



Transport and Mobility Forum, Cork
www.transportandmobilityforum.com
tmfcork@gmail.com

c/o Cork Environmental Forum
Bernadette Connolly
Mount Carmel, Kilcolman
Enniskeane, Co. Cork
P47 C578

FOR RELEASE 16:00h 25/7/23

Cork Transport and Mobility Forum calls for budget measures to support sustainable and active travel.

The Transport and Mobility Forum, Cork (TMF), a cross-sectoral representative group of 25+ organisations who have a common interest in sustainable travel, has submitted a pre-budget proposal to Minister Paschal Donohoe, urging him to allocate more funding and resources to facilitate and assist the reduction in the financial, social, environmental, and health costs of the transport sector in Ireland.

The TMF's pre-budget submission suggests the following measures (with quotes for each section):

- Active travel
 - Continuation or increase of funding to support a modal shift to active travel.
 - Multi-annual funding for behaviour change and maintenance programmes.
 - Rebalancing of funding from capital funding of infrastructure to innovative behaviour change projects.
 - Funding for interagency transport forums in each county/region.
 - Higher ceiling for Bike to Work scheme for cargo bikes and other bikes capable of carrying multiple people.
 - Introduction of a flat public sector mileage rate.
 - Funding for public and private bike and micro mobility share as well as multimodal mobility hubs.

“ Dr. Darren McAdam-O’Connell Coordinator of the TMF, said: ‘Sustainable and Active Travel (cycling and walking) help to reduce congestion on roads, improve air quality, support a low carbon economy, reduce noise pollution, save energy and improve public health. All of which have a positive effect on the economy and public finances.’”

- Public transport
 - Continue and expand investment in public transport projects, such as Bus Connects, bringing battery electric rolling stock and light rail to Cork.
 - Lower public transport fares and trial free services for certain routes and demographics.

Transport & Mobility Forum

- Extend services to un and underserved communities and ensure accessibility and affordability.
- Funding to attract more drivers and staff for public transport service providers.
- Provide funding for new and existing public transport hubs and multimodal mobility hubs.

“ Dr. Darren McAdam-O’Connell Coordinator of the TMF, said:

‘These measures will not only benefit the public transport users, but also reduce the dependency on private car use, which has negative impacts on congestion, air quality, climate change, and public health.’

‘Public transport is essential for the social, economic, and environmental well-being of Cork and its citizens. We urge the Minister to continue and expand the investment in public transport projects that will improve the connectivity, accessibility, affordability, and reliability of the public transport system in the region. We also call for more funding to lower public transport fares, extend services to un and underserved communities, attract more drivers and staff for public transport service providers, and provide new and existing public transport hubs and multimodal mobility hubs.’”

- Fleet transition
 - Refocus subsidies and tax breaks on the least energy intensive options, such as e-bikes, e-cargo bikes, and small low power e-cars.
 - Calibrate motor tax bands to incentivise smaller lower powered e-cars and discourage oversized and overpowered e-cars.

Transport & Mobility Forum

- Introduce road pricing to replace fuel tax revenue and discourage driving in congested and well-served areas, without penalising those who suffer from forced car dependency in underserved areas.

“ Dr. Darren McAdam-O’Connell Coordinator of the TMF, said:

‘These measures will not only help us achieve our climate obligations and improve the health of the nation, but also make our roads more friendly and inviting for active travel modes such as cycling and walking.’

‘Private vehicles are a major source of greenhouse gas emissions, air pollution, noise pollution, and road accidents in Ireland. We need to transition away from large heavy internal combustion vehicles to smaller lighter electric vehicles as soon as possible. Electric vehicles are cleaner, quieter, safer, and more efficient than petrol and diesel vehicles. They also have less impact on the environment and the infrastructure. We propose that the Minister adopts a range of fiscal instruments to encourage and support the optimal transition of the national motor vehicle fleet, such as refocusing subsidies and tax breaks on the least energy intensive options, calibrating motor tax bands to incentivise smaller lower powered e-cars, and introducing road pricing to replace fuel tax revenue and discourage driving in congested and well-served areas.’”

- Flat public sector mileage rate
 - Introduce a flat mileage rate to avoid incentivizing less sustainable modes and/or larger vehicles.
 - Allow non-governmental organisations to move to a more sustainable system of mileage.
 - Incentivize the use of more sustainable modes such as public transport, cycling, and walking.

“ Dr. Darren McAdam-O’Connell Coordinator of the TMF, said:

Transport & Mobility Forum

'A flat public sector mileage rate would be fairer, simpler, and greener than the current system.'

'The public sector mileage rate is a system that rewards the use of less sustainable modes and/or larger vehicles, which have higher environmental and social costs.'

- Free parking
 - Discontinue or tax free employee parking as a benefit in kind to reduce the incentive and cost of private car use and make active travel and public transport more viable and attractive

" Dr. Darren McAdam-O'Connell Coordinator of the TMF, said:

'Free parking is a hidden subsidy that encourages the use of private cars and discourages the use of active travel and public transport.'

'(Free parking/It also) imposes a cost on those who don't drive, as they have to pay higher taxes, fees, and rents to cover the land and maintenance costs of parking spaces.'

'Free parking creates a barrier for walking and cycling, as it reduces the availability and attractiveness of public space and increases the distance and danger of accessing destinations.'

'We propose that the Minister discontinues or taxes free employee parking as a benefit in kind, reflecting the full economic cost of providing parking spaces. This would reduce the demand for private car use, free up land for other uses, and create a more level playing field for active travel and public transport modes.'

Transport & Mobility Forum

- Distance reduction
 - Audit and reform regulations, taxes, and subsidies to reduce average journey distances.
 - Include transport costs in mortgage calculations to avoid forcing first time buyers into long-distance commuting and incentivising commuter belt development over more central locations.
 - Reform rates system to encourage in-town development and discourage out-of-town development.

“Dr. Darren McAdam-O’Connell Coordinator of the TMF, said:

‘Reducing the average distance people need to travel is the best way to reduce the health, social, environmental, and financial cost of transport. This is in line with the national planning framework and the national spatial strategy, which aim to create compact and connected settlements that support sustainable and active travel modes. However, there are some financial and regulatory issues that act against this goal, such as regulations, taxes, subsidies, lending rules, and rates system that favour out-of-town development and long-distance commuting. We propose that the Minister conducts an audit of these issues and reforms them to ensure they support the reduction of average journey distances. This would enable more people to live closer to where they work, study, shop, and socialise, and reduce their reliance on private car use, which has negative impacts on congestion, air quality, and climate change, as well as the health and quality of life of ordinary people who are having to spend more and more of their life sitting in traffic.’” -

The TMF hopes that the Minister will consider their pre-budget submission and implement the suggested measures to enable more people to choose sustainable and active travel modes for their daily journeys. This will not only benefit the



Transport & Mobility Forum

individual health and well-being of the citizens, but also contribute to the national goals of reducing greenhouse gas emissions, improving air quality, and enhancing social inclusion and cohesion.

For more information comment or interview contact Darren McAdam-O'Connell TMF coordinator.

For more information about the Cork Transport & Mobility Forum, please visit <https://transportandmobilityforum.com>

Contact:

Darren McAdam-O'Connell

Coordinator of TMF

Phone: +353-83-1816178

Email: TMFCORK@gmail.com

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

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