



What we heard

Feedback on the Draft National Infrastructure Plan

New Zealand Infrastructure commission / Te Waihanga

Te Waihanga seeks to transform infrastructure for all New Zealanders. By doing so our goal is to lift the economic performance of Aotearoa and improve the wellbeing of all New Zealanders.

We are an autonomous Crown entity, listed under the Crown Entities Act 2004, with an independent board. We were established by the New Zealand Infrastructure Commission/Te Waihanga Act 2019 on 25 September 2019. Information on the Commission is available at www.tewaihanga.govt.nz/

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National Infrastructure Plan

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Executive summary

1. About the draft National Infrastructure Plan

New Zealand's infrastructure is ageing, our population is growing and getting older, and climate change is intensifying exposure to natural hazards. Over the next 30 years we will need to renew much of the infrastructure we already have, invest to meet new demands, and make sure every dollar delivers the greatest possible value.

In June 2025, Te Waihanga released the **draft National Infrastructure Plan** – a practical, long-term roadmap to meet these challenges, informed by sector feedback and conversations with communities around New Zealand. Building directly on our **2022 Infrastructure Strategy** and incorporating the National Infrastructure Pipeline and our Forward Guidance on sustainable investment levels, the draft Plan set out 19 recommendations under four themes:



Establish Affordable and Sustainable Funding

Clear the Way for Infrastructure

Start with Maintenance

Right-size New Investment

Between 25 June and 6 August 2025, we asked New Zealanders and the infrastructure sector for their views on the draft Plan and received **2,705 responses**. Feedback was received through a nationally representative survey, an open public survey, and written submissions. This report summarises what we heard.

2. Key themes identified in the feedback

Overall sentiment strongly supported the direction of the draft National Infrastructure Plan and its recommendations. Respondents consistently highlighted several shared priorities:

- A long-term, evidence-based system is essential:** Respondents highlighted the importance of investment decisions being informed by robust, high-quality data and aligned with the public interest and New Zealanders' long-term needs. Political short-termism was widely seen as a key barrier to progress.
- Spend better before spending more:** Respondents supported prioritising maintenance, renewals, and improved asset management. Many were surprised these fundamentals were not standard practice. They wanted assurance that New Zealand's infrastructure investment system is delivering value for money – that we are looking after what we have first and investing in the most cost-effective solutions.
- Funding must be fair, stable, and affordable:** While there was a high level of overall support for the best practice pricing principles suggested in the Plan, some respondents raised concerns around implementing a user-pays approach for network infrastructure. Submissions stressed the

need to ensure lower-income and remote households have equitable access to core services to avoid regressive impacts.

4. **Coordination across the system must improve:** Feedback highlighted the need for stronger alignment across central government. Respondents emphasised the importance of spatial planning for improving coordination, and the need to balance clear national direction and leadership with meaningful regional and community input on priorities, decision-making, and local needs.
5. **Greater transparency and accountability are an important priority:** Submitters wanted better visibility and improved transparency around project and provider performance, clearer reporting, and stronger learning from past investments.
6. **Long-term challenges arising from trends such as the ageing population and climate change must be considered upfront:** Respondents called for better long-term planning to prepare for different possible futures. Some also called for a more considered, less reactive, approach to risks and hazards.

Alongside these shared themes, some respondents suggested making the recommendations in the draft Plan clearer and more actionable and using less technical language.

Submissions also highlighted areas of concern, largely centred on risks associated with how recommendations could be implemented. Common themes included the need to:

1. Avoid excessive bureaucracy or cost from any new processes.
2. Prevent unfair cost shifts onto those least able to pay.
3. Ensure environmental, social and community outcomes are considered alongside speed and efficiency.
4. Avoid political short-termism, although some submitters were sceptical this could ever be fully achieved.

3. Next steps

Feedback received during the consultation period directly shaped the final National Infrastructure Plan. For a full summary of what changed and why from the draft to the final Plan, refer to the Infrastructure Commission website. The Commission presented the Plan to the Government in December 2025, with a response due before the middle of 2026.

How we heard from New Zealanders

Our methodology

Between **25 June and 6 August 2025**, Te Waihanga gathered a wide range of views from New Zealanders on the draft National Infrastructure Plan. Our engagement approach was designed to ensure both breadth and representativeness, combining statistically robust survey data with detailed sector perspectives and open public input.

In total, we received **2,705 pieces of feedback**, comprising:

- **1,001 online survey responses** from a **nationally representative¹ sample** of New Zealanders, drawn from a balanced online panel reflecting New Zealand's demographic and geographic diversity.
- **1,557 public responses** to an **online survey**, which was promoted through our website, newsletter, and social media.
- **122 written submissions**, 107 from organisations, including representative and peak body groups, local and central government, and iwi, along with 15 from members of the public.
 - **30 organisations** chose to make their submission via the **survey** (five of which also made a written submission).

Using these channels together meant we could capture a broad and diverse set of perspectives from expert stakeholders and everyday New Zealanders. Respondents were asked to rate their agreement with each of the Plan's four themes and 19 recommendations on a five-point scale ("Strongly agree" to "Strongly disagree", plus "Don't know" and "Not sure"). Respondents were also invited to provide written feedback for each recommendation, allowing them to explain or contextualise their rating, including any conditions or assumptions.

To ensure the survey was accessible, we used plain-language summaries and visuals drawn directly from the draft Plan so people could give informed feedback without needing to read the full technical document. This document uses the plain-language names for the 19 recommendations and shows how they relate to the more formal recommendations in the draft Plan. The online and representative surveys asked identical questions, allowing the results to be compared. Bespoke written submissions typically offered more detailed perspectives, including identifying potential gaps and concerns as well as sector-specific priorities, risks, and practical considerations for implementing recommendations.

See Appendix D for examples of the survey and submission form.

This report presents a summary and analysis of the feedback received.

¹ This sample closely matched the regional distribution and demographic profile of the adult New Zealand population based on gender, ethnicity, age, region, and income

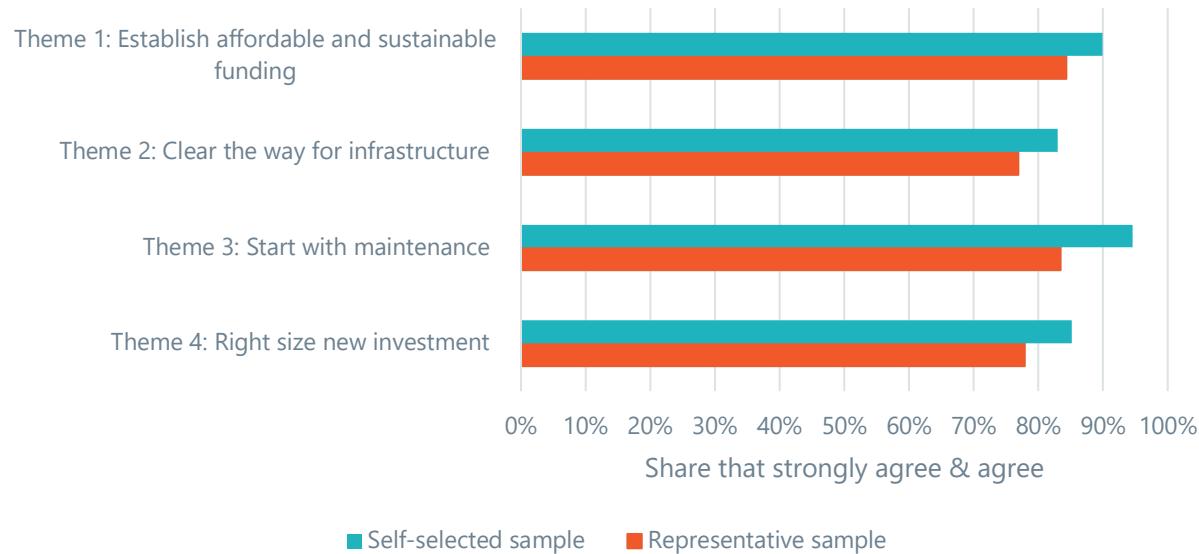
Overview of results

How to read the results

Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with each of the four draft themes and 19 draft recommendations on a five-point scale ranging from “**Strongly agree**” to “**Strongly disagree**”.

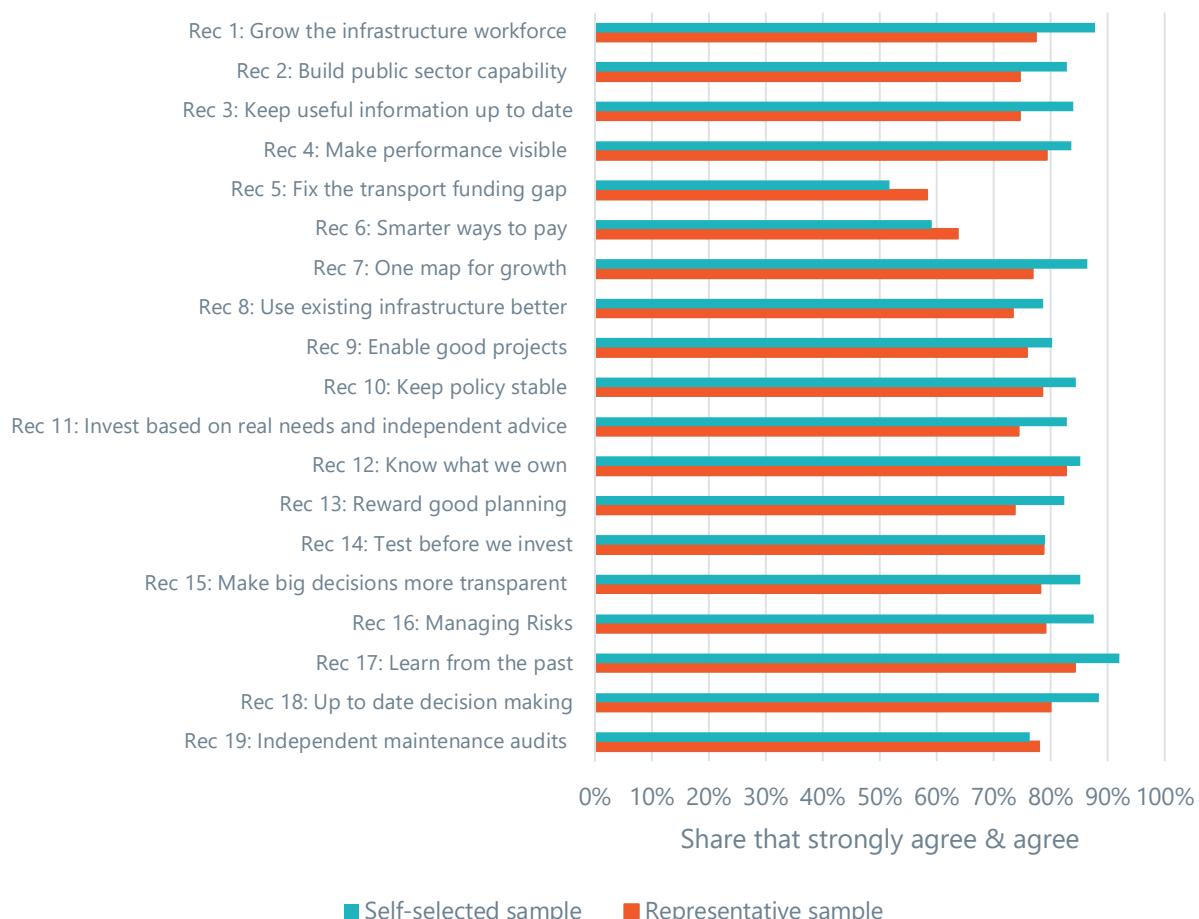
Figure 1: Agreement (%) with the four draft themes **Figures 1 and 2** show the combined proportion of respondents who selected “Agree” or “Strongly agree” for each theme and recommendation.

Figure 1: Agreement (%) with the four draft themes



Note: Orange bars represent the nationally representative sample (n=1,001), weighted to match New Zealand’s population by age, gender, ethnicity, income, and region. This gives the most reliable picture of broader public sentiment. Blue bars represent the open self-selected survey (n=1,557), which includes a higher proportion of people with professional or personal interest in infrastructure. All subsequent figures in this report show representative sample results only, as these provide the clearest indication of wider public sentiment.

Figure 2: Agreement (%) with the 19 draft recommendations



Note: Orange bars represent the nationally representative sample (n=1,001), weighted to match New Zealand's population by age, gender, ethnicity, income, and region. This gives the most reliable picture of broader public sentiment. Blue bars represent the open self-selected survey (n=1,557), which includes a higher proportion of people with professional or personal interest in infrastructure. All subsequent figures in this report show representative sample results only, as these provide the clearest indication of wider public sentiment.

Feedback at a glance

Across all feedback channels, agreement with the draft National Infrastructure Plan's four themes and 19 recommendations was consistently strong. On average, 77% of respondents in the nationally representative sample and 82% of respondents in the open public survey agreed with the recommendations. Fourteen recommendations received more than 75% agreement, with those relating to transparency, learning from past projects, and strengthening core asset management disciplines getting particularly high levels of support

Two recommendations received lower than average levels of support in both survey samples – although they still had support from the majority of respondents:

- **Recommendation 5: Fix the transport funding gap:** 58% agreement in the representative sample.
- **Recommendation 6: Smarter ways to pay (expanded user-pays tools):** 64% agreement in the representative sample.

These were the only two recommendations to fall below 70% support among the wider public. They also attracted by far the strongest and most consistent concerns, which were overwhelmingly focused on affordability, fairness, and the risk of disproportionately burdening lower income households.

While many respondents agreed that those who use and directly benefit from network infrastructure should contribute more, they felt that any new charges or funding tools must be carefully designed to:

- Keep essential services accessible and affordable, especially for those with potential accessibility issues (such as lower-income, rural, and vulnerable households).
- Allocate costs so that higher-impact, heavier, and wealthier users (e.g. heavy vehicles, developers, high-use/impact industries) pay a fair share.
- Reflect the true social and environmental costs (and benefits) of use, rather than shifting costs onto the general taxpayer or disadvantaged groups.
- Be paired with robust multi-year funding arrangements and strong safeguards.

Overarching themes across all groups

Feedback across all channels shared several consistent themes and priorities:

Taking a long-term, stable and needs-based approach to investment was the most consistently shared view across all sources of feedback. Respondents stressed that New Zealand's infrastructure decisions must be guided by long-term evidence and public need, not short-term political pressures. Political instability and policy shifts were frequently cited as the biggest obstacles to sustained progress. Many submitters called for independent, high-quality data and cross-party consensus to provide greater certainty and confidence for investors, councils, and communities.

Across all feedback sources, there was a clear desire for **efficiency and value for money**. Respondents supported a system where providers deliver better outcomes from existing resources before seeking new funding. This ties closely with widespread calls for improved asset management and maintenance, with many expressing surprise that themes and recommendations such as **Start with maintenance** and **Know what we own** were needed, viewing these as fundamental principles of good infrastructure management.

On funding and financing, respondents widely supported the Plan's best practice pricing principles as a way to ensure **sustainable and equitable funding systems**. They emphasised the need to ensure user-pays principles for network infrastructure accounted for fairness and affordability. While many agreed that direct users and beneficiaries should contribute, there was strong caution against overly rigid or regressive funding mechanisms – particularly where essential services or lower-income communities could be disproportionately affected.

To guard against this, submitters expressed support for funding models with higher contributions from heavy users or commercial interests, protections for vulnerable households, and charges that reflect the true costs of use. There was also broad support for multi-year funding, paired with robust processes and safeguards, to improve delivery certainty and avoid the disruption of annual Budget cycles.

There was strong support for **system-level coordination and alignment**, particularly between central and local government. Respondents highlighted the importance of mechanisms such as spatial planning and regional collaboration to ensure national priorities reflect local realities. Some called for a better balance between national consistency and local responsiveness, with decisions informed by community and iwi perspectives.

Transparency and accountability were also identified as essential characteristics of an enduring system. Respondents supported regular public reporting, performance measurement, and updates to the National Infrastructure Pipeline. Clearer information on how projects are prioritised, funded, and evaluated was seen as key to maintaining public trust. Many suggested stronger post-completion review

processes and disclosure requirements to ensure lessons are learned and investment decisions remain transparent over time.

Respondents noted the need for long-term planning that recognises how future conditions will differ from today. **Flood management, natural hazard planning, and understanding system**

interdependencies were identified as important areas of focus, particularly by sector and regional government respondents.

Refinements and cautions

While feedback across groups was generally consistent, a small number of recurring differences in emphasis and approach were identified. These do not indicate fundamental disagreement but reflect differing perspectives on how best to achieve shared goals.

- **Centralisation versus local decision-making:** Tension between maintaining national consistency and evidence-based advice, and ensuring decisions remain responsive to local needs and conditions.
- **Independence and accountability of advice:** Several respondents questioned how independent advice would be reviewed or validated to remain free from political or commercial influence. Others cautioned that additional oversight could risk duplication, add costs and blur lines of accountability.
- **Scope and fairness of user-pays model:** While there was broad support for user-pays principles, submitters held differing views on how far this should extend and what sectors it may be suitable for.
- **Approach to assurance and risk management:** General support for stronger assurance processes, but mixed views on how prescriptive or proportionate these should be.
- **Energy transition and pragmatism:** Split perspectives on how quickly to transition to renewables. Some called for accelerated investment in low-emission energy systems, while others emphasised the need to maintain reliability and cost stability.

Overall, the feedback confirms that New Zealanders want an infrastructure system that is long-term, fair, transparent, and resilient – one that balances efficiency with equity and stability with adaptability.

From consultation to Plan development

We heard clear support for the overall direction of the draft Plan, along with feedback on specific areas where it needed to be developed further and made more practical and transparent. We have used this feedback – alongside updated data, further sector engagement, and ongoing technical work – to refine and strengthen the final Plan. We listened, and the final Plan is materially different as a result.

To inform this process, we created a comprehensive change log capturing more than 1,000 pieces of specific feedback as suggestions, comments, and proposed actions from survey responses, written submissions, hui, and targeted engagement. Each suggestion was reviewed, triaged for relevance and feasibility, prioritised, and either actioned or carried forward for possible future work. This ensured every piece of feedback was systematically considered and transparently tracked.

For a full summary of why changes were made between the draft and the final National Infrastructure Plan, refer to the Infrastructure Commission website.

Detailed feedback analysis

For those who want to see the consultation findings in more depth, the appendices provide a detailed breakdown of the feedback that informed the final Plan. This includes quantitative results, qualitative insights, the full list of contributing organisations and the demographic characteristics of respondents.

- **Appendix A:** Detailed theme-by-theme and recommendation-by-recommendation analysis, including quantitative results for both surveys, key quotes, and differences between respondent groups.
- **Appendix B:** Full list of organisations that made written submissions.
- **Appendix C:** Demographic profile and weighting details for the nationally representative survey (all figures in the main report refer to this weighted sample).
- **Appendix D:** A copy of the survey and submission form that respondents filled out.

Appendix A – Detailed thematic analysis by theme and recommendation

In the draft National Infrastructure Plan, each recommendation was written in technical language intended for decision makers, infrastructure agencies, and sector specialists. For the public consultation, we rephrased these recommendations in plain English to make them more accessible to a wider audience.

This section links the two versions so that readers can see how the consultation questions align with the formal recommendations in the draft Plan.



Theme 1: Establish affordable and sustainable funding

The following five recommendations from the draft National Infrastructure Plan correspond to the **Establish affordable and sustainable funding** theme.

Recommendation 3: Sustainable Investment

Forward Guidance is refreshed through quarterly updates to the National Infrastructure Pipeline and ongoing updates to the Infrastructure Priorities Programme and the Infrastructure Needs Analysis.

Recommendation 5: Transport System Reform

The land transport funding gap is closed by requiring user charges to fully fund planned investment.

Recommendation 6: Funding Pathways

Funding tools are matched to asset type (user-pays for network infrastructure, commercial self-funding for economic-development assets, and tax funding for social infrastructure) to keep the overall capital envelope affordable. User-pricing principles are applied across all network sectors, so user charges fully fund investment, guide efficient use of networks and distribute the benefits of network provision.

Recommendation 11: Needs Based Government Investment

Fiscal strategy is informed by infrastructure investment and asset management planning and the New Zealand Infrastructure Commission's independent view of long-term needs.

Recommendation 13: Stable Central Government Funding

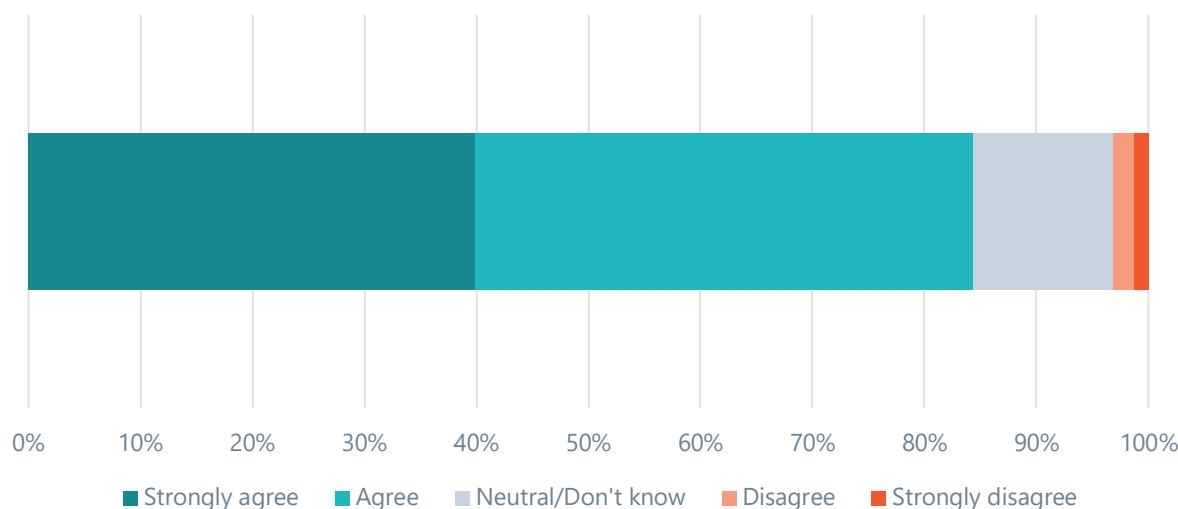
Multi-year Budget funding is available for central government agencies with strong planning, delivery and asset management practices.

For each recommendation, we show:

1. How the recommendation was described in the consultation – the question and context used in public engagement.
2. What people told us in relation to each recommendation.

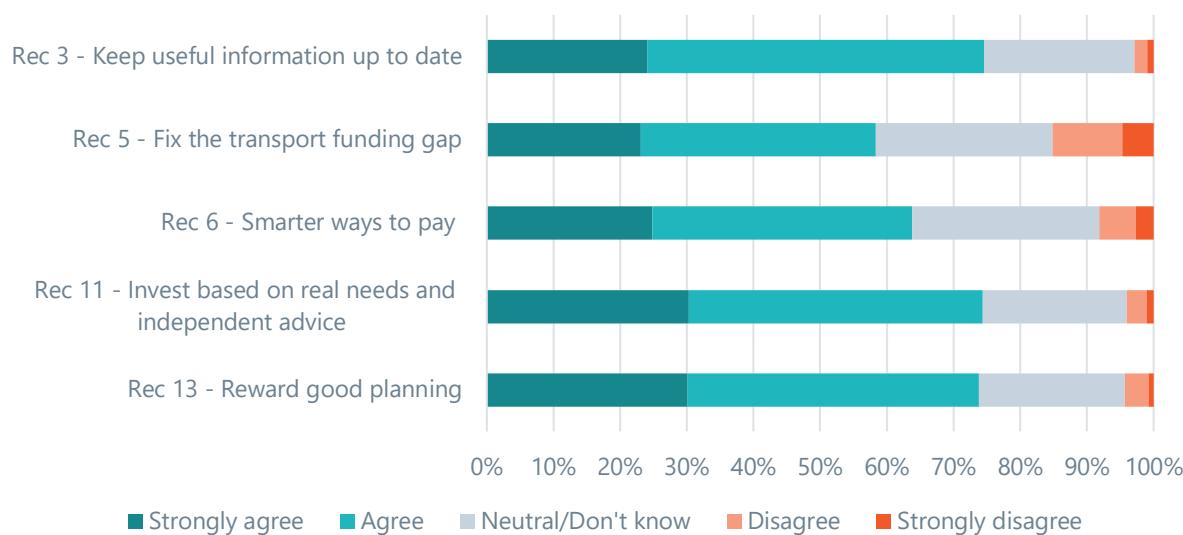
This approach helps ensure that the consultation findings can be clearly traced back to the formal recommendations in the draft Plan.

Figure 3: Agreement that Establishing affordable and sustainable funding is a priority for New Zealand (%)



When asked whether **Establishing affordable and sustainable funding** was a priority for New Zealand, 84% of respondents agreed, while 12% were neutral or unsure, and 3% disagreed. This indicates broad consensus across the representative sample of the importance of this theme for New Zealand's infrastructure system.

Figure 4: Agreement with theme one recommendations (%)



Across the representative sample, there was broad agreement with the theme one recommendations (58-75%), indicating strong support for improving how infrastructure is funded and prioritised in New Zealand.

The highest levels of agreement were for **Keeping useful information up to date** (75%) and **Investing based on real needs and independent advice** (74%), both of which reflect a desire for transparent, evidence-driven decision-making. Similarly, **Reward good planning** attracted 74% agreement, suggesting widespread recognition of the need for predictable investment settings.

While support remained high overall, recommendation 6 (**Smarter ways to pay**) and recommendation 5 (**Fix the transport funding gap**) recorded comparatively lower levels of agreement (64% and 58% respectively) and higher neutrality or disagreement (8% and 15%). This indicates that while respondents generally endorsed these principles, views may be more mixed or dependent on specific funding mechanisms and perceived fairness.

Overall, the results suggest strong consensus on the importance of information transparency and funding stability, alongside a moderate appetite for reforming how transport is funded and paid for.

Recommendation 3: Keep useful information up to date

What the draft Plan recommendation Sustainable investment said

Forward Guidance is refreshed through quarterly updates to the National Infrastructure Pipeline and ongoing updates to the Infrastructure Priorities Programme and the Infrastructure Needs Analysis.

How we described this in the consultation

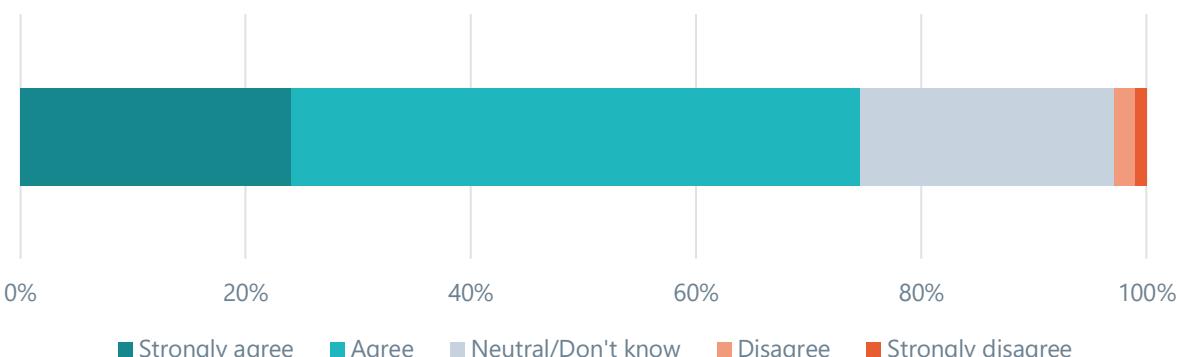
The challenge: Decision makers don't always have access to the information they need to make sure infrastructure investment is matched to New Zealanders' long-term needs in an affordable way.

Recommendation: Regularly update 'Forward Guidance' – long-term information about what New Zealanders need and where, which projects can best meet those needs in the most affordable way, and what infrastructure is in progress in the national 'pipeline' – so that decision makers have what they need to make well informed decisions.

We asked: To what extent do you agree that this recommendation will address this challenge? Is there anything missing in our approach?

What people told us

Figure 5: Agreement that the recommendation Keeping useful information up to date will address the challenge (%)



75% of our representative sample agreed or strongly agreed that keeping infrastructure information like our Forward Guidance forecasts up to date is important. This was seen as essential for ensuring investment decisions are well-informed, evidence-based, and aligned with long-term national needs.

Feedback from organisations, the representative panel, and self-selected participants shows strong overall alignment. While the level of detail varied, the three respondent groups shared the same broad view:

- **Organisations** tended to focus on technical systems – data standards, coordination, and reporting frameworks.
- **Representative-panel respondents** framed their feedback around fairness, efficiency, and good governance.
- **Self-selected participants** placed stronger emphasis on depoliticisation, independence, and transparency.

Despite these differences in tone, all groups sought the same outcome: reliable, publicly available information to support stable, well-sequenced investment decisions. Key themes are discussed below:

Infrastructure decisions should be based on long-term, reliable, and up-to-date information.

Respondents repeatedly emphasised that robust, current data is fundamental to effective decision-making.

"Future planning needs to ask the common population about what is needed, not bureaucrats"

– Representative panel survey respondent

"Forward guidance is sensible, but how the guidance is developed and by whom comes into question, as does how robust it remains during final decision-making processes for new projects."

– Self-selected survey respondent

"Achieving this requires timely and accurate information, and to ensure the relevant information is provided a standardised approach to reporting and costing should be implemented."

– *Private sector company*

"I agree very strongly that there is a need to constantly be updating your forward planning as circumstances often change, however I'm wary of the term "most affordable option" as this doesn't always equate to the most sustainable option-long term costs linked to quality and longevity also need to be considered."

– *Self-selected survey respondent*

Information should be transparent, accessible, and independent of political cycles.

Many respondents stressed that long-term infrastructure planning should be insulated from short-term political changes.

"Ensuring that advice is genuinely independent and transparent is essential."

– *Private sector company*

"Infrastructure decisions should never ever become either a political football or a vote gathering strategy"

– *Self-selected survey respondent*

"Make a plan and follow it through, albeit with updates. Once a plan is established with bipartisan approval, leave Government out of it. No more changes by newly elected Governments. Appointed experts in the field should carry out the plan and take responsibility. The NZ population deserves that."

– *Self-selected survey respondent*

Coordination, accountability, and strong asset management are needed.

Submissions from across the sector called for clearer links between information systems, Forward Guidance, and asset management. Many noted that data must be consistent across agencies to improve national coordination and performance monitoring.

"Include local input, plan for future scenarios, and ensure the information is transparent and regularly reviewed by an independent body."

– *Representative panel survey respondent*

"Accurate, reliable asset data (consistent and comparable across agencies) is going to be essential to inform strategic national decision making."

– *Central government agency*

"I like it, forward thinking can make people less likely to go for choices that are for instant gratification instead of long-term benefit"

– *Representative panel survey respondent*

A shared desire for continuity, stability, and efficiency.

Respondents across all groups highlighted that continuity across electoral cycles and consistent investment planning are critical to long-term value for money.

Across all respondent groups, there was clear consensus that keeping infrastructure information current, transparent, and publicly accessible should be a national priority. The feedback didn't emphasise the need for new systems, but on making better use of the information we already collect – and maintaining it over time to support long-term, stable infrastructure planning.

Recommendation 5: Fix the transport funding gap

What the draft Plan recommendation “Transport system reform” said

The land transport funding gap is closed by requiring user charges to fully fund planned investment. This recommendation would need to be implemented through policy and operational changes, which we are investigating further.

How we described this in the consultation

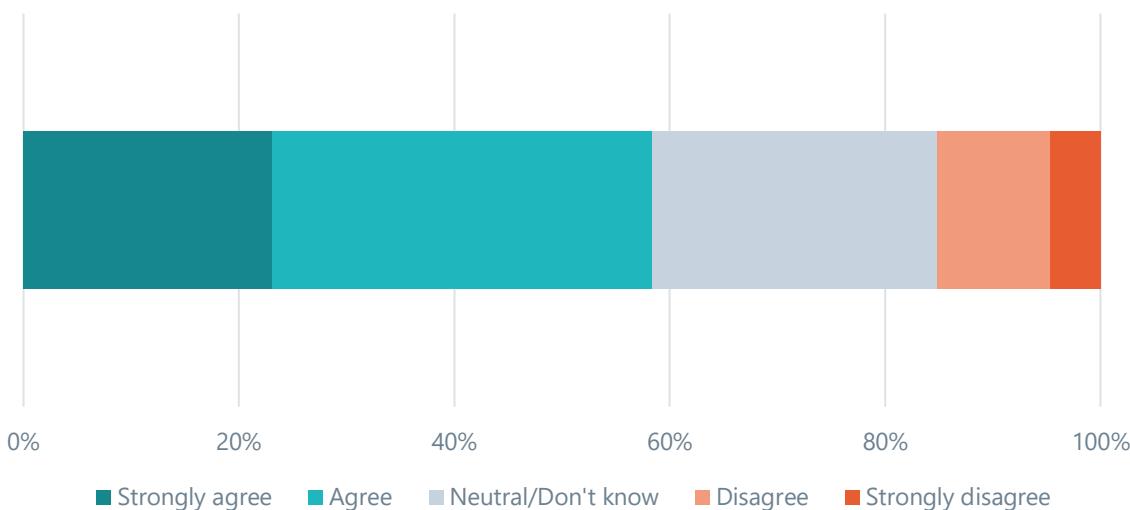
The challenge: Currently, the money that drivers pay through charges like fuel taxes doesn't actually cover the full cost of building and looking after our roads. The same is true for the rail network. The extra cost falls back on all taxpayers, leaving less money for other public goods and services.

Recommendation: Require that charges for using our roads and rail (e.g. fuel taxes, road user charges, congestion pricing) cover the cost of building and looking after them, making the land transport system self-sustaining.

We asked: To what extent do you agree that this recommendation will address this challenge? Is there anything missing in our approach?

What people told us

Figure 6: Agreement that the recommendation Fix the Transport Funding Gap will address the challenge (%)



Just over half (58%) of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the proposed approach would address this challenge, while about one-fourth were neutral and a smaller share disagreed.

The main difference lies in emphasis rather than direction. Organisations tended to focus on the mechanics of funding reform and system efficiency, while survey respondents were more likely to highlight affordability, fairness, and accountability concerns. Despite differences in emphasis, similar themes emerged among groups:

Transport funding must be sustainable and fair.

Across all feedback, there was agreement that New Zealand's current transport funding arrangements are financially unsustainable. Respondents widely supported reform to ensure the system can continue to sustainably fund ongoing maintenance and future improvements.

"We just pay so much tax in general and on everything already. I don't understand how the country constantly needs more and more money from our pockets."

– Representative panel survey respondent

"Unfortunately, this cost will go up but prefer to pay a small amount of additional tax if it means things actually get done. Should never have had tax cuts"

– Representative panel survey respondent

"The current underfunding of the land transport system is a significant constraint on both economic productivity and urban development, and resolving this funding gap is critical to unlocking future growth."

– Local government entity

"We agree that transport system reform is needed if public infrastructure funding is to be affordable and sustainable. We accept that in practice this means road user charges and rates will need to provide a greater proportion of land transport funding than is presently the case. However, we question whether full user-pays funding is realistic."

– *Advocacy organisation*

At the same time, respondents cautioned that any new or expanded funding model must remain affordable and equitable. Several noted that transport is an essential service and that cost increases could disproportionately affect low-income and rural communities.

"This will disadvantage rural northern and all South Island communities most."

– *Representative panel survey respondent*

"Any changes to road user charges or fuel taxes need to account for people in rural areas who rely heavily on vehicles because public transport options are limited or non-existent."

– *Representative panel survey respondent*

A user-pays funding approach is supported, but it must be balanced with public benefit.

There was widespread agreement that those who benefit directly from transport infrastructure should contribute to its costs – through tools such as road-user charges, tolling, or time-of-use charging. However, respondents across all groups emphasised that transport also delivers broader social, economic, and environmental benefits that justify continued public funding.

Many supported Crown co-investment for projects with national or inter-regional significance, such as resilience upgrades, freight corridors, and housing-enabling transport links.

"It's a good approach but should also consider affordability for users and support sustainable transport options."

– *Representative panel survey respondent*

"... we question whether a user-pays approach is capable of funding large-scale transport infrastructure projects, which have high costs but undoubtedly deliver inter-generational benefits."

– *Advocacy organisation*

"I agree in principle, but this is most relevant to roads. It's important to consider the wider benefits of specific transport modes (i.e. rail, cycling, walking) and how costing them may de-incentivise use, whereas ways of travelling like driving have significant disbenefits for wider society (road deaths, emissions, health, amenity). This is especially important when considering climate change."

– *Self-selected survey respondent*

A recurring suggestion – particularly from organisational and public submissions – was to ensure heavy vehicles contribute fairly to road maintenance and renewal costs, given their disproportionate wear on infrastructure. Respondents saw this as a practical way to make user-pays more equitable and efficient without placing additional strain on everyday road users.

Efficiency and transparency are critical for public confidence.

Across all groups, there was strong support for improving efficiency and accountability in how transport revenue is spent. Respondents stressed that the Government should spend more efficiently before charging more, with clearer oversight needed for procurement, cost control, and performance.

"That would fix the problem, but taxing people more because the government is incompetent doesn't really help the people, just spend the money effectively"

– Representative panel survey respondent

Public transport, rail, and environmental benefits should be recognised.

A number of public and organisational respondents felt that user-pays models should be balanced with ongoing public investment in public transport and rail, recognising broader benefits such as congestion and emissions reduction, as well as improved accessibility. This view was particularly strong among self-selected participants, who saw public transport subsidies as a necessary public good.

Recommendation 6: Smarter ways to pay

What the draft Plan recommendation “Funding pathways” said

Funding tools are matched to asset type (user-pays for network infrastructure, commercial self-funding for economic-development assets, and tax funding for social infrastructure) to keep the overall capital envelope affordable. User-pricing principles are applied across all network sectors so user charges fully fund investment, guide efficient use of networks and distribute the benefits of network provision.

How we described this in the consultation

The challenge: We usually try to collect the cost of network infrastructure, like transport, water, electricity, and telecommunications from the people who use or benefit from it through things like fuel taxes, rates and bills. But at the moment, this doesn't always work for roads, rail and water networks.

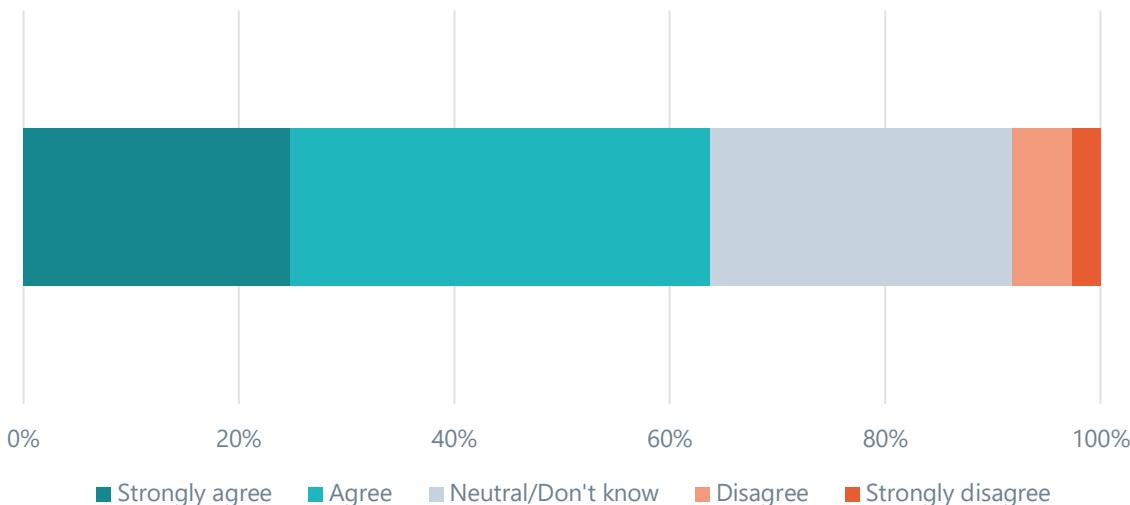
This means that money we collect through our general taxes is needed to top up the cost of things like roads and water pipes, when it could be used for social infrastructure like hospitals, schools, parks, and defence and justice facilities.

Recommendation: Take a more consistent approach to the way New Zealanders pay for network infrastructure (like roads and water) by making sure charges to users and those who benefit cover the costs. This means we'll have more money from general taxation for social infrastructure (like hospitals and schools).

We asked: To what extent do you agree that this recommendation will address this challenge? Is there anything missing in our approach?

What people told us

Figure 7: Agreement that the recommendation Smarter Ways to Pay will address the challenge (%)



Approximately 60% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that using user-pays models and targeted funding tools are important to ensure infrastructure is sustainably funded. However, this support was tempered by clear concerns about affordability, fairness and the potential for inequality if applied too rigidly.

Organisations tended to focus on technical design and implementation – ensuring funding tools are fit-for-purpose, linked to asset type, and supported by clear accountability mechanisms.

Representative-panel and self-selected respondents tended to emphasise the importance of fairness, inclusion, and the need to protect vulnerable households from additional financial pressure. These concerns were voiced most strongly by self-selected survey participants, who pointed to cost-of-living impacts, raised questions about the level of trust in Government, and called for more progressive taxation and accountability mechanisms.

Where there was clear consensus, all groups agreed that:

User-pays should form part of a broader, balanced funding model rather than the default.

Across all respondent groups, there was agreement that people and organisations who directly benefit from infrastructure should contribute proportionately to its cost. However, many stated that a pure user-pays system isn't viable across all sectors.

"Sustainable funding models must be fit-for-purpose and reflect asset type. Not all infrastructure fits a user-pays model."

– Individual written submission

"I'd need to know more on the breakdown of who pays in that model, and how much, but seems like the best idea so far."

– *Representative panel survey respondent*

"A pure user-pays funding model cannot fully apply in all network sectors; some element of public-good funding can be optimal over the longer term."

– *Sector group*

Many stressed that the user-pays model should be seen as a spectrum rather than a binary choice, with room for co-investment, subsidies, or cross-subsidisation where there are broader community or national benefits.

"Not every piece of network infrastructure needs to fully 'pay its own way'... cross-subsidisation should occur – for example, more densely populated areas should help to pay for network infrastructure in less densely populated areas."

– *Sector group*

"I am unsure about the validity of the binary division between network infrastructure and social infrastructure. Is there some value judgement? Is it the applicability and fairness of user pays in network vs social infrastructure. User pays is a good approach for all infrastructure, if it is affordable, fair/proportional and can ideally be reduced by user behaviour. Intergenerational cost and benefit has to be considered and seems to be a fair way to do this."

– *Self-selected survey respondent*

Fairness and affordability remain central.

Equity and access were the most frequently mentioned concerns across all groups. Many warned that applying user-pays too rigidly could disadvantage low-income households, rural communities, and smaller providers.

"An over-reliance on the user-pays model may impact affordability"

– *Sector group*

"But I do think these charges need to be looked at before being implemented because we have a population who are struggling to pay their bills, so any extra costs need to be seriously considered"

– *Representative panel survey respondent*

"Must be reasonable costings for users, particularly those with low incomes or as beneficiaries."

– *Representative panel survey respondent*

Both public and organisational submitters stressed that fairness also means holding large users and commercial actors accountable for the true costs they impose. Heavy vehicles, developers, and corporations were cited as groups that should pay a greater share of network costs.

Efficiency, transparency, and accountability are key.

Respondents across all audiences, but particularly representative and self-selected survey respondents, linked sustainable funding with efficient, transparent use of public money. There were repeated calls for the government to “spend better before charging more”, supported by clear reporting on where money goes and how it delivers value for communities.

“So many good ideas, but there is so much waste on all these infrastructure ideas, just look at the waste of roading and how many are standing around, cut out a couple, save the monies, companies put in their prices, well over what they need and still run over the budget, there should be a time limit and then cut off”

– *Representative panel survey respondent*

“Smarter funding must include smarter accountability. This means asking not just who pays, but who benefits – and whether that benefit is proportionate to their contribution.”

– *Iwi group*

Concerns about waste, inefficiency, and perceived lack of accountability in government spending were common across both survey samples, reinforcing the desire for transparency and performance reporting as part of any future funding reform.

Public–private partnerships seen as useful – but not without risk.

Several submissions acknowledged that public–private partnerships (PPPs) can unlock capital and expertise when applied with appropriate safeguards. Others, however, cautioned that poor design or oversight of PPPs could lead to inequitable outcomes or loss of public control.

“Public–private partnerships can be a good way for costs to be attributed to those that use the infrastructure, but independent risk and performance reviews are essential...”

– *Sector group*

Recommendation 11: Invest based on real needs and independent advice

What the draft Plan recommendation “Needs based government investment” said

Fiscal strategy is informed by infrastructure investment and asset management planning and the New Zealand Infrastructure Commission’s independent view of long-term needs.

How we described this in the consultation

The challenge: New Zealand often makes decisions about infrastructure based more on how much money we have available to spend each year, rather than on our long-term national needs. Our

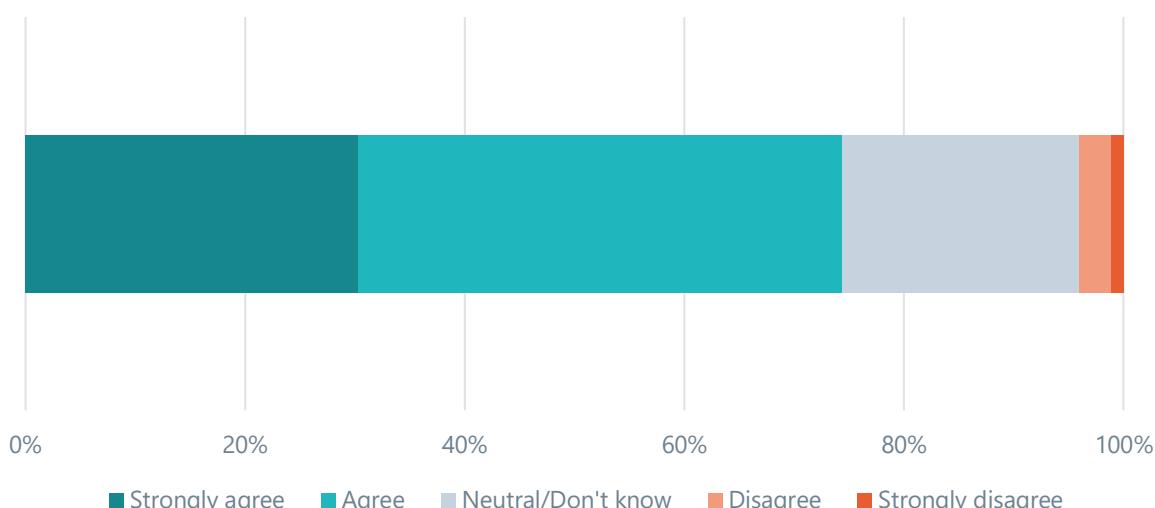
current approach means central government agencies' investment planning is divorced from what's affordable in the long run.

Recommendation: Use independent advice from the Infrastructure Commission to guide long-term budgeting, so that decisions about how much we can spend in the future are based on evidence of what New Zealand needs, to ensure we can invest the right amount in the right places, at the right time.

We asked: To what extent do you agree that this recommendation will address this challenge? Is there anything missing in our approach?

What people told us

Figure 8: Agreement that the recommendation Invest based on real needs and independent advice will address the challenge (%)



74% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that infrastructure investment should be based on clear assessment of needs and informed by independent advice. Despite subtle differences in tone, every group sought the same outcome: A transparent, evidence-based, and enduring infrastructure system that invests based on real need.

Organisations tended to focus on system design and process integrity, including embedding needs-based assessments into fiscal processes and ensuring advice is robust, validated, and technically sound.

Both survey panels emphasised the importance of accountability, fairness, and clear communication – wanting confidence that independent advice will be acted upon and not lost in bureaucracy. Concerns around political interference and consultant influence were strongest among self-selected participants who called for cross-party consensus and long-term depoliticised planning.

Across all groups, several consistent messages stand out:

Infrastructure investment should be based on credible, forward-looking evidence that supports continuity and stability.

Infrastructure investment should be based on a clear assessment of needs and informed by independent advice, rather than being driven by short-term budget cycles or political considerations. This approach was seen as essential for ensuring that resources are directed effectively, and that infrastructure development aligns with long-term national priorities.

"I'm surprised this isn't how the government decides how money is invested already."

– *Representative panel survey respondent*

"You have to plan and budget based on a long-term view. I am surprised that hasn't been the approach all along."

– *Representative panel survey respondent*

"In order to commit to holistic and co-ordinated long-term planning, the infrastructure sector and asset owners need certainty of funding and policy to plan, deliver, and maintain these assets appropriately."

– *Local government group*

Independent advice must be transparent, publicly available, and protected from political influence.

Respondents stressed that the credibility of this approach relies on the Infrastructure Commission's advice being both independent and transparent. Without this, submitters felt there remained a risk that advice could be ignored or shaped to political advantage. Several respondents recommended mechanisms for validating or reviewing the Commission's advice to safeguard its independence.

"This has to be independent of any sitting government and protected from sitting government's as they have a tendency to undo each other's work. That is a wasteful and damaging practice that needs to stop immediately, so any infrastructure commission has to sit outside of and parallel to the "house". Be untouchable and also empowered to enforce the true long-term plan."

– *Representative panel survey respondent*

"Ensuring that such advice is genuinely independent and transparent - prior to its presentation to Government - is essential"

– *Private sector company*

"Is there another independent organization that could assist the Infrastructure Commission by validating or reviewing their independent advice?"

– *Iwi group*

Decision-making should balance national consistency with local context, ensuring community needs are not overlooked.

While there was broad agreement on the value of independent advice, some respondents expressed concern that over-reliance on national-level advisors could lead to centralised decision-making and the marginalisation of local priorities. Councils, in particular, emphasised the importance of retaining local decision rights over projects that directly serve their communities.

"Make sure advice includes local voices and is reviewed regularly. Also, explain clearly how decisions are made and where the money is going."

– *Representative panel survey respondent*

"Honestly I feel like so much of our money is wasted on fancy infrastructure. If they went to the people or did local polls on whatever city they wanted the infrastructure built with a short timeline to reply I think they would get the best results on what would be real investment for our future."

– *Representative panel survey respondent*

"Council staff believe that local infrastructure decisions should be made at a local level, by organisations that are responsible to the local residents."

– *Local government entity*

"...we strongly support local decision-making in determining the prioritised order and location of both new infrastructure developments, and maintenance of existing assets. Central government direction must allow sufficient variation for regional and local application."

– *Local government group*

Long-term planning should be aligned through spatial and regional frameworks to link national priorities with local delivery.

Submissions also emphasised that needs-based investment must be integrated with spatial planning and grounded in the realities of local and regional growth. Respondents noted ongoing misalignment between national funding priorities and regional requirements, particularly in transport.

Many supported using spatial plans and proposed Regional Deals as mechanisms to align national fiscal strategy with local government investment. This integration was seen as essential to ensure infrastructure funding decisions reflect where growth, housing and economic opportunities will actually occur.

"More aligned planning for growth is critical and will enable more efficiencies with regards to investment prioritization."

– *Local government entity*

"There would need to be local as well as national input - not a top-down approach"

– *Self-selected survey respondent*

"Be good to see local, regional, central allocations of this"

– *Self-selected survey respondent*

Recommendation 13: Reward good planning

What the draft Plan recommendation Stable central government funding said

Multi-year Budget funding is available for central government agencies with strong planning, delivery and asset management practices. This recommendation should only be implemented following improvements to agency long-term asset management and investment planning that can be integrated into fiscal strategy and allowance decisions. It differs from the former Multi Year Capital Allowance which reflects the funding the Government has set aside to meet the costs of future capital investments.

How we described this in the consultation

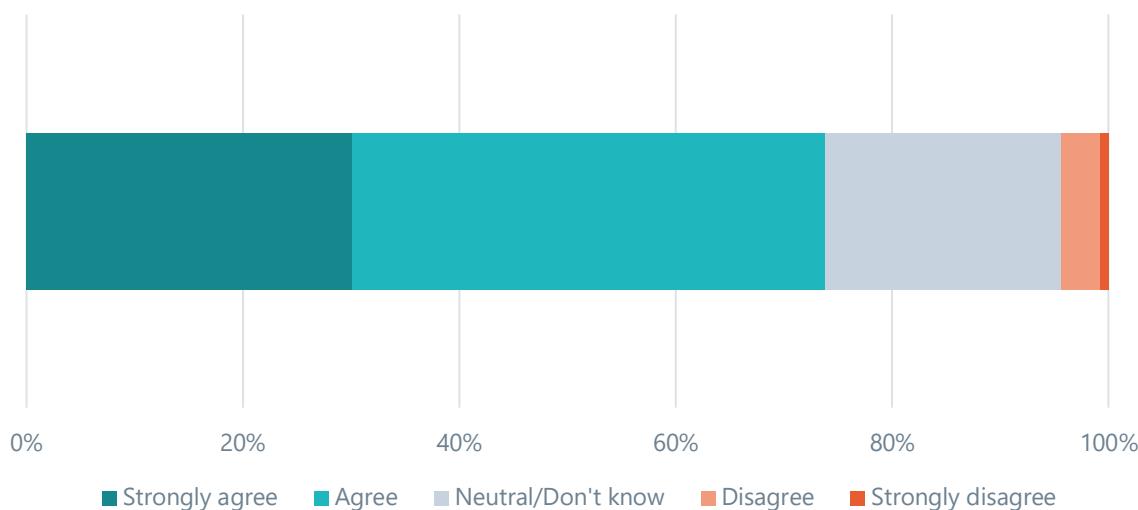
The challenge: Funding for government agencies often changes from year to year, which makes it challenging to deliver infrastructure projects that take a long time to plan and build. The result can be a stop-start approach.

Recommendation: Allow government agencies that plan and perform well to get funding that covers multiple years, so they can better deliver infrastructure projects with less disruption.

We asked: To what extent do you agree that this recommendation will address this challenge? Is there anything missing in our approach?

What people told us:

Figure 9: Agreement that the recommendation Reward good planning will address the challenge (%)



74% of respondents agreed that multi-year funding for central government agencies is essential to support stable, efficient and well-planned infrastructure delivery. Feedback across organisations and both survey panels revealed strong consensus that long-term funding arrangements are necessary to address any inefficiencies and disruption created by annual Budget cycles.

Multi-year funding enables better planning and delivery.

Across all feedback, there was broad support for enabling multi-year Budget commitments to give agencies greater confidence to plan and deliver infrastructure efficiently. Respondents viewed this approach as a way to strengthen partnerships, improve contracting, and retain skilled workforces.

"Budgeting for a full project will be more cost effective in the long term."

– Representative panel survey respondent

"Allow government agencies that plan and perform well to get funding that covers multiple years, so they can better deliver infrastructure projects with less disruption."

– Private sector company

"New Zealand's rail sector has historically faced inconsistent investment cycles, leading to challenges in skills retention, workforce planning, and project continuity."

– Sector group

Respondents also noted that long-term projects are particularly vulnerable to political change. Multi-year commitments were seen as a safeguard to protect these investments and prevent waste or disruption.

"We support the principle of stable, long-term government funding as a foundation for effective infrastructure planning and delivery."

– Local government entity

"This would be beneficial, and kind of leads on from the previous recommendation mentioned. With each new year, and new government, infrastructure projects in this capacity would not get the right or enough funding, and projects would be disrupted and not followed through."

– Representative panel survey respondent

Linking funding to performance and accountability.

Another recurring theme across all feedback was support for linking eligibility for multi-year funding to the quality of planning, delivery, and asset management. Respondents saw this as a way to encourage continuous improvement and ensure value for money across the public sector.

"There needs to be regulation of both central and local government entities so that funding allocations are linked to the quality of asset-management planning as well as performance of delivering on these plans."

– Sector group

However, respondents also urged clarity about how performance would be measured and who would make these determinations. Both survey groups stressed the importance of transparent criteria, independent oversight, and safeguards to ensure the system remains fair and depoliticised.

Maintaining fairness and avoiding inequity.

Some cautioned that linking funding to performance could inadvertently disadvantage smaller or less well-resourced agencies. Respondents highlighted the need for accountability frameworks that recognise different contexts and capacities.

"How do agencies plan if they [don't] get funding? What do you mean by agencies that perform well? Against what metrics? How do you judge if they are performing well? And how do you know the KPIs set are the right KPIs to identify this and that you're meeting the core function"

– Self-selected survey respondent

The representative panel echoed this concern, calling for accountability and performance measures that recognise diverse contexts and capacities across agencies. Self-selected participants went further, warning against any perception that funding decisions could be politicised or used to reward loyalty rather than performance.

"Who makes the judgement on who performs well and at what level open to corruption"

– Representative panel survey respondent

"The approach is effective, but it could be strengthened by including clear criteria for what qualifies as "good planning" and ensuring smaller or under-resourced agencies still have fair access to multi-year funding support."

– Representative panel survey respondent

Depoliticisation and long-term certainty.

A strong theme, particularly among self-selected respondents, was the need to insulate infrastructure funding from political cycles. Many called for cross-party agreements or legislated frameworks to ensure continuity and transparency of long-term funding decisions.

Representative panel respondents expressed similar views, noting that long-term certainty is key to confidence in delivery but must be balanced with mechanisms for oversight and flexibility as needs evolve.

"The largest threat to successful infrastructure planning is sovereign risk, namely the temptation for short-term politicians to drive or cancel investments based on political expediency (i.e. electoral votes) rather than business case driven discipline."

– Sector group

"Missing: any bi- or multi-lateral agreement to NOT interfere or interrupt the plan/planning/implementation of pipeline-approved projects/programmes."

– Self-selected survey respondent



Theme 2: Clear the way for infrastructure

The following seven recommendations from the draft National Infrastructure Plan correspond to the theme **Clear the way for infrastructure**.

Recommendation 1: Workforce Development

Workforce development planning and policy is informed by infrastructure investment and asset management plans and the New Zealand Infrastructure Commission's independent view of long-term needs

Recommendation 2: Public Sector Capability

Public sector project leadership is strengthened by standardising role expectations and improving career pathways.

Recommendation 4: Consumer Protection

All infrastructure providers, regardless of sector have clear and well-understood transparency and accountability mechanisms that ensure that consumer interests are protected.

Recommendation 7: Spatial Planning

Under the new resource management system, spatial planning informs and is informed by infrastructure investment and asset management planning and the New Zealand Infrastructure Commission's independent view of long-term needs.

Recommendation 8: Maximising Use

Land-use policies should enable new and existing infrastructure to be used by as many people as possible.

Recommendation 9: An Enabling Environment

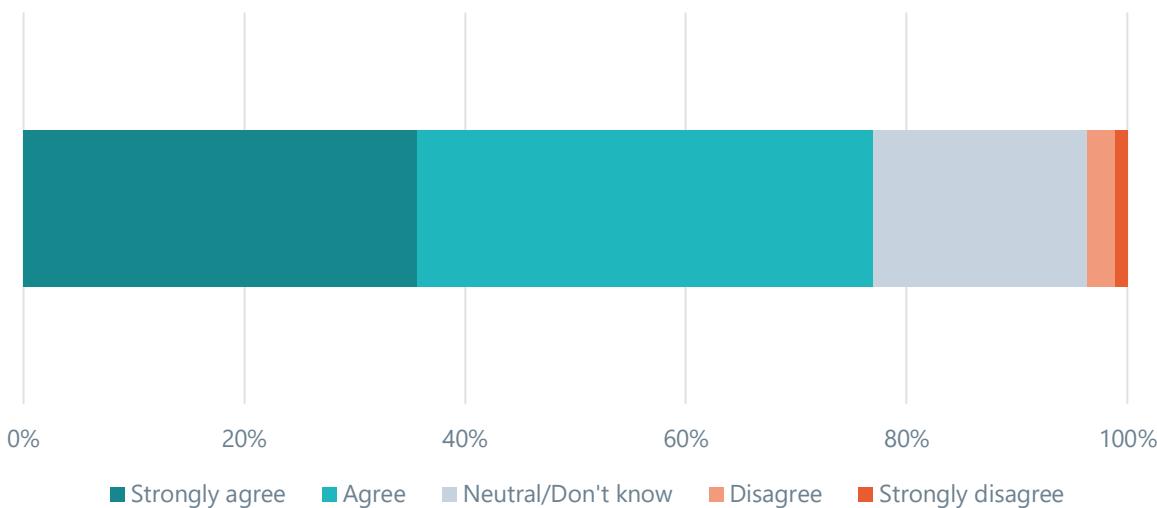
The resource management system enables infrastructure with national and regional benefits, while managing interactions with surrounding land uses and negative impacts on the natural environment.

Recommendation 10: Policy Stability

Energy investors have predictable policy and consenting settings that support affordability, security of supply, and the decarbonisation of the economy

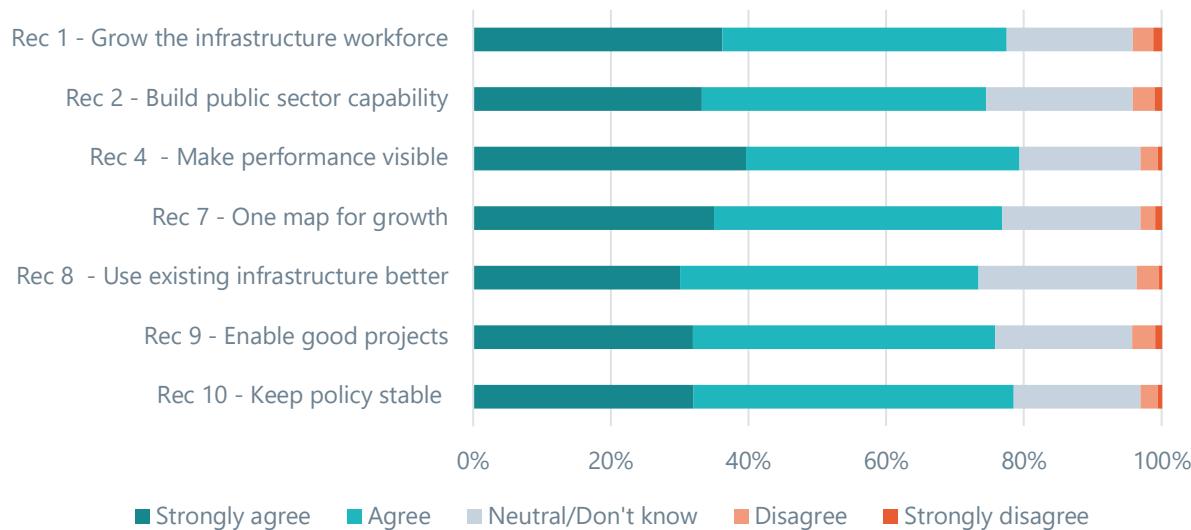
For each, we summarise how it was described during consultation and what people told us in response. This ensures that the consultation findings can be clearly traced back to the formal recommendations in the draft Plan.

Figure 10: Agreement that Clearing the Way for Infrastructure is a priority for New Zealand (%)



When asked whether they agreed that the theme “Clearing the Way for Infrastructure” should be a priority for New Zealand, most respondents (77%) expressed agreement. A further 19% were neutral or unsure, while only 4% disagreed.

Figure 11: Agreement with theme two's recommendations (%)



Across the representative sample, levels of agreement with the theme two recommendations were consistently high, indicating broad support for the actions proposed under this theme. Agreement ranged from 73% to 79% across all recommendations, with fewer than 5% of respondents disagreeing in each case.

The strongest support was for recommendation 10 – “Keep policy stable” and Recommendation 4 – “Make performance visible”, both with 79% agreement. This was closely followed by recommendations 7, 9, and 11, which each received around three-quarters of respondents in agreement (76–77%).

Recommendation 1: Grow the infrastructure workforce

What the draft Plan recommendation “Workforce development” said

Workforce development planning and policy is informed by infrastructure investment and asset management plans and the New Zealand Infrastructure Commission’s independent view of long-term needs

How we described this in consultation

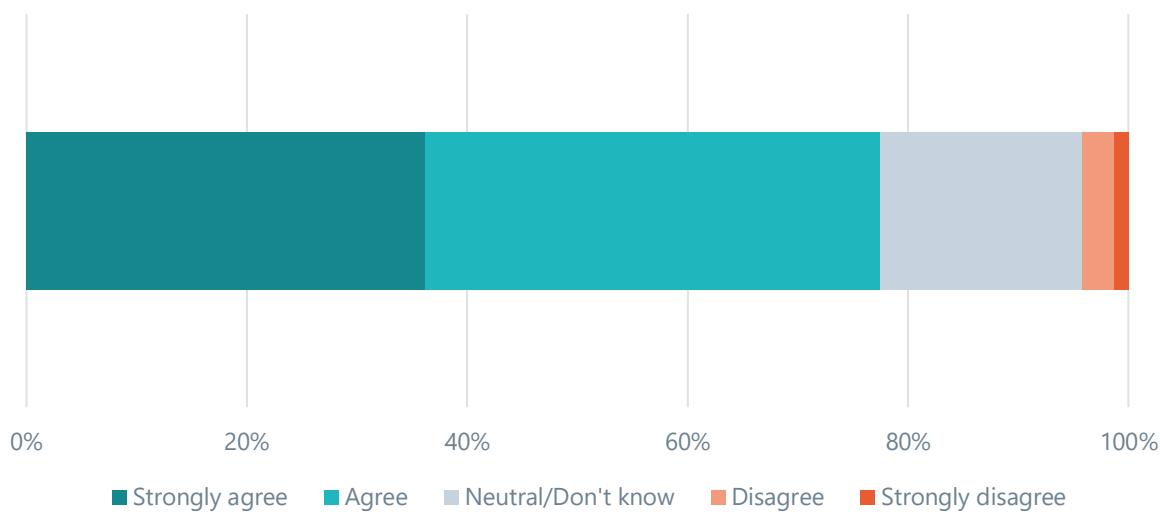
The challenge: New Zealand doesn’t have enough skilled workers to plan, build and maintain our infrastructure, and we don’t always train based on New Zealand’s long-term needs. We can’t always rely on overseas expertise to meet our needs. Without better planning, we risk not having the right workforce to meet future demand.

Recommendation: Plan how we train and grow the infrastructure workforce based on a longer-term view of New Zealand’s infrastructure needs, beyond current projects, to ensure we have the right skills, in the right places, at the right time.

We asked: To what extent do you agree that this recommendation will address this challenge? Is there anything missing in our approach?

What people told us

Figure 12: Agreement that the recommendation Grow the Infrastructure Workforce will address the challenge (%)



More than three-quarters of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that workforce development is a national priority, essential to delivering New Zealand’s infrastructure pipeline efficiently and sustainably.

All three respondent groups recognised workforce capability as one of the most pressing constraints on infrastructure delivery and supported long-term, coordinated action to address it. Differences between groups were tonal rather than directional. Organisations focused on structure and coordination – calling for a national workforce strategy linked to the infrastructure pipeline and stable funding. Representative panel respondents emphasised retention, domestic training, and fair pay to keep skilled workers in New

Zealand. Self-selected respondents expressed similar priorities but used stronger language around the need for systemic reform and long-term government leadership to ensure stability.

Systemic shortages and instability are limiting delivery.

Organisational submissions emphasised that workforce shortages span technical, professional, and trade roles – from engineers and project managers to technicians and civil construction workers. Respondents stressed that instability caused by stop–start investment cycles and recent downturn-driven redundancies had weakened the sector’s capacity to deliver.

“All plans are for nothing if you don’t have the ability – in terms of a skilled workforce – to implement and maintain.”

– *Advocacy organisation*

“We must ensure our infrastructure plan can protect us from the workforce exodus we’ve seen over the last 18 months.”

– *Sector group*

“Our current approach is too reactive and tied to short-term economic conditions, rather than driven by a consistent, long-term national strategy.”

– *Private sector company*

A coordinated national workforce strategy is widely supported.

Across all respondent groups, there was agreement that workforce shortages – across trades, professional, and technical roles – pose the single biggest barrier to infrastructure delivery. Respondents stressed that workforce development must be embedded into early project planning, so that people are trained and available when projects commence. Stronger coordination across agencies, sectors, and regional authorities was seen as critical, with some calling for a national workforce strategy that integrates investment pipelines, asset management plans, and labour supply forecasting.

“Review of apprenticeship scheme to ensure we are training people well, retaining them, and that employing an apprentice is not difficult for employers. Transparency of future projects creates job security.”

– *Representative panel survey respondent*

“A longer-term outlook for infrastructure investment will help strengthen workforce development decisions.”

– *Iwi group*

“A stable pipeline of projects, particularly in construction and manufacturing, is critical for sustaining expertise, as workforce shortages or surpluses in one sector impact the entire economy.”

– *Sector group*

Training, entry pathways, and career visibility must improve.

A repeated theme was the lack of visibility of infrastructure careers and the need to improve entry points, pathways, and progression for workers across the sector. Submissions pointed to gaps in vocational and technical training, the need for modular and stackable qualifications, and greater collaboration with schools and tertiary providers.

"There's no front door to infrastructure – people don't know what jobs exist, what the pathways are, or how to get in."

– Private sector company

"The approach is strong but could also include partnerships with industry and education providers to create clear career pathways and attract diverse talent."

– Representative panel survey respondent

"Almost no civil infrastructure trades training is serviced by the education system, which leaves us reliant on immigration and company training."

– Sector group

There was strong support for revitalising apprenticeships and polytechnic programmes, alongside new initiatives that promote green infrastructure skills, digital capability, and artificial intelligence (AI) literacy.

Retention, pay and working conditions matter.

Across both public survey groups, respondents highlighted that skilled workers continue to leave for Australia due to higher wages and more consistent work opportunities. Retaining skilled New Zealanders was seen as equally important as training new ones.

"Provide jobs so skilled workers required don't leave for Australia"

– Representative panel survey respondent

"And we also have to make sure that they stay in our country and not leave for better pay overseas"

– Representative panel survey respondent

Many self-selected participants linked workforce retention directly to the predictability of the infrastructure pipeline, arguing that inconsistent funding and project cancellations erode confidence and drive talent away.

"If we have a coherent plan for infrastructure development and consistent funding then this will mitigate the current issue of Kiwis learning their work skills on a big NZ project then leaving for Oz because the next NZ project is years away or has just been canned."

– Self-selected survey respondent

"NZ needs to maintain a pipeline of projects that align with infrastructure we need to retain the skilled workforce we have."

– *Self-selected survey respondent*

Inclusion and diversity strengthen resilience.

Some respondents, particularly among organisational submissions, also highlighted the importance of broadening talent pools and using inclusive messaging to engage with diverse groups, including Māori, Pacific peoples, women, and neurodiverse people. Additionally, the need for upskilling in specific areas such as green infrastructure, digital skills, and AI literacy was mentioned.

"The major problem we have in many sectors (including energy, transport) is that our infrastructure workers are also aging and lack diversity. The sectors tend to be dominated by men and don't always offer a supportive, encouraging environment for women or diverse staff."

– *Self-selected survey respondent*

"We agree that a longer-term view is needed for how we train and grow the infrastructure workforce. That longer-term view needs to be cognisant of the younger population demographic of Māori who will make up a larger part of the workforce"

– *Iwi group*

Recommendation 2: Build public sector capability

What the draft Plan recommendation “Workforce development” said

Public sector project leadership is strengthened by standardising role expectations and improving career pathways.

How we described this in consultation

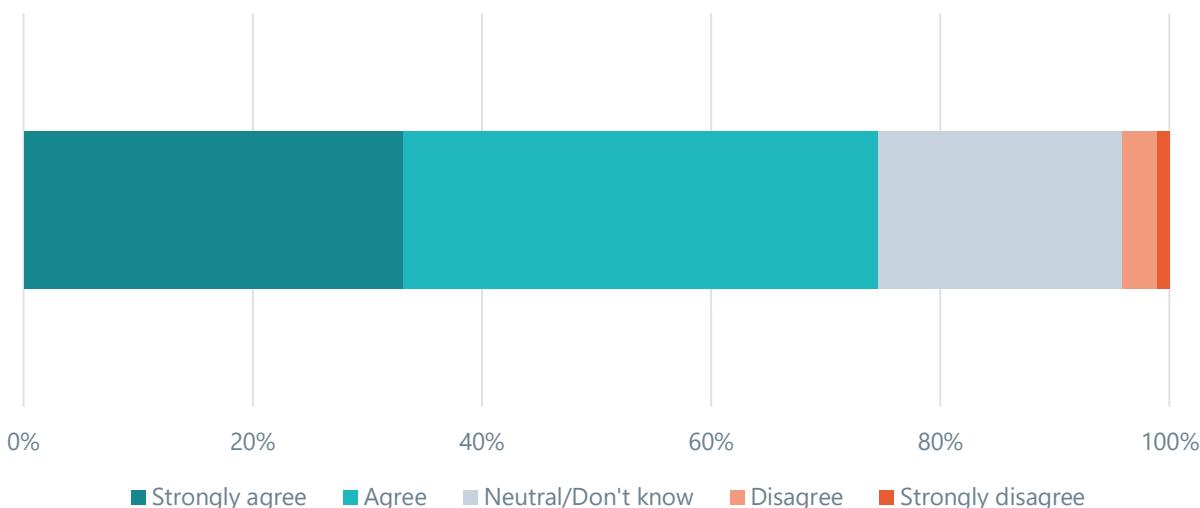
The challenge: Government is responsible for many of New Zealand’s biggest infrastructure projects – but it often lacks enough skilled and experienced leaders to deliver them well. This reflects the challenges of planning and delivering complex projects when there are many stakeholders inside and outside of government.

Recommendation: Support the people leading government infrastructure projects by setting clear job expectations and creating better training and career pathways.

We asked: To what extent do you agree that this recommendation will address this challenge? Is there anything missing in our approach?

What people told us

Figure 13: Agreement that the recommendation Build public sector capability will address the challenge (%)



75% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that strengthening public sector capability is essential to improving how New Zealand plans, delivers, and manages infrastructure.

Respondents across all groups broadly supported the intent of this recommendation, viewing a more skilled and consistent public sector as central to better project delivery, smarter procurement, and more reliable infrastructure outcomes.

Stronger capability within the public sector is seen as essential.

There was clear consensus that strengthening public sector capability would improve the consistency and quality of infrastructure delivery.

"Stronger capability within the public sector would make a real difference, especially when it comes to consistency in decision-making, funding processes, and infrastructure partnerships."

– Private sector company

"We support efforts to strengthen public sector project leadership through standardised role expectations and improved career pathways."

– Sector group

"We would support building capability in the public sector if it leads to improvements in efficiency, productivity, and the quality of infrastructure."

– Iwi group

Procurement and asset management are key pressure points.

Across all submissions, a persistent theme was the need to improve procurement capability and asset management within government agencies. Respondents cited insufficient commercial and construction expertise, leading to poorly scoped projects, unrealistic risk allocation, and inefficiencies in delivery.

"A persistent and systemic barrier to effective infrastructure delivery is the insufficient commercial and construction expertise within government procurement teams."

– *Sector group*

"Asset management and governance experience and skills within the infrastructure public sector are limited."

– *Private sector company*

Respondents agreed that improving these systems would lift efficiency, reduce cost overruns, and deliver better value for money.

Collaboration with industry can complement internal capability.

Many respondents encouraged the government to draw more actively on private-sector expertise through secondments, partnerships, and shared training pathways. This was viewed as a way to reduce delivery risk and strengthen sector-wide capability.

"Fostering collaboration with the private sector – where expertise and capacity often exist – can complement internal capability, reduce delivery risk, and support improved project outcomes."

– *Private sector company*

"Investing in skilled infrastructure leadership within government, with better continuity and clearer accountability, would help streamline projects and improve coordination with the private sector."

– *Private sector company*

Retention, continuity, and leadership matter as much as training.

Respondents across all groups cautioned that capability building will not be effective without strategies to retain staff and maintain institutional knowledge. They pointed to frequent turnover, inconsistent expectations, and short-term funding cycles as major barriers.

"Capability development alone will not prevent skilled staff from leaving... Competitive pay, meaningful work, and continuity of projects... are key to retaining talent."

– *Local government entity*

The self-selected group, in particular, linked these concerns to a broader sense of loss following the disbanding of the Ministry of Works, calling for stronger central leadership and long-term workforce planning.

Accountability and performance go hand in hand.

Both the representative and self-selected surveys emphasised the importance of accountability for project performance. Respondents supported clearer expectations, performance reporting, and stronger consequences for cost overruns or delivery failures.

"Setting expectations is not enough. There needs to be binding penalties in place for when infrastructure projects go beyond the promised scope of delivery and budget"

– *Representative panel survey respondent*

"And add in the need for accountability and responsibility if projects are not delivered on time, budget, scope."

– *Self-selected survey respondent*

"Additionally, institute performance-based remuneration, with bonuses for achieving projects on time and under budget, and penalties for projects that run over time and budget."

– *Self-selected survey respondent*

Many also called for reducing bureaucracy, avoiding unnecessary consultant reliance, and ensuring capability building translates into tangible improvements in project outcomes.

Recommendation 4: Make performance visible

What the draft Plan recommendation “Consumer protection” said

All infrastructure providers, regardless of sector have clear and well-understood transparency and accountability mechanisms that ensure that consumer interests are protected.

How we described this in consultation

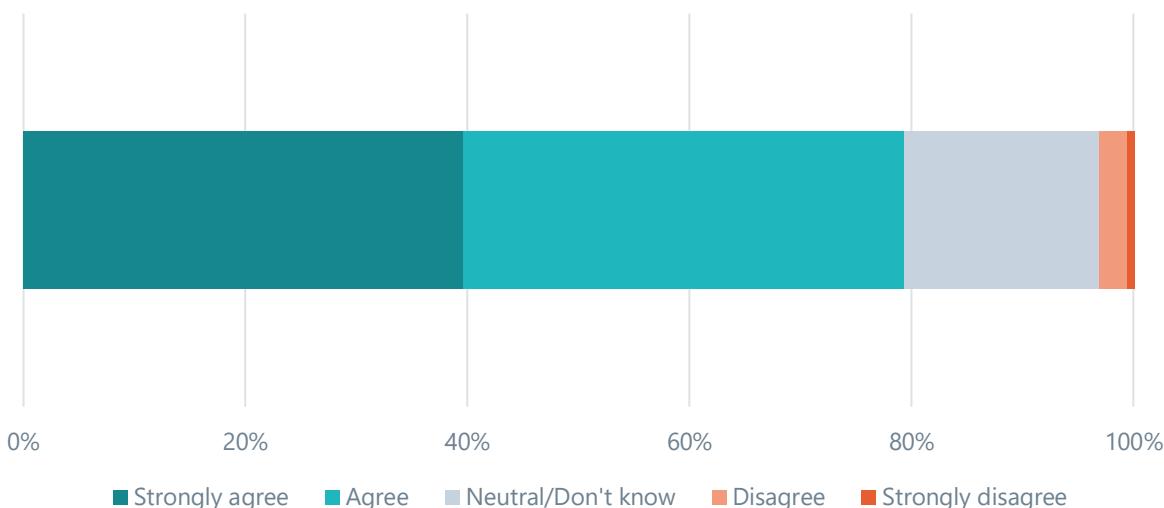
The challenge: It's difficult for most of us to see how well government agencies, councils, companies and others who are responsible for infrastructure are performing. There's a range of ways to get this transparency, but they aren't always applied consistently which makes it hard for the public to demand accountability.

Recommendation: Require infrastructure providers to publish clear and transparent information about their performance, to ensure that the interests of the people who use and pay for infrastructure are protected.

We asked: To what extent do you agree that this recommendation will address this challenge? Is there anything missing in our approach?

What people told us

Figure 14: Agreement that the recommendation Make Performance Visible will address the challenge (%)



Approximately 80% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that improving transparency and accountability in infrastructure performance is essential for delivering better outcomes and value for money.

Feedback from organisations, the representative panel, and self-selected participants shows strong alignment. All groups agreed that infrastructure providers should be required to publish clear, consistent, and independently verified performance information – particularly when receiving public funds. This transparency was seen as fundamental to public trust, fair pricing, and long-term efficiency across the infrastructure system.

While organisations focused on system design and data quality, public respondents (both representative and self-selected) emphasised the importance of accessibility, consequences for poor performance, and ensuring transparency translates into real-world improvements – not just more paperwork.

Transparency and accountability must underpin infrastructure performance.

Across all submissions, transparency was viewed as essential for ensuring value for money, preventing waste, and rebuilding public confidence in infrastructure delivery.

"I would love to know about all the infrastructure projects going on in my city and how much it is costing us"

– Representative panel survey respondent

"Transparency is critical to accountability, public trust, and the continuous improvement of infrastructure systems."

– Private sector company

"How can we measure success if we don't measure performance and make it transparent?"

– *Private sector company*

Respondents supported public reporting on cost, performance, and progress, but stressed that information must be clear, standardised, and accessible in order to be meaningful for communities and decision-makers alike.

Robust asset management and independent oversight are key.

Many organisational submissions highlighted the need for credible asset registers, whole-of-life asset management plans, and independent maturity assessments as the foundation for transparency.

Several suggested that funding allocations should be linked to the quality of these systems and to demonstrated delivery performance.

"There needs to be regulation so that funding allocations are linked to the quality of asset management planning as well as delivery."

– *Sector group*

"Better asset registers and long-term infrastructure investment plans will be important for understanding the pipeline of work needed and the balance between maintenance, renewals, and new build solutions to central government's infrastructure challenges."

– *Central government agency*

Representative and self-selected respondents echoed these views, calling for independent verification and clear metrics to ensure transparency measures are credible, consistent, and free from political or commercial interference.

Consumer protections should be meaningful, not procedural.

Respondents across all groups emphasised that accountability frameworks must include clear consequences for persistent underperformance and be tailored to each sector's context.

"Transparency of timeline, cost and accountability to the communities. Ka pai"

– *Representative panel survey respondent*

"Transparency must be accompanied by meaningful consequences for persistent underperformance."

– *Local government entity*

"Consumer protections must be consistent and clearly defined to ensure confidence."

– *Local government entity*

Public respondents reinforced that reporting alone is not enough – transparency must drive improvement and deliver tangible benefits to communities.

Avoid unnecessary duplication and cost.

While transparency was strongly supported, many warned against creating redundant or overly complex reporting frameworks. Both councils and public respondents urged alignment with existing local government and agency reporting to avoid duplication and additional costs.

"Councils already produce significant annual and three-yearly performance reports... Any new reporting requirements should align with existing frameworks."

– *Local government entity*

"Further filing carries a layer of unneeded bureaucracy, which can lead to higher cost."

– *Local government entity*

"A consistent approach is good but also wouldn't this extra reporting potentially make it harder to get projects done"

– *Self-selected survey respondent*

This concern was most strongly expressed by self-selected participants, who voiced broader scepticism about bureaucracy and "tick-box" compliance. They emphasised the need for transparency that drives genuine accountability and improvement – rather than creating additional paperwork or administrative burden.

Recommendation 7: Spatial planning

What the draft Plan recommendation "Spatial planning" said

All infrastructure providers, regardless of sector have clear and well-understood transparency and accountability mechanisms that ensure that consumer interests are protected.

How we described this in consultation

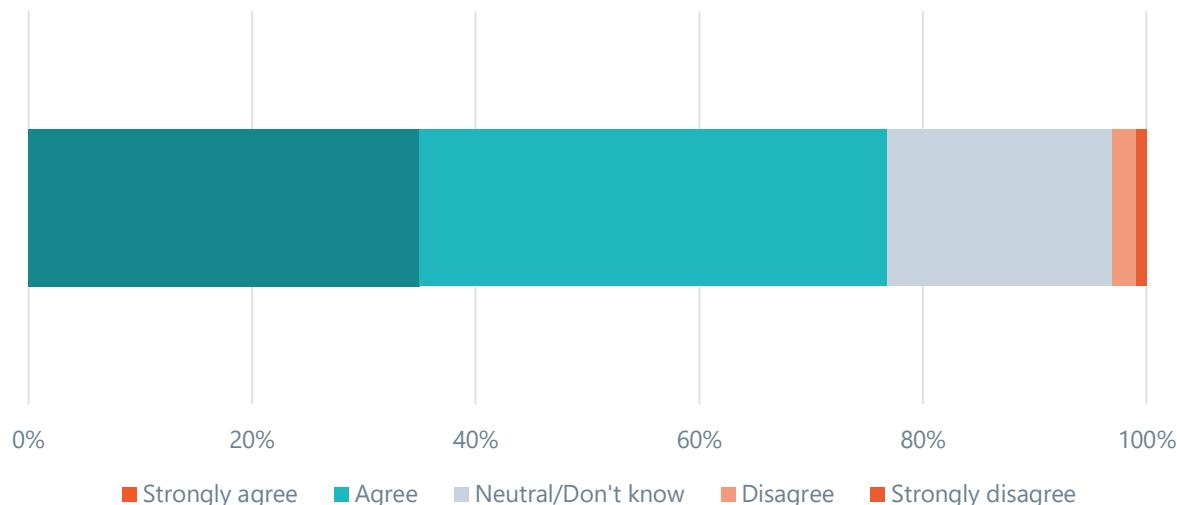
The challenge: New homes, roads, and services are sometimes built in areas where there aren't enough water pipes, schools or other infrastructure to support them – or where it's very expensive to build. This leads to costly gaps, delays, and extra pressure on the infrastructure that's already there.

Recommendation: Use long-term regional growth plans – known as spatial plans – to align where new homes, roads, and other infrastructure will go. These plans bring together land use, infrastructure, and funding decisions in one place, so that growth happens where infrastructure is already planned, affordable, and easier to deliver.

We asked: To what extent do you agree that this recommendation will address this challenge? Is there anything missing in our approach?

What people told us

Figure 15: Agreement that the recommendation One map for growth will address the challenge (%)



More than three-quarters (77%) of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that having a coordinated, long-term approach to spatial planning should be a national priority.

While feedback from organisations, the representative panel, and self-selected participants was highly consistent, each group brought a slightly different emphasis. Organisations focused on system design and implementation – calling for statutory weight, consistent national standards, and clear links between spatial plans and investment decisions. Representative respondents framed their feedback around fairness, accountability, and delivery, highlighting the need for infrastructure to precede development and for stronger oversight of developer contributions. Self-selected participants echoed these themes but placed greater emphasis on environmental protection, climate resilience, and preventing unsustainable growth such as building on floodplains or productive land.

Spatial planning is critical for coordinating land use, growth, and investment.

Respondents across all groups agreed that better spatial planning will help direct investment to where it is most needed and ensure growth occurs in places that can be serviced efficiently.

"Makes sense to have plans to build where already have access to water pipes"

– Representative panel survey respondent

"Spatial plans are a key guideline for ensuring infrastructure providers build what is needed, in the right place, and at the right time."

– Private sector company

Many submissions stressed that for spatial planning to be effective, it must carry legal weight, be consistent across regions, and be embedded within the reformed resource management system.

"Subject to spatial plans being robustly developed, they should carry greater statutory weight to require both local and central government... to give effect to these plans in their decision-making."

– *Local government entity*

Spatial planning should integrate resilience, climate adaptation, and hazard management.

A recurring theme was the need for spatial plans to actively manage environmental and climate risks, not just enable growth. Respondents cautioned that failing to embed hazard and resilience considerations risks locking in infrastructure in the wrong locations or creating stranded assets in future.

"Spatial planning is a key tool to achieve integration between resource management planning and infrastructure planning."

– *Sector group*

"This will only work if you take individual regions and look at them more carefully. What works for some is woefully inadequate for places with more rainfall. Again - be informed by changing climate!"

– *Self-selected survey respondent*

"National infrastructure plays a critical role in the natural hazard resilience of New Zealand communities; therefore, the coordinated delivery of infrastructure and housing can be a powerful mechanism to ensure communities live in areas with lower natural hazard risks."

– *Central government agency*

Aligning planning with investment, funding, and delivery.

Across all groups, there was strong agreement that spatial plans should directly inform local government long-term plans, asset management strategies, and central government funding decisions. Respondents stressed that infrastructure sequencing and funding must be tied to what spatial plans set out – otherwise they risk becoming aspirational rather than operational.

"Strengthen alignment between land-use planning, service delivery and infrastructure investment, using long-term asset management plans as the common thread."

– *Sector group*

Respondents also called for improved coordination between central and local government, iwi, and the private sector to ensure joined-up decision-making and efficient use of resources.

Fairness, local input, and accountability matter.

Both survey groups strongly supported spatial planning, but raised concerns about how it will be implemented – particularly the balance between national direction, local flexibility, and developer responsibility. Some highlighted the importance of genuine community engagement, transparency in how decisions are made, and fair cost-sharing between developers and existing ratepayers.

"And property developers need to pay their fair share in making sure the infrastructure is put in place or enhanced if necessary"

– Self-selected survey respondent

Recommendation 8: Use existing infrastructure better

What the draft Plan recommendation Use existing infrastructure better said

Land-use policies should enable new and existing infrastructure to be used by as many people as possible.

How we described this in consultation

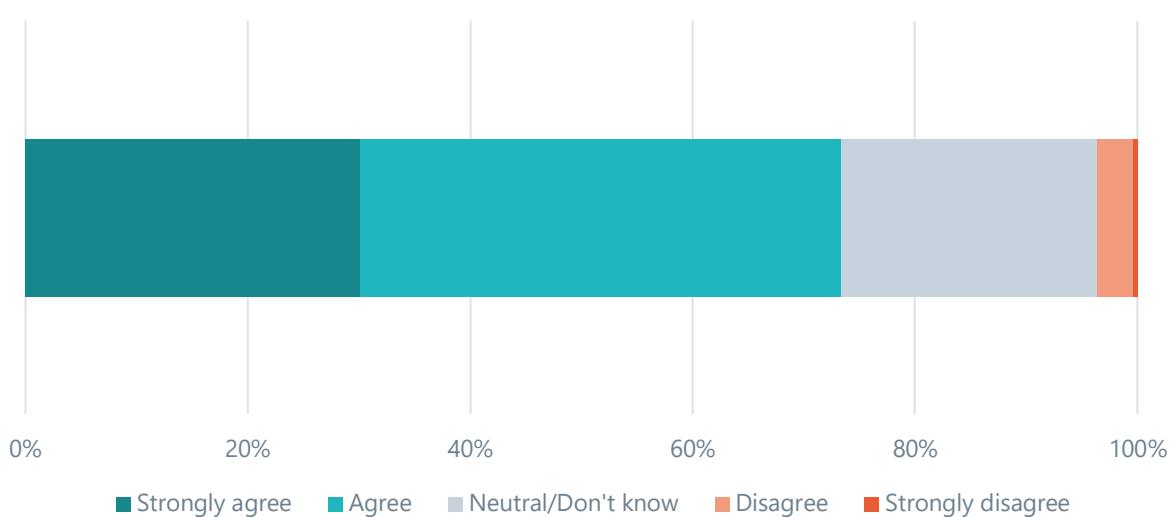
The challenge: Planning rules often make it hard to make the most of infrastructure we already have, for example limiting the number of homes that can be built near train stations, schools, or water networks.

Recommendation: Make sure planning rules support more people to use the infrastructure we already have and that we plan to build.

We asked: To what extent do you agree that this recommendation will address this challenge? Is there anything missing in our approach?

What people told us

Figure 16: Agreement that the recommendation Use existing infrastructure better will address the challenge (%)



There was strong and consistent agreement (~70%) that New Zealand should make better use of existing and planned infrastructure before defaulting to new builds. This was seen as a practical way to reduce costs, improve value for money, and create more liveable and resilient communities.

Clearer coordination and national consistency.

Respondents described this as a common-sense way to get more from past investment while ensuring future growth happens in the right places and at the right time. Spatial planning was widely seen as the key mechanism to achieve this, supported by clear national direction, consistent rules, and better coordination across councils, utilities, and government agencies.

"[Private sector company] strongly agrees with the recommendation to align planning rules with existing and future infrastructure. Doing so helps maximise public investment, supports more sustainable and efficient urban development, and enables communities to benefit more fully from services such as public transport, education, and utilities."

– Private sector company

"Planning rules are one of many potential barriers to using existing infrastructure better."

– Iwi group

Linking development to infrastructure capacity.

Respondents consistently emphasised the need to better align growth with available infrastructure. Intensification around transport hubs and existing networks was widely supported – but only when supported by the capacity to maintain service quality.

"Building houses all over the place without having the infrastructure in place to support them like we seem to currently be doing is crazy. If the infrastructure in the area can't support more houses they shouldn't be built."

– Representative panel survey respondent

Many called for stronger expectations that developers contribute fairly to infrastructure costs, and for sequencing that avoids overloading existing systems.

"I'd like to see planning rules forcing developers to be responsible for things like the extra load infill housing puts on pipe infrastructure and maintaining a degree of public amenities in their developments. As housing gets tighter and small, safe public space gets more important"

– Representative panel survey respondent

Smarter technology and use of assets.

Some respondents highlighted technology and operational changes to get more from what we have before building new – such as demand management (e.g. off-peak EV charging), smart networks, and better visibility of assets (including smaller/regional providers in national datasets) to avoid duplication and overbuilding.

Recommendation 9: Enable good projects

What the draft Plan recommendation Enable good projects said

The resource management system enables infrastructure with national and regional benefits, while managing interactions with surrounding land uses and negative impacts on the natural environment.

How we described this in consultation

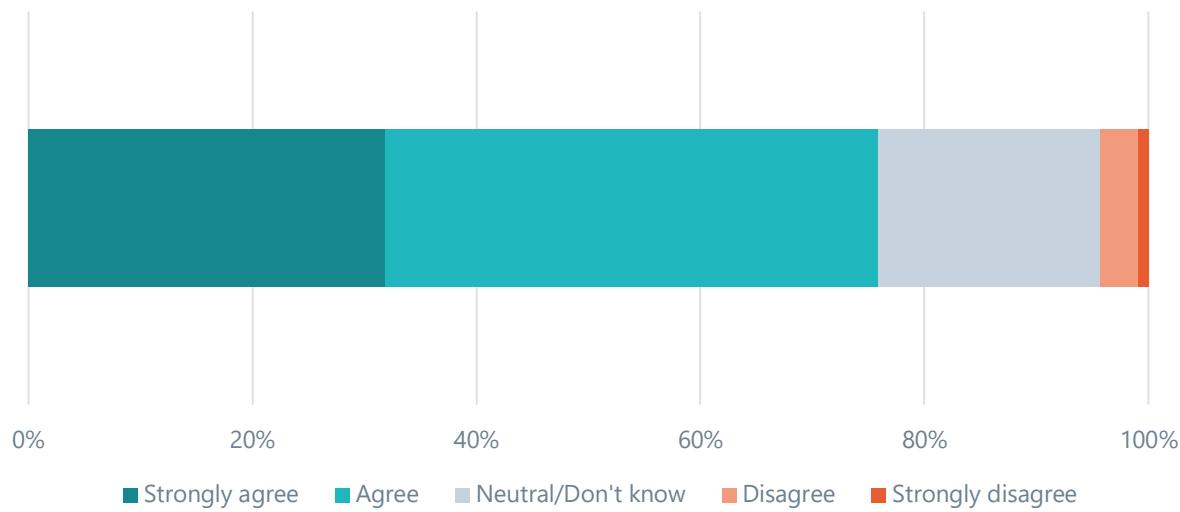
The challenge: Infrastructure projects can take years to get consent. Constant changes to rules and unclear approval processes create delays, add cost, and make it harder to invest with confidence.

Recommendation: Make sure the resource management and planning rules enable important infrastructure projects – while still protecting the environment and managing interactions with surrounding communities.

We asked: To what extent do you agree that this recommendation will address this challenge? Is there anything missing in our approach?

What people told us:

Figure 17: Agreement that the recommendation Enable good projects will address the challenge (%)



More than three-quarters of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that improving planning and consenting is essential to reduce delays, costs and uncertainty for infrastructure.

Clearer, nationally consistent planning rules are needed.

Across all groups, there was strong agreement that the current resource management system is complex, fragmented, and inconsistent. Respondents called for nationally consistent planning rules and faster approval processes that maintain environmental and cultural protections. While there is broad alignment on the need for reform, views diverge on how to strike the right balance between efficiency, environmental outcomes, and community input.

"Simplify it as much as possible. There are too many regulations, and everything takes way too long."

– *Representative panel survey respondent*

"Uncertainty around resource consents is one of the biggest blockers to building rural infrastructure."

– *Private sector company*

"Consenting delays under the Resource Management Act (RMA) continue to be a major constraint to infrastructure delivery."

– *Sector group*

"The cost of consenting a new water storage project can add upwards of 20-30% of the cost of building it, depending on scale."

– *Sector group*

Many organisations strongly supported developing a National Policy Statement for Infrastructure (NPS-I) and other national tools to provide clearer direction and improve coordination.

"Getting the regulatory setting right to support infrastructure, including the establishment of a National Policy Statement for Infrastructure is critical to getting infrastructure appropriately recognised within the resource management system."

– *Sector group*

"We see the NPS-Infrastructure as a vital and long-overdue step toward a more enabling, consistent planning framework that properly recognises the role of infrastructure in delivering public good across generations."

– *Sector group*

Environmental protection and community voice must remain central.

While respondents widely supported streamlining and reform, many cautioned against doing so at the expense of environmental protection. Respondents emphasised that a healthy environment underpins the resilience of built infrastructure and that natural systems – such as wetlands and natural stream paths – can play a critical role in complementing traditional infrastructure. Respondents cautioned against placing economic growth above environmental outcomes, noting that long-term sustainability depends on maintaining environmental integrity. Other groups, by contrast, prioritised the importance of infrastructure for enabling economic growth.

"There has to be a balance between getting moving on good projects and ensuring communities are brought along too."

– *Representative panel survey respondent*

"We definitely need to make sure that our environment is protected"

– *Representative panel survey respondent*

"[Private sector company] strongly agrees with the recommendation to improve resource management and planning rules in ways that support timely delivery of infrastructure projects. The inclusion of protections for the environment and meaningful engagement with surrounding communities is essential and strengthens the recommendation."

– *Private sector company*

"Infrastructure investment decisions should prioritise business efficiency and economic growth – social, cultural and environmental wellbeing are important, but sustained improvements in these areas are only affordable when there is a strong economy."

– *Advocacy organisation*

Some also expressed concern that streamlining planning and consenting processes must not weaken requirements for proper environmental assessment or meaningful community and iwi engagement.

Good projects are those that are supported by the community, environmentally responsible, and culturally aligned – not just those that move quickly."

– *Iwi group*

"We see the NPS-Infrastructure as a vital and long-overdue step toward a more enabling, consistent planning framework that properly recognises the role of infrastructure in delivering public good across generations."

– *Sector group*

Recommendation 10: Keep policy stable

What the draft Plan recommendation Keep policy stable said

Energy investors have predictable policy and consenting settings that support affordability, security of supply, and the decarbonisation of the economy

How we described this in consultation

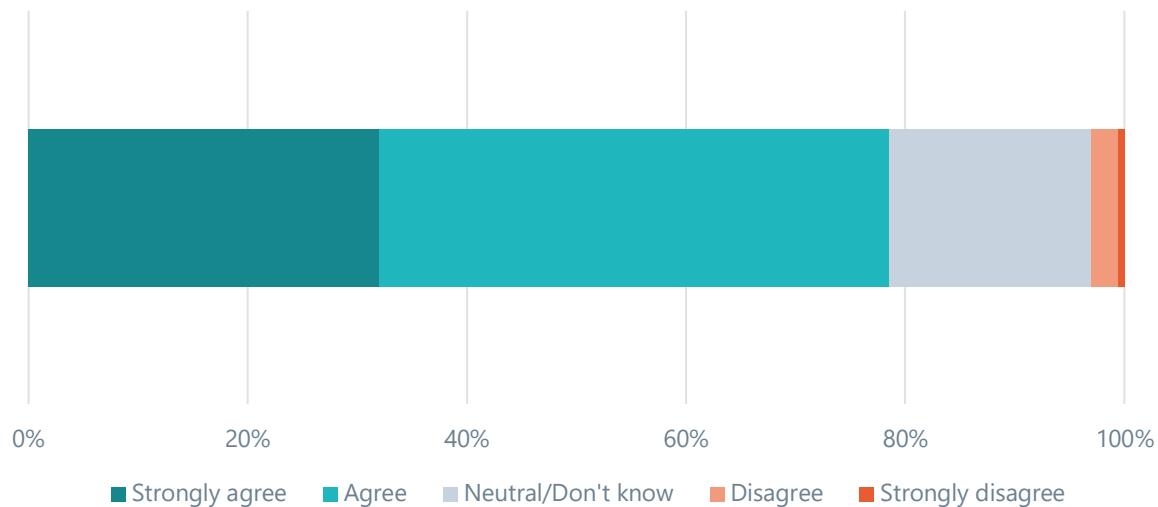
The challenge: When infrastructure rules keep changing it becomes harder and riskier for investors to plan ahead, which drives up costs and slows down delivery. This is especially true for electricity, which needs to keep investing to keep prices affordable and supply reliable while transitioning to net-zero carbon emissions.

Recommendation: Set clear and stable policies so infrastructure investors can plan ahead with confidence — especially in key sectors like electricity.

We asked: To what extent do you agree that this recommendation will address this challenge? Is there anything missing in our approach?

What people told us

Figure 18: Agreement that the recommendation Keep policy stable will address the challenge (%)



Almost 80% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that policy and funding stability are essential to deliver long-term infrastructure efficiently.

Feedback from organisations, the representative panel, and self-selected participants all emphasised that short electoral cycles and shifting priorities undermine confidence, delay projects, and increase costs.

Long-term stability is essential for confidence and delivery.

Across all groups, respondents consistently highlighted that frequent changes in government direction create uncertainty and deter investment. Organisations in particular stressed the link between policy volatility and inefficiency in project delivery.

"Policy stability is particularly important for those sectors which rely on private sector investment."

– Sector group

"Stable policy signals let investors mobilise resources with confidence and support long-term infrastructure projects that are essential to affordability, reliability, and the net-zero transition."

– Private sector company

"Policy instability is a great inhibitor to commercial investment in infrastructure."

– Private sector company

Frequent changes in direction were said to erode institutional capability and drive boom-bust cycles that make efficient delivery difficult. Respondents saw a stable, transparent pipeline as essential to smoothing workloads, retaining skilled workers, and reducing costs.

"A cross-party consensus on a core pipeline of nationally significant projects is essential to provide the private sector with the certainty needed to invest, ultimately improving deliverability and driving down costs."

– Sector group

"A stable, long-term pipeline (especially for mid-sized, repeatable projects) will help smooth delivery, retain talent and support resilience."

– Sector group

Bipartisan frameworks and cross-party consensus.

Across all audiences, there was strong endorsement of bipartisan or cross-party mechanisms to protect major infrastructure priorities from political swings. Respondents viewed multi-party agreements, statutory frameworks, or independent institutions as ways to anchor long-term decisions while preserving flexibility for innovation.

"A cohesive bipartisan energy strategy is one of the most meaningful things government could deliver to support the country's electrification transition."

– Private sector company

While organisational feedback focused on the mechanics of such frameworks, many public respondents framed them in terms of trust and accountability – wanting assurance that major projects would endure regardless of changes in government.

Stable regulation and planning frameworks underpin long-term investment.

Respondents highlighted that constant shifts in resource management policy and legislation undermine long-term infrastructure planning and delivery. Respondents noted that ongoing RMA reforms, changing consenting rules, and inconsistent national direction create uncertainty, increase costs, and delay projects. A stable, nationally consistent framework was seen as essential to give investors, councils, and providers the confidence to plan and deliver infrastructure efficiently.

"Clear and stable policies are required to enable everyone to be confident in how they are going to achieve what they want to achieve."

– Representative panel survey respondent

"We agree that stable resource management legislation is important."

– Sector group

Energy, climate, and the pace of transition.

Frequent changes in government direction – on decarbonisation, electrification, and the energy transition – were cited as undermining confidence in long-term investment and planning.

Where views differed was on the pace and priorities of transition. Some respondents advocated for clearer, more consistent commitments to renewable energy and net-zero goals, while others called for a more pragmatic approach that prioritises energy security, reliability, and affordability during the transition.

"Can't suddenly change into net zero. It has to be a smooth transition. If not we are going to have a shortage like with the eggs"

– Representative panel survey respondent

"Encourage more homes and businesses to be less reliant on national electric infrastructure. More solar and wind options with battery storage, and reasonable price paid for selling back to the grid"

– Representative panel survey respondent

"The draft Plan should adopt a systems-based and fuel agnostic approach to energy infrastructure. This will preserve the flexibility that we need to have a resilient energy system with a mix of reliable energy sources available."

– Advocacy organisation



Theme 3: Start with Maintenance

The following three recommendations from the draft National Infrastructure Plan correspond to the **Start with maintenance** theme.

Recommendation 12: Asset management and investment planning

Central government agencies are legislatively required to prepare and publish long-term asset management and investment plans.

Recommendation 18: Performance reporting

Central government agencies are legislatively required to report on performance against their asset management and investment plans.

Recommendation 19: Asset management assurance

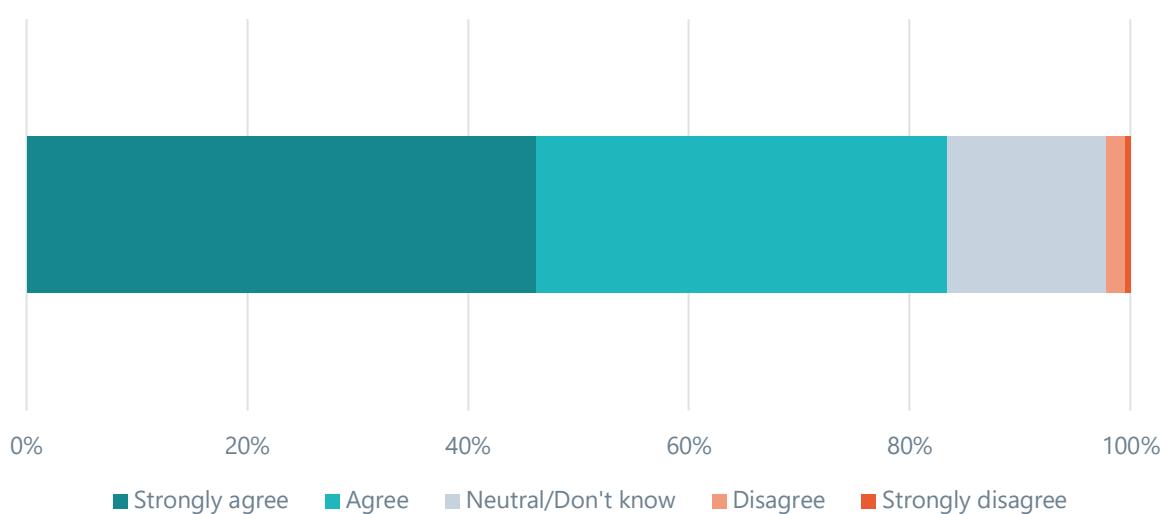
Central government agencies' asset management and investment plans are independently assessed.

For each recommendation, we show:

1. How the recommendation was described in the consultation – the question and context used in public engagement.
2. What people told us in relation to each recommendation.

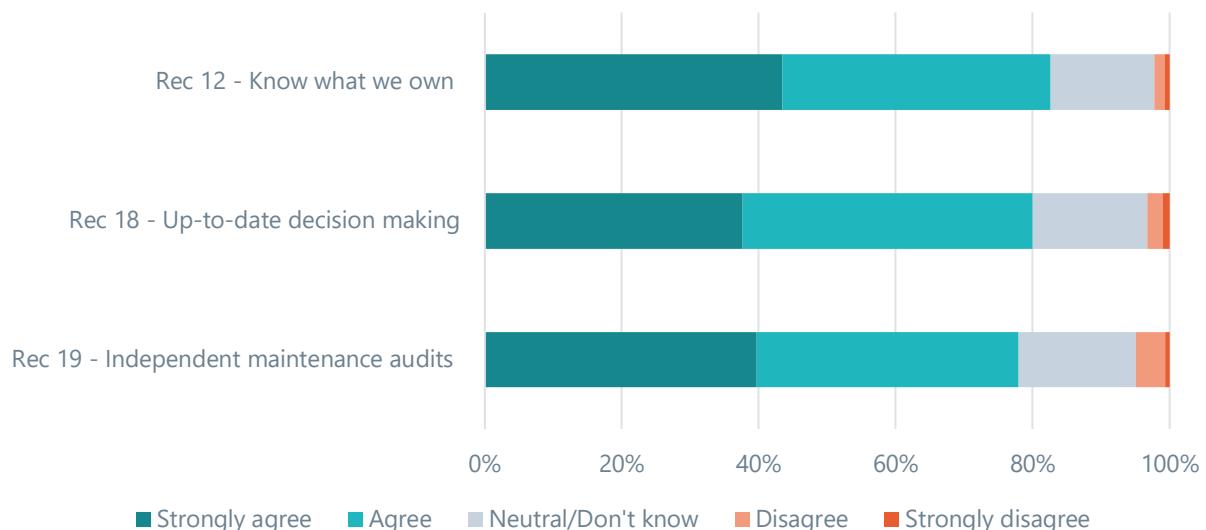
This approach helps ensure that the consultation findings can be clearly traced back to the formal recommendations in the draft Plan.

Figure 19: Agreement that Starting with maintenance is a priority for New Zealand (%)



When asked whether they agree that the theme **Start with maintenance** should be a priority for New Zealand, the majority of respondents (83%) agreed. A further 14% were neutral or unsure, and only 2% disagreed, indicating strong overall support for prioritising maintenance in national infrastructure planning.

Figure 20: Agreement with theme three recommendations (%)



Agreement with the theme three recommendations was high across all measures, indicating strong support for improving the quality and accessibility of infrastructure information in New Zealand.

The highest level of agreement was for **Recommendation 12: Know what we own**, with 83% of respondents agreeing. This was followed by **Recommendation 18: Up-to-date decision making** (80%) and **Recommendation 19: Independent maintenance audits** (78%).

Disagreement was very low, at only 2–5% across all three recommendations. Overall, the results suggest that respondents recognise the importance of better data, information, and oversight to support informed infrastructure decision-making and asset management.

Recommendation 12: Know what we own

What the draft Plan recommendation Know what we own said

Government agencies are legislatively required to prepare and publish long-term asset management and investment plans.

How we described this in consultation

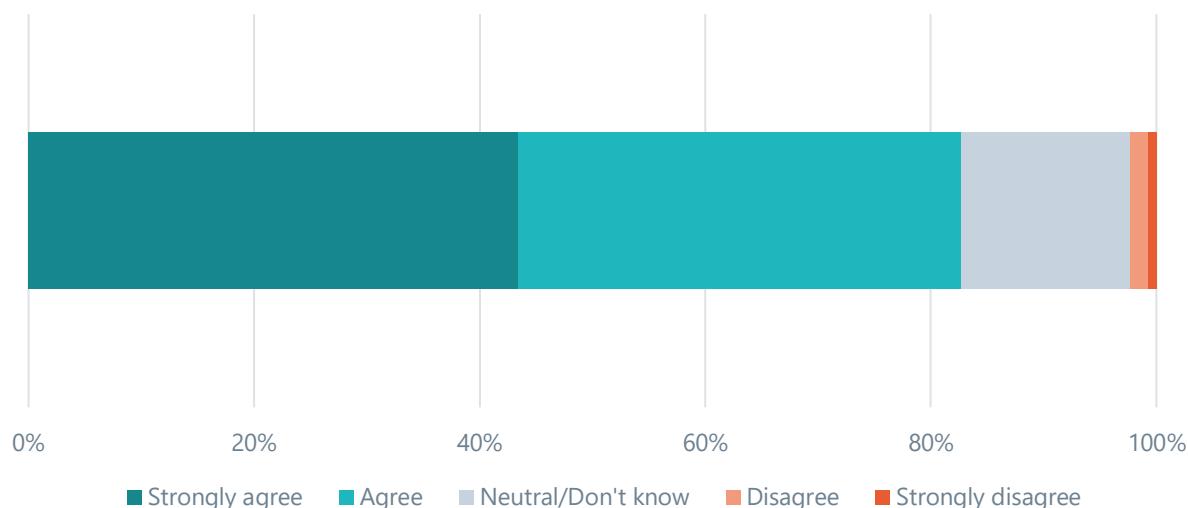
The challenge: Many government agencies don't fully know the condition of their infrastructure. This means that in many cases, they don't know what needs repairing and when, and when they need to improve infrastructure to meet new demands. Often, they'll only know something needs repairing or improving when it goes wrong. This is more expensive and means disruption for New Zealanders.

Recommendation: Require all central government agencies to develop and maintain full, accurate registers of their infrastructure and produce long-term plans for how they'll look after it and improve it.

We asked: To what extent do you agree that this recommendation will address this challenge? Is there anything missing in our approach?

What people told us:

Figure 21: Agreement that the recommendation Know What We Own will address the challenge (%)



More than 80% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that knowing what we own is important. Across all groups, respondents stressed that reliable and up-to-date information on infrastructure assets is essential to ensuring money is spent wisely, risks are managed, and future investment decisions are grounded in evidence. Some were surprised that this is not already universal practice.

"This was supposed to be happening many decades ago but as usual the taxpayers have to put up with funds being diverted to another 'committee' that is formed to investigate why there has been no remedial action taken"

– Representative panel survey respondent

"Often repairs etc are left too long and end up costing more long term"

– Representative panel survey respondent

"It is incomprehensible that some central and local government infrastructure providers don't have asset registers and by implication have no credible asset management plan."

– Sector group

"We would like to see clear recognition of asset management as a key discipline, with an even greater focus on strategic asset management planning being the driver for investment decision making and projects, rather than asset management often being an afterthought to investment planning and project creation."

– Central government group

Several noted that local government is already required to do this under the Local Government Act, and argued that central government should meet similar standards.

"Central government should follow similar practice to local government in terms of 10-year long term plans and 30-year infrastructure plans."

– *Local government entity*

Nationally consistent data standards and shared systems are widely supported.

Respondents across all groups noted that asset information is currently fragmented, duplicated, or inconsistent. There was strong support for nationally consistent standards covering asset condition, risk, criticality, and performance – and for shared systems that reduce duplication and improve coordination.

"A standardised approach to reporting and costing should be implemented."

– *Private sector company*

"Certain infrastructure should be prioritised over other types, like an asset criticality approach. Some infrastructure might not be so critical so shouldn't have the same level of detail around plans."

– *Self-selected survey respondent*

"Need to use standard systems such as GIS and easy to interrogate asset management systems."

– *Self-selected survey respondent*

"The approach is solid, but could also include regular independent audits and a shared national framework to ensure consistency and data quality across agencies."

– *Representative panel survey respondent*

Stronger oversight, auditing, and accountability are widely called for.

Across organisations, panel respondents, and self-selected participants, there was frequent support for independent assurance of asset management practices. Suggestions included periodic audits by the Auditor-General or an equivalent independent body.

"It should be a centralised system so that they can be held accountable to their maintenance plans"

– *Self-selected survey respondent*

"Planning in the government sector needs to be independently assessed and reported on."

– *Local government entity*

"There is no accountability to watch-dogs such as the Auditor General for prudent management of funds and asset management."

– Sector group

Panel and self-selected respondents – who tended to focus more on accountability – highlighted concerns about wasted funds, deferred maintenance, and the need for consequences where asset management fails.

High-quality asset management requires skilled staff and sustained resourcing.

Respondents across all groups emphasised that producing credible long-term asset plans requires specialist skills, sustained funding, and organisational capability – particularly if expectations increase.

“Producing long-term asset plans will require a specific skill set and there may need to be training and support available.”

– Private sector company

“It horrifies me that that wouldn't be happening already. There may be some economies of scale or efficiency gains if the government departments don't have to produce the long term plans alone. They need the skills to do this and they might or might not be present in the agency.”

– Self-selected survey respondent

“Asset management professionals will need to be in leadership and delivery positions that implement an asset management first strategy for the country.”

– Sector group

Representative and self-selected respondents also stressed that improved asset management must avoid unnecessary bureaucracy that adds cost without improving outcomes.

Recommendation 18: Up-to-date decision making

What the draft Plan recommendation “Up-to-date decision making” said

Central government agencies are legislatively required to report on performance against their asset management and investment plans.

How we described this in consultation

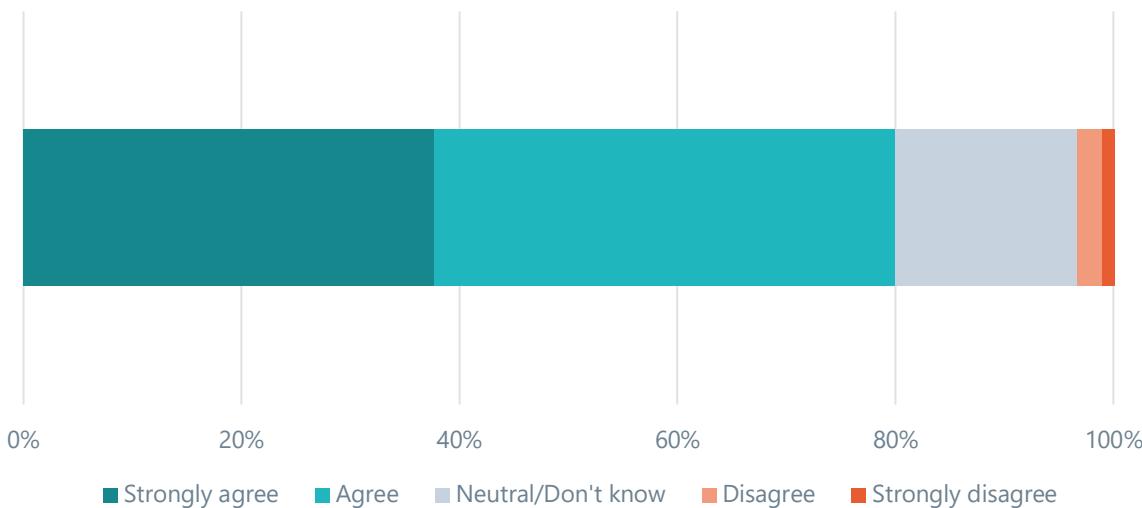
The challenge: Even if central government agencies do have a long-term plan for how they'll look after their infrastructure, it's not always clear how well they're tracking. This keeps decision-makers and the public in the dark and means we can't plan ahead.

Recommendation: Require agencies to report how well they are delivering on their long-term infrastructure plans, including how their infrastructure is performing, so that decisions can be made based on up-to-date information.

We asked: To what extent do you agree that this recommendation will address this challenge? Is there anything missing in our approach?

What people told us

Figure 22: Agreement that the recommendation Up-to-date decision making will address the challenge (%)



80% of respondents expressed support for clear, transparent reporting to improve decision-making. Across all groups, respondents highlighted that transparent reporting on long-term plans helps surface asset condition risks, clarify priorities, and support evidence-based budgeting.

"This is basic stuff that I'd expect to be happening already."

– Representative panel survey respondent

"Requiring agencies to report on how well they are delivering their long-term infrastructure plans is critical for informed decision-making at every level of government...."

– Private sector company

"Transparency is vital for accountability, and timely, accurate reporting enables better decision-making, public trust, and strategic planning."

– Private sector company

Many organisations and technical submitters emphasised that reporting should shine a light on under-investment in maintenance and renewals, helping to identify risks early and avoid costly deferrals.

"We believe that agencies and all infrastructure providers should be quantifying and reporting on the deferred maintenance and deferred renewals. This is in effect a 'liability' for agencies and the Government that is not quantified, reported, or transparent."

– Central government agency

"We strongly support focus on prioritising maintenance and renewals, with stronger requirements for agencies to gather and report on performance of their assets."

– *Sector group*

Concerns about reporting burden and practicality.

A recurring theme – across all groups – was that reporting must be meaningful, not excessive. Respondents emphasised the need for balance so reporting requirements do not overwhelm smaller agencies or divert resources away from core functions like maintenance.

"Visibility and transparency is important for central government use of public funds. However, a balance must be struck between over-burdening infrastructure delivery agencies."

– *Local government entity*

"Reporting can be a distorting burden, it can also cause distortion to good practice when organisations focus on KPIs rather good outcomes. The reporting system needs to be integrated with everyday record keeping - it also needs to be flexible enough to celebrate unforeseen good outcomes"

– *Self-selected survey respondent*

Both survey groups also cautioned against reporting that becomes a "box-ticking exercise", or that increases bureaucracy without delivering better outcomes.

Calls for independent oversight and stronger accountability.

A smaller but notable share of respondents – particularly from the self-selected and organisational groups – argued that reporting alone may not ensure accountability. They suggested that long-term plans and asset management practices could require independent review or external checks.

"Long-term plans should be regularly reviewed by an independent team... Projects should go through a staged process..."

– *Sector group*

"Where renewal works are deferred, this should be subject to heightened scrutiny... independent review or audit of reasons for deferral."

– *Iwi group*

"Independent evaluation of progress to ensure accurate reporting."

– *Representative panel survey respondent*

Recommendation 19: Independent maintenance audits

What the draft Plan recommendation “Independent maintenance audits” said

Central government agencies’ asset management and investment plans are independently assessed.

How we described this in consultation

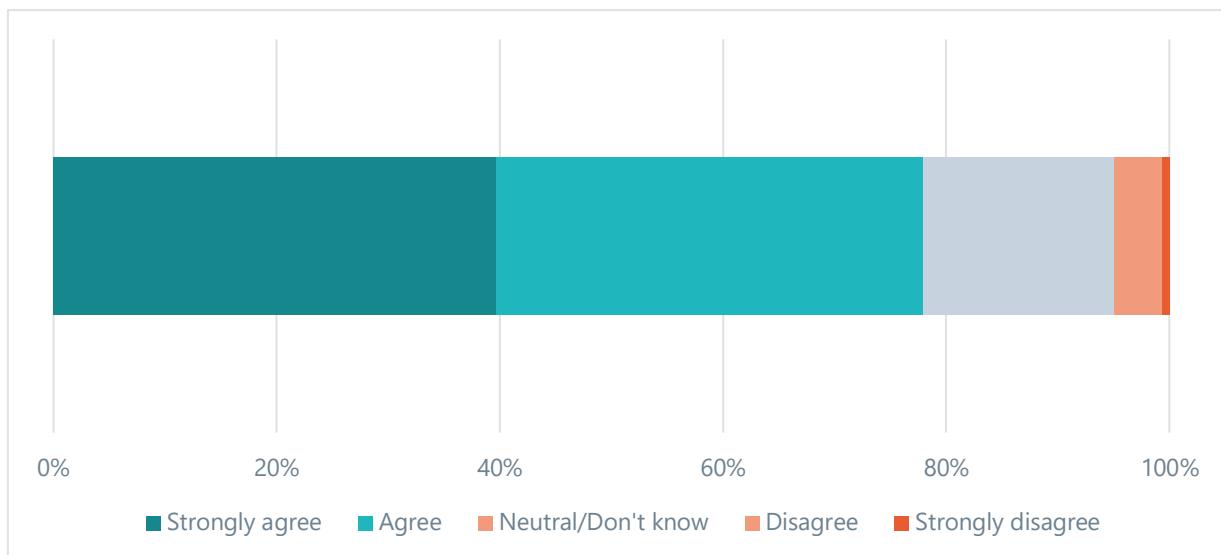
The challenge: Government agencies currently self-assess whether their maintenance is good enough. We know that this way of doing things isn’t working because information is inconsistent and not always accurate.

Recommendation: Have experts independently check whether government agencies’ long-term infrastructure plans are sound and being followed.

We asked: To what extent do you agree that this recommendation will address this challenge? Is there anything missing in our approach?

What people told us

Figure 23: Agreement that the recommendation Independent maintenance audits² will address the challenge (%)



Almost 80% of respondents agree that independent assessment of asset management practices, including maintenance, can improve transparency, consistency and accountability in how central government manages its infrastructure assets.

Consistent support for independent checks to strengthen accountability.

Organisations emphasised that independent scrutiny of asset management and investment plans can lift performance and public confidence, particularly for critical infrastructure.

² ‘Audit’ and ‘assurance’ are technical terms with different meanings. For the plain language survey, we used ‘audit’ in a colloquial sense to refer to the process of independent assessment.

"Independent assessment can improve consistency, accuracy, and accountability."

– *Local government entity*

"Great to have some quality control mechanism in place"

– *Representative panel survey respondent*

Both survey groups echoed this, stressing the need for impartial oversight to counteract political interference, internal bias, and varying levels of capability across agencies.

There is a shared concern that assessments must not create unnecessary cost or bureaucracy.

Across all respondent types, the strongest point of caution related to cost and administrative burden. Many referenced the expense of existing local government audits as a warning, noting that additional layers of oversight could divert funds away from maintenance itself.

"Having experts independently check whether government agencies' long-term infrastructure plans are sound and being followed can add substantial additional costs. The additional cost of these independent checks needs to be limited to avoid creating a situation similar to the cost of auditing Local Government LTPs that adds substantial costs across NZ and cannot be controlled or reduced."

– *Local government entity*

"Such supervision may have a big financial cost to bring into the equation of responsible maintenance."

– *Representative panel survey respondent*

"Provided that these 'independent experts' are not part of the usual consultant gravy-train."

– *Self-selected survey respondent*

Independence, expertise and data quality are critical to effectiveness.

Respondents across all groups stressed that the value of independent checks depends on the capability and neutrality of those conducting them. There were repeated calls for assessors to have genuine sector expertise and strong contextual understanding, rather than applying generic or unsuitable benchmarks.

"We need independent, industry qualified experts to: Audit agency infrastructure plans and maintenance... [and] provide objective, experience-based assessments..."

– *Private sector company*

"Staff note, however, that the expertise of auditors is critical, they must have appropriate, context-sensitive knowledge and avoid applying generic or ill-suited benchmarks."

– *Local government entity*

"As long as the independent checkers are honest."

– *Self-selected survey respondent*

A few submissions emphasised that independent assurance would only be effective if supported by reliable data and common standards. They recommended greater use of digital tools such as digital twins, as well as consistent reporting frameworks across agencies.

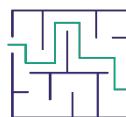
"We encourage the adoption of digital practices and data-driven asset management, including national data standards, mandated digital delivery and digital twins"

– *Sector group*

Mixed views on extending independent checks to local government.

Some organisational submissions suggested including local government, given councils' significant ownership and management of infrastructure. Others opposed this, noting councils already undergo audit processes and face substantial compliance costs. This variation reflects differences in roles and existing oversight regimes rather than disagreement about the principle of independent assurance.

Overall, respondents want stronger oversight – but not at the expense of adding unnecessary bureaucracy, cost, or inefficiency. They see independent audits as a useful tool to lift performance but emphasise that value will depend on how they are designed, resourced, and applied in practice.



Theme 4: Right-size New Investment

The following four recommendations in the draft National Infrastructure Plan correspond to the theme **Right-size new investment**.

Recommendation 14: Investment Readiness Assessment

All Crown-funded infrastructure proposals pass through a transparent, independent readiness assessment before funding.

Recommendation 15: Project Transparency

All business cases, Budget submissions, and advice on central government infrastructure investments are published.

Recommendation 16: Risk Management

Project assurance for central government agencies ensures that risks are well managed.

Recommendation 17: Learning from Projects

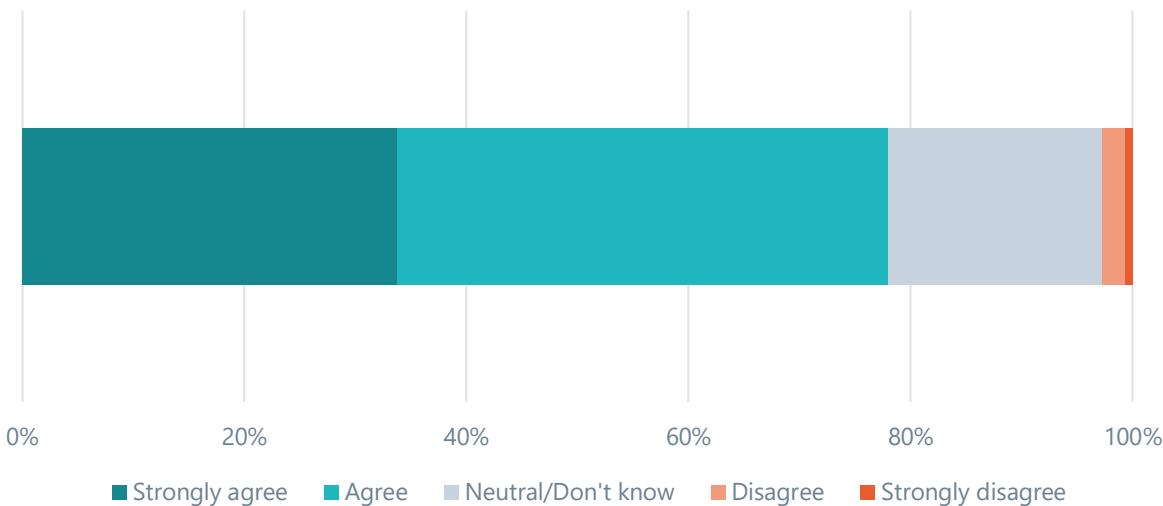
Post-completion information on actual project costs, delivery dates and benefits are provided and published in a standard format, enabling comparisons to what was expected when funded.

For each recommendation, we show:

1. How the recommendation was described in the consultation – the question and context used in public engagement.
2. What people told us in relation to each recommendation.

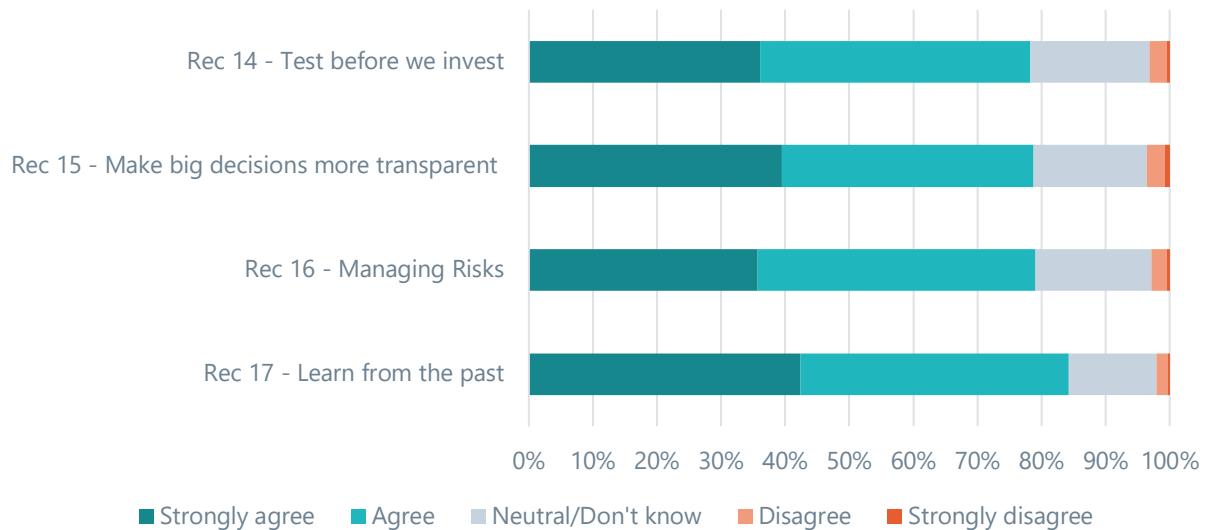
This approach helps ensure that the consultation findings can be clearly traced back to the formal recommendations in the draft Plan.

Figure 24: Agreement that Right Sizing New Investment is a priority for New Zealand (%)



When asked whether they agree that the theme "Right-size New Investment" should be a priority for New Zealand, the majority of respondents (78%) expressed agreement. A further 19% were neutral or unsure, while only 3% disagreed.

Figure 25: Agreement with theme four's recommendations (%)



Agreement with the theme four recommendations was strong, reflecting widespread support for greater transparency, learning, and accountability in infrastructure decision-making.

The highest level of agreement was for Recommendation 17 – "Learn From the Past", with 84% of respondents agreeing. High levels of agreement were also witnessed for other recommendations, which were all at 78% or 79% respectively.

Disagreement levels were minimal (2–4%), with most remaining responses neutral or unsure.

Recommendation 14: Test before we invest

What the draft Plan recommendation “Test before we invest” said

Crown-funded infrastructure proposals pass through a transparent, independent readiness assessment before funding.

How we described this in consultation

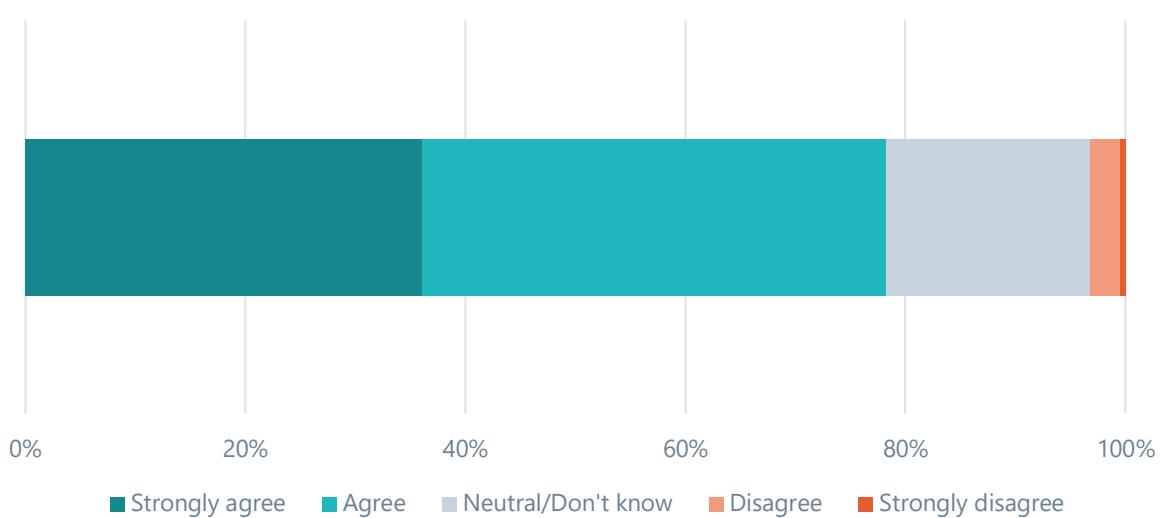
The challenge: We don't currently require an independent assessment of projects to make sure they are important, provide value for money, and are ready for investment, unlike many other countries. When we try to build things that aren't properly thought out, things can go wrong fast. Delays, cost blowouts and cancelled projects are not how we should be spending our limited infrastructure dollar.

Recommendation: All central government-funded infrastructure projects have an independent assessment to make sure they're ready before money is spent.

We asked: To what extent do you agree that this recommendation will address this challenge? Is there anything missing in our approach?

What people told us

Figure 26: Agreement that the recommendation Test before we invest will address the challenge (%)



Almost 80% of respondents agreed this recommendation will improve accountability, reduce the risk of cost overruns and help ensure value for public money.

Independent assessment is widely supported as a tool to improve decision quality.

Across all groups, respondents saw value in independent scrutiny before committing public funds. Many viewed this as necessary to avoid the kinds of issues seen in past projects, including poor early problem definition, underestimation of costs, or investment in assets that later prove oversized or misaligned with demand.

"Insight values foresight. Ka pai"

– *Representative panel survey respondent*

"All infrastructure projects that involve central government funding should have an independent assessment before money is spent – not just projects fully funded by central government."

– *Iwi group*

"Every central government-funded infrastructure project must undergo independent assessment before investment."

– *Private sector company*

Many emphasised that assessment should cover not just capital cost but also whole-of-life affordability, operating costs, resilience, carbon impacts, and whether the project is right-sized.

"Verification should test demand assumptions, options and right-sizing, staging, value engineering, cost realism, and user affordability."

– *Private sector company*

"Assessments should consider the full picture not just upfront capital costs but also operational and maintenance expenses over the asset's whole life."

– *Local government entity*

Proportional, risk-based processes are important to avoid unnecessary burden.

A common theme across organisations, the representative panel, and self-selected respondents was that independent assessments must be proportionate. Respondents expressed concern that applying full assurance requirements to every project – regardless of size, complexity or risk – could slow delivery or add unnecessary cost.

"I do worry that this is going to add a layer of bureaucracy which will delay project start up."

– *Self-selected survey respondent*

"A one-size-fits-all requirement may not be efficient... for smaller or lower-risk projects, the cost and delay... could outweigh the benefits."

– *Local government entity*

"To ensure processes are not 'bogged down' in unnecessary processes, this recommendation should only apply to high value projects."

– *Local government entity*

"While we agree there should be more planning to evaluate project viability and prioritisation, the current project assurance and business case approach is very expensive and time consuming and may not result in anything being delivered or funded."

– Central government agency

Survey respondents raised similar concerns, noting the risk of bureaucratic layers, added consultancy costs, and avoidable delays.

Assessments must be genuinely independent, credible, and free from political or commercial influence.

Across all groups, there was a clear view that assessments must be genuinely independent to be effective. Respondents stressed the need for clear qualifications, transparent methods, and publicly available findings. Self-selected respondents emphasised this most strongly, often citing mistrust of political cycles and consultant dependence.

Recommendation 15: Make big decisions more transparent

What the draft Plan recommendation “Make big decisions more transparent” said

All business cases, Budget submissions, and advice on central government infrastructure investments are published.

How we described this in consultation

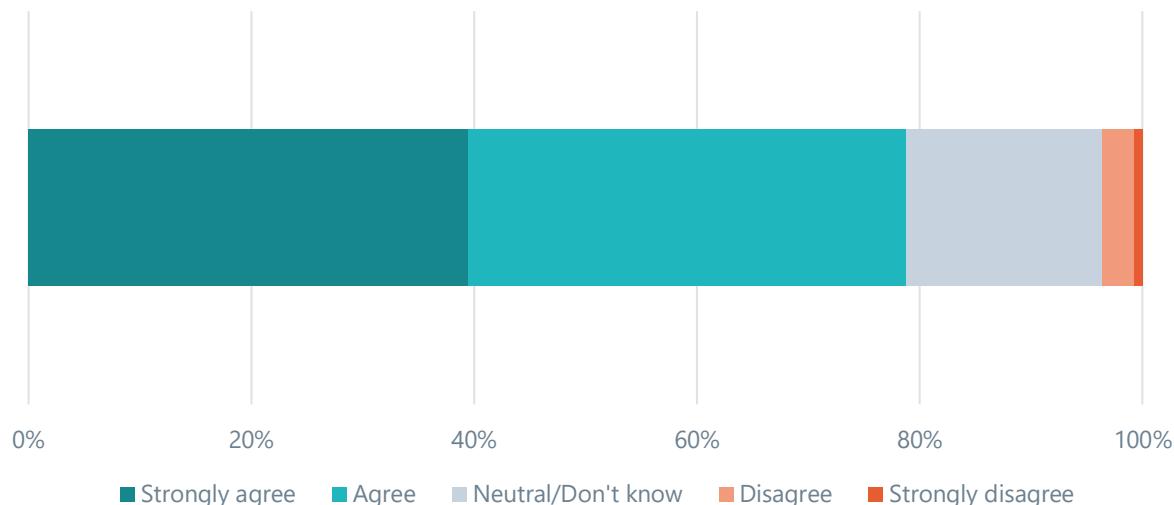
The challenge: Key project decisions can happen with limited public information. This can make it hard for people to be confident that we are choosing the right projects, that will get us what we need, well into the future.

Recommendation: Make the information that government uses to decide on infrastructure projects public – like business cases, budget requests, and expert advice – so people can see how decisions are made.

We asked: To what extent do you agree that this recommendation will address this challenge? Is there anything missing in our approach?

What people told us

Figure 27: Agreement that the recommendation Make big decisions more transparent will address the challenge (%)



More than three-quarters of respondents agreed that greater transparency in major infrastructure decision-making is essential to maintaining trust, improving accountability and ensuring public money is spent wisely.

Transparency is essential for public trust and confidence.

Respondents across all groups believed that better transparency helps the public understand why projects are chosen, what they will cost, and how they will be delivered. Many noted that this helps build trust and improves the quality of input from communities and the private sector.

"Would be better to have all the info for the public to make a more informed decision"

– Representative panel survey respondent

"It's always best to be transparent about why things are being done, especially with taxpayers' money."

– Representative panel survey respondent

"Transparency is essential to restoring trust in the infrastructure system."

– Iwi group

"Greater transparency can help build public confidence that the right projects are being chosen."

– Local government entity

"We agree that ensuring greater transparency of large public sector projects will help the public hold the government and delivery agencies to account, which can help get better results. It also allows the private sector to plan and operate their business more effectively."

– *Sector group*

Self-selected respondents reinforced this theme strongly, often framing transparency as a safeguard against political swings, waste, or poor decisions.

Stronger readiness and assurance processes were widely supported.

Many organisational submissions strongly supported independent project assessments to ensure proposals are well-sscoped, realistic, and deliverable before funding is committed.

"[Local government entity] staff strongly support the recommendation that all central government-funded infrastructure projects undergo independent assessment before funding is committed."

– *Local government entity*

However, organisations also emphasised avoiding unnecessary duplication and suggested applying readiness assessments proportionately, with clear thresholds. Several councils noted they already use robust business-case processes and encouraged consistency across central government.

Panel and self-selected respondents supported the idea of independent checks, though they were less focused on specific tools and more concerned with ensuring decisions reflect genuine public interest rather than political pressure.

Transparency must enhance value for money, not create barriers or delays.

While transparency was strongly supported, many respondents – especially from the representative and self-selected groups – warned that processes should not become so complex or burdensome that they slow down delivery, increase costs, or dilute accountability.

"It is important to have good process in place but don't wait until all information is available. So start with the concept, work through pre-feasibility, feasibility, budgets, business case, risks and project plan. At any time the project can be pulled if any aspect doesn't stack up. Waiting on all information to be available will incur significant costs. A staged approach will minimise expenditure before the project is pulled."

– *Self-selected survey respondent*

Commercial sensitivity needs to be carefully managed.

Some respondents also expressed concern about the risk of publishing commercially sensitive information, particularly in cases involving private entities. They suggested mitigations such as anonymisation, aggregated reporting, or applying minimum thresholds to limit disclosure to significant projects.

"Business cases prepared by private entities often contain commercially sensitive information. Disclosure could compromise competitive positions and deter private investment in infrastructure delivery."

– Sector group

Recommendation 16: Risk management

What the draft Plan recommendation Make big decisions more transparent said

Project assurance for central government agencies ensures that risks are well managed.

How we described this in consultation

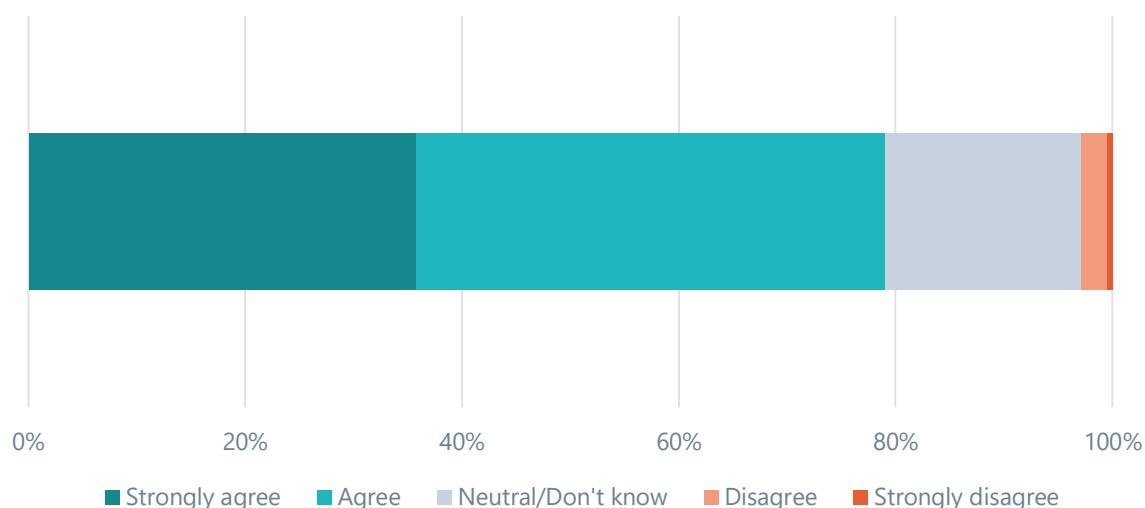
The challenge: Not only is infrastructure costly, it's also complex. This makes it easy for things to go wrong. Projects face challenges when all the risks aren't properly considered and managed.

Recommendation: Stronger upfront risk management and assurance processes are required for all projects – making sure risks are visible and well-managed from start to finish.

We asked: To what extent do you agree that this recommendation will address this challenge? Is there anything missing in our approach?

What people told us

Figure 28: Agreement that the recommendation Managing risks will address the challenge (%)



Almost 80% of respondents agreed that more consistent risk management is essential for improving infrastructure delivery.

Strong support for embedding risk management early and throughout project delivery.

Respondents consistently emphasised the importance of embedding comprehensive risk management from the start of projects through to completion. This was framed as essential to avoid cost overruns, delays, and unexpected problems. Many expressed clear support for the recommendation, with several noting that proactive risk identification leads to stronger, more resilient infrastructure outcomes.

"The approach is solid, but incorporating continuous risk monitoring and feedback loops from past projects could further strengthen risk management throughout the project lifecycle."

– Representative panel survey respondent

"[Local government entity] staff strongly support the recommendation for stronger upfront risk management and assurance processes across all infrastructure projects. Making risks visible and actively managed from the earliest stages through to project completion is essential to reducing unexpected problems, cost overruns, and delays."

– Local government entity

"[Private sector company] strongly agrees with the recommendation to implement robust upfront risk management and assurance processes for infrastructure projects. Effective risk management must consider not only technical and engineering factors... but also broader contextual risks."

– Private sector company

"Investment in risk reduction and resilience pre-event simultaneously reduces the impact of damaged critical infrastructure on impacted communities and economies, reduces response costs and increases the speed of restoration."

– Local government group

Support for independent assurance.

A repeated theme from other recommendations was that independent verification and greater transparency across projects would strengthen accountability, reduce the risk of budget blow-outs, and build public confidence. Several responses stressed the value of making risk identification publicly available, and of learning through systematic post-completion reporting.

"It is agreed that independently assessed and published risk identification for projects will build trust with the community."

– Sector group

"We also endorse the Commission's call for systematic post-completion reporting so that accurate data on actual costs, delivery performance and realised benefits are shared across the sector."

– Private sector company

Independent expertise and capability are seen as critical.

Respondents across all groups also highlighted that effective assurance depends on the right skills and frameworks. Concerns were raised that risk management is too often undervalued, treated as an afterthought, or handled without sufficient expertise. Calls were made for consistent national frameworks and improved sector capability to support better practice.

"Anyone undertaking risk assessment should be trained or certified in such. Government entities should have to have both risk and asset management maturity assessments undertaken biannually at least"

– *Self-selected survey respondent*

Risk management must account for climate change, natural hazards, environmental, social, and cultural impacts.

Risk management was seen as extending beyond technical or financial issues. Respondents pointed to the importance of integrating climate change, natural hazards, environmental and cultural impacts, and community or market effects into project assurance. Failing to account for these dimensions was noted as a cause of project delays, redesigns, or conflict in the past.

"Climate and natural hazard risk assessments and consideration of mitigation and adaptation measures must become business-as-usual for infrastructure planning and asset management"

– *Advocacy organisation*

Improved procurement and better allocation of risk were frequently raised.

Among organisations, there was recognition that better procurement practices and risk allocation mechanisms could reduce uncertainty and deliver stronger outcomes. Progressive contracting was mentioned as one way to address unknowns such as underground conditions early, while respondents stressed that risks should be assigned to those best placed to manage them.

"Using procurement tools such as progressive contracting may be a better approach whereby the initial areas of project uncertainty such as geotechnical, underground assets conditions and other 'surprise' elements could be dealt with"

– *Sector group*

Recommendation 17: Learn from the past

What the draft Plan recommendation Learning from projects said

All business cases, Budget submissions, and advice on central government infrastructure investments are published.

How we described this in consultation

The challenge: We need to learn from what went well, and what didn't, on past projects to ensure the next project goes better. However, information about past infrastructure projects isn't easy to find or

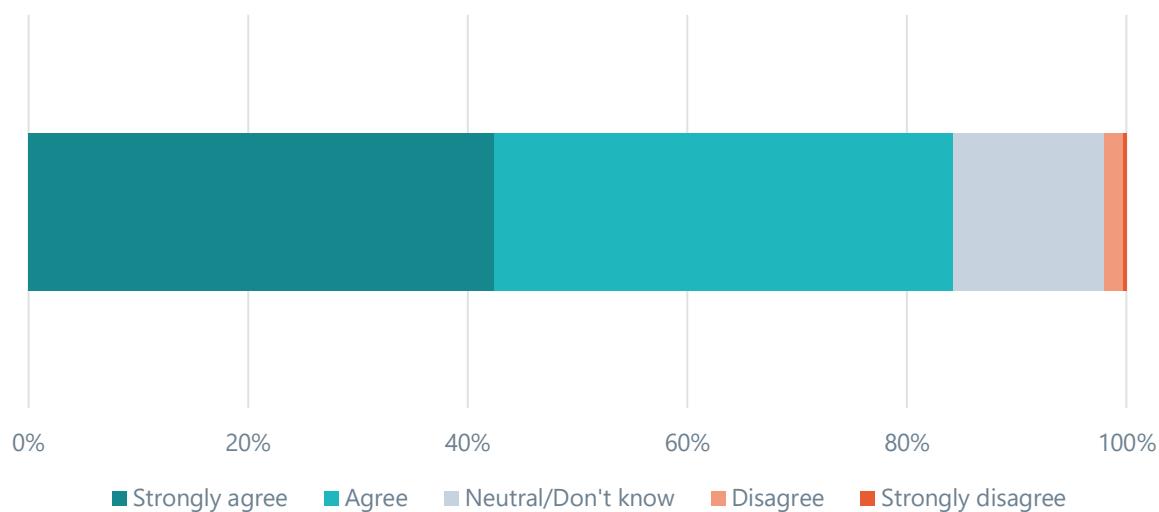
understand. Making key project information public helps to ensure that future decisions are based on evidence and real outcomes, not guesswork or short-term thinking.

Recommendation: Track and publish what projects actually cost, when they're delivered, and what benefits they provide so that we can improve future infrastructure projects.

We asked: To what extent do you agree that this recommendation will address this challenge? Is there anything missing in our approach?

What people told us

Figure 29: Agreement that the recommendation Learn from the past will address the challenge (%)



84% of respondents supported stronger requirements to track and publish the actual costs, timelines, and outcomes of major infrastructure projects.

People want project outcomes – costs, timeframes, and benefits – to be published clearly and consistently.

Across all groups, respondents agreed that tracking and publishing project performance is central to improving infrastructure delivery.

"The information or progress needs to be made available to the public and allowed to have a say."

– Representative panel survey respondent

"Track and publish what projects cost, when they are delivered, and what benefits they provide so that we can improve future infrastructure projects."

– Local government entity

"Transparent reporting helps ensure future decisions are guided by evidence rather than assumptions and builds public trust in how infrastructure investments are managed."

– *Private sector company*

The representative survey panel and self-selected respondents linked this directly to public trust and the responsible use of taxpayer money.

Post-completion evaluations are widely supported as a way to learn from past projects.

Respondents stressed that consistent post-completion evaluations would create a feedback loop, allowing lessons learned to be applied to future projects. This was seen as a way to address optimism bias, strengthen business cases, and ensure better decision-making across agencies.

"Tracking post construction benefits against the investment case plan will enable a better understanding of the outcomes related to assumptions previously made and will identify the impacts of optimism bias."

– *Private sector company*

"Look back in order to go forward. Great idea. Works every time."

– *Representative panel survey respondent*

"Part of transparency and an opportunity to a) not reinvent the wheel, and b) learn."

– *Representative panel survey respondent*

Self-selected respondents stressed that these reviews must be meaningful rather than box-ticking exercises, with lessons actively applied to future projects.

Standardisation and data quality are important for comparability and learning.

Organisational submissions emphasised that learning from past projects requires consistent, high-quality information that is reported in the same way across agencies. A standardised, sector-wide framework was seen as necessary to ensure comparability and consistency of reporting.

"Through development of a universal performance scorecard, it would be possible to track investment delivery against plan, and to compare performance outcomes between departments and agencies."

– *Private sector company*

This theme was also reflected in public responses, though framed less technically – with calls for information that is clear, accessible, and understandable for communities.

People want broader outcome reporting – not only financial metrics.

Some respondents stressed the importance of ensuring information is accessible to a wide range of users, including iwi, communities, and non-technical stakeholders. There was also repeated support for

broadening reporting beyond financial metrics to capture environmental, cultural, regional, and social impacts.

"Publishing this information (including a breakdown into categories such as land, consenting, design and various delivery components) will help identify where infrastructure investment delivers the greatest benefits for cost, contributing to more efficient use of limited funding."

– Local government entity

This aligns with broader public calls for transparency about whether projects have achieved real, long-term value.

Appendix B – List of organisations who contributed

Listed below are the organisations who submitted on the draft National Infrastructure Plan, and gave permission to publish their submission:

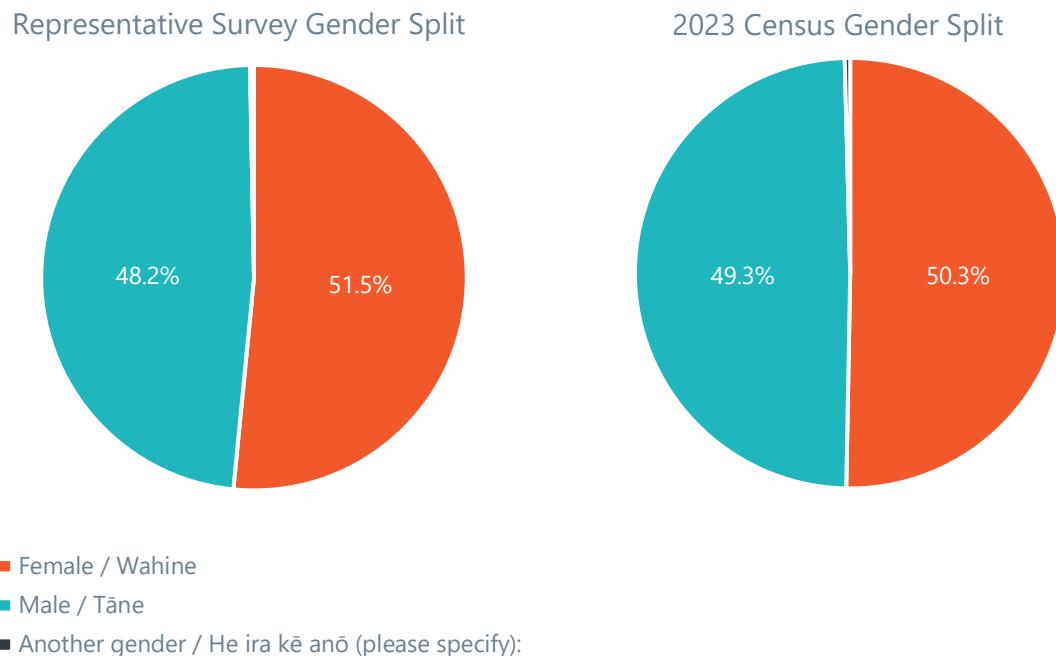
AA Automobile Association	ACE New Zealand
Air New Zealand	Amuri Net Limited
Āpōpō	Architecture, Engineering and Construction (AEC) Working Group, part of the AI Forum of New Zealand
Asset BowManagement Ltd	Association of Salaried Medical Specialists
Auckland Airport	Auckland Council
Australasian Railway Association	beforeUdig
Beca	Bus and Coach Association New Zealand
Buller District Council	Campaign for Better Transport Incorporated
Business New Zealand	Central Economic Development Agency (CEDA)
Canterbury Mayoral Forum	Chorus
Central Government AM Leaders Forum	Civil Contractors New Zealand
Christchurch City Council	Consumer NZ
Climate Action Ōtautahi	Crown Infrastructure Delivery (CID) Limited
Concrete NZ	Department of Conservation
Consultus Ltd	Enable Fibre Networks
Degrowth Aotearoa New Zealand	Engineering NZ
Energy Resources Aotearoa	Environment Southland
Environment Canterbury	Hamilton City Council
Enviro NZ	Horizons Regional Council
Fonterra	ICNZ Insurance Council NZ
Hawkes Bay Regional Council	Infrastructure Sustainability Council
Hotel Council Aotearoa	Institution of Chemical Engineers New Zealand
Infrastructure New Zealand	iRAP - International Road Assessment Programme
Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia (IPWEA)	Islands for the Future of Humanity
InternetNZ	Maritime Union of New Zealand
IrrigationNZ	Meridian Energy Limited
Manawatu District Council	National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA)
Master Builders Association of NZ	Natural Hazards Commission Toka Tū Ake
Metals NZ	New Zealand Government Procurement
Ministry of Justice	New Zealand Telecommunications Forum (TCF)
National Road Carriers	Ngā Iwi o Taranaki
New Zealand Council of Trade Unions Te Kauae Kaimahi	Northland Regional Council
New Zealand Rivers Group	Office of ECE
New Zealand Airports Association	Orion New Zealand Limited
Northern Infrastructure Forum	Otago Regional Council
Novoconsult Ltd	Porirua City Council
Opportunities Party	Primo Wireless Ltd

Otago and Southland Regional Transport Committees	Rangitikei District Council
Palmerston North City Council	Reflective Construction Law
Powerco	Rewiring Aotearoa
Property Council New Zealand	Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS)
Raukawa Charitable Trust	Selwyn District Council
Rental Vehicle Association of NZ Inc	Sport NZ
Rosebank Business Association	Stratanet Limited
Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society of New Zealand Inc	Te Kaahui o Rauru
South Island Regional Transport Committee Chairs Group	Te Rūnanga o Ngati Mutunga
	Te Utanganui
Tauranga City Council	The Connectivity Group Limited (TCG)
Te Kōkiringa Taumata, New Zealand Planning Institute	The Internet Service Providers Association of New Zealand Inc (ISPANZ)
Taituarā – Local Government Professionals Aotearoa	Tourism Industry Aotearoa
Te Uru Kahika	Transpower
The Aggregate and Quarry Association	Upper Hutt City Council
The Future is Rail	Vector Limited
Transportation Group	Waimakariri District Council Staff
Tuatahi First Fibre	Water New Zealand
Unison Networks Limited	Wellington City Council
Urban Task Force	Western Bay of Plenty District Council
	ZAM Advisory Pty Ltd
Waikato Regional Council	
WasteMINZ	
WSP	
Zero Waste Aotearoa	

Appendix C – Demographic information

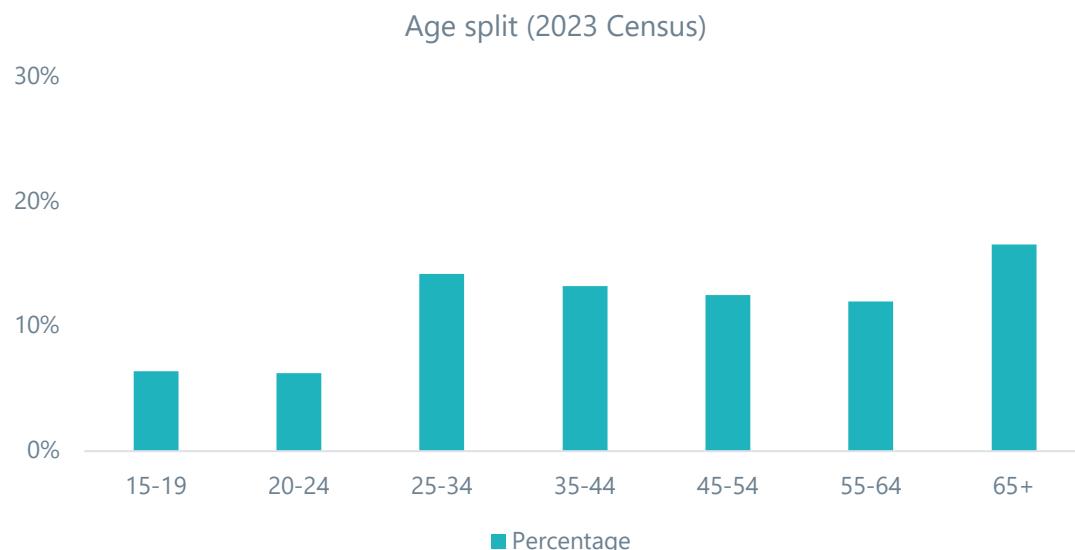
This appendix provides an overview of the demographic profile of the nationally representative survey sample and compares it with 2023 Census data. It includes gender, age, ethnicity, and regional distribution. All figures in the main report refer to the weighted representative sample, ensuring the results align closely with the demographic make-up of New Zealand's population.

Figure 30: Gender distribution – representative survey sample versus 2023 Census data



This figure compares the gender distribution of the nationally representative survey sample with the 2023 Census population profile. The weighted survey sample closely aligns with national proportions: 51.5% female and 48.2% male, compared with the Census estimate of 50.3% female and 49.3% male. Responses from people identifying as another gender were collected but represent a very small share of both the survey and national population, and therefore do not materially affect the comparison. Overall, the close alignment between the survey and Census data indicates that the sample provides a robust demographic basis for interpreting the survey findings.

Figure 31: Age distribution – 2023 Census data



This figure compares the age profile of the nationally representative survey sample with the 2023 Census population. The Census shows a broad spread across age groups, with larger proportions in the 25–34, 35–44, and 65+ cohorts. The representative survey sample was weighted to align with national population patterns, resulting in a similar age distribution.

While there are small differences between the two sources – reflecting the wider age bands used in the survey – the survey sample includes a balanced mix of younger, middle-aged, and older respondents. The close alignment across major age cohorts supports the reliability of the survey results and ensures that findings reflect the perspectives of New Zealanders across different stages of life.

Figure 32: Age distribution – representative survey sample

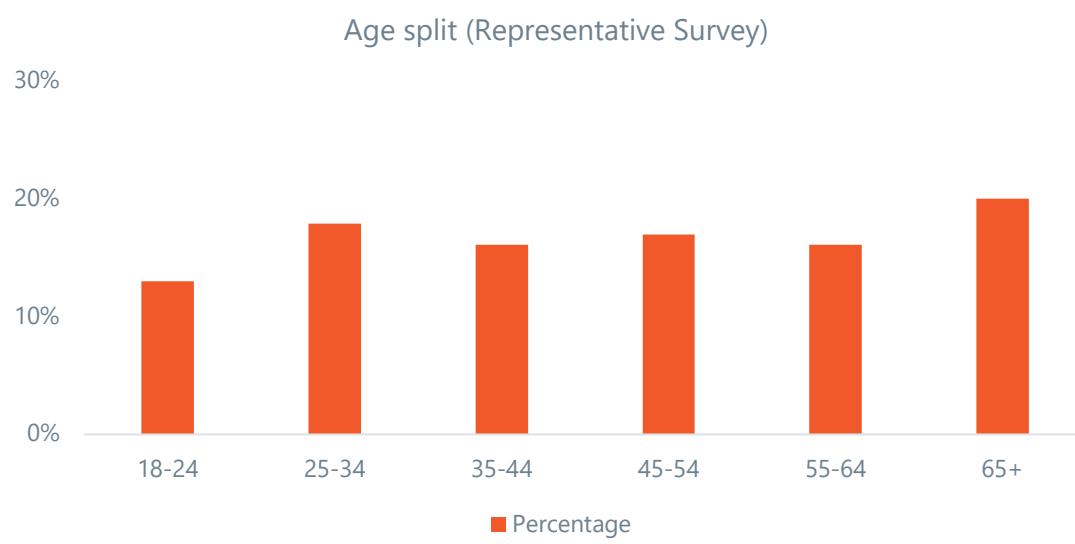
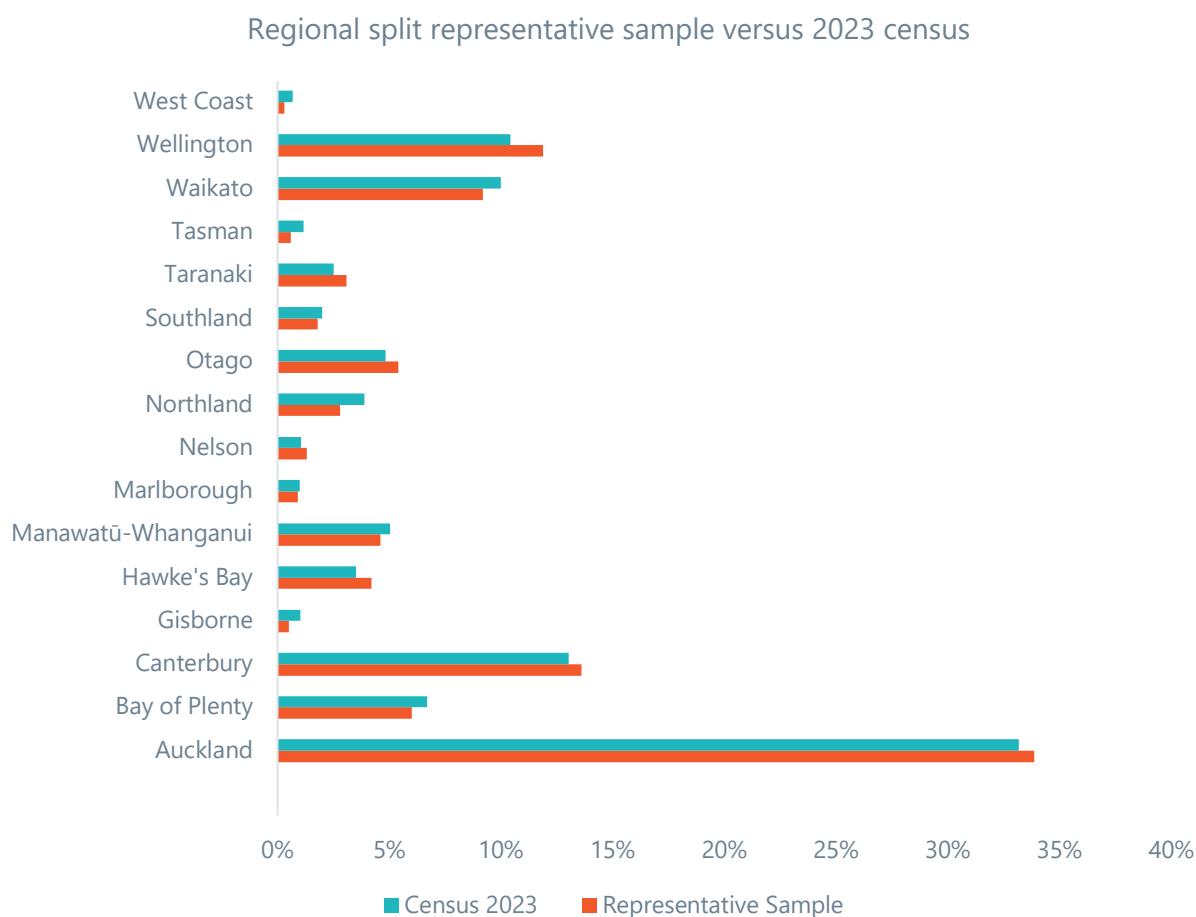


Figure 33: Regional distribution – representative survey sample versus 2023 Census data



This figure compares the regional distribution of the nationally representative survey sample with the 2023 Census population. The weighted survey sample closely tracks the regional make-up of New Zealand, with the largest share of respondents from Auckland, followed by Canterbury, Wellington, and Waikato – consistent with national population patterns.

Smaller regions such as Gisborne, Marlborough, the West Coast, and Tasman represent a minor share of both the Census and survey sample, reflecting their proportion of the national population. While there are minor differences across some regions, these are small and expected within sample-based survey work. Overall, the close alignment indicates that the survey provides a robust regional cross-section of New Zealanders.

Figure 34: Ethnicity distribution – representative survey sample versus 2023 Census data



Note: MELAA = Middle Eastern, Latin American and African

This figure compares the ethnicity profile of the nationally representative survey sample with the 2023 Census population. The weighted survey sample broadly aligns with national proportions across major ethnic groups. Māori and Pacific Peoples are represented at levels close to their Census share, while the European and Asian proportions show minor variation but remain within an expected range for a weighted sample. MELAA groups make up a small share of both the Census population and the survey sample.

Overall, the distribution indicates that the representative survey provides a reasonable reflection of New Zealand's ethnic diversity, supporting confidence in how the survey findings represent population-level views.

Appendix D – Survey and submission form

The following are examples of the online survey and submission form.



Infrastructure choices impact all of us

On average, New Zealanders each spend around \$4,500 on infrastructure services a year.

The decisions we make about our roads, pipes, schools, powerlines and much more, all have a big impact on Kiwis.

While we spend a lot on infrastructure, we're not very good at getting value or at looking after the things we've got. Broken water pipes, potholes and poor water quality are just some examples of this.

We think New Zealand has the capacity, ingenuity and skills to meet our challenges. However, we need to make some changes so that Kiwis can have confidence that we'll get the infrastructure we need now and in the future.



Next

Example of text around the survey and submission form.



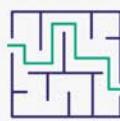
A path to the future

The New Zealand Infrastructure Commission, Te Waihanga, is working on a Plan to set out a path for the future. We want feedback on actions we're proposing to address what's not working, and how we can better plan for future generations.

Our draft Plan includes four areas of changes we think are needed to address our challenges. It makes a total of 19 recommendations under these areas.



Establish
affordable and
sustainable
funding



Clear the way
for
infrastructure



Start with
maintenance



Right-size new
investment

Prev

Next

Example of text around the survey and submission form.



Establish affordable and sustainable funding

Finding smarter ways to pay so we can keep the essentials affordable for everyone.



New Zealand already spends a lot on infrastructure - more than most countries like us - but we're not always getting good value for what we spend. At the same time, both the Government and households are facing tighter budgets. Ageing infrastructure still needs to be looked after, and new infrastructure is needed for a changing population and growing economy, while managing the effects of climate change and other natural hazards. We need a smarter way to decide who pays, when, and how much, while making sure essential services remain affordable for everyone.

To what extent do you agree that 'establishing affordable and sustainable funding' is a priority for New Zealand?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know/not sure
<input type="radio"/>					

Would you like to answer questions about our five recommendations on this topic, or skip to the next section?

- Answer questions about our five recommendations
- Skip to the next section (*Clear the way for infrastructure*)

[Prev](#) [Next](#)

Example of survey question on one of the four themes.



Keep useful information up to date

Establish affordable and sustainable funding: Recommendation 1 of 5

The challenge

Decision makers don't always have access to the information they need to make sure infrastructure investment is matched to New Zealanders' long-term needs in an affordable way.

We're making the following recommendation

Regularly update 'forward guidance' - long-term information about what New Zealanders need and where, which projects can best meet those needs in the most affordable way, and what infrastructure is in progress in the national 'pipeline' - so that decision makers have what they need to make well informed decisions.

To what extent do you agree that this recommendation will address this challenge?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know/not sure
<input type="radio"/>					

Is there anything missing in our approach? Or would you like to comment on your answer, above?

[Prev](#) [Next](#)

Example of survey question on one of the 18 recommendations.