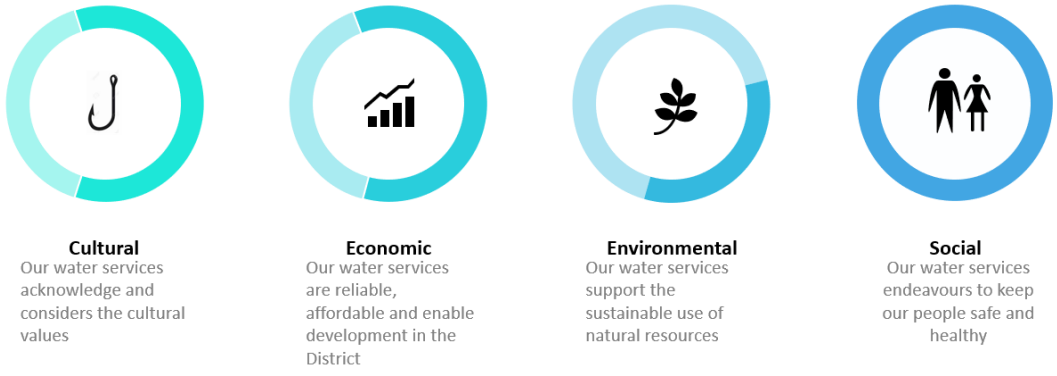


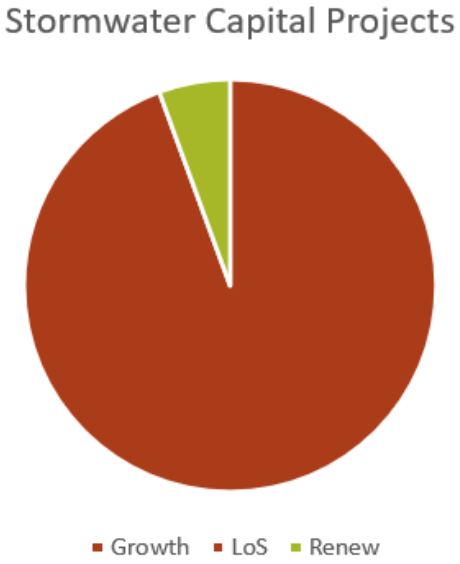
Wastewater Issue 4

Issue – WW Main Renewals	
There are more than 98km of mains of DN150 to DN500. A significant portion of this was installed during the early 1900s. These mains will reach the end of their expected useful lives within the next 30 years.	
Main Options	**Implication of Options**

Option 1 - Status Quo	The mains will deteriorate over time and will present a bow wave of breakages or replacements. The mains will not be fit-for-purpose and failure/breakages will be an ongoing issue resulting in increased interruptions and environmental contamination opportunities.
Option 2 – Programmed main renewals	Programme main renewals to ensure continuity of service and integrity of collection network.
Time period	2025/26 to 2054/55
Cost	$29m Capex Ranges from $300k/yr to $1.6M/yr over the 30 years.
What is the driver	Renewal
Assumption	That the useful life of significant assets will be the same as set out in the accounting policies of the Council. A new regulatory agency (Taumata Arowai) has been formed, with new regulatory standards for drinking water. It is assumed that the Council will continue to be responsible for delivering its existing range of water, wastewater and stormwater services.

Project Contribution to the Four Well Beings





Stormwater

The Council's goal for the stormwater activity is:

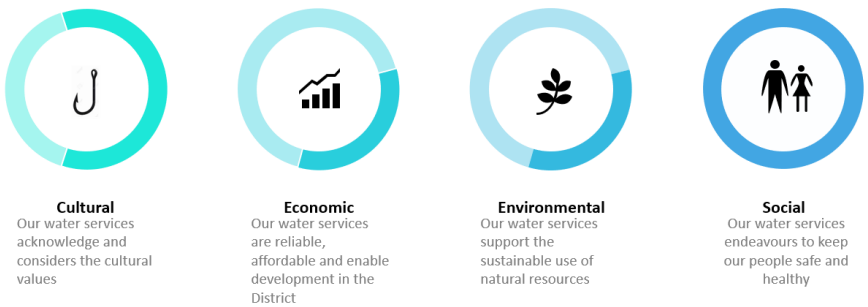
- the collection and disposal of stormwater to safeguard public health and safety
- to protect property
- minimising any adverse environmental impacts.

Significant infrastructure issues are tabled below. The highlighted option is the preferred approach for addressing the identified issue.

Stormwater Issue 1

Issue – Stormwater Separation	
Approximately 40% of the Gore and 25% of the Mataura wastewater network consists of a combined wastewater/stormwater system. Add to that significant capacity limitations which lead to surface flooding, sometimes contaminated with wastewater. The combined nature of the system also results in high flows through the Council's wastewater treatment plant affecting its treatment performance and/or resulting in raw wastewater overflows to the environment.	
Main Options	**Implication of Options**
Option 1 - Status Quo	Maintaining the existing system will not meet environmental standards and neither comply with Regional Plan rules. This will not contribute to social, cultural and environmental well beings.
Option 2 – Increased Investment	Separate the stormwater and wastewater systems. Address stormwater capacity constraints and meet required standards (1:5 year event). Apply an integrated approach to stormwater management.
Time period	2025-2055
Cost	$184 m over 30 years
What is the driver	LoS/Renewal
Assumption	That the useful life of significant assets will be the same as set out in the accounting policies of the Council. A new regulatory agency (Taumata Arowai) has been formed, with new regulatory standards for drinking water. It is assumed that the Council will continue to be responsible for delivering its existing range of water, wastewater and stormwater services.

Project Contribution to the Four Well Beings

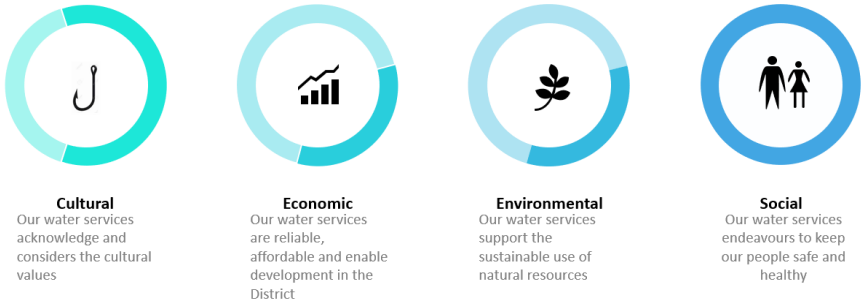


Stormwater Issue 2

Issue – Stormwater Quality Improvements
There is increased focus from the Central Government on the sensible, sustainable management of water. Stormwater management moves from "to collect, convey, discharge" to a more integrated approach of "slow it down, spread it out, and soak it in". This approach includes quantity and quality considerations, multiple-use facilities, riparian corridors, recreation, wetland preservation and groundwater recharge.

Main Options	Implication of Options
Option 1 - Status Quo	Maintaining the existing system will not meet environmental standards and neither comply with Regional Plan rules. This will not contribute to social, cultural and environmental well beings.
Option 2 – Increased Investment	Develop and construct infrastructure to improve the stormwater discharge quality and meet regional rules and environmental standards. Apply an integrated approach to stormwater management.
Time period	2033/34 to 2053/54
Cost	$63m Capex over 21 years
What is the driver	LoS/Renewal
Assumption	That the useful life of significant assets will be the same as set out in the accounting policies of the Council. A new regulatory agency (Taumata Arowai) has been formed, with new regulatory standards for drinking water. It is assumed that the Council will continue to be responsible for delivering its existing range of water, wastewater and stormwater services.

Project Contribution to the Four Well Beings



8. Financial Estimates

The Local Government Act 2002 Section 101B – Infrastructure Strategy states:

(4) The infrastructure strategy must outline the most likely scenario for the management of the local authority's infrastructure assets over the period of the Strategy and, in that context, must—

(a) show indicative estimates of the projected capital and operating expenditure associated with the management of those assets—

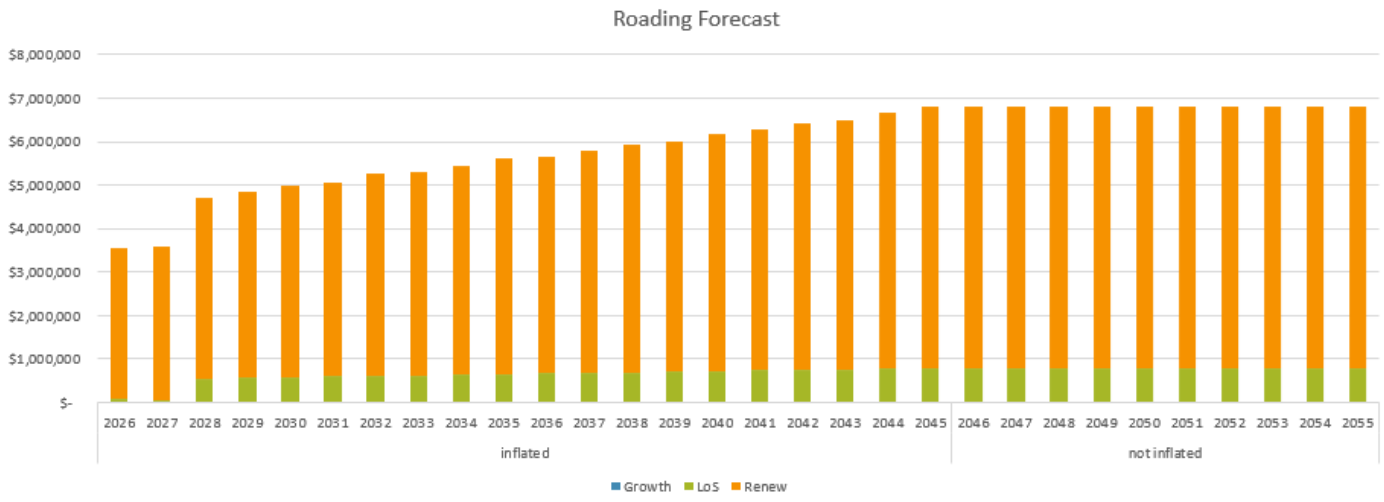
(i) in each of the first ten years covered by the Strategy; and

(ii) in each subsequent period of five years covered by the Strategy.

8.1. Roads and Footpaths

The projected capital expenditure associated with the roading infrastructure assets are graphically represented below:

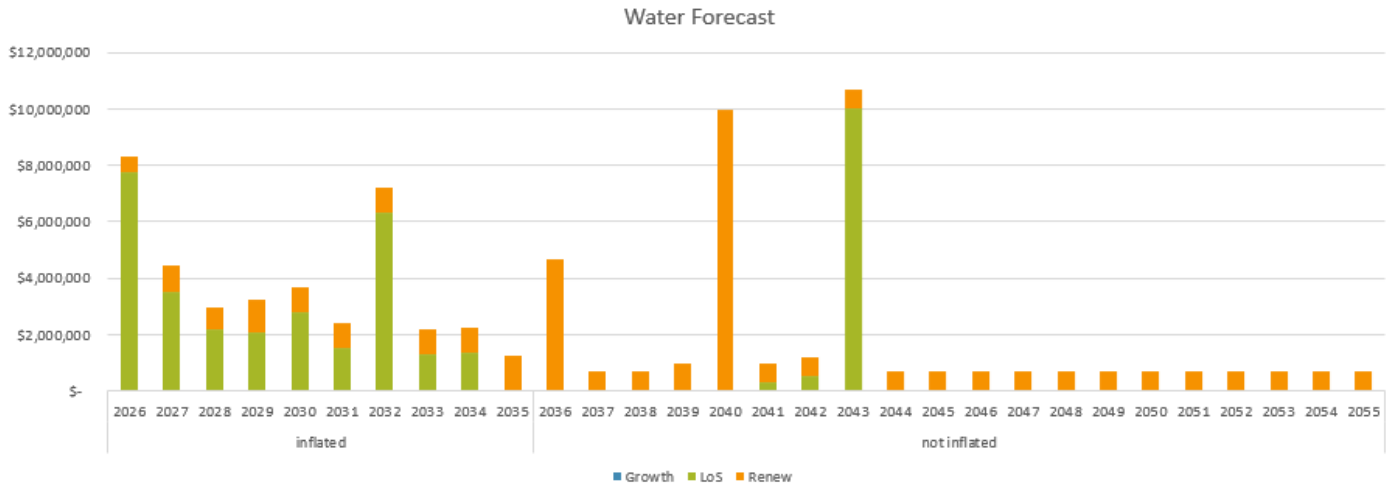
Figure 8.1: Projected Capital Expenditure – Roads and Footpaths



8.2. Water

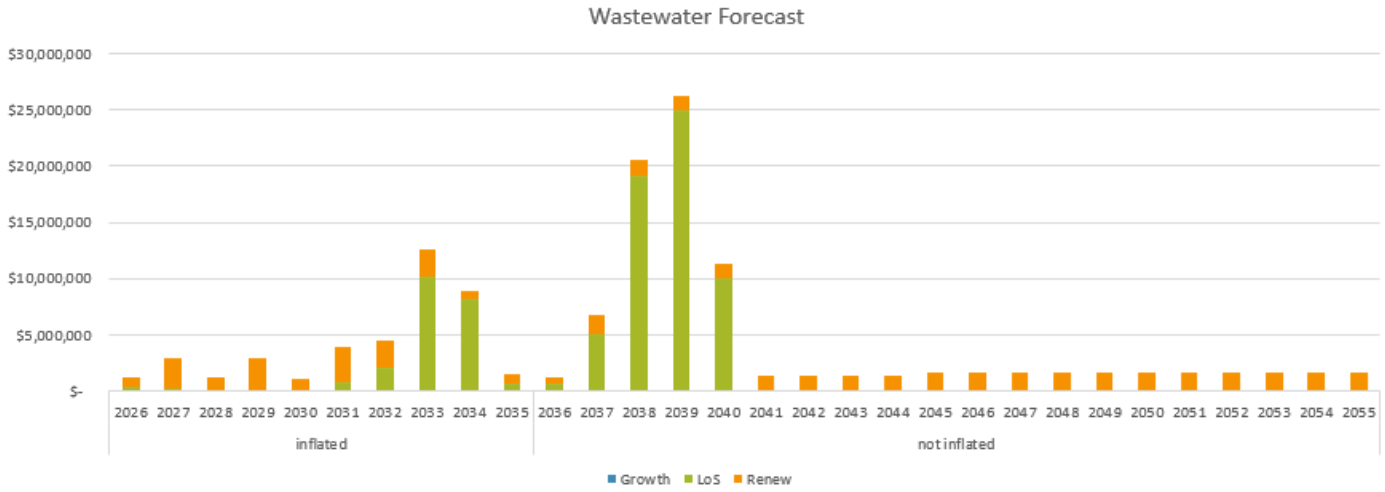
The projected capital expenditure associated with the water infrastructure assets are graphically represented below:

Figure 8.2: Projected Capital Expenditure – Water



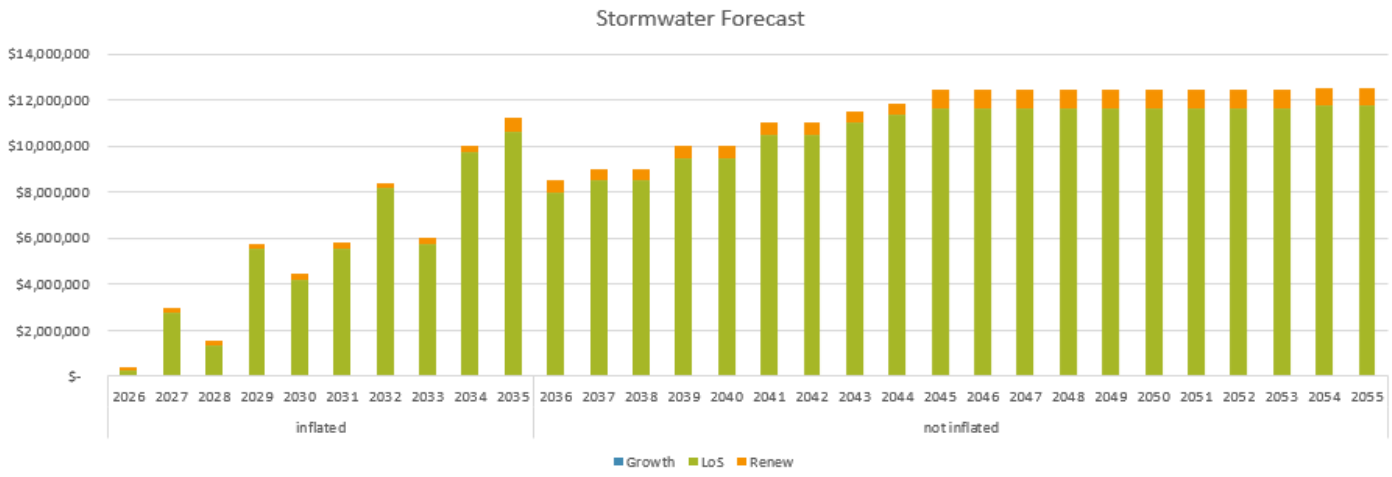
8.3. Wastewater

Figure 8.3: Projected Capital Expenditure - Wastewater



8.4. Stormwater

Figure 8.4: Projected Capital Expenditure – Stormwater



8.5. Total Expenditure

The projected capital expenditure associated with the significant infrastructure assets are graphically represented below:

Figure 8.5: Projected Capital Expenditure- Infrastructure Assets

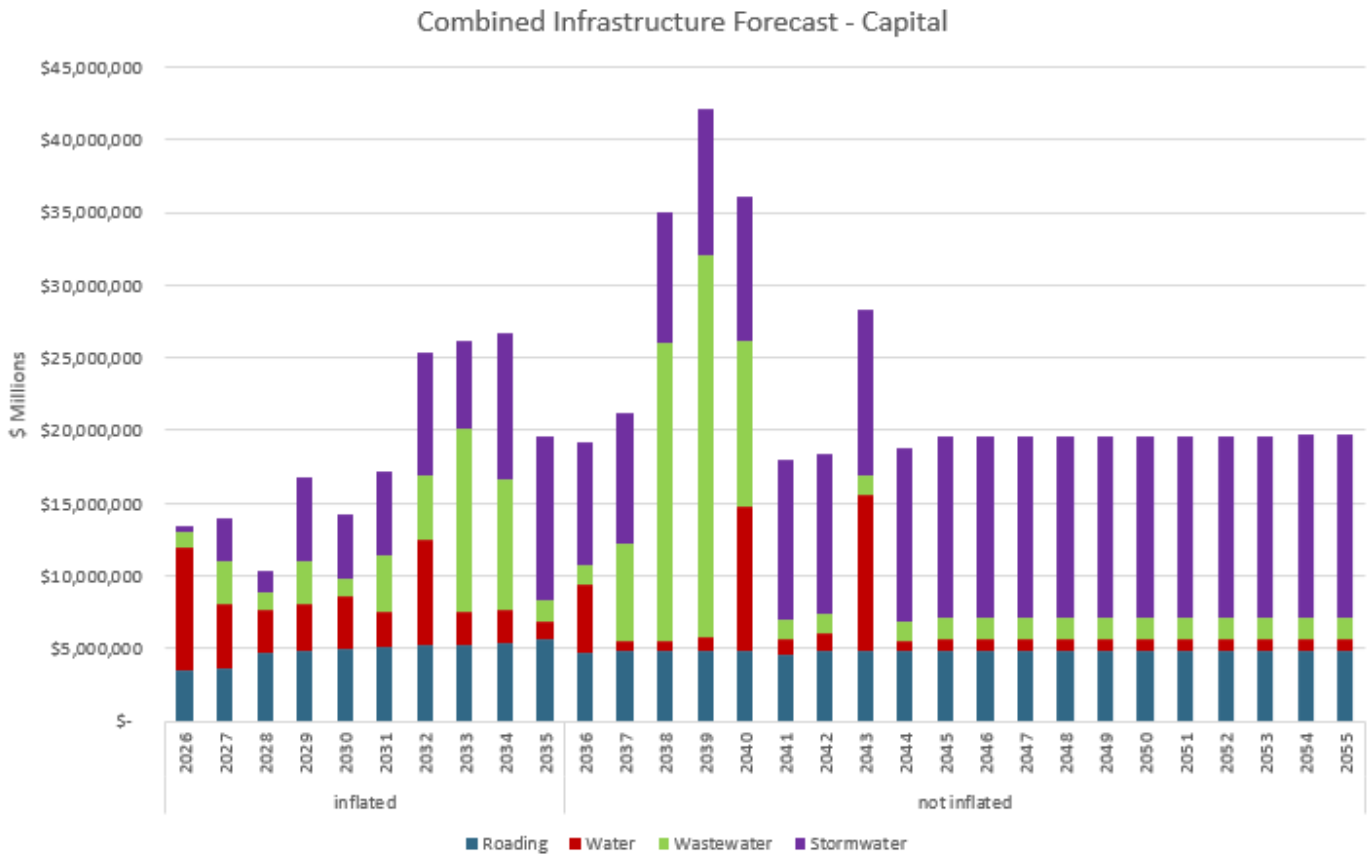


Figure 8.6: Projected Operational Expenditure –Infrastructure Assets