Submissions Policy

Date Created	Next Review	Officer Responsible
8 February 2023	8 February 2025	Corporate Planning and Strategy Manager

Document Set ID: 20250465
Version: 2, Version Date: 11/02/2026

Introduction

Submissions are an important part of Rotorua Lakes Council decision-making process. A submission is formal feedback from an individual or an organisation/group in response to a Council proposal. It is one of the main ways Council can better understand the views on an issue and factor them into their decision-making.

This policy relates to handling submissions under the Local Government Act 2002 (including Annual and Long-term Plans). The principles in this policy may also be used for other areas of legislation. It does not cover submissions under the Resource Management Act 1991, where a separate process is applied.

Who can make a submission?

Anyone can make a submission regardless of his or her age or place of residence. You don't need to be a ratepayer to make a submission. Submissions can be made by individuals or representatives of an organisation, group or agency.

Submissions are public documents

Submissions are public documents. While personal contact details may be removed, the submitter's name will be published unless they specify otherwise.

Only Council and relevant staff members will have access to un-redacted versions of submissions.

Submission minimum criteria

To be considered, all submissions must include:

- First and last name
- Organisation, if appropriate.
- One of the following:
    - Postal address
    - Email address
- Telephone number – while not mandatory this may be helpful if you wish to arrange attendance at a Council Hearing.

Accepted submission methods

Rotorua Lakes Council will receive submissions:

1. Online – through our Participate engagement website: Participate | Whakapuakina mai - Rotorua Lakes Council
2. By post – to: Rotorua Lakes Council, Private Bag 3029, Rotorua Mail Centre, Rotorua 3046
3. In person – Drop a form off at our Customer Centre in the Civic Centre, 1061 Haupapa Street, Rotorua, New Zealand.

Document Set ID: 20250465
Version: 2, Version Date: 11/02/2026

Accepted submission formats and languages

Rotorua Lakes Council will accept submissions that are:

- Written or spoken in English or Te Reo Māori
- New Zealand Sign Language (NZSL)
- Recorded as video or audio files.

Rotorua Lakes Council can provide assistance for people who need help to make a submission.

Note: guidance on the content of the submission cannot be provided.

Submission content conditions

Rotorua Lakes Council reserves the right to remove from consideration, any submission – in part or in full – that contains content that is clearly determined to be of the following nature:

1. Frivolous or vexatious
2. Offensive language
3. Discriminatory or derogatory
4. Personal threats or harassment of Councillors or staff members
5. Would be an abuse of the hearing process to allow the submission (or part thereof) to be taken further
6. Unrelated to Rotorua Lakes Council work (in which case Rotorua Lakes Council would endeavour to forward the submission to the appropriate agency (if they can be identified).

Submitters will not be unfairly denied the opportunity to make genuine submissions. Where there is uncertainty, the default position will be to allow the submission with every effort made to preserve as much of the content as possible.

Rotorua Lakes Council's Chair or Deputy Chair and the Chief Executive will be jointly responsible for the final decision on whether any submission or part thereof should be removed from consideration.

Any substantial redactions or removals of submissions will be listed and provided to Council prior to deliberations.

Late submissions

A late submission is any submission received after the indicated consultation closing date and time. For postal submissions, this is any submission post-marked after the consultation's closing date.

Late submissions may be accepted subject to a Council resolution before the hearing or deliberations begin. Acceptance of late submissions will be at Council's discretion. In considering whether to accept late submissions, Council will consider whether:

- the submission is received at a practical point in the process (e.g. before hearings begin); and/or,
- the submitter will have an unfair advantage over others.

Document Set ID: 20250465
Version: 2, Version Date: 11/02/2026