



## Transport & Mobility Forum

### **Cork City Council**

Roads & Infrastructure Directorate  
Roads Design & Construction Division  
City Hall  
Cork

*Via online consultation portal*

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### **PART 8 Public Consultation – Response**

## **Covid 19 Recovery Pathway 1 Proposed Road Closure: Paul Street, Tuckey Street, Pembroke Street**

\*\*\* for practicality reasons, we submit one document covering all three proposed road closures \*\*\*

Dear Sir/Madam,

The Transport and Mobility Forum, Cork (TMF) is a representative group of organisations who have a common interest in sustainable travel \*. The TMF fully supports 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.

The current COVID 19 crisis is a tremendous challenge for the entire country (and the world). Recovery from the lockdown for businesses and public life is dependent on safety measures regarding social distancing with new requirements for space needed by pedestrians.

Significantly more space is now needed in the city centre (and other neighbourhood centres) for pedestrians, if the necessary numbers of footfall shall be reached to bring back public life into the city and make it a vibrant place again for shoppers, workers, businesses and visitors alike.



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The **TMF strongly welcomes the proposed pedestrianisation** of the three city centre streets (Paul Street, Pembroke Street and Tuckey Street) for the above reasons. These streets only bear a limited load of motor traffic and their closure for car traffic can significantly contribute to increasing much needed extra space for active travel in the heart of the city centre, at short notice.

Regarding Tuckey Street, its closure will also avoid vehicle movements cutting across the wide pedestrian area of Grand Parade, adding to pedestrian safety there.

### Observations

As these streets will become entirely pedestrianised, provisional additional kerb ramps shall be considered where necessary (in particular in Tuckey Street) to better allow for navigating e.g. wheelchairs and prams/buggies. Proper flow of stormwater to the drain gullies, however, must be maintained.

We welcome the full replacement for disabled car spaces in locations nearby to maintain accessibility of the area to people who are dependent on car access. Extra care should be given to secure a safe access route for their users to the core city centre area. As the replacement spaces for Pembroke St will go onto the South Mall (some even across the road), slower vehicular speeds shall be considered on the South Mall. This would also benefit cycling safety on this wide one-way thoroughfare.

Additional safe bicycle parking facilities shall be considered in these areas, as they would enhance accessibility to the city centre by bicycle and existing bike parking facilities are often at capacity already. This would also help to avoid (wide spread) casual bike parking e.g. at sign posts which now will be more of a nuisance and risk than ever as it often creates unnecessary pinch points and bottlenecks for the flow of pedestrians, maintaining the distancing required.

Regarding street furniture, consideration shall be given to mini-interventions using natural material for upgrading the public realm, e.g. timber planters that can serve as barriers instead of solely technical barrier installations and yellow lines ("tactical urbanism", to apply e.g. at Daunt Square end of Paul Street, Grand Parade /Tuckey St). This can help to make the new pedestrianised spaces more attractive and create a better sense of place.

### Outlook

We understand that closure of these 3 streets are the first step for City Council to take in the process of street adaptation and road space redistribution responding to social distancing requirements, as laid out in its Discussion Paper of 04/05/2020. Other streets need to follow. This applies to streets both in the city centre, as well as in neighbourhood centres (e.g. Douglas Street) and main active travel arteries leading towards the centre.

As public transport capacities are largely reduced due to distancing requirements, walking and cycling will play a more vital role in getting to the city centre, while car traffic will soon come to its limits on



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an even more finite road infrastructure. Hence pop-up cycling infrastructure (lanes on main roads, priorities on designated quiet routes) will be a next important step.

We explicitly want to make reference to our recently issued Open Letter "*Safer Streets – The Urgent Need to Provide Space for Social Distancing and Active Travel during COVID 19 Restrictions*" of 14/05/2020 to Cork City and County Councils (see attached) with meanwhile over 30 signatory organisations, where we outlined measures that should be taken short-term to support COVID recovery for businesses and public life, but also to be considered for promoting a lasting change in mobility patterns in the city and towns.

### Conclusion

We welcome the here proposed measures and the fact that these are also made subject to a public consultation, allowing a wider stakeholder-input. We reiterate to offer our support and expertise while going forward with introducing further short-term and temporary measures. While these measures are primarily driven by social distancing requirements, we see them as a chance to enhance the vibrancy and attractiveness of Cork's city centre also in the long-term.

Should you require any clarifications, please email me at [tmfcork@gmail.com](mailto:tmfcork@gmail.com) .

Kind regards

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

Stephan Koch (Chair)  
Transport and Mobility Forum

**Note:** *The comments within this submission are solely the view of the Transport and Mobility Forum (TMF) as a whole and not the opinion or view of any individual partner of the TMF.*

\*) A full list of partners in the Transport and Mobility Forum can be found at

<https://transportandmobilityforum.com/partners/>