

Laura Bowman

From: Official Information
Sent: Thursday, 10 November 2022 8:51 am
To: 7(2)(a)
Cc: Official Information
Subject: Final Response - LGOIMA 285565 - 7(2)(a) - amount of potholes and the cost of fixing them for the years 2019 to 2022

Kia Ora,

I refer to your **information request below**, Hamilton City Council is able to provide the following response to you request concerning the amount of potholes and the cost of fixing them for the years 2022, 2021, 2020 and 2019

Request 1 & 2

1. Could I please get how many potholes the city council has had on their streets/roads for each year and have that separated into years?
2. The money which has been spent on fixing potholes for each of those years?

Response 1 & 2

Table 1 below includes the yearly totals and cost of repairing potholes until scheduled road renewals are completed. The cost to Hamilton City Council is 49% of the total cost, as Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency funds 51% of maintenance costs on our roads.

The information below also details the number of potholes reported to Council by the public, and those identified through Council's routine road inspections.

Table 1

	Total number of potholes	Potholes reported by public	Potholes identified by road inspectors	Total cost of pothole repairs	Average cost per pothole repair
1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019	1243	163	1080	\$167,581.26	\$134.82
1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020	1160	307	853	\$156,530.4	\$134.94
1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021	1074	257	817	\$184,685.04	\$171.96
1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022	1301	279	1022	\$248,868.29	\$191.29
1 July 2022 to 30 October 2022	981	185	796	\$187,655.49	\$191.29

Please note that the average cost per pothole repair has increased due to material, plant and labour costs increases over the last four years; these costs have been passed on to Council.

Request 3

Who fixes the potholes?

Response 3

Infrastructure Alliance is a partnership between Council and Downer, and the collective is responsible for maintenance and renewals on the network. The Infrastructure Alliance Incident Response crew repairs the potholes on Hamilton's roads.

Request 4

How are they prioritised - compared to regular work?

Response 4

All potholes reported by the public are logged into the Council Customer Relationship Management system under category *"Urgent" Report Potholes & Edge Failures in Road Reserve*. When entering the information, several questions are asked of the public to ascertain the risk to people and property. Factors considered include street location, speed limit, time of day, location of pothole on the road (i.e., in the wheel path or in a cycle lane), the diameter and width of the pothole. For potholes that are greater than 50mm deep and 300mm in diameter located on the road, or greater than 50mm deep and 150mm diameter located in a cycle lane, staff endeavour to respond within the hour. Our level of service is to repair potholes either temporarily or permanently within 48 hours of being notified.

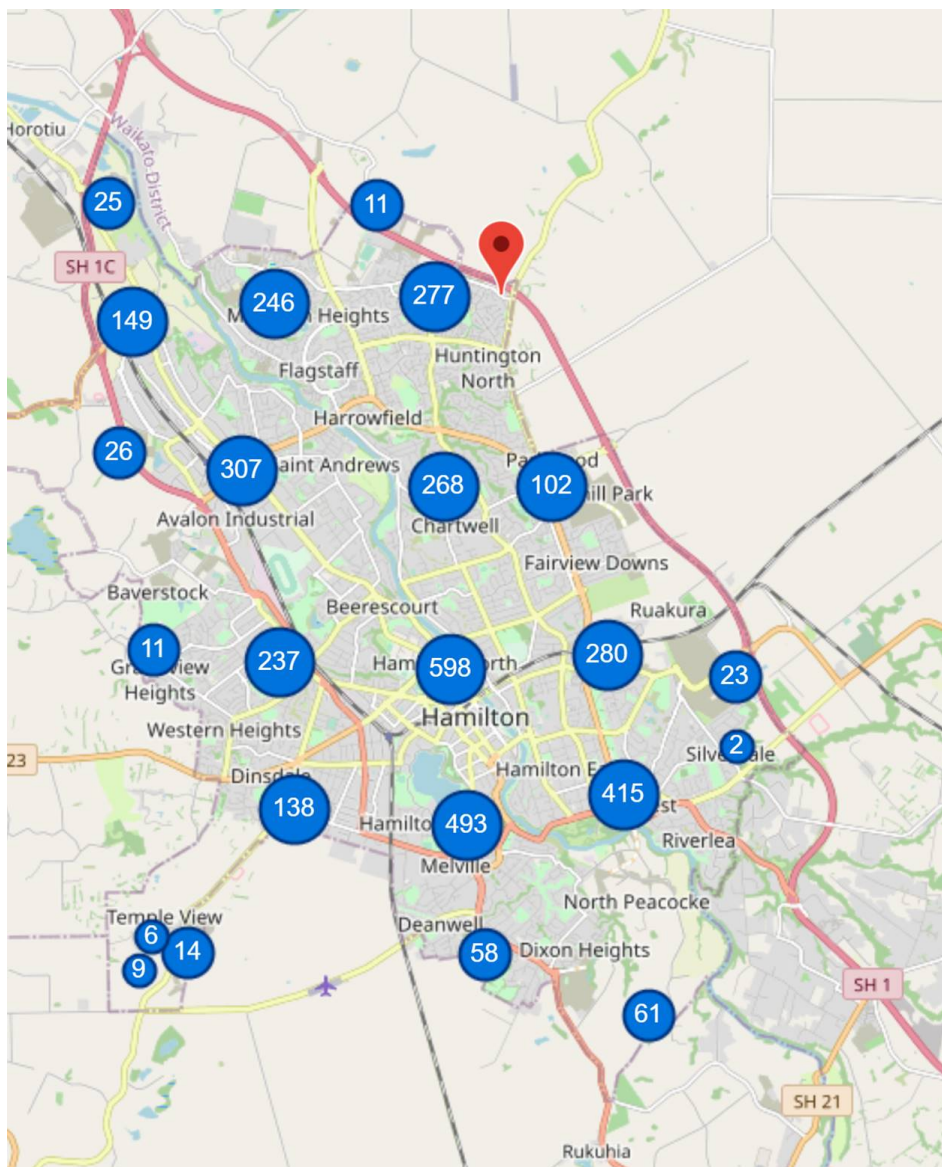
The initial response is to make the road safe by applying a temporary treatment with cold mix asphalt. These defects are then investigated further and run through a prioritisation algorithm, taking into consideration size, location, and previous repairs. The prioritised sites then feed into the pavement maintenance programme for permanent repairs.

Request 5

Where are the most common potholes?

Response 5

Below is a map showing all potholes repaired since 1 July 2018.



Source: Road Assessment and Maintenance Management (RAMM)

Request 6

How many complaints do you get about potholes each year?

Response 6 – Q – ELW -

Of all potholes repaired each year, between 12% to 17% are reported by the public, with all other potholes identified for repair identified by road inspectors. See Table 1 for this breakdown.

Request 7

Do you pay for damage to vehicles that have been caused by potholes?

Response 7 – question is do we pay for damage.

Council only receives a small number of requests for compensation due to potholes causing vehicle damage. In a one-year period, these requested have ranged between four and eleven in number.

Council is unable to repair a pothole they are not aware of.

Local roading authorities cannot be held legally liable for failure to maintain a road. There is a common law rule which holds that a local authority is not liable for damage arising out of the ordinary disrepair of a road under its control. This is called the 'omissions of non-feasance' rule. Even if a road is allowed to fall into disrepair, Council is protected by this common law rule that gives councils immunity for "omissions of non-feasance."

Request 8

If so, how much have you paid out for damaged vehicles.

Response 8

From 1 July 2019, Council has paid ex-gratia payments of \$1,608.87. These ex-gratia payments have been due to Council being aware of a pothole and failing to repair within the agreed level of service timeframe.

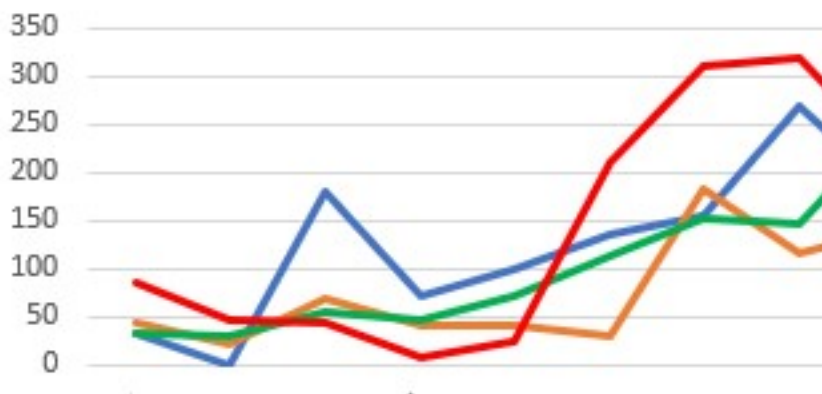
Request 9

And anything else you wish to add.

Response 9

Council also notes that during periods of wet weather, there is a corresponding increase in the number of potholes which form on our roads. This trend can be seen in the below data, with increased numbers over the recent wetter winter months. The increase seen in this year's data is due to the fact we have seen the country's wettest winter on record:

Total pothole repairs by month - January 2019 to 30 October 2022



You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

Kind Regards,

Laura | Official Information Coordinator

Governance & Assurance Team | People and Organisational Performance

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