CORK METROPOLITAN AREA

TRANSPORT STRATEGY 2040 | EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
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Chelwynd Viaduct Photograph
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INTRODUCTION

The Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (CMATS) 2040 (the “Strategy”) has been developed by the National Transport Authority (NTA) in collaboration with Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII), Cork City Council and Cork County Council.

The Cork Metropolitan Area (CMA) is in the midst of an exciting phase of development. The recently-published National Planning Framework (NPF) 2040 envisages that Cork will become the fastest-growing city region in Ireland with a projected 50% to 60% increase of its population by 2040.

This projected population and associated economic growth will result in a significant increase in the demand for travel. This demand needs to be managed and planned for carefully in order to safeguard and enhance Cork’s attractiveness to live, work, visit and invest in.

Cork already performs well as a major urban centre in Ireland and the City has positioned itself as an emerging medium-sized European centre of growth and innovation. Building on this potential is critical to further enhancing Ireland’s metropolitan profile.

National Planning Framework 2040

CMATS represents a coordinated land use and transport strategy for the Cork Metropolitan Area (CMA) to cover the period up to 2040. The Strategy is considered to be flexible with the ability to scale up public transport capacity and frequencies as necessary along CMATS agreed transport corridors.

The Strategy takes its lead at national level from the NPF 2040 and the National Development Plan (NDP) 2018-2027 and builds upon previous transport studies including the Cork City Centre Movement Strategy, Cork Area Strategic Plan (CASP) and the Cork Cycle Network Plan.

The Strategy will provide a coherent transport planning policy framework and implementation plan around which other agencies involved in land use planning, environmental protection, and delivery of other infrastructure such as housing and water can align their investment priorities.

CMATS will deliver an integrated transport network that addresses the needs of all modes of transport, offering better transport choices, resulting in better overall network performance and providing capacity to meet travel demand and support economic growth. To achieve this vision, the guiding principles upon which CMATS is based is depicted in the graphic below. To achieve this vision the guiding principles upon which CMATS is based are:

Principle 01
To support the future growth of the CMA through the provision of an efficient and safe transport network.

Principle 02
To prioritise sustainable transport and reduce car dependency within the CMA.

Principle 03
To provide a high level of public transport connectivity to key destinations within high demand corridors.

Principle 04
To identify and protect key strategic routes for the movement of freight and services including the provision of a high level of freight access to the Port of Cork.

Principle 05
To enhance the public realm through traffic management and transport interventions.

Principle 06
To increase public transport capacity and frequencies where needed to achieve the strategy outcomes.
National Policy
CMATS is a Regional level plan and is directly informed by National level (Tier-1) policies. The most important and recent of these documents are the NPF 2040 and the NDP 2018-2027.

Some of the key transport growth enablers relevant to the development of the Strategy include:
- Delivery of large-scale regeneration projects for the provision of new employment, housing and supporting infrastructure in Cork Docklands (City Docks and Tivoli);
- Progressing sustainable development of new greenfield areas for housing on public transport corridors;
- Intensifying development in inner-city and inner suburban areas;
- Development of a new sScience and Innovation Park to the west of the city accessible by public transport;
- Development of enhanced city-wide public transport to incorporate proposals for an east-west corridor from Mahon, through the City Centre to Ballincollig and a north-south corridor with a link to the Airport;
- M8/N25/N40 Dunkettle Junction upgrade and improved Ringaskiddy Port access;
- Enhanced regional connectivity through improved average journey times by road; and
- Improved traffic flow around the City, which, subject to assessment, could include upgrades of the N40, and/or alternatives which may include enhanced public transport.

Some of the core principles of the NPF that have informed the development of CMATS are:
- NSO 1 – Compact Growth;
- NSO 2 – Enhanced Regional Accessibility Road Network;
- NSO 3 – Public Transport;
- NSO 4 – Sustainable Mobility;
- NSO 5 – A Strong Economy supported by Enterprise, Innovation and Skills;
- NSO 6 – High-Quality International Connectivity;
- NSO 7 – Enhanced Amenity and Heritage;
- NSO 8 – Transition to a Low Carbon and Climate Resilient Society; and
- NSO 10 – Access to High-Quality Childcare, Education and Health Services.

Other key national level Policy and Guidelines that CMATS must align with include:
- Climate Action Plan 2019;
- Planning Land Use and Transport Outlook 2040;
- National Mitigation Plan;
- Investing in our Transport Future - Strategic Spatial Planning and National Roads;
- Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (updated 2019);
- Smarter Travel - A Sustainable Future; and
- Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments Guidelines for Planning Authorities.

Regional Policy
At a regional level, the NPF 2040 recommends the development of RSESs and MASPs. The RSESs are to ensure better co-ordination in planning and development policy matters across local authority boundaries. As part of the RSES process, MASPs are required to provide more specific focus on city and metropolitan issues. The RSES for the Southern Region was published in January 2020.

Local Policy
The third tier in the planning and policy hierarchy is local planning, which involves the planning framework for the implementation of national and regional guidance at the local level. CMATS will inform the future update of Cork City and County Development Plans and the future development of Local Transport Plans (LTPs)/Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMPs) for Metropolitan Towns and City Districts.