



Research First

# Invercargill City Council

## 2013 Service Level Survey: Roading Report

Friday, 6 December 2013



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### Disclaimer

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## 1 Introduction

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### 1.1 Research Context

In 2013 Invercargill City Council (ICC) contracted Research First to conduct a survey of Invercargill residents. The purpose of this survey is to provide ICC with a measure of how satisfied residents are with seven key areas:

1. Roading;
2. Parks and reserves;
3. Cemeteries and crematorium;
4. Stormwater;
5. Water supply;
6. Sewerage; and
7. Solid waste.

### 1.2 Research Design

The 2013 research involved a mixed-method multi-phase design, which combined qualitative and quantitative research.

#### 1.2.1 The Qualitative Phase

The qualitative part of this research comprised:

1. Interviews with key members of the ICC staff; and
2. Seven focus groups, held among people identified as being informed and relevant to each of the service areas.

The focus groups involved between five and seven participants who were recruited by ICC to reflect the range of views held in the community regarding each issue. The discussion groups were held at ICC's Council Chambers, during August 2013.

#### 1.2.2 The Quantitative Phase

The survey of residents was completed between late August and mid October 2013. The data collection period was an extended one because the survey used a mixed-method design. In other words the 'survey' was actually two surveys - one completed online and one completed by conventional mail return. The process used was:

- A randomised sample was generated from the electoral roll, including both Māori and general rolls;
- A letter was sent to all those randomised into the sample, asking them to participate. The letter was sent out on ICC letterhead and invited participation by accessing the survey website (i.e., an online survey);



**This report  
presents the  
roading results  
from the 2013  
survey of  
Invercargill  
residents**

- A follow-up postcard was sent two weeks later, reminding people that they were still welcome to participate, and could do so by the online survey or by telephone if necessary; and
- Two weeks after the postcard was sent, a further follow-up was sent to all non-respondents that included a hard copy of the survey and a reply paid envelope (i.e., a mail survey).

Of the 2,500 invitations sent out, 354 residents responded to the mail survey and 315 residents replied to the online questionnaire\*. This means the results reported here are based on 669 responses.

This document combines the qualitative insights from the focus groups and the results from the survey about **roading** in Invercargill.

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\* Note that due to the self-completion nature of the on-line survey, there are some questions that were answered by smaller numbers of respondents. Where there were fewer than 15 responses to a question these results have not been included.

## 2 Roading Service Levels: The Focus Group Insights

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### 2.1 Front-of-Mind Concerns

There was a general feeling among participants that the roads in Invercargill were poor. Two key areas of concern were the speed at which people drove, particularly around schools, and that there was a lack of safety signage.

### 2.2 Footpaths

In general, the footpaths were seen to be of an acceptable standard. When asked about having footpaths on only one side of the road, there were mixed views. Participants felt that some streets could easily have one footpath, but participants did question what would happen on the other side of the road (i.e., what would be there in place of footpath?)

Concerns were raised about how safe it would be for children and disabled residents to cross roads if there was no footpath on the other side of the road. If this was to be implemented, participants felt that 'slowing devices' could be installed in streets to ensure that traffic speed was controlled. The cost of such an initiative was also questioned.

Some participants saw the ease of crossing the road as an issue. While there were many crossings in the inner city, in other areas there were few, if any. It was felt there was no strategy in place regarding where crossings should be located. This was seen as a problem for disabled and elderly residents.

Some footpaths in town are not sealed, which could be an issue for disabled people. Similarly, there was a concern that having crossings directly outside the Foundation for the Blind was not ideal and the location of this crossing could be re-considered. While some footpaths have potholes in them, it was generally not the norm. Participants did note that problems arose when footpaths needed fixing. Maintenance of footpaths was on a schedule and if a footpath needed maintenance before its scheduled time, a complaint needed to be made with the Council. Participants felt the Council needed to be more proactive in ensuring there were no issues with footpaths.

Participants were asked to consider the lack of footpaths in Otatara, and the corresponding open drain network. Participants described the layout in Otatara as '*terrible*'. The drains were of different depths and there were apparently no standards in place regarding the size or structure of the drains. This led to flooding issues in heavy rain. There was a concern about safety, as open drains were often on narrow roads which could be a safety issue when driving. Participants felt that footpaths might be useful on one side of the

road, but few people walk in Otatara so footpaths may not be necessary.

## 2.3 Cycle Ways

Some issues were raised about the cycle ways in Invercargill. While it was agreed that there are many cycle lanes across Invercargill, cyclists could not necessarily get all over town using them. There was a question regarding the appropriateness of cyclists using areas in which no cycle lanes were provided.

Another issue with cycle lanes related to pedestrian crossings. It was suggested that pedestrians frequently move out into the bike lane, and as a result, cyclists have to move onto the road. This was a hazard and has caused the loss of life in Invercargill recently. Given this, some participants noted that they did not feel safe biking on roads.

Participants felt that children should cycle on the footpaths, as it is safer than being on the road. Participants suggested that children's bikes should be equipped with bells to let pedestrians know the bike is coming. Rules would need to be implemented to make the footpath safe for all users. Concerns were also raised about skateboarders. Participants noted that skateboarders were fairly well behaved when on the footpath and most got off the boards when approaching people.

Participants suggested building a cycleway to Otatara. This could be established using the old tramway embankment. Of note, the cycleway along this embankment does already exist.

## 2.4 Maintenance, Cleanliness & Street Lighting

Participants made the point that the roads are 'only as good as what is underneath them'. Road construction was important and had an impact on the level of maintenance required. The focus group participants thought the roads were not built to a sufficient standard for the local conditions, and believed this was why the need for maintenance was so high. To illustrate this point, the participants talked about how there were 'lumps' and 'holes' appearing in some streets that have recently been resealed (which led to a general discussion about the quality of the streets).

Overall, it was felt that the maintenance of traffic-bearing roads was good. That is, roads that carry the traffic in the city have a higher level of maintenance than general suburban streets.

Other roads appeared to have a roster-based maintenance programme. Participants understood that if all the roads were to be maintained at a uniform level across the city then rates would need to increase. There was agreement that Invercargill needs to 'think of some way' to generate funding as central government is unable to pay for high standards of local roads.

Participants raised concerns about the quality of workmanship by contractors on the City's roads. There was a perception that the contractors need to be monitored more closely as their work standards varied.

The streets were viewed as being tidy. More problems were seen to occur further out of town where the wind blew the rubbish. It was agreed that some areas were not cleaned as well as others. An example given was near the bike park. The source of much of the rubbish was identified as being from debris coming from trucks. Participants felt that there was less regular street sweeping now than had historically been the case. Participants felt that cleaners should not be relying on machines to pick up all the rubbish and that they should be using a broom in some instances to collect all the rubbish.

Invercargill has a significant number of gravel roads. There were many potholes in these roads. Drainage was also an issue on some of these gravel roads. The maintenance level of these roads was high, but seen as being adequate. The participants were clear that the District had a large, distributed, rural road network and that traffic volumes on most roads were low.

There were no major issues identified with the street lighting in Invercargill. The participants noted that street lighting is not provided in all areas and in those areas that it was provided it be not evenly spread. While this raised safety concerns for some, the majority of participants noted the need to balance cost with need.

## 2.5 The Community at Risk Register

Participants were asked to consider the Community at Risk Register. They were mostly unaware of the Community at Risk Register, and where Invercargill was positioned in the register.

When it was outlined that Invercargill had a higher crash rate than many other districts and cities, participants questioned where these the crashes had occurred, and whether they were at controlled or uncontrolled intersections.

Participants felt that the installation of traffic lights might help to reduce the number of accidents as had been seen in Spey Street. A number of issues were raised that participants felt led to the high number of accidents in and around the city:

- Cars (especially four wheel drives) parking close to corners, obscuring the turning traffic's vision;
- In busy areas drivers have the inability to judge if it is safe to pull out;
- Lack of patience of drivers;
- Layout of the city - Invercargill has a lot of crossroads and people find it difficult to see oncoming traffic (e.g., Kelvin Street);

- Trees obscuring vision - *'they look pretty but can be a hazard'*;
- Bad drivers in Invercargill - do not follow the 'merge like a zip' concept, perhaps training is required; and
- Exiting big shopping centres onto busy main roads - people are taking risks to get back into traffic flows.

## 2.6 Traffic Bylaws

Participants knew little about the traffic bylaws. It was felt that there was confusion with regard to speed limits in town. There are a range of zones being 50Km/H, 60Km/H and in some instances 80Km/H. It was felt that by changing some of these speed limits, confusion could be avoided.

A discussion also arose about the possibility of Esk Street becoming a pedestrian zone. Participants noted that the street is currently one way and there is not a lot of traffic currently using the street. Questions arose regarding whether Invercargill could afford to remove cars from this street. It was felt that if residents could not find a park near the shops they wanted to go to, they would simply not go to the shops. Parking in Invercargill was considered to be a long-term issue, and an important one for many residents.

## 2.7 Road Drainage and Flooding

Questions were raised in the Stormwater group regarding the management of flooding on roads. While the discussion took place in the Stormwater group, the function of management of stormwater from roads (and associated flooding) is a function of the roads services in Invercargill. The major concern raised about the management of water on roads is the clogging of the drainage sumps and associated local flooding. In some areas (such as in Bluff), the blocking of sumps has led to significant surface flows that moved from the roads and into the suburban areas.

In parallel to the concern regarding the flooding issues, participants also expressed significant concern about the environmental impact of the water discharged through the stormwater system. There were many discharge points throughout the city area, and the quality of the water at the discharge points was identified as being a major polluting factor in the waterways.



## 2.8 Other Messages

Participants were given the opportunity to address any other issues they felt were pertinent to the Council in relation to roading. A number were identified:

- Education was required about how to drive on icy roads, as ICC rarely grits the roads and drivers needed to understand how to drive in these conditions;
- Congestion exists at some roundabouts as there were not four even flows of traffic (at certain points in the day). Tweed Street was an example of this. A suggestion was to install a traffic light that operated during peak periods to reduce congestion;
- There is difficulty crossing roads where roundabouts were in place, and traffic lights would make it easier and safer to cross;
- While congestion is an issue at peak times on some roads, it is not too bad and there are other routes drivers could take if necessary;
- Pedestrians have difficulty crossing the road sometimes as the green light indicating crossing is safe was not illuminated long enough;
- ICC needs to adopt a walking/cycling strategy into its long term planning; and
- The roading design was changing as trucks are being diverted off certain roads; however, the public was affected by this. A Western Bypass was proposed but will not go ahead (NZTA issue). If it were to go ahead it would reduce the number of trucks on the road and have a more positive effect on the city.

### 3 Roading Service Levels: The Survey Results

#### 3.1 Frequency of Use

Respondents read the following preamble about roading, and were asked how frequently they used each of the following roading services:

*The ICC is responsible for over 590km of roading in and around the city. Services include street lights, traffic signs and signals, footpaths, drainage surface water channel systems, bridges, culverts, street furniture, parking facilities, vehicle access crossings and cycle tracks. Costs are covered by a combination of rates (about 40%) and grants from the government (60%).*

Urban roads are the most used roading service, followed by footpaths, rural roads and cycle lanes. Nearly all (90%) respondents used urban roads almost daily or several times a week. In contrast, 9% used cycle lanes almost daily or several times a week.



**Cycle lanes were infrequently used by the participants in this survey, with 55% saying they 'never' used them**

**Table 3.1: Frequency of Using Roading Services**

Frequency	Almost daily	Several times per week	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Urban roads	69%	21%	8%	1%	1%
Footpaths	35%	28%	29%	6%	1%
Rural roads	15%	18%	50%	15%	2%
Cycle lanes	3%	6%	16%	20%	55%

#### 3.2 Importance of Roading Features

Respondents were asked to rate the importance of the roading services that ICC provides. This was done by rating the importance of each service on a 5-point Likert scale (where 1 is 'very important' and 5 is 'very unimportant'). To make these results easier to interpret, a composite 'more than important' (MTI) score was calculated. This simply combines the number of respondents who rated the service as 'important' or 'very important'.

The results show that respondents ranked the services in three clusters (Table 3.2):

- Tier One: Surface of streets, cleanliness of roads in the Central City, surface of footpaths, and road signs markings signals (89% to 92% MTI).
- Tier Two: Street lighting, cleanliness of roads in urban areas and public parking (81% to 87% MTI)
- Tier Three: Road sweeping, surface of cycle lanes and roading amenities (65% to 74% MTI).

**Table 3.2: Importance of Roading Features**

Features	MTI	Very Important	Important	Neutral	Unimportant	Very Unimportant
Surface of streets	92%	45%	47%	4%	1%	3%
Cleanliness of roads in the Central City	91%	45%	46%	7%	1%	2%
Surface of footpaths	89%	44%	45%	8%	1%	3%
Road signs markings signals	89%	49%	40%	6%	1%	3%
Street lighting	87%	45%	42%	9%	1%	3%
Cleanliness of roads in the urban areas	85%	32%	53%	12%	1%	2%
Public parking	81%	26%	54%	16%	2%	2%
Road sweeping	74%	19%	56%	22%	2%	2%
Surface of cycle lanes	68%	26%	42%	22%	6%	4%
Roading amenities	65%	17%	48%	30%	3%	2%

### 3.3 City Centre Roads

Respondents were asked to rate Invercargill's City Centre roads on a number of elements. This was done by rating each service on a simple 5-point Likert scale (where 1 = very poor and 5 = very good).

To make these results easier to interpret, a composite 'more than good' (MTG) score was calculated. This simply combines the number of respondents who rated the service as 'good' or 'very good'.

The quality of the 'effectiveness of roundabouts in managing traffic flow' was rated highest (82% MTG), followed by road signs, markings, and signals (70%), direction signs (68%), and street lighting (66%; Table 3.3, overleaf).

The surface of footpaths and streets, and the quality of the road construction were rated lowest (34% - 44% MTG).

**Table 3.3: Condition of City Centre Roads**

Aspect of Roads	MTG	Very Good	Good	Average	Poor	Very Poor
Effectiveness of roundabouts in managing traffic flow	82%	34%	48%	14%	3%	1%
Road signs, markings, signals	70%	23%	48%	25%	3%	1%
Direction signs	68%	17%	51%	28%	4%	0%
Street lighting	66%	20%	45%	28%	5%	2%
Surface of cycle lanes	56%	8%	48%	33%	8%	3%
Cleanliness of the urban roads	56%	9%	46%	34%	8%	2%
Location of pedestrian crossings	55%	11%	44%	31%	11%	3%
Road sweeping	53%	11%	42%	33%	11%	3%
Public parking	52%	8%	44%	35%	10%	4%
Roading amenities, street furniture, bins, decorations	48%	9%	39%	41%	9%	1%
Surface of footpaths	44%	7%	37%	42%	11%	4%
Quality of the road construction	42%	9%	33%	39%	14%	5%
Surface of streets	34%	5%	28%	41%	20%	6%

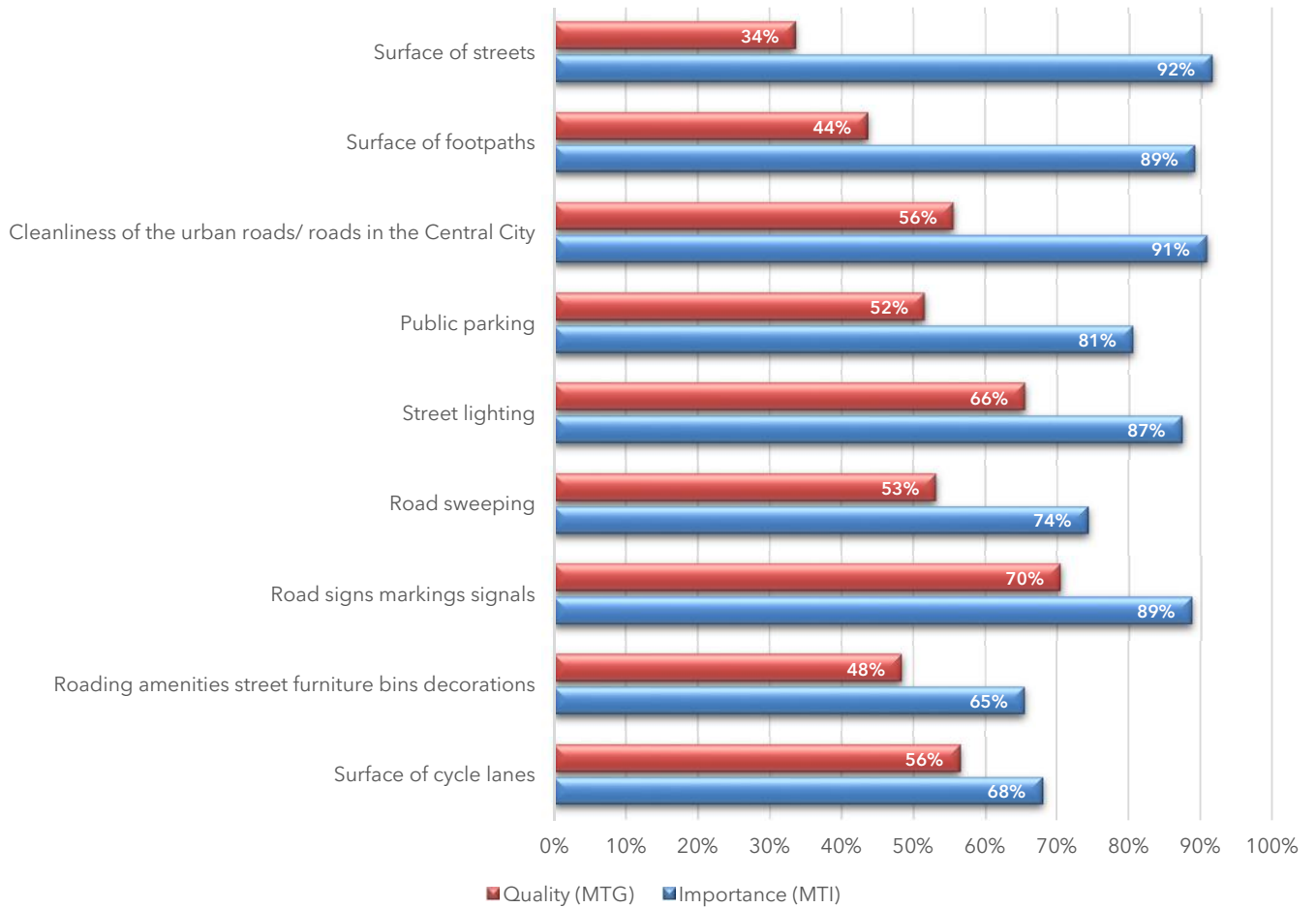
Figure 3.1 (overleaf) shows the importance (MTI) of roading services in the Central City relative to their perceived quality (MTG) rating for all of the roading services listed.

This makes it clear that the perceived quality of the service is lower than the perceived importance of that service. The greatest differences between importance and delivery of service within Central City roads were for:

- The surface of streets (92% importance vs. 34% quality);
- The surface of footpaths (89% importance vs. 44% quality);
- Cleanliness of urban roads and roads in the Central City (91% importance vs. 56% quality); and
- Public parking (81% importance vs. 52% quality).

These results show that the perceived quality of the roading in the Central City is not meeting respondent's perceived importance of those services. These are areas of roading that ICC could improve.

**Figure: 3:1 Importance vs. Quality of Central City Roads**



### 3.4 Urban Roads

Invercargill’s urban roads were also rated on a 5-point Likert scale, where 1 = very poor, 3 = average, and 5 = very good. To make these results easier to interpret, a composite ‘more than good’ (MTG) score was calculated.

The quality of the ‘effectiveness of roundabouts in managing traffic flow’ was rated highest (76%), followed by direction signs, road signs, markings, signals and public parking (57% - 65% MTG; Table 3.4).

The quality of road construction (34%) and the surface of streets were rated the lowest (30%).

**Table 3.4: Condition of Urban Roads**

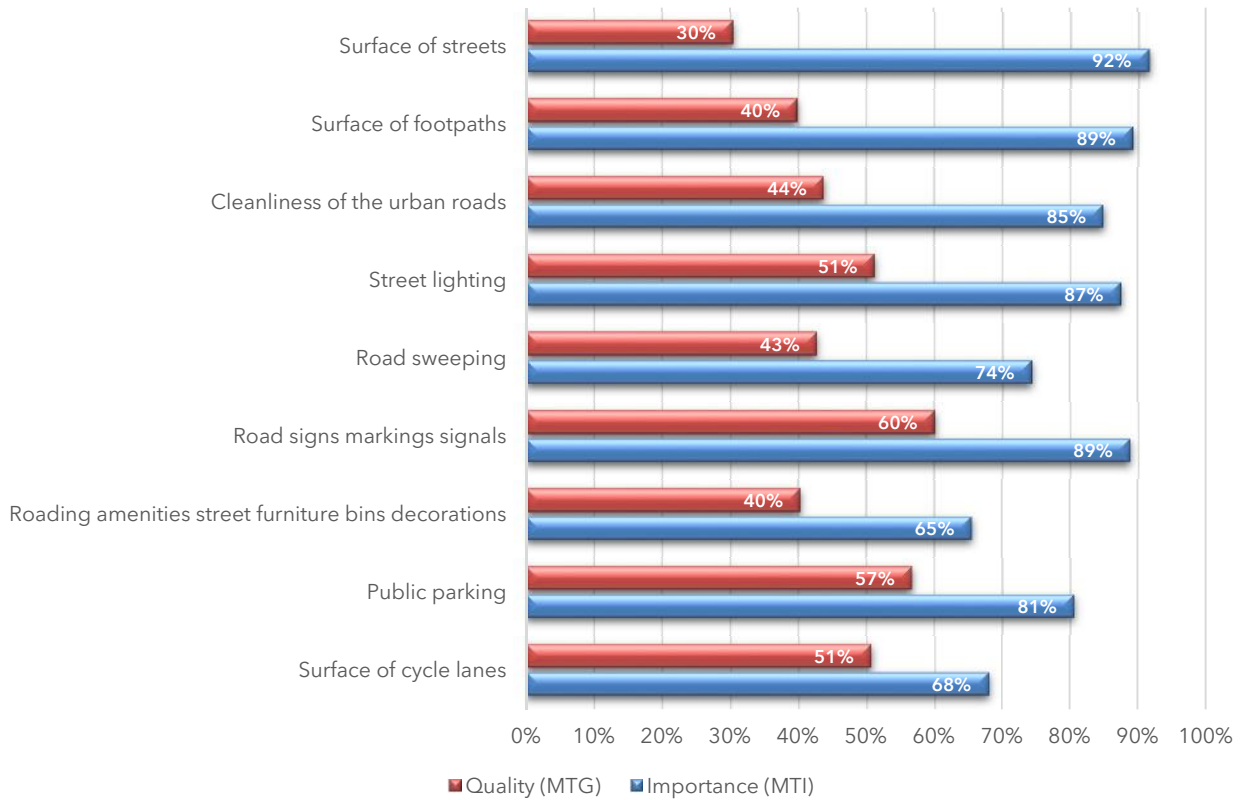
Aspect of Urban Roads	MTG	Very Good	Good	Average	Poor	Very Poor
Effectiveness of roundabouts in managing traffic flow	76%	27%	49%	19%	4%	1%
Direction signs	65%	14%	51%	31%	3%	1%
Road signs, markings, signals	60%	14%	46%	35%	3%	2%
Public parking	57%	10%	47%	34%	7%	2%
Street lighting	51%	12%	39%	33%	14%	2%
Location of pedestrian crossings	51%	7%	44%	37%	9%	3%
Surface of cycle lanes	51%	8%	43%	36%	10%	3%
Cleanliness of the urban roads	44%	7%	37%	42%	11%	4%
Road sweeping	43%	8%	35%	41%	13%	4%
Roading amenities, street furniture, bins, decorations	40%	6%	35%	41%	15%	3%
Surface of footpaths	40%	5%	35%	41%	13%	6%
Quality of the road construction	34%	6%	28%	44%	16%	6%
Surface of streets	30%	4%	26%	42%	23%	5%

The following graph shows the importance (MTI) of roading services on urban roads relative to their perceived quality (MTG) rating. Figure 3.2 (overleaf) shows that the elements of urban roads listed were rated higher in terms of importance rather than quality. The greatest differences between perceived importance and delivery of service on urban roads were:

- The surface of streets (92% importance vs. 30% quality);
- The surface of footpaths (89% importance vs. 40% quality);
- The cleanliness of urban roads (85% importance vs. 44% quality); and
- Street lighting (87% importance vs. 51% quality).

These results show that the perceived quality of the urban roading is not meeting respondent's perceived importance of those services. This gives ICC an indication of the areas that they could improve.

**Figure: 3:2 Importance vs. Quality of Urban Roads**



### 3.5 Rural Roads

Invercargill’s rural roads were rated on a 5-point Likert scale, where 1 = very poor, 3 = average, and 5 = very good. To make these results easier to interpret, a composite ‘more than good’ (MTG) score has been calculated.

Rural roads were rated highest for direction signs (61% MTG) and lowest for the cleanliness, quality of construction and surface of rural roads (31% to 37% MTG; Table 3.5).

**Table 3.5: Condition of Rural Roads**

Aspect of Rural Roads	MTG	Very Good	Good	Average	Poor	Very Poor
Direction signs	61%	11%	50%	32%	6%	1%
Effectiveness of managing traffic flow	57%	7%	50%	37%	4%	2%
Road signs and markings	56%	9%	47%	39%	5%	0%
Cleanliness of the rural roads	37%	5%	33%	48%	13%	1%
Quality of the road construction	32%	5%	26%	46%	17%	6%
Surface of roads	31%	4%	27%	45%	17%	7%

### 3.6 Perception of Roads in Area

Respondents were asked to rate the condition of the roads in their part of the city (i.e., Invercargill, Otatarata, or Bluff) compared with roads in other parts of the city. Roads in Invercargill were, in general, rated the same (49%) or better (37%) than in other parts of the city. The roads in Otatarata were either rated the same (48%) or worse (44%) than roads in other parts of the region, while roads in Bluff tended to be rated worse (50%).

**Table 3.6: Roads in Area Compared with Roads in Other Parts of City**

	Invercargill	Bluff	Otatarata	Total
Much better	15%	11%	4%	13%
A little better	22%	17%	4%	20%
Same	49%	22%	48%	48%
A little worse	9%	11%	25%	11%
Much worse	5%	39%	19%	8%



### 3.7 Roading Features

Respondents were asked whether they had any specific issues with roundabouts or pedestrian crossings (Table 3.7). They were then asked to identify the location where needs were not met (Table 4.8).

Almost a quarter (23%) of residents had issues with roundabouts. Almost half of all issues to do with roundabouts centred on the Elles Rd/ Tweed St, Queens Drive/ Herbert St and Tay St/ Racecourse Rd/ Rockdale Rd roundabouts.

**Table 3.7: Issues with Roading**

	Have Issues	Do Not Have Issues
Roundabouts	23%	77%
Pedestrian Crossings	32%	68%

**Table 3.8: Location of Roundabout Issues**

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Elles Rd/ Tweed St	39	26%
Queens Drive/ Herbert St	17	11%
Tay St/ Racecourse Rd/ Rockdale Rd	15	10%
All/ Unspecified	12	8%
Tweed St	11	7%
Herbert St	7	5%
Tweed St/ Clyde Rd	7	5%
The Crescent	6	4%
Other	59	40%

Almost a third (32%) of residents had issues with pedestrian crossings. Among this group, 89% of issues with pedestrian crossings occurred with crossings in Tay St, Dee St and Windsor St.

**Table 3.9: Location of Pedestrian Crossing Issues**

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Tay St	77	38%
Dee St	53	26%
Windsor St	50	25%
Queens Drive	14	7%
Near Troopers Memorial	14	7%
Crossings near roundabouts	14	7%
Tweed St	9	4%
King St	9	4%
Other	68	33%

Respondents were asked whether Invercargill’s roads met the needs of individuals with disabilities. Table 3.10 shows that most (83%) residents said Invercargill’s roads did meet the needs of individuals with disabilities however some (17%) said they did not. Few were able to specify which roads did not (Table 3.11).

**Table 3.10: Accessibility for People with Disabilities**

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Invercargill’s roads DO meet the needs of individuals with disabilities	435	83%
Invercargill’s roads do NOT meet the needs of individuals with disabilities	91	17%

**Table 3.11: Location of Roads Not Meeting the Needs of Individuals of Disabilities**

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Unspecified	54	59%
Gala St	4	4%
Esk St	4	4%
Other	45	33%

### 3.8 Invercargill City Council’s Roading Service

Respondents were asked to rate ICC’s roading service. Opinion was divided as to the quality of the ICC’s service delivery. The results show that (Table 3.12, overleaf):

- The ICC was rated highest for ‘overall improvement to roading in the last three years’ (44%), but 39% were in the neutral category.
- While 38% rated ICC’s responsiveness to complaints as good or very good, a further 39% rated them poor or very poor.
- Under half (45%) rated the value for money of the roading service in the ‘neutral’ category, with 33% rating this aspect as good and 22% rating it as poor.
- The ICC was rated lowest for consultation with residents about roading services (45% poor and 30% neutral).

**Table 3.12: Performance of ICC’s Roading Service**

ICC’s Roading Service	MTG	Very Good	Good	Average	Poor	Very Poor
Overall improvement to roading services in the last three years	44%	9%	35%	39%	12%	6%
Responsiveness to complaints	38%	10%	28%	23%	18%	21%
Value for money for roading service (Average residential rate per year \$260)	33%	6%	28%	45%	16%	6%
Consultation with residents about roading services	24%	4%	20%	30%	30%	15%

Respondents were asked how long it should take ICC to fix the problem, should a road maintenance problem is reported. Table 3.13 shows those three quarters felt road maintenance problems should be resolved within three days.

**Table 3.13: Time it Should Take to Fix a Problem**

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
1 day	79	12%
2 days	164	26%
3 days	221	35%
4 days	100	16%
5 or more days	73	11%

Respondents were asked for any additional comments regarding the ICC roading service. 216 people responded to this question. Responses were varied (Table 3.14, overleaf). One in four comments were about the quality of the roads, or the roads containing potholes. One in ten comments related to the negative effects of roadworks.

**Table 3.14: Additional Comments about Roading Services**

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Roads are patchy/ rough/ poor quality	36	17%
Potholes	17	8%
Doing a good job	14	6%
Faster response to issues	11	5%
Poor time management by contractors	11	5%
Better planning of road works/ layout	11	5%
Debris on roads/ Cycle lane (i.e. glass)	10	5%
Reworking same areas of roading too often	8	4%
Road markings of poor quality	7	3%
Need public consultation on changes in roads	7	3%
Enforce rules/ maintenance	6	3%
Traffic lights needed at some intersections	6	3%
Lack of/ poor quality footpaths	6	3%
Work on high traffic areas in evenings	6	3%
More cycle lanes	5	2%
Better provision for heavy traffic	5	2%
Retime traffic lights	5	2%
Curbing choice hazardous	4	2%
Lack of co-ordination between departments	4	2%
Narrow roads	4	2%
Need to return to 2 lane streets	3	1%
Too many roadworks at the same time	3	1%
Unevenly distributed road quality - North is better than South, Otatara is neglected	3	1%
More roundabouts	3	1%
More speed bumps	3	1%
Easier/ Well publicised access to reporting issues	2	1%
Poor lighting	2	1%
Other	14	6%