

Marguerita Street Traffic management and safety improvement consultation

Frequently Asked Questions:

This sheet answers some of the questions we have heard from the community.

To give feedback please visit www.rotorualakescouncil.nz/letstalk

Why is Council considering making changes to Marguerita Street?

As part of its role in managing the local road network, Council continuously monitors traffic load, types, behaviours, and the impacts on surrounding neighbourhoods. There are a number of reasons that Council is consulting the community about the proposed changes. They include safety, speed, parking issues and damage to nearby buildings from the vibrations caused by heavy vehicles.

What has changed?

Council has heard concerns from residents in the area for a number of years regarding the mixed traffic use of Marguerita Street. Within the last 10 years, Rotorua's population has grown by almost 6000 people, increasing the number of motorists on the roads. The local commercial industry has also seen a large increase meaning the number, and size of heavy vehicles on the road is significantly more than a decade ago. The soil in the area is also considered 'soft' being made up largely of pumice. This causes vibrations by large traffic to be amplified within buildings and, in some cases, the vibrations have caused damage to properties.

What process has council been through to get to this point?

A report was prepared using monitoring and traffic modelling data from Marguerita Street. Speed data was captured and traffic modelling produced an estimate of potential impacts on alternative streets should Marguerita Street be closed as a through-road. The report also included three options for traffic management and safety improvements. Earlier this year in February, the report was presented to elected members. It was their instruction to consult with the wider community to get the public's feedback so they could make informed decisions about the future management of the street.

How could changes to Marguerita Street affect other roads/streets nearby?

Traffic modelling data has suggested that a closure would most likely affect Sala Street and Sophia Street by increasing the traffic that would use these routes. Given Sala Street's status as a State Highway which currently carries approximately 20,000 vehicles per day, the effect would most likely be unnoticeable however, the increase on Sophia Street would be noticeable. Traffic modelling is an estimate and can only predict the potential changes to traffic movements. It cannot predict how people may change their behaviour and the route they choose to take as an alternative. Any changes to traffic flow would need to be managed by Rotorua Lakes Council and possibly NZ Transport Agency if it affected a State Highway.

How would option 3 affect traffic flow onto Te Ngae Road?

Should elected members decide to proceed with option 3, traffic flow onto Te Ngae Road is likely to reduce. Traffic monitoring shows that 70% of the traffic is through-traffic. This means traffic exiting onto State Highway 30/Te Ngae Road could be at a slightly lower level to what it is now. NZ Transport Agency are also working on a plan to upgrade State Highway 30/Te Ngae Road, which includes safety improvements to side roads and intersections.

Sala Street is already busy – won't option 3 make it worse?

On average, the daily load for Marguerita Street is between 4300 and 5319 vehicles. As a State Highway, Sala Street carries approximately 20,000 vehicles a day. The potential impact of additional vehicles on Sala Street would be similar to its current vehicle load and type. Council is also working with NZ Transport Agency to enhance the urban State Highway routes around Rotorua to improve safety for all users.

Who has Council consulted so far?

Council has heard from residents and a number of businesses. Letters were hand delivered to both residential and commercial properties on Monday 29 June 2020. We are now working through a process to engage with those residents and businesses who have not yet provided feedback, as well as the wider community.

When will a decision be made?

Feedback closes 31 July 2020. Once all feedback has been received and collated, a report will be prepared to go to Council for their consideration. The final decision will be made by the full Council before the end of the year.

What has happened so far to improve safety?

Council has responded to safety concerns in the interim with improved signage and road markings to give the impression of a narrow road, which encourages lower speeds. Parking enforcement has also been active in the area and Council is arranging for barriers to be added to grass verges at the residential end of the street, which will help to reduce the instances of illegal parking on Marguerita Street.

What is the average speed for Marguerita Street?

Council undertook a period of traffic speed counts. The data suggested that on average, traffic travels within the posted speed limit of 50km/hr. It was found that 15% of vehicles exceeded the speed limit.

Traffic monitoring data

Traffic Load

Marguerita Street	Average Daily Load	% Commercial
Fenton Street End	4302	7
Hilda Street	4840	8
Te Ngae Road End	5319	9

An estimate based on the number of dwellings would suggest that approximately 70% of the traffic at the Fenton Street end is through traffic.

Speed

Marguerita Street	Average Speed km/hr	85 th % Speed km/hr	Max Recorded km/hr
Fenton Street End	43.3	49.0	76.4
Hilda Street	49.0	54.7	89
Te Ngae Road End	36.7	42.8	88

The above data suggests that on average traffic travels within the speed limit of 50km/hr. The 85% speed means that 15% of vehicles are exceeding this speed.

Safety Record

Marguerita Street Safety Record over the last 10 years is as follows:

Crash Type	Number	Injury
Loss of Control	5	0
Crossing/Turning	4	3
Rear End	3	0

A crash rate of 12 in 10 years is considered reasonably significant. The majority of the crashes were around peak times, with loss of control and turning movements the predominant causes. No indication that speed is a significant factor.

Sadly, there has also been one fatality from a vehicle incident on Hilda Street earlier this year.