



Transport & Mobility Forum

RSES Submissions,
Regional Planning Unit,
Southern Regional Assembly,
Assembly House,
O'Connell Street,
Waterford X91 F8PC

Transport and Mobility Forum
Cork

12 February 2018

Comments to Regional Spatial Economic Strategy Issues Paper

Dear Sirs

The Transport and Mobility Forum, Cork (TMF) is a representative group of organisations who have a common interest in sustainable travel (see www.transportandmobilityforum.com). TMF fully support sustainable modes of travel measures and policies. Sustainable and Active Travel helps reduce congestion on roads, improve air quality, supports a low carbon economy, reduces noise pollution and improves public health.

Thank you for the opportunity to feed into the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) process. The TMF fully support '...offering more sustainable choices and options for people, businesses and communities that can positively influence more sustainable patterns of living and working...'. We understand the challenges of accommodating significant growth as raised in the RSES Issues Paper in line with the National Planning Framework. We wish to offer the following recommendations:

p.9 Questions for our Cities

In order to facilitate cities achieving full potential for economic growth we must collectively strive to create a modern European sustainable travel system which **prioritises walking, cycling and public transport** above all other forms of travel. Our city centres are a fixed geographic area and with the proposed significant increases in population and employment, development has to take a new approach in order for our cities to remain enjoyable places to live, invest, work and visit. This could be achieved through higher density mixed use development, houses and business without car spaces, new bus lanes, new pedestrian/cycle routes and more joined-up thinking between stakeholders at local, regional and national levels.

Key transformational projects for Cork should include:

- City Docks and Tivoli Docks
- New train station at Blackpool
- Bus Rapid Transit infrastructure that will connect Ballincollig to Mahon
- Option of TramTrain (combining a LUAS type tram with Commuter Rail)
- Continued upgrades of our train and bus stations and port terminals
- 4 new bridges over River Lee (2 merging at Custom House Quay, Water Street and Eastern Gateway Bridge)
- Installation of new, extended and connected bus lanes and associated infrastructure with connections to train stations, ports and existing/proposed park and rides

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- Installation of new, extended and connected pedestrian and cycle lanes with associated infrastructure with connections to train stations, bus stops, bus stations, ports, local services, schools and 3rd level education,
- Coherent plan for greenways including [EuroVelo Route](#),
- Development of strategic and coordinated park and ride schemes with connections for buses, cyclists and pedestrians, and
- Development of travel cards which can be used on all forms of public transport throughout Ireland (bus, train, tram, car-sharing (the “GoCar” type) and bike-sharing).

Metropolitan Area Strategic Plans sustainable development patterns and key infrastructure

Development patterns should be future proofed for economic growth in a low carbon economy. Developments should;

- 1) be flood proofed for the lifetime of the development including soft landscaping to,
- 2) aim to have a zero carbon or low carbon footprint during the lifetime of development, and
- 3) increased provision of open space with increased planting of shrubs and trees which reduce overall air and noise pollution, reduce impacts from flooding and creates a friendlier/welcoming urban environment for locals and visitors to walk and cycle (pleasant public realm).

p.10 Large Urban Centres (10,000+) projected increase by 20-25% up to 2040

TMF fully support the principle of 30% of new housing to be achieved in infill/brownfill sites and suggest these should be mixed-use sites which include employment, schools, services and facilities to reduce travel times. To achieve high quality and socially inclusive urban communities, RSES could support in policy, supported by financial funding prioritisation, of pedestrian, cycle and public transport above all other forms. Government funding should unlock brownfield sites in terms of road access and contaminated land remediation. This would avoid the continued reduction of planning standards to make development sites economically viable. Affordable housing provision needs to rise 40% in order for communities to be sustainable.

p.11-14 Towns less than 10,000 and Our Rural Areas

Sustainable growth and service provision should be proportionate to;

- 1) the size of settlement,
- 2) the towns ability to grow existing services and facilities to accommodate such growth, and
- 3) where environmental factors allow.

Travel regardless of scale, should prioritise sustainable travel measures, development with low carbon pollution and increasing renewable energy targets.

p.15-16 Housing and Sustainable Communities

Development should support easier access to sustainable, safer and welcoming travel measures to meet needs of people especially; increased proportion of older age, disadvantaged communities, people with reduced mobility, children, women and business. Infrastructure provision (e.g. bus and train stations, bus stops, bus and cycle lanes, pedestrian routes, park and ride, electric car charging points) and development layouts (e.g. open space and road design) should aim to make sustainable travel more interlinked, accessible, friendlier and attractive to use. Location of local services and facilities, e.g. retail, schools, colleges and universities in cities and towns need to support accessibility on foot and bicycle for a large proportion of their catchment area.

We support the principle of prioritising '*...the provision of new housing units within the built-up areas of our regional cities and larger towns with at least 50% of all new housing in the cities to be located on infill/brownfield sites (i.e. urban centres) and 30% of all new housing in larger town to be developed within existing the built-up areas or edge of centre locations...'*. Development Plans and Local Area Plans need to put in place measures to achieve this goal e.g. majority of short-medium term sites are within brownfield sites as close as possible to city and town centres (similar to the sequential approach used for supermarkets).

We really should be planning development by prioritising people who live, work and enjoy the buildings, spaces and services over the lifetime of those developments. Large brownfield sites such as Tivoli and Cork City Docklands will be phased over many years, resulting in the lifetime of buildings lasting 100+ years from now. Consequently, such development should be future proofed as much as possible; reducing impacts of and addressing climate change, reducing carbon footprint, and supporting healthier environments for us to live in. In order for these sites to be sustainable communities, they need to;

- 1) be of mixed use,
- 2) accommodate 40% affordable housing,
- 3) include good quality open space,
- 4) support modern broadband infrastructure,
- 5) minimise public water use through rain water capture on site to flush our toilets, water our open space vegetation and wash our bicycles, and
- 6) have integrated 50% renewable energy generated on site to meet energy demand of buildings and transport. Energy demand overall can be reduced through energy conservation measures including higher density development, insulation measures, buildings orientation and trees planted to reduce impacts of prevailing winds, passive solar design etc.

p.19 Key economic questions

One key barrier to additional jobs within the region is the unsustainable prioritisation of car use over all other forms. Studies throughout the world have repeatedly shown that road infrastructure improvements to accommodate additional capacity solely alleviate the car congestion problem over the short term in specific locations. The continued prioritisation of road infrastructure for car users solely relocates the congestion closer to our city and town centres and increases air and noise pollution.

Another barrier is the lack of mixed use developments which would remove or reduce car use from home to work and other local services and facilities. Provision of adequate housing near to employments will help to reduce exorbitant commuting distances, often induced by the lack of housing supply.

p.21 Transition to a Low Carbon Economy

20% Greenhouse gas emissions from travel in Ireland can be reduced. Various ways to achieve this are highlighted above.

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p.23 Marine environment and ports

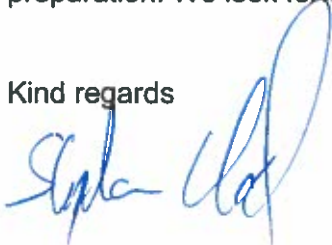
Upgrade of port infrastructure for; 1. commercial ships with option of transfer of materials by train into city/town centres, 2. tourism ships with easier access physically and financially for tourists by train, bus, cycling and walking, 3. electricity substations for ships and ferries to connect to avoid exhaust from diesel engines polluting marine environment, and 4. installation of electric car charge points at car parks adjacent to ferries / ports.

p.24 Investment and Infrastructure

In order to meet the above goals it is vital to prioritise investment and infrastructure in sustainable travel to meet the growth in population of our city, towns and villages.

TMF fully support the principle of sustainable mobility and improving accessibility throughout the southern region. We would appreciate the opportunity to feed into future; RSES consultations, Regional Transport Strategy and the Cork Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan preparation. We look forward to hearing from you in due course.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Stephan Koch".

Stephan Koch (Chair)
Transport and Mobility Forum

transportandmobilityforum@gmail.com