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Re: Local Economic and Community Plan 2023-2029

Dear Sir/Madam,

The National Transport Authority ('the NTA') welcomes the opportunity to comment on the Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) 2023-2029. In regards to feedback on the Plan, the Authority provides the following for the Council's consideration.

The NTA has statutory responsibility under the Dublin Transport Authority Act of 2008 and the Public Transport Regulation Act of 2009 for securing the provision of public passenger land transport services throughout the State, by:

- contracting public service obligation (PSO) public transport services, and
- licencing public transport services provided on a commercial basis.

In relation to Cork County, there are a number of projects and programmes being progressed by the NTA which complement the above core functions and which can make an important contribution to the achievement of the LECP's Goals and Objectives.

These have included the preparation of the Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (CMATS) in collaboration with Cork County Council, Cork City Council and TII. CMATS was completed in 2020 and is currently being implemented through a number of projects and programmes:

- The BusConnects (Sustainable Transport Corridors and Bus Network Redesign), Cork Light Rail project and the Cork Commuter Rail Programme;
- The implementation of walking and cycling infrastructure through the Active Travel Programme;
- Public Transport Integration Measures (integrated ticketing, journey planning and RTPi); and

- Transport Demand Management Initiatives (Smarter Travel Workplaces, Green Schools Programme).

In relation to the provision of public transport services in rural areas, the *Connecting Ireland: Rural Mobility Plan* being prepared by the NTA, is a national public transport initiative that will increase connectivity, particularly for people living outside the major cities. The plan aims to improve mobility in rural areas. It will provide better connections between villages and towns by linking these with an enhanced regional network connecting cities and regional centres nationwide. *Connecting Ireland* will seek to improve the current transport network by:

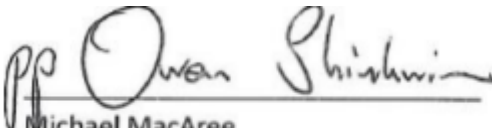
- Enhancing existing services;
- Adding new services and;
- Enhancing the current Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) network

In relation to investment in cycle infrastructure, CycleConnects is a proposed network of fully connected coherent and safe cycling routes in each county. This includes proposed cycle networks in towns with a population of at least 5,000 people (2016 Census) and fully connected networks in rural areas.

The formulation of the LECPs goals and objectives should be cognisant of travel patterns and transport demand as they relate to the metropolitan area (MASP) and the wider County area. Related to this, it is recommended that the LECP emphasises the crucial role which the integration of land use and transport planning and coordinated, policy-led transport investment will play in achieving all of the LECP's goals and objectives, in particular those relating to 'High Level Goal 1: Sustainable, Resilient and Empowered Communities' and High Level Goal 4: A Low Carbon and Climate Resilient County'.

I trust that the views of the NTA will be taken into consideration in the completion of the Local Economic and Community Plan.

Yours sincerely,


Michael MacAree
Head of Strategic Planning