Cork City Council
City Development Plan 2022-2028
Planning Policy Unit
City Hall
Cork

Via online consultation portal

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Pre-Draft Public Consultation – Response

Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028

Dear Sir/Madam,

Thank you for giving the general public and stakeholders the opportunity to feed into the new City Development Plan (CDP 2022-2028) at pre-draft stage.

The Transport and Mobility Forum, Cork (TMF) is a cross-sectoral 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 new CDP will shape the further development of Cork City in the 2020s and well into the 2030s at a time where the City has just expanded its boundaries and plans for significant growth of the city exist on national and regional levels. In this period of dynamic development, it will be essential to take measures that the inner city remains accessible at all times. Further, the urgency for sustainable development and the challenges of Climate Change also require swift and decisive action. The carbon emissions from transport represent about one third of Ireland's CO2 emissions, with the vast majority of them being caused by road transport, i.e. mostly the fossil fuel powered private car traffic. The city's (and county's) population travelling to work and education, retail, family and leisure activities and the

resulting travel patterns in terms of distance covered and transport mode is highly determined by the location of housing, employment, education and retail facilities. This and the provision of transport infrastructure and services are a direct outcome of planning and thus the major lever that the CDP can have for contributing to a sustainable development of the city.

While the current COVID 19 pandemic crisis dominates the debate on public life these days, it is uncertain how far into the future its effects will last. But it certainly highlights the vulnerability of a society that is highly dependent on transport and mobility, on covering longer distances in people's daily lives and it imposes a strong new perspective on the significance of proximity and walkability, for work and retail, leisure and social life alike. The question of what shops or amenities can be reached within a small radius on foot or by bicycle has suddenly reached a new importance, for reasons previously unforeseen. At a time where roads are at and beyond capacity on a regular basis, and public transport and lift-sharing in a private car currently experience unprecedented constraints, the ease and necessity of covering distance appears in a very new light.

As the past months under the impression of the **COVID pandemic** and subsequent lockdown conditions have shown, more and more people were drawn to a **more physically active lifestyle in their locality**, walking, running and cycling in and around their neighbourhoods and availing of local green spaces, with e.g. bicycle shops being sold out shortly after their return to business. The expansion of pedestrianised areas in the city (centre) with using more public street space for business activities (e.g. cafes and restaurants) , initially as a public health and safety measure, has been well received by citizens, visitors and businesses alike. **The momentum** of openness for and appreciation of such measures should be used to **drive a cultural shift towards a more people centred urban design** and more sustainable overall transport system, with support also given to e.g. businesses to support this shift in their remit (through employee bicycle parking or changing facilities).

TMF Consultation Process

While the Transport and Mobility Forum Cork (TMF) primarily concentrates on the promotion of sustainable travel from the transport side, the right location of homes, jobs, schools and services, as well as environmental aspects, are also being considered, as this is the decisive factor of how and how far people need to travel in their daily lives.

In order to get input from a majority of the TMF member organisations, the TMF held a virtual brainstorming meeting focusing our discussion, also along the lines of the questions at the end of chapter 8 in the CDP public consultation Issues Paper.

City Structure / New Neighbourhoods

National (NDP, NPF) and regional (RSES, C-MASP) policies call for significant growth of Cork City, with the emphasis on compact, higher density developments along the public transport corridors and brown field / infill developments. TMF is in full support of these policy principles.

We'd like to give some thoughts and ideas on new developments, and also on retrofitting existing structures, in general, that we regard as essential to achieve sustainable city structure in terms of modal shift for daily travel and reduction of emissions.

New Neighbourhoods – Old Neigbourhoods

The "**15-minute neighbourhood**", where all essential services for daily life are accessible within a 15min walk shall become a paradigm for the built and social infrastructure in the City.

Livable neighbourhoods shall be created, with a high-quality public realm, green spaces, more urban green also along streets and a safe and inviting environment for all ages (e.g. more public playgrounds for children).

The existing **green belt** along most parts of the old city boundary, e.g. towards Blarney and Ballincollig, the Lee Fields, Tramore Valley Park etc., should be regarded as an asset and be maintained as far as possible to provide access to green spaces withing walkable distance for many city residents (also in response to COVID experiences).

The creation of the New City quarters in Tivoli and the Docklands should largely follow the **experiences of international best practice** regarding urban design and sustainable travel (see e.g. Freiburg Vauban, the presentation on which in the City Council's first public consultation webinar was very well received, but also e.g. Copenhagen, as presented in Cork in October 2019 by Copenhagen's former City Architect)

The new CDP should define **two model / showcase neighbourhoods** where the above-mentioned features are being applied as a priority: one should be a new built city quarter (e.g. Tivoli), the other should be created by targeted retrofitting of an existing neighbourhood.

The ideal, attractive New Neighbourhood should feature

- varying styles in architecture, including explicitly modern styles
- Low energy buildings
- Green roofs
- Accessible green spaces in the public realm
- Public playgrounds
- Transparency of street space (see e.g. Copenhagen: no wall to be higher than 1.5m) facilitating visual contact between houses and public space, "eyes on the streets"
- Permeable streets and public spaces
- Storm water retention facilities locally as part of green spaces (lawns or planted ditches that will flood in case, see e.g. Copenhagen's "cloud burst plan")
- "built in sustainable travel" such as secure bicycle parking, e-bike and e-car charging facilities (also support for retrofit in existing neighbourhoods)

Aim at creating **inclusive communities**, i.e. a mix at micro-level of household/unit sizes, property ownership structures (owner occupied, rental, affordable/social housing), attracting also young families (cater for children), and avoiding gated developments and mono structures.

A clear emphasis should be on **mixed use developments** and for brownfield site infills (residential, offices, doctors, creche, retail, hospitality, …).

A comprehensive **tree planting programme** within the City (streets, lawns in housing estates, "wasted spaces" e.g. at motorway interchanges (like Wilton/Sarsfield), grants for tree planting in private gardens, …) shall be established. Besides improving the public realm, this would benefit air quality, traffic noise reduction, storm water retention etc. It would also be vital for Cork's ambitions to apply as Green Capital of Europe (compare similar programme in Vitoria Gasteiz in the Basque Country – one new tree per citizen – also presented in Cork some years ago).

The **extent of sealed surfaces** allowed on a property should be limited, particularly aiming at large scale car parks (apply semi-permeable parking stands, hedges, graveled drainage ditches, one tree per 10 car spaces or similar…). Car parks in other countries often look much different to the endless continuous tarmac surfaces one can find in Cork.

Active Travel and Public Transport

Modes of Active Travel, i.e. walking and Cycling, combine a **large number of benefits**: Little space consumption, no or little space demand for parking, zero-emission (air quality and climate), healthy through physical activity and lower stress levels and socially inclusive.

Yet active travel is far **underrepresented** when it comes to planning at a larger scale. The same applies to its representation in official statistics in Ireland (e.g. Census data as the main source only asks for usual transport mode for the commute only, ignoring multi-modal travel and other trip purposes). It also is highly dependent on good spatial planning, as distances covered are limited and personal safety aspects are more important than e.g. when driving in a car. This is particularly important for vulnerable road users such as children (families), elderly or mobility impaired people.

The current **pandemic crisis highlights** the need for more space given to people walking and cycling. The impact on our public realm and ways of working and traveling (i.e. reallocation of road space, pedestrianisation, outdoor dining, reduced public transport capacity, home-working, etc.) offer a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for mass societal behavioural change away from car dependency and in many ways unsustainable commutes. The new CDP must maximise on this momentum and the City should act swiftly to implement the infrastructural changes needed to make this short-term behavioural change a long-term lasting one.

Improved conditions for **active travel must be at the heart of planning** for a sustainable city and communities in the new CDP, and must get an equal, if not higher importance to car access for the planning of new developments, residential, retail, educational (schools) and commercial (workplaces). Adequate access routes for active travel should be an essential planning condition for any larger scale development. All new development designs must include detailed plans of the outdoor landscape and how it is connected to footpaths, cycleways, bus, light rail and train services.

Attractive and safe walking and cycling routes must be **deemed as essential infrastructure** with the same significance as roads. For active travel as well, the general benefits for the community should prevail in the planning process over the objections of a few, e.g. regarding opening laneways or the necessary acquisition of land, which often means only a minor part of a property (also via CPO).

Active travel infrastructure must cover hard measures like infrastructure design (foot and cycle paths, dedicated quiet routes, pedestrian friendly traffic signals) and soft measures like safety, attractive environment and a high quality public realm.

A special focus should be on **planning for the youngest and the oldest**, i.e. with children and the elderly in mind, in order to promote and maintain their independence. The needs and **requirements for people with disabilities**, be they mobility or other impairments, must be considered at all stages.

What key actions would you like to see to improve walking and cycling infrastructure?

More street space for walking and cycling shall be provided to create safe and attractive active travel routes for all ages and abilities.

Street space should be redesigned where traffic lanes are excessively wide but underutilised, where junctions have unnecessarily wide kerb radii, etc., and proper spaces for pedestrians or urban green (a tree, a parklet, …) created instead.

Slower speeds of motor traffic on city streets shall be a goal. Over time, 30km/h shall become the default speed for city streets. Streets exempt from 30km/h shall meet clearly defined criteria (main thoroughfares, sufficiently wide footpaths (depending on – potential – footfall), sufficient space for safe cycling, …). The lay-outs of urban street space shall reflect this. This would honour Irelands signing of the UN's "Stockholm Declaration" in February 2020. In this context, TMF supports Ireland's "Love 30" campaign (www.love30.ie).

Lower speeds for motor traffic in large parts of the City will be an important **factor to raise levels of active travel,** perception of safety and attractiveness of the public realm. This will subsequently also raise the attractiveness of neighbourhood centre businesses.

As a short-term **supportive measure**, e.g. side alternating parking and the application of planters, parklets etc. (tactical urbanism) can help to reduce actual speeds in the city and neighbourhood centres, as well as in residential areas. While necessary car access could be maintained, a pedestrian centred urban design can contribute a lot to this transition process.

All infrastructure (esp. for active travel, but also for public transport) shall **be inclusive**, i.e. considering the needs of people with disabilities, elderly people, and children (incl. parents with buggies).

Networks of alternative **"Quiet Routes" for cycling and walking** shall be developed, away from main motor traffic routes, i.e. incorporating residential streets (permeability of estates!!), parks, greenways etc. Many people would not necessarily want to cycle (or walk) the most direct route if it is along a busy main road with many trucks and buses (even if segregated)

Special attention should be given to the **"walking experience**". What can be seen along walking routes? Houses and shop fronts are more attractive than a long fence of an industrial estate or a monolithic office complex to walk along. **The surface quality of footpaths** should also convey the message that pedestrians are welcome, and walking is supported.

Safe and where possible segregated cycle paths on continuous cross city routes shall be established. Special emphasis shall be given to safe junction design, avoiding conflicts also between cyclists and pedestrians (the Cork Cycle Network Plan 2017 says very little about junctions). Cycling infrastructure should allow a safe and comfortable **use for all people cycling**, with varying levels skills, abilities and confidence.

Recommended **cross-city cycle routes with comprehensive signposting** shall be defined and advertised. They might also include quiet(er) shared surface roads at 30km/h in places (see "Quiet Routes").

Greenways should be planned for, designated and designed for **dual purpose** use and promoted as such: recreational / amenity AND utility use (commuting, shopping etc. uses). **Greenways are active travel infrastructure** and should be connected to all residential, educational, retail and commercial developments in the vicinity and connected to other transport modes especially bus stops and train stations.

On greenways, people **cycling and walking should be separated** in an appropriate way. Walking and cycling happen at different pace, so shared surfaces and high footfall will increase the chances of conflict between both user groups.

Priority routes that should be fast-tracked for completion should be the proposed **"Lee to Sea" greenway** (with completion by 2025, missing essential bits to be added earlier in stages (e.g. Ballincollig to Victoria Cross), *https://lee2sea.wordpress.com*), and the proposed **Cork Hospitals cycle route** (City Centre – Mercy – UCC – Bon Secours – CUH) as a short -term priority.

Expended and improved safe, secure and convenient **bicycle parking** in city centre and other key destinations (shops, schools, playgrounds, bus stops …) shall be promoted as an important element of cycling as a comprehensive transport system.

Secure (and collective where necessary) **cycle parking for employees** is needed and shall be promoted in the city centre and other key employment locations.

Secure and convenient **cycle parking for residents** is needed (to be included in planning conditions and building regulations). Especially where bike storage on the property is not adequately possible (no front yard, no direct access to back yard), collective secure bike parking shall be facilitated in the street space.

If planning for secure **bicycle parking, oversized bikes** (e.g. cargo-bikes) shall also be catered for, as they become more popular and need extra space.

Public Bike Sharing schemes are highly successful in Cork (CokeBikes) and should be expended as an integral part of sustainable multi-modal travel chains. They should become part of general public transport structures. Their infrastructure needs (space for stations) shall be considered in all planning processes.

Other aspects to promote Active Travel:

In residential streets, **"home zone" street layout** should be considered where only low levels of local access car traffic occurs. A shared space should be created, as people don't stick to the narrow footpath anyway, unless they have to (buggies, wheel-chairs, … for whom the kerb presents an obstacle when joining/leaving the footpath). Paved surfaces shall be applied instead of tarmac, to indicate that the street surface's main purpose is not necessarily to be driven on by cars ("**legible streets"** by design and materials).

The recommendations of DMURS should fully be applied. Good examples of same can be seen e.g. in Adamstown (Co. Dublin).

Different ways to **store refuse ("wheely") bins** need to be found where houses have no front yards/gardens. In many cases, half of the (often narrow) footpath width is taken up by bins, forcing pedestrians onto the carriageway.

Storm water drain gullies must be kept in full working order. Flooded pedestrian crossings and pedestrians getting splashed from ponding on carriageways are a deterrent for walking.

A tourism and cultural **heritage campaign on walking routes** and places to see while walking should be developed.

Campaigns on health benefits of walking and cycling shall be in place, with incentives to those who prioritise using active travel (Cork is WHO Healthy City).

Cork City Council should develop a role for a **Mobility officer** covering Active Travel and Public Realm enhancements. This role would function as a link between communities and the council, in the development and delivery of both hard and soft measures

What needs to be done to increase use of public transport over the coming decade?

Public Transport (PT), along with active travel, needs to become the **backbone for inner city travel**. Present levels of private car traffic in the city (in absolute numbers) cannot be exceeded going forward, as already now, one local incident in the peak hours brings large parts of the city road network to a collapse. In the contrary, they need to be reduced given the space needed to prioritise PT and cycling infrastructure.

Public transport within the city will continue to largely depend on buses in the 2020s, with Light Rail realistically only becoming available after 2030.

Buses need to be frequent and reliable, with predictable travel times. **Trust in PT's reliability will be essential** to attract more passengers and hence free up road space where these passengers have previously been travelling by car.

For PT's reliability, **buses must be given priority in city traffic** over private car use with more bus lanes and priority at signaled junctions.

PT's attractiveness and reliability vs. delays in traffic congestion due to high volumes of car traffic is a typical **"chicken or egg" situation**, which must actively be addressed and communicated by the City Council and the NTA. This transition process needs clear communication and leadership.

Comprehensive information on public transport (covering all local operators, public or private) is needed at all levels with integration into all kinds of media (e.g. Google Maps). TFI operated **real-time information** needs to be improved, as so far, it is often inaccurate.

Fare collection / payment methods must become faster, easier and smarter. Prepaid fares and season tickets shall become the norm, as ticket purchase (incl. card tapping) at the driver often leads to delays at the bus stops. **Multi-door buses** should speed up bus journeys by reducing dwelling times at bus stops.

The proposed **high volume East-West (light-rail) corridor** is fully supported and needs to be strengthened in PT offer long before the actual light rail will become operational.

In addition, a similarly **strong North-South bus corridor** (in connection with P+R) shall be created to take through car traffic out of the city centre, not least to create room for dedicated bus and cycling infrastructure crossing the city centre.

P+R sites in the North of the City shall connect directly to employment hotspots like the South-West (UCC, CUH, County Hall) and Mahon as a priority.

Timetables should be subject to review on a regular basis (e.g. in an annual cycle across all local operators). **Connections between services** must be convenient and reliable (ICT supported), esp. when service frequencies are low.

Connections and transfers between routes, operators and transport modes will more and more become the norm. They need to be organised as seamless as possible, as the "one-seat bus trip" becomes more unlikely.

Seamless transfer will become even more important when the planned **Light Rail** route becomes operational, as trips on the main corridor will be bundled, but fine distribution in the suburbs will often need to happen by bus.

Bus stops must be attractive and **fully accessible** at all times for the buses and the passengers, not least for allowing safe access for mobility impaired passengers.

Bus stops and stations should be **well connected to local walking and cycling routes**. Bicycle parking should be provided at major stops. Bike+Ride and Park+Ride should be provided in key locations.

Bus stops should become **a "place" in neighbourhoods** and serve multiple purposes (vending machines, "parcel motel", local notice board, …). Access and waiting must be safe esp. for vulnerable users, incl. single female passengers. Stops should be visible in populated and overlooked places ("with eyes on the street"), well-lit at night. Upgrading bus shelters to become 'Neighbourhood Mobility Hubs' should be explored.

New commuter rail stations must be **built in parallel with new local developments**, not years later, so that train services will be available from "day one" (e.g. Tivoli).

The **carriage of bicycles on all train services** (particularly commuter rail) must be provided and facilitated. Integrating both modes will unlock significant synergies regarding train catchment and last-mile solution as well as action radius for cycling. The options of **carrying bikes on buses** (and light rail) shall be investigated and facilitated where (when) possible.

In outlying areas (e.g. outer suburbs), **flexible routings and on-demand-services** should be facilitated through modern ICT, particularly at times of low demand (e.g. evenings, weekends), in order to provide a sustainable mobility offer also "out-of-hours". **Cooperation with taxi** companies should be considered. Best practice examples from all over Europe should be investigated.

For providing an **integrated comprehensive public transport** offer, all forms of innovative mobility services shall be considered, following best international practice. All existing features of **"Mobility as a Service (MaaS)"** shall be looked at, established or extended, incl. sharing options (bike sharing, (e)cargo bike-sharing, car-sharing (i.e. GoCar style), collective taxi services (ride pooling, like e.g. MOIA in Hanover or Hamburg, BerlKoenig in Berlin), small demand driven buses for suburbs or late hours, …). All of which should be **integrated in a comprehensive mobility system**. Collaborations with academia and the private sector to boost innovation in this field should actively be sought.

Alternative Fuels for Buses must be considered when moving away from diesel buses, with several options like e.g. electric, CNG, hydrogen, bio-methane or hybrid versions thereof. This will help to improve air-quality inbthe City and to de-carbonise public transport.
As it is unlikely that there will be one unique form of fuel used in transport, an adequate supply of charging/ refuelling infrastructure needs to be provided. Projects to develop this refuelling infrastructure or produce renewable energy locally should be supported where possible.

The option of a **combined TramTrain system** shall be explored, following the significant successes of such systems in Europe (e.g. "Karlsruhe Model" in Germany). While both Commuter Rail and planned Light Rail systems will be small scale only in Cork, the merging of both into one system, connecting at Kent Station, can bring the local rail system to a complete new level of attractiveness for the passenger with unprecedented direct connections.
As this is a more radical idea with a complex background, please **see Appendix 1** for a more detailed description.

How can we get stakeholder buy-in to support the delivery of high quality reliable public transport, walking and cycling infrastructure?

The **positive effects** to residents and businesses that low-car city spaces have produced in other cities (international best practice) should **actively be highlighted** and communicated. It's good to hear the experience from Freiburg, Copenhagen, Vienna, etc in webinars and presentations, it's even better if lessons learnt would also be applied to places like Cork.

The best advertisement for change is providing first-hand experience with tangible positive results.

The measures laid down in the CDP shall result in an **action plan**. Its delivery must follow a transparent process, and progress must be tangible and visible. **Confidence and trust in the delivery** of a concise and holistic new transport system must be created and maintained in order to secure widespread **acceptance for change**.

In the field of Transport, a set of **KPI** shall be defined and **target figures for modal shift** etc. be set and monitored. A **comprehensive progress report** for goals formulated in the CDP shall be published in 2025 and 2028.

Modal share targets for a shift to Sustainable Transport modes should be defined for 2025 (half-time) and 2028, esp. for city boundaries, as CMATS only sets targets for the wider Cork Metropolitan Area. One key target should be 10% share of cycling for all trips in the city by 2025. This target was formulated for 2020 as a nationwide average, with actual figures today still far from that.

The large volume of investment into the upgrade and change of Cork's transport system, be it large projects or small "quick win" interventions, should be supported and monitored by a **local NTA office in Cork,** to provide continuous presence "on the ground" where change is going to be implemented.

The **transition process** in the City must be supported by thorough **stakeholder inclusion and involvement** (communities, civil society groups, businesses, …) with intensive and transparent consultation, not least of the future users of new facilities, **at pre-draft stage**. Bottom-up feedback from people in their communities and neighbourhoods shall take place in transparent structures and involve all demographics and walks of life.

"Quick wins" interventions shall specifically be looked at (esp. for active travel) and fast-tracked where substantial improvements can be gained soon and **tangible positive results achieved** with relatively simple interventions (good example in past: "Mahon Ramps" to connect City Gate to Blackrock greenway). A list of such quick wins, that shall be realised until 2025, should be part of the CPD.

There needs to be **strict enforcement** of parking laws and speed limits, in order have bus and cycle lanes as well as footpaths available for their designated and intended use, and to guarantee the best

return for taxpayers' investments. Community and traffic Gardai as well as City Traffic Wardens must be funded to have the capacity to enforce such laws.

The wide-spread **fear of anti-social behaviour** in connection with neighbourhood permeability and shortcuts shall be addressed as a societal problem and tackled it as such, not through oppressive urban design (high fences), cut-back of connectivity, isolation of housing estates from nearby services etc.

Other aspects:

Schools

As for many people the school run is an essential part of their daily routine, it is also a determining factor of their overall travel behaviour.

It should be imperative that schools are safely accessible by means of active travel. Hence all new **schools must be located in the hearts of neighbourhoods and communities**. As many of their pupils and students as possible should be able to access their schools by walking or cycling in a safe environment, and, dependent on age, should be enabled to do so independently.

All existing schools should execute an **active travel audit**, and be retrofit with safe active travel access where necessary.

School streets where car traffic is largely restricted at start and finish times should provide a "soft landing" for children, and address the increasing issues of congestion (and hazards) and air pollution outside schools.

For young people travelling longer distances to schools, the schools should be **connected to public bus services (or even a school bus** service, possible with a parents involving hybrid operation model). Defined drop-off zones should funnel and regulate car access and protect other children walking and cycling, when the motorised school run is unavoidable.

As for many parents, the **school run is connected to their commute**, long distance and car dependent access also determines the modal choice for their commute. The closer the school is to where children live and the more they are able to get to school independently, the higher are the chances for their parents to be in a position to commute other than by car. Therefore, schools should favour students living closer to the school.

Car Pooling

Car Pooling (lift sharing) can offer a significant increase in efficiency for car travel given limited road and parking capacities. It requires little additional infrastructure and can thus be realised in the short-term. To provide attractive, larger scale car pooling options along over-loaded travel corridors (e.g.

N40, Little Island), arrangements for **Park+Pool sites** (one car gets parked and the driver gets a lift by their colleague) shall be explored and facilitated.

Water Transport

A commuter and tourist ferry network in Cork Harbour should be supported. This would help alleviate congestion in the East and South East of the city and the metropolitan area and service towns like Cobh which are targeted for growth, but also connect e.g. places like the city centre and Blackrock with Little Island. A Ferry service e.g. between Blackrock, Tivoli and Little Island which allows carrying bicycles, would open up completely new multi-modal sustainable travel options.

Conclusion

Cork City needs a fundamental change in its travel system given the city's planned growth in population and employment, in order to maintain accessibility, meet emission targets (climate change), improve public health (noise, air quality, physical activity levels, …) and to improve the City's citizen's general quality of life and hence the City's attractiveness as a whole.

Public transport and active travel (cycling and walking) must become the default modes of city travel, and be given priority, if all city parts shall remain accessible given the predicted growth in population and employment.

Every suitable measure is needed to tackle car dependency and to reduce the need to do a single occupancy car journey. International best practice shall thoroughly be examined and where possible applied to Cork.

All city planning must ensure that all parts of the city are duly accessible by public transport and active travel in order to support a transition to a low-car city as vital condition to keep city accessible, and to a low-carbon economy to meet Ireland's emission targets.

The directing of large parts of predicted growth in population and employment into public transport corridors, brownfield and infill sites is welcome. The idea of higher densities in such corridors, and the proximity of homes to shops, schools, services and workplaces is essential. Access to new developments must have a strong emphasis on active travel and public transport. Retrofit of existing urban fabrics must happen accordingly. The public realm and urban design shall see an upgrade in the city centre as well as in neighbourhoods and urban villages with the needs and comfort of pedestrians of all ages on top of the priority list, to create vibrant and pleasant spaces in successful neighbourhoods and communities.

As planning is a long-term process, the right decisions must be taken now to move the future development of the City into the right direction for an attractive, mobile, pleasant, healthy, successful and sustainable Cork.

We hope that this comprehensive submission, concentrating on the wider transport and mobility aspects, will help drafting a robust, forward thinking and future proof new City Development Plan to shape Cork well into the 2030s and support a sustainable development of the City that has the right responses to the overarching challenges, first and foremost to the City's growth and to Climate Change, for decades to come.

We would be obliged to further participate in the discourse around the development of Cork's 2022-2028 City Development Plan. Please do not hesitate to contact us at any time under tmfcork@gmail.com.

Kind regards

Stephan Koch

Transport and Mobility Forum – Chair

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/

Appendix 1:

Option of Converting the East Cork commuter lines to TramTrain operation

The text below is taken from an earlier submission relating to the CMATS public consultation in June 2019.

"In CMATS, the upgraded network of suburban rail will still only consist of one line (Mallow – Cork – Cobh) with a branch to Midleton. Cork's LRT will also only consist of one East-West line. Although the area around Kent station will become a future employment hotspot, and development of the Docklands will put Kent Station more into the centre of the City's activity zones, it will still remain peripheral to the actual core city centre. Accessing employment and education centres e.g. in the south west (UCC, CUH, County Hall, CIT etc) will always require changing transport modes at Kent Station. The fact that a rail based PT provision e.g. for the Tivoli development area will in most cases require changing modes only after a very short train trip, is likely to limit its attractiveness.

The **basic idea** for TramTrain in Cork would be to combine two technically isolated modes of only small size – heavy (suburban) rail and light-rail (SR and LRT), which will meet at Kent station, to a larger system.

The combination of LRT (trams) and regional heavy trail lines has proven to be very popular and successful in connecting medium-sized cities to their hinterland in several places in Continental Europe: Karlsruhe, Kassel, Saarbruecken, Chemnitz (all Germany), Mulhouse and Banlieu of Paris (France). TramTrain is often also referred to as the Karlsruhe Model, due to the ground-breaking pioneering works done in this field in and around the city of Karlsruhe in the 1980s and 90s, with local railway lines being converted to LRT operation, and even shared track operation between heavy rail and LRT trains.

The basic idea is to combine the East Cork commuter lines (Cork – Cobh/Midleton) with the inner city LRT line (Ballincollig – City Centre – Mahon), with trains running through on both networks. A seamless travel from Midleton to UCC or CUH, without changing seat, would offer a complete new form of quality and commuter experience to public transport.

A number of **technical pre-conditions requirements** would need to be met. While they cannot be discussed here in detail, only the most obvious ones shall be mentioned. Due to the unique track gauge of 1600mm on Irish railway lines, and most LRT systems running on 1435mm standard gauge, incl. the Dublin LUAS, a uniform track gauge would be needed for a TramTrain service. Most likely, the East Cork railway lines would need to be converted to LRT standard, i.e. tracks converted to 1435mm standard gauge (as building the LRT with 1600mm Irish Rail gauge would be very uncommon, custom made and hence expensive). Station platforms would need to be lowered to low floor LRT height. As the railway line is not electrified yet, this can be done to LRT standard. These are the three most essential requirements.

As a **consequence** this conversion, however, would require the fundamental decision to permanently cease all heavy rail operations east of Kent Stn. The only potential reasons for not doing so would be maintaining heavy rail connections to port activities at Marino Point and Cobh for freight services. But

even if such heavy rail access would still be required (at a very limited scale), technical solutions to do so would be available (three-rail track for parts of the line and a passing loop where required).

As an **effect**, instead of having two different, independent systems (SR and LRT) at a very limited scale each, a Cork TramTrain would offer a larger uniform system and the comfort of through running light-rail trains from East Cork into the heart of Cork City, and further to employment hotspots in the City's southwest and Mahon, connecting Ballincollig with Little Island etc. The only negative effect for the network development would be the isolation of the Mallow to Cork Kent commuter services, as this line is part of the intercity line to Dublin. However, having a dual system operation between Kent station and Blackpool / Kilbary, although quite sophisticated from a technical perspective, would also be possible.

As light-rail vehicles (LRV) are laid out for far more frequent stops than heavy rail trains (weight, acceleration), more stops along the railway line could be served while maintaining short travel times (and cheaper to build than compared to railway standards). By expanding the walkable and cyclable catchment area along the converted railway line, the TramTrain system would move "closer" to where people live, would be better accessible to passengers as they could be allowed to cross the tracks (no stairs, bridges, lifts required, compare LUAS Green Line in South Dublin), and the line could also be extended e.g. into the town centre of Midleton as a tramway operating on street level.

These features were realised in the Karlsruhe TramTrain system and made it the stunning success story as which it is known throughout Europe and worldwide.

As the development of an LRT system in Cork is only planned in the long term, and upgrades of the SR lines in Cork can facilitate quick wins for public transport, a TramTrain system would be unlikely to be developed in the near future. Conversion of the line would also result in service limitations during construction phase. The only requirement that needs to be met in the present time for keeping the option alive for later years is to plan for a connection of both systems at Kent station today, and keep the alignments for the necessary tracks free of buildings during the current and ongoing urban development of the area. (…)

As this is a quite complex topic, the above description can only touch the technical aspects very briefly."