



Uimhir Thagarta Uathúil: CRK-C155-DEV21-189

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Stádas: Submitted

Aighneacht:

General comments on Transport and Mobility chapter

Comhairliúchán:

Draft Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028

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I'd just like to offer encouragement for the active travel objectives in the plan

Caibidil: Volume 1 - Written Statement» 4. Transport and
Mobility

Ábhair: Transport and Mobility

Please find below some comments related Chapter 4 "Transport and Mobility" of the Cork City Development plan.

To summarise: dial up the ambition and detail on active transport and rebalance the transport in the city to favour people not cars.

I am very much in support of the Objective 4.4 on Active Travel. Currently pedestrians and cyclists are not well served . I'd like to see a dramatic improvement in Active Travel provision and a concert effort to reduce the car dominance in the city with its attendant pollution, danger, noise and excessive land-use.

I'd like to give credit to the council for to the major improvements over the last 2 years with street pedestrianization and provision of protected cycling infrastructure.

Chapter 4, Section 4.1 'Integrated Transport system"

I am very supportive of the objective to "enhance the city's attractiveness to live, work visit and attract investment".

As a tech worker I'm not tied to a specific location and quality-of-life issues such as safety, pollution, car dominance and public realm attractiveness are high on my list of considerations on where I choose to live. Cork has huge, unrealized potential here but that potential needs to be tapped to hold a foot-loose workforce.

Chapter 4, Section 4.3, 4.4

I am very strongly in support of the objective to "support modal shift towards more sustainable modes: walking and cycling".

The lack of ambition in walking and cycling modes is very disappointing. Why is no increase in walking expected if densification of the city increases, the public realm becomes more attractive and the consideration for pedestrians to be given priority? The 4% modal share for cyclists is also very unambitious. This compares very badly with cities that score highly in livability surveys such as Copenhagen with a modal share for pedestrians and cyclists of upward of 60%. Like Cork, in the 1980's Copenhagen had a modal share for cycling of approx. 8%: can we not even aim for what we know was possible?

More detail on how this modal share is currently computed would be of great interest. The self-reported census data is useless as a basis for an 'evident based' strategy. An Analysis of anonymised cellular data, visual recognition analysis or even old-fashioned road counts would be more credible.

The quality of these statistics concerns me as these are key metrics in the evaluation of progress of the strategy.

Section 4.6

I'm encouraged by the "linking of sustainable transport provision with land use". However, I'm not convinced that the ambition to significantly reduce (motorized traffic) congestion is incompatible with the provision of improved active travel infrastructure. That is, the provision of improved active travel infrastructure: wider pavements, reprogrammed traffic lights, cycle lanes etc, will result in increased congestion until modal shares shift and this should be accepted. The alternative is the failed 'predict and provide' model which is destroying the city.

"Road Diets" should be a significant part of the strategy. The city has a large number of excessively wide lanes (eg Boreenmanna road) unnecessary turn lanes that are of minimal benefit to motorists and encourage speeding.

A strategy is a framework for decisioning: that is it prioritized some ends over others. This strategy should explicitly prioritize active travel over motorized transport.

Section 4.8

Land use is critical to transport planning. However the damage done by decades of encouraging a car-based lifestyle won't be easily undone.

As a minimum, disincentives should be put in place to prevent commuters from sprawled outlying settlements undermining the livability of the city center and near suburbs. Roads such as Douglas Rd are race tracks for folk commuting from the outer suburbs and will require significant traffic calming measures if they are to be attractive for active travel for people living close to the city.

Table 4.2

Why are only the 'approximate cost' totals shown: why not detail each transport intervention? This would facilitate meaningful comparison.

It is disappointing that no numbers are available to compare the costs of say cycling greenways and the primary cycling network. To be honest, it looks like little effort went into estimating these very large numbers. Again, the provision of active travel infrastructure doesn't appear to have a clear plan.

Section 4.1

The City Center Movement Strategy “much of which has been implemented to date” doesn't seem to be a great success. Despite being a small, compact city, Cork is an unpleasant pedestrian, cycling environment with the exception of a few 'reservations' such as Oliver Plunket St.

With the exception of cycle lanes I'm not noticing much improvements for users of active transport. A comprehensive reconfiguration of all main city-center junctions to prioritize pedestrians would be a very worthwhile objective.

The inability / refusal of the council to enforce the Patrick St private car-ban for a mere 3 hours a day does not demonstrate a commitment to active travel. Lessons should be learned from this and incorporated into the strategy – the lesson to learn is that enforcement won't happen so plan accordingly.

Table 4.4

With the exception of Oliver Plunket Street, this reads like a list of the shortest streets in the city.

Section 4.21 Pedestrianization

I cannot overemphasise my support for improved pedestrian consideration in the city. I can't help but notice that this is a very short section of the strategy plan and is very vague.

I'd like to see some concrete commitment such as the reconfiguration of all inner-city junctions with an emphasis on pedestrian safety above traffic flow, the reprogramming of all traffic lights to include a pedestrian phase, the accommodation of direct pedestrian routes, a city wide program to address pavement clutter (such as lighting for roads?), awareness campaigns that pedestrians have priority etc.

Section 4.29

There has been a very noticeable improvement in cycling infrastructure which I applaud. There is a long way to go before there are sufficient connected, safe routes to encourage this mode of transport to reach its potential which we know from European cities to be of the order of 30%, not a measly 4%.

I would like to see a stronger commitment for arterial commuter cycling routes such as the Lee to Sea which serve a wide catchment area and have the potential to transform cycling in the city. The current patchwork of short, inconsistently designed and implemented cycle lanes needs to be brought to a consistent level of design and aligned with a coherent network which is referred to in section 4.30: more detail with timelines on this would be of great interest.

Section 4.40

Cork is hilly: e-bikes make hills disappear. This is a no-brainer. I'd very strongly advise making e-bikes a requirement in the much needed expansion of this service.

Documents Attached: Níl