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Mr. Ken Spratt,
Acting Secretary General,
Department of Transport.

Date: 2nd November 2020

**Re: Recommendations from the Southern Regional Assembly for the Department of Transport's
Statement of Strategy 2020-2023**

SRA File Ref: 20/GD006

A Chara,

The Southern Regional Assembly (SRA) welcome the opportunity to engage with the Department of Transport in the preparation of your Statement of Strategy 2020-2023.

The opportunity to contribute is timely for the SRA. Firstly, the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies (RSES) for the Southern Region and Metropolitan Area Strategic Plans (MASPs) for Cork, Limerick-Shannon and Waterford came into effect on the 31st January 2020. They set out a 12-year strategic planning and economic development framework for the Southern Region to become one of Europe's most Liveable, Creative and Innovative and Greenest Regions.

The primary objective of the RSES and MASPs is to implement Project Ireland 2040, the National Planning Framework (NPF) and the National Development Plan (NDP- 2018-2027) at the regional level. It is the first step towards achieving a more sustainable settlement pattern for our Region which is projected to grow by an additional 380,000 people (2m in total) by 2040 and grow employment by 225,000 (880,000 in total). Each of our three cities of Cork, Limerick and Waterford target at least 50% growth over this period. Compact Growth will see at least 50% of all new housing delivered within existing urban footprints for our cities through regeneration and infill development, with a Compact Growth target of 30% for all other settlements. Improved connectivity and a greater level of ambition to transition to sustainable mobility are key to the successful delivery of the RSES vision, strategy, growth targets and objectives.

Secondly, our Regions need to be economically resilient, competitive and prepared for external economic shocks, which we anticipate through Brexit and have experienced with the sudden impacts of Covid 19. Recent analysis by the three Regional Assemblies demonstrates the profound impacts of Covid 19 on our Region's economy. Strengthening our multi modal transport and digital networks for enhanced international connectivity, enhanced regional connectivity and transitioning to smarter, sustainable mobility are critical to future proof our infrastructure for economic and climate change resilience. This is needed to ensure we can still have efficient interactions between our primary drivers of economic growth, especially between our cities and metropolitan areas, economic corridors, ports and airports, key towns and rural areas. This is also a key factor for a higher quality of life as active travel, less traffic congestion and sustainable mobility leads to healthier and liveable communities,

attributes for quality place making, which are essential to retain and attract people to live, work and invest in our Regions.

Our transportation networks also need to be resilient for climate change adaptation and contribute to climate change mitigation with higher levels of decarbonisation in the transport sector.

The goals, objectives and actions followed by the Department of Transport have a significant role to play in contributing to effective regional development, transforming our settlement patterns, building competitiveness and resilience across our Region and building a lower carbon economy and society.

It is critical for our Region that strategic road projects as identified in the NPF, NDP, RSES and MASPs are prioritised. These projects complete strategic links to enhance our international and regional connectivity between economic drivers of growth, especially between cities and ports. Such projects are integral infrastructure for sustainable multi modal transport.

As this submission demonstrates, strategic road projects are needed to segregate commercial freight traffic from urban centres, enable larger urban centres transition to heightened levels of sustainable and active travel, facilitate city centre and dockland regeneration for Compact Growth and facilitate public transport corridors, especially bus networks which are flexible to connect all locations in our Region.

Demand management policies are key to ensure the strategic road network is maintained, protected and strengthened for essential economic, public transport and essential service functions and used less so for unsustainable private transport which causes congestion, pollution and erodes our economic competitiveness.

Implementing actions through such initiatives as the DTTAS National Policy Framework for Alternative Fuels Infrastructure for Transport 2017-2030 and Smart Travel Initiatives will ensure that strategic roads are conduits for an increasingly decarbonised transport sector in compliment with other modes including greater use of our rail network. All these measures reinforce intelligent, resilient and lower carbon transport networks for our Regions.

The following goals, objectives and actions are recommended for the Statement of Strategy 2020-2023 under the two themes of (i) high quality international connectivity and enhanced regional accessibility and (ii) sustainable mobility and low carbon transport.

Theme: High Quality International Connectivity & Enhanced Regional Accessibility

- Recommended High Level Goal: Achieve High Quality International Connectivity and Enhanced Regional Accessibility
- Recommended Objectives:
 - To seek a holistic delivery of TEN-T Network
 - To deliver strengthened strategic road networks
 - To implement strengthened policy on national and regional multi-modal movement of freight.
 - To realise the full potential of our rail network

Theme: Sustainable Mobility and Low Carbon Transport

Recommended High Level Goal: Transition our society and economy to higher rates of sustainable mobility and lower carbon transportation.

- Recommended Objectives:
 - To Transition our economy and society to Lower Carbon Transport

- To Support Smart Sustainable Mobility for Smart Cities & Smart Regions
- To Fund and support the implementation of Metropolitan Area Transport Strategies
- To Fund and support the implementation of Local Transport Plans
- To Support the implementation of 10 Minute City & Town Concepts

1.0 High Quality International Connectivity & Enhanced Regional Accessibility

Recommended High Level Goal: Achieve High Quality International Connectivity and Enhanced Regional Accessibility

1.1 Recommended Objective: To seek a holistic delivery of TEN-T Network

Implementation of EU Regulation No 1315/2013 TEN-T and guidelines , addressing Core and Comprehensive routes, multi modal transport, strategic urban nodes (our cities especially), our ports and airports, innovation in technology and low carbon transport require continued support for enhanced international connectivity. The delivery of TEN-T objectives in the Regions presents opportunities which need to be optimised to better integrate our international connection points with regional accessibility. These opportunities include:

- An upgraded network of modal transport corridors connecting strategic urban nodes (our cities), Tier 1 and Tier 2 Ports and Airports across our Regions, with increased recognition on the capacity and role of such assets outside of Dublin, for greater economic resilience, competitiveness and balanced regional development.
- There are other important corridors for regional connectivity (road and rail) not directly on Core or Comprehensive TEN-T routes. The Atlantic Economic Corridor and Eastern Economic Corridor (the Eastern Economic Corridor is an extension of the Dublin-Belfast Corridor to Rosslare Europort supported by Southern Region RSES RPO 42 and also identified in the Eastern and Midland Region RSES as a Strategic Corridor) extend through our Region. These corridors promote economic growth and interact with drivers for economic growth. There is potential to further strengthen infrastructure (road, rail, digital) spreading the economic reach of such economic corridors. While not directly on the TEN-T network, these links compliment it and are vital to improved economic interaction. Projects that meet and compliment the objectives of TEN-T and the guidelines should be supported.
- Through delivery of TEN-T projects, a high priority should be placed on the transition of our transport sector, especially commercial transport and freight, to low carbon fuel sources and smart technologies (see separate points below on the promotion of cleaner energy sources for ports, airports, public transport and freight, rail freight and rail electrification).
- Through the delivery of TEN-T projects, support e-mobility and innovation in transport technology such as testing autonomous vehicles to future proof our economic transport chains (see separate points below for smart and sustainable mobility).
- Support investment packages to deliver transport projects that improve multi modal connectivity between strategic urban nodes on the TEN-T network and within urban nodes for sustainable mobility (including the sustainable management of freight). Investment for the implementation of Metropolitan Area Transport Strategies in particular need to be identified (see separate points below on the importance of these strategies).

Potential Actions:

- Co-ordinate with the Regional Assemblies through implementation structures for each Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES), ensuring that the principles of the Regional Transport Strategy in each RSES are being delivered.
- Consult with the Regional Tier through the Regional Assemblies on delivering the priorities of the RSES through the existing National Development Plan and future National Development Plans.
- In coordination with Project Ireland 2040 and the NDP, support funding for transport investment packages addressing transport priorities as identified in the RSES, MASPs and Metropolitan Transport Strategies for Cork, Limerick-Shannon and Waterford. Implementation of these strategies need support as game changers for transport led planning, economic growth and sustainable mobility for our cities, metropolitan areas and wider region, each integrating strategic Tier 1 and Tier 2 port functions.
- Consult with the Regional Assemblies on the development and implementation of the National Investment Framework for Transport in Ireland as it applies to the funding and delivery of strategic transport projects in the Regions.
- Support funding and actions that deliver decarbonisation of the transport sector, with a focus on lower carbon freight distribution on the TEN-T network (see separate points below on a Regional Freight Strategy and Rail Freight).
- Support Ireland and the Regions to be innovators in the research and deployment of smarter mobility technology, autonomous vehicles and low carbon transport (see further points below of smart mobility).
- Engage with the EU on TEN-T regulation review and the implementation of the objectives in the TEN-T guidelines throughout our Regions.

The above objective and actions will assist the implementation of RSES Regional Policy Objectives (RPOs) including:

RPO 91 Decarbonisation in the Transport Sector	RPO 139 Low Carbon International Connectivity	RPO 140 International Connectivity
RPO 141 Regional Freight Strategy	RPO 142 Ports	RPO 145 Regional Ports and Harbour Strategy
RPO 146 High Quality International Connectivity Ports	RPO 147 Economic Opportunity of Ports	RPO 149 Regional Airport Strategy
RPO 150 High Quality International Connectivity Airports	RPO 153 Capacity of Inter Urban Road Connections	RPO 155 Managing Regions Transport Assets
RPO 156 Steady State Investment	RPO 157 Local Transport Plans	RPO 160 Smart and Sustainable Mobility
RPO 161 Smart Mobility	RPO 164 Metropolitan Transport Strategies	RPO 166 Investment in Strategic Inter Regional Multi Modal Connectivity
RPO 167: National Road Projects	RPO 168 Investment in Regional and Local Roads	RPO 170 Rail

1.2 Recommended Objective: To deliver strengthened strategic road networks

Investment in national and regional road corridors remains an important consideration, both for steady state maintenance and new improved corridors.

The NPF, NDP and RSES in turn has identified strategic road corridor improvements (including for public transport use), especially improved corridors connecting our cities and Tier 1 and Tier 2 Ports.

In larger urban areas, strategic road investment for orbital routes can facilitate a more efficient separation of economic and HGV movements, reduce congestion in the urban cores to improve the public realm, interchange facilities and active travel and allow new bus corridors to be established.

These projects, identified in co-ordination with the NTA and TII with additional regional priorities through the RSES process, are at different stages of the assessment, design and planning, but all need to be supported and progressed to underpin transport infrastructure led sustainable and economic growth, particularly as enablers of compact sustainable growth.

For example the sustainable growth of our metropolitan areas will require strategic road corridor investment in tandem with public transport investment. In Waterford, river crossings are required if the strategic and sustainable aim of a concentric city (including the strategic development of the eastern side of the Waterford MASP) is to be achieved. In Cork the regeneration of brownfield lands in the Docklands for major sustainable residential and mixed uses (one of the largest regeneration projects in the State) is dependent on strategic new road access to the new Port of Cork at Ringaskiddy to enable remaining industrial port uses to relocate and the new port facilities to function. Similarly the sustainable development of the North East quadrant of the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area requires strategic road investment.

Greater use of our road network for public transport, inter-regional bus services and local bus services, is an opportunity to encourage greater modal change. The RSES places significant emphasis on the important role of bus services in our region, especially the flexibility of bus services to access locations currently underserved.

Regional objectives support strategic bus networks (initiatives identified as Bus Connects in the NDP) through identification, safeguarding and phasing of strategic bus network routes throughout the Southern Region's Cities and metropolitan areas.

Road based transport is often the only viable and sustainable mode for rural and peripheral locations. It is essential for "life-lines" whereby smaller urban settlements and rural areas can access essential services, including health, education, retail, employment etc. and interchange with other public transport modes in key settlements through a safe and well-maintained road network. A high-quality road network is needed for successful rural public transport services, the movement of freight and emergency services. RSES objectives seek network reviews, services to small towns and villages, rural bus services including Local Link services.

The road network is also of strategic economic value for access and mobility for tourism along nationally designated tourism corridors, of which the Wild Atlantic Way, Ireland's Ancient East and Hidden Heartlands cross our Region.

Potential Actions:

- Support the delivery of national and regional road projects and strategic bus networks as identified in the NDP.

- Support the delivery of national and regional road projects as identified in the RSES through the current and future NDPs, with investment packages for the Regions and investment for steady state maintenance and new strategic road network projects as identified through Metropolitan Area Transport Strategies.
- Strengthen rural public transport programmes, Local Link services and connectivity along tourism routes including the Wild Atlantic Way, Ireland’s Ancient East and Ireland’s Hidden Heartlands.
- Integrate nature-based design solutions throughout the design, planning, tendering and implementation stages for road transport projects, especially requirements for the use of green infrastructure and sustainable drainage in road design projects.

The above objective and actions will assist the implementation of RSES Regional Policy Objectives (RPOs) and MASP policy objectives including:

RPO 91 Decarbonisation in the Transport Sector	RPO 122 Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)	RPO 124 Green Infrastructure
RPO 140 International Connectivity	RPO 141 Regional Freight Strategy	RPO 153 Capacity of Inter Urban Road Connections
RPO 155 Managing Regions Transport Assets	RPO 156 Steady State Investment	RPO 157 Local Transport Plans
RPO 158 Intra-regional Rural Connectivity	RPO 160 Smart and Sustainable Mobility	RPO 162 Multi Modal Travel Integration
RPO 164 Metropolitan Transport Strategies	RPO 166 Investment in Strategic Inter Regional Multi Modal Connectivity	RPO 167: National Road Projects
RPO 168 Investment in Regional and Local Roads	RPO 171 Bus	RPO 172 Rural Transport & RPO 173 Tourism Corridors
Cork MASP Policy Objective 9 Strategic Road Network Improvements	Limerick Shannon MASP Policy Objective 8 Strategic Road Infrastructure.	Waterford MASP Policy Objective 7 Regional Connectivity

1.3 Recommended Objective: To implement strengthened policy on national and regional multi-modal movement of freight.

This objective is an extension of support for actions to deliver on the TEN-T network outlined above. It is important to emphasise the need for strong policy support at a national level for freight movement and to recognize the capacity and role of all our Tier 1 and Tier 2 Ports as a collective strength for the state – both within the Southern Region and beyond..

Guaranteed journey times for the movement of people and goods between our Region’s economic drivers is an important enabler for our economic competitiveness. This includes the movement and distribution of logistics between our cities and metropolitan areas of Cork, Limerick-Shannon and Waterford, the Atlantic Economic Corridor, the Eastern Economic Corridor and between our Tier 1 and Tier 2 Port assets (Ports of Cork, Shannon- Foynes, Waterford-Belview and Rosslare Europort).

Efficient movement of goods by road and rail between these drivers for growth is essential for our economic growth.

Engagement with our stakeholders in the development of the RSES identified important issues for:

- High volumes of freight for export from the Southern Region travelling by road outside of the Region to Dublin Port, adding to congestion in Dublin Port and on the road network around Dublin, resulting in additional KMs travelled and emissions by the transport sector and the additional costs of time and delays arising from congestion.
- At the same time there is capacity at ports in the Southern Region which is not being utilised.
- A strong preference by exporters and freight hauliers to use transport networks (including rail freight) and ports within the Region with barriers identified including lack of freight rail connectivity and times/frequencies of options for ferries from ports such as Rosslare Europort

Climate and environmental issues in relation to freight movement include:

- Major concerns about greenhouse gas emissions and the need for urgent actions in all areas to address climate change.
- Air and Noise pollution impacts on communities from truck movements through towns and villages located on strategic transport corridors. The opportunity to reduce truck movements through transfer of freight from road to rail should be pursued.

Irish Ports handled 50.7 million tonnes of goods in 2016. Dublin Port accounted for 47% (23,849 tonnes) and was more than the combined totals for Shannon/Foynes (10,949), Cork (8,977), Rosslare (2,179) and Waterford (1,325) despite strategic locations in the Southern Region, particularly to the EU. The Southern Region accounted for 35% of the origin and 36.5% of the destination of all tonnes transported by road. A more equitable distribution of activity across these assets will address issues as outlined above. Multi modal connectivity between these assets needs to be enhanced to optimize their economic roles.

In addition to the need for improved road connectivity, each of our Region's Tier 1 and Tier 2 Ports also have potential to integrate rail freight. Examples include:

- Deep water wharf and rail connection at Marino Point in Cobh as part of the Port of Cork.
- Reinstatement of the Limerick to Foynes rail line connecting the State's deepest port to the national rail network.
- Strengthening connections to the Port of Waterford Belview and Rosslare Europort via the Waterford-Limerick rail line and mothballed Waterford Port-Rosslare Strand rail line (a key east to west corridor across our region).
- Provision of new or enhanced freight handling facilities / infrastructure at rail connected ports to activate their potential for rail freight.

There is also significant potential for a national rail hub designation at a central location in the Southern Region (the potential of Limerick Junction for such a role is cited in the RSES) for the movement of people and goods. Such a hub would allow inter connections at a regional cross-roads for moving people and goods from east/west (Waterford to Limerick and onwards to Galway, connecting the AEC, Western Rail Corridor to the Eastern Corridor) and from north/south (Belfast-Dublin-Cork corridor).

Additionally, transport investment under Metropolitan Area Transport Strategies for Cork, Limerick-Shannon and Waterford and Local Transport Plans for other settlements (Key Towns) will address the movement of freight, the opportunities for modal interchange.

The specific preparation of a Regional Freight Strategy for the Southern Region is an action of the RSES. This initiative is complimentary to the review by AECOM on National Rail Freight. The SRA were consulted as a key stakeholder in this review and through our submission (July 2020) strongly supported the opportunities for rail freight integrated with and as a compliment to sustainable lower carbon road freight networks.

Potential Actions:

- Support regional initiatives arising from the RSES and MASPs, including partnership with the SRA towards the preparation and implementation of Regional Freight, Port and Airport Strategies. Give greater priority to multi-modal freight movement at national and regional level and optimise rail freight to ports as a compliment to sustainable lower carbon road freight networks in the Southern Region.
- Support the initiatives of Irish Rail in the development of a National Rail Freight Strategy and support a focus on the opportunities for rail freight in the Regions in compliment to a Regional Freight Strategy.
- Strengthen policy support and prioritisation towards the of Tier 1 and Tier 2 Port assets in the Regions as a counterbalance to pressures on Dublin’s infrastructure. Harness the capacity and collective strength of these assets for economic competitiveness, especially in the context of the key role of our Region’s ports for EU and UK trade post Brexit.
- Support funding for transport investment packages addressing the distribution of freight within and around our cities and other settlements as identified in Metropolitan Transport Strategies for Cork, Limerick-Shannon and Waterford.

The above objective and actions will assist the implementation of RSES Regional Policy Objectives (RPOs) including:

RPO 91 Decarbonisation in the Transport Sector	RPO 139 Low Carbon International Connectivity	RPO 140 International Connectivity
RPO 141 Regional Freight Strategy	RPO 142 Ports	RPO 145 Regional Ports and Harbour Strategy
RPO 146 High Quality International Connectivity Ports	RPO 147 Economic Opportunity of Ports	RPO 149 Regional Airport Strategy
RPO 150 High Quality International Connectivity Airports	RPO 164 Metropolitan Transport Strategies	RPO 166 Investment in Strategic Inter Regional Multi Modal Connectivity
RPO 167: National Road Projects	RPO 168 Investment in Regional and Local Roads	RPO 170 Rail

1.4 Recommended Objective: To realise the full potential of our rail network

Further to the role of rail freight, our extensive rail networks are a significant asset and need to be protected and optimised for our Region’s transition to greater levels of sustainable mobility, use of rail and achievement of lower carbon emissions.

In a Rail Review in 2016, the NTA initially included a recommendation for short term cost savings to close approximately 33% of the rail network and 13 stations in the Southern Region. This was strongly rejected by many stakeholders including the Southern Region as it failed to realise the future role of rail networks and fortunately it was not pursued.

The SRA have consistently supported strengthened policy and investment for our rail network as strategic infrastructure, including contributions to reviews of the EU TEN-T Regulation, AECOM

National Rail Freight, Systra Rail Consolidated Strategy and the Department of Transport’s Sustainable Mobility Policy Review. All these initiatives positively identify a strong future role for rail in our transport networks and should be supported by the Department.

Our Region’s three cities and metropolitan areas of Cork, Limerick-Shannon and Waterford and eleven of our Key Towns, including the larger scaled Key Towns of Kilkenny, Ennis, Carlow, Tralee, Wexford and Clonmel are integrated with the rail network. All are larger scaled towns and centres of growth with an important regional economic role.

Our rail networks will be key corridors for sustainable movement of people and goods into the future. The rail network will play an important role in achieving effective land use and transport planning in pursuit of our growth targets in our urban settlements. The RSES has identified a greater role for our rail network through:

- Align transportation planning with spatial land use planning to optimise access to public transport, especially rail stations.
- For an economically competitive region, guarantee and reduce journey times, especially between each of the four cities and metropolitan areas outside of Dublin as well as to Dublin.
- The scope for rail electrification.
- Need to invest in high quality passenger facilities, real time journey information, integrated ticketing across all modes of transport.

Potential Actions:

- Support a strengthened role for our passenger and freight rail networks at national policy level.
- Support investment in rail infrastructure, multi-modal interchange with rail, passenger facilities and seek strengthened investment for rail infrastructure through the NDP.
- Support investment in commuter rail stations and services, especially in cities, suburbs and metropolitan areas.
- As identified in the National Development Plan, support feasibility studies and actions for rail electrification and higher rail speeds leading to improved connectivity between our Region’s cities, Key Towns and along economic corridors.

The above objective and actions will assist the implementation of RSES Regional Policy Objectives (RPOs) including:

RPO 91 Decarbonisation in the Transport Sector	RPO 141 Regional Freight Strategy	RPO 155 Managing Regions Transport Assets
RPO 156 Steady State Investment	RPO 160 Smart and Sustainable Mobility	RPO 162 Multi Modal Travel Integration
RPO 164 Metropolitan Transport Strategies	RPO 166 Investment in Strategic Inter Regional Multi Modal Connectivity	RPO 170 Rail

2.0 Sustainable Mobility and Low Carbon Transport

Recommended High Level Goal: Transition our society and economy to higher rates of sustainable mobility and lower carbon transportation.

2.1: Recommended Objective: To transition our economy and society to Lower Carbon Transport

Congestion caused by the dominance of private transport for most of our journeys is a cost to our economy, environment and health. It is eroding our quality of life, quality of our places and attractiveness for investment.

More urgency is needed in the decarbonisation of the transport sector to address climate change and meet our national commitments to reduce carbon emissions. The Climate Action Plan 2019 identifies 'Empowering Modal Shift and Sharing Economy in Transport' as an action area in the Transport Sector. Where 20.1% of Ireland's Greenhouse Gas emissions were attributable to the transport sector in 2018 (EPA report), greater actions to reduce carbon emissions from transport are needed. At EU level, the Green New Deal supports the shift to sustainable and smart mobility. Implementing actions through the DTTAS National Policy Framework for Alternative Fuels Infrastructure for Transport 2017-2030 need to be prioritised.

The SRA has a key role to adopt a joint regional approach to adaptation planning in partnership with Climate Action Regional Offices (CAROs) and the Local Authorities who have adopted Climate Adaptation Strategies. Decarbonisation of the transport sector will be a key influence on successful implementation of these climate strategies. Support at Department level is needed for these initiatives will ensure their success.

Recent reviews by the Department on Sustainable Mobility Policy (Feb 2020) highlighted that commuting trips nationally are expected to rise by 35 per cent over current levels by 2040. While the more recent impacts of Covid-19 on travel to work patterns, with increased working from home and decreased private and public transport journeys to access work will require assessment, these predictions still indicate a potential long-term trend that presents a significant challenge in the context of high levels of jobs and employment growth targeted through the NPF and RSES.

The integration of land use and transport planning, to facilitate transport infrastructure led distribution of growth in the right locations is a key factor to lower carbon emissions from transport.

This principle achieves Compact Growth and is core to the NPF, our RSES and MASPs and is a key principle for Metropolitan Area Transport Strategies and Local Transport Plans. It is also a core policy for Local Authority Development Plans and Local Area Plans. This principle also needs strong support at Department level underscoring sustainable mobility policy and demand management for the sustainable use of the strategic road network for public transport, essential economic movement and key services.

Key to achieving low carbon transport will also be incentives for affordable and easily accessed technology for clean generated electricity, bio-gas, hydrogen and other non-fossil fuels for private, commercial and public transportation and provision of clean energy and lower carbon fueling stations.

The SRA welcomed and contributed to the Department's recent consultation on the Five City Demand Management Survey (undertaken by Systra in September 2020) which identifies effective policy measures to achieve demand side behaviour change for greater transition to low carbon transport across:

- Taxation and Fuel Measures
- Clean Air Measures

- Parking Measures
- Planning Measures
- Energy Management Certification
- Integrating Ticketing and Mobility as a Service
- Local Toolkits

Through positive feedback supporting these initiatives, the SRA also highlighted the importance of financial incentives and rewards for going green, both private and commercial. Tax reductions, grants, and financial rewards for going green will push demand for green technology and push the market to respond with affordable choices, especially in affordable green vehicles, EV and alternative fuel infrastructure, greater demand and usage of public transport and active travel, mobility as a service solutions etc.

Potential Actions:

- Strengthen the Department’s commitment to the decarbonisation of transport across all sectors to meet our national commitments under the National Climate Action Plan and the EU’s New Green Deal and prioritise implementation of actions under the DTTAS National Policy Framework for Alternative Fuels Infrastructure for Transport 2017-2030.
- Support the initiatives of the Climate Action Regional Offices (CAROs) and Local Authorities for the implementation of sustainable transport measures under Climate Adaptation Strategies and objectives pursued at a local level for decarbonisation of the transport sector to address climate change mitigation and adaptation.
- Support a greater level of ambition in actions that transition our strategic international connectivity assets of ports and airports to low carbon renewable energy sources and a low carbon future.
- Generate stakeholder awareness and collaboration in the implementation of policy arising from the Departments Sustainable Mobility Policy Review and Five City Demand Management Survey, especially the implementation of innovative demand management incentives across all sectors.
- Support a greater level of ambition in actions in the development of clean energy fueling station infrastructure of all sectors.
- Support financial incentives and rewards for going green in transportation, across private, commercial and public transport sectors.
- Support investment in public transport networks, multi-modal interchange, smart mobility, walking and cycling for strengthened sustainable mobility within and between our settlements.
- Strengthened policy support and funding for the implementation of Metropolitan Area Transport Strategies for Cork, Limerick-Shannon and Waterford and Local Transport Plans for other key settlements (see separate recommended objectives below).

The above objective and actions will assist the implementation of RSES Regional Policy Objectives (RPOs) and MASP Policy Objectives including:

RPO 91 Decarbonisation in the Transport Sector	RPO 93 CNG and EV Infrastructure	RPO 139 Low Carbon International Connectivity
RPO 151 Integration of land use and transport integration	RPO 152 Local Planning Objectives	RPO 157 Local Transport Plans

RPO 160 Smart and Sustainable Mobility	RPO 161 Smart Mobility	RPO 162 Multi Modal Travel Integration
RPO 163 Sustainable Mobility Targets	RPO 164 Metropolitan Transport Strategies	RPO 165 Higher Densities
RPO 170 Rail	RPO 171 Bus	RPO 174 Walking and Cycling & RPO 176 “10-minute” city and town concepts
Cork MASP Policy Objective 8 Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (CMATS)	Limerick Shannon MASP Policy Objective 7 Sustainable Transport	Waterford MASP Policy Objective 6 Sustainable Transportation

2.2: Recommended Objective: To support Smart Sustainable Mobility for Smart Cities & Smart Regions

The “Smart City” concept envisages that digital technology is embedded across all city functions as a platform to solve complex challenges. It involves systematic integration of information and communication technologies (ICT) in planning, design, operations and management of public services, with the ultimate goal of benefiting all citizens and enhancing a location’s attractiveness. Such approaches allow for the development of smarter urban transport networks.

Transition to a smart digital future that integrates smarter mobility is a key priority for the Metropolitan Areas and our Region. The RSES seeks to build on initiatives offered from the concept of “Smart Cities”, with the view of extending such activities to other towns, villages and rural areas across the region, thereby developing a wider “Smart Region”. To support the development of a “Smart Region”, investment in digital infrastructures and new technologies for smarter travel (such as Mobility as a Service systems) will be required.

The RSES seeks investment in initiatives that leverage intelligent transport systems and smart transport services, which would include real time information for all transport systems. It recognises the integration of new technology for public transport services and multi-modal interchange and use of green technology to achieve lower carbon emissions.

A further example is the Southern Region’s potential as an innovator for autonomous vehicle technology. Jaguar Landrover will locate their new research and development centre in Shannon. Under this initiative, new technologies will be developed to support electrification and self-driving features including the next generation of electrical architecture as well as advanced driver assistance systems.

The SRA’s submission to the Department’s Sustainable Mobility Policy Review (February 2020) highlighted the need to provide support for Smart City and Smart Region concepts and initiatives, recognising the important role of digital infrastructure, innovation in smart technologies and smart mobility in creating smarter cities, towns and villages.

Other legislative changes that enable innovation and testing of pilot projects for sustainable mobility should be facilitated. Greater support for public agency, private enterprise and research and development sectors to test, pilot and innovate in our streetscapes for sustainable transport measures should be provided.

Examples include opportunities for innovation in multi-modal transport chains and transitioning, with the use of technology, seamlessly between different modes. The RSES supports for example

infrastructure to provide for integration between all modes of transport to support the use of sustainable travel choices. Potential options include:

- Bike and Ride facilities
- Park and Cycle facilities
- Park and Car Pool facilities
- Public bicycle sharing facilities
- Car sharing (GoCar type)
- Integration of cycling and public transport
- Integrated ticketing to include bike and car sharing
- Integrated ticketing/cards across bike sharing, bus use, train use and car sharing
- Investigate the feasibility of Mobility Hubs for major developments or multi-developments sharing the facility.
- The feasibility of e-scooter schemes.

Further, the SRA's submission to the Department's Five City Demand Management Survey (September 2020) also highlighted that more flexible approaches in the regulatory regime for private enterprise to collaborate with public transport agencies for sustainable transport networks is needed. Embracing innovation by the private sector could support greater change, especially for Mobility as a Service Solutions as a way of life. Our cities and towns should be leaders and pioneer such approaches. Strengthened collaborations with enterprise, academia and communities is encouraged.

A blended public and private partnership approach could bring about innovation to succeed and pilot projects at a community level and drive demand management initiatives forward. Support to fund and outsource the establishment of certain demand measure tools for quicker action and results would benefit all.

These themes should be reflected and supported through the next Statement of Strategy for a transformative and forward-looking vision and higher level of ambition on what we can achieving using the Smart City networks, research and innovation assets in our Regions.

Potential Actions:

- Support Smart City and Smart Region initiatives and develop with stakeholders the full potential for smarter urban transport networks, seamless multi modal travel chains and smart mobility technology to be embedded as a core attribute of sustainable cities and regions.
- Strengthen support towards the transformative potential of E- Mobility, autonomous vehicles, Mobility as a Service transport solutions and other emerging innovations in the transport and mobility sector through national policy and initiatives.
- Support funding for actions that position our Regions as leaders in the digital transformation of transportation, E-Mobility and sustainable mobility.
- Support legislative changes that enable innovation and testing of pilot projects for sustainable mobility.
- Support blended public and private partnerships to foster innovation and test pilot projects at a community level that will drive demand management initiatives forward.

- Actively encourage initiatives and partnership models across public, private, academia and community sectors that support partnerships to deliver Mobility as a Service and sustainable mobility services.

The above objective and actions will assist the implementation of RSES Regional Policy Objectives (RPOs) and MASP Policy Objectives including:

RPO 91 Decarbonisation in the Transport Sector	RPO 93 CNG and EV Infrastructure	RPO 133 Smart Cities
RPO 134 Smart Cities and Smart Region	RPO 160 Smart and Sustainable Mobility	RPO 161 Smart Mobility
RPO 162 Multi Modal Travel Integration	RPO 163 Sustainable Mobility Targets	RPO 164 Metropolitan Transport Strategies
Cork MASP Policy Objective 11 Transition to Digital Future	Limerick Shannon MASP Policy Objective 12 A Smart Metropolitan Area and Strengths in Attracting FDI	Waterford MASP Policy Objective 5 Investment in Infrastructure and Digital Connectivity
Cork MASP Policy Objective 7 Integrated Landuse and Transport Planning	Limerick Shannon MASP Policy Objective 7 Sustainable Transport	Waterford MASP Policy Objective 6 Sustainable Transportation

2.3: Recommended Objective: To fund and support the implementation of Metropolitan Area Transport Strategies

The scale of population growth targeted for each of the region’s cities and their metropolitan areas is significant. 50-60% growth beyond 2016 population to 2040 is targeted. The RSES and MASPs set a framework for the sustainable growth of Cork by over additional 104,600 persons to 2031 (75,000 of which is in the city and suburbs). Growth for Limerick Shannon is targeted at over 39,700 additional persons (33,900 in the city and suburbs) in the same period. Growth for Waterford is targeted at over 14,600 additional persons to 2031 (13,800 in the city and suburbs).

The scale of challenge to transition travel to sustainable modes in cities and metropolitan areas in the context of high growth is significant. The RSES and MASPs highlight that 2016 travel patterns are dominated by private car.

In the Cork Metropolitan Area, travel mode to work/education by private car is 66.9%, by public transport is 8.6% and walking and cycling 18.4%. Private car mode reduces in the core city centre (20.3%), but significant change is needed for people moving to and from the city centre across the metropolitan area by sustainable modes.

A similar pattern is observed in the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area but with greater use of walking and cycling in the metropolitan area, where travel mode to work/education by private car is 63.8%, by public transport is 7.6% and walking and cycling 21.5%.

In the Waterford Metropolitan Area, travel mode to work/education by private car is 69.1%, by public transport is 4.9% and walking and cycling 18.3%.

Transport investment, with a focus on sustainable travel between our cities along with sustainable and active travel within our cities and metropolitan area for daily activities, is a key enabler for each

city and metropolitan area. Investment is urgently needed to transition travel patterns to public transport and active modes across cities and metropolitan areas, as demonstrated in the above trends.

The RSES specifically identifies transport investment priorities under all transport modes (including rail, strategic bus networks, orbital traffic management, strategic road improvements, improved access to ports and airports, walking and cycling infrastructure, greenways, interchange facilities including park & ride) to be addressed by a metropolitan transport strategy for each city. Each MASP in turn integrates specific objectives for integrated land use and transport planning, sustainable transport and investment under the metropolitan transport strategies.

Progress by the NTA, TII, Local Authorities and stakeholders (which include the SRA) is positive with the Cork Metropolitan Transport Strategy completed and at implementation stage, the Limerick-Shannon Metropolitan Transport Strategy at draft stage and currently on public consultation and the Waterford Metropolitan Strategy at pre-draft preparation stage with stakeholders (including the Regional Assembly).

From the regional perspective, the preparation, implementation and follow through investment in delivering metropolitan transport strategies cannot be over-stated. For the regions to succeed, our cities and metropolitan areas must be prioritised for investment in transport infrastructure projects.

Beyond policies, pro-active project management/project implementation mechanisms need to be supported and initiated in each city and metropolitan area to deliver transformative transport projects in a timely manner.

Potential Actions:

- Support the National Transport Authority, Transport Infrastructure Ireland, Local Authorities and other stakeholders in the preparation and implementation of Metropolitan Area Transport Strategies which are transformative game changers for sustainable transport infrastructure led planning.
- Support funding packages specific to each city and metropolitan area, aligned to the infrastructure projects and delivery of short term, medium term and longer-term transport priorities.
- Support the work of transport agencies, Local Authorities and other stakeholders for coordinated project management delivery of transport projects and land use projects in our cities and metropolitan areas in a programmed manner.
- Investigate the feasibility and support the development of sustainable water transportation services for cities and metropolitan areas in Cork Harbour, Shannon Estuary and Waterford Harbour as an integrated part of multi-modal public transport networks.

The above objective and actions will assist the implementation of RSES Regional Policy Objectives (RPOs) and MASP Policy Objectives including:

RPO 151 Integration of land use and transport integration	RPO 154 Land Use Plans	RPO 160 Smart and Sustainable Mobility
RPO 162 Multi Modal Travel Integration	RPO 163 Sustainable Mobility Targets	RPO 164 Metropolitan Transport Strategies

Cork MASP Policy Objective 7 Integrated Landuse and Transport Planning	Cork MASP Policy Objective 8 Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (CMATS)	Limerick Shannon MASP Policy Objective 6 Integration of Transport and Landuse
Limerick Shannon MASP Policy Objective 7 Sustainable Transport	Waterford MASP Policy Objective 6 Sustainable Transportation	Waterford MASP Policy Objective 7 Regional Connectivity
Cork MASP Policy Objective 11 Transition to Digital Future	Limerick Shannon MASP Policy Objective 12 A Smart Metropolitan Area and Strengths in Attracting FDI	Waterford MASP Policy Objective 5 Investment in Infrastructure and Digital Connectivity
Cork MASP Policy Objective 7 Integrated Landuse and Transport Planning	Limerick Shannon MASP Policy Objective 7 Sustainable Transport	Waterford MASP Policy Objective 6 Sustainable Transportation

2.4: Recommended Objective: To fund and support the implementation of Local Transport Plans

Local Transport Plans (LTPs) are an objective of the RSES. They are game changing framework for transport investment, integration of land use and transport planning and transition to sustainable mobility for towns and rural areas across our Regions.

LTP's will be prepared by the NTA in co-ordination with TII, Local Authorities and other stakeholders (including the SRA) for Key Towns and other large settlements across our Region.

Currently in our Region, a LTP for Kilkenny is at draft preparation stage and when completed, it will set a high quality benchmark for what LTP's should address and implement. This process should be highlighted as a good practice case study when completed.

LTPs will be evidence based and informed by Area Based Transport Assessment (ABTA) guidance produced by NTA and TII. LTPs will address:

- Maximising the opportunities for the integration of land use and transport planning for different towns.
- Assess the existing traffic, transport and movement conditions within the plan area and in its wider context.
- Plan for the efficient and sustainable movement of people, goods and services within, to and from the Plan area.
- Identify the extent to which estimated transport demand associated with local development objectives can be supported and managed on the basis of existing transport assets.
- Identify the transport interventions required within the plan area and in the wider context, to effectively accommodate the anticipated increase in demand.
- Prioritise the delivery of sustainable and active travel infrastructure.
- Plan and target actions for modal shift to sustainable transport modes to facilitate a modal shift away from car dependence.
- Plan and target actions to retrofit permeability for green modes (walking and cycling)
- Include provision for infrastructure for electric vehicles and alternative fuels
- Co-ordinate with Local Link rural public transport services

The Department's policies should support the role of LTPs and the implementation of projects arising from them for enhanced sustainable mobility at the local level.

Potential Actions

- Support NTA, TII, Local Authorities and other stakeholders in the preparation and implementation of Local Transport Plans.
- Support funding packages specific to each town and plan area, aligned to the infrastructure projects and short term, medium term and longer-term priorities identified in LTPs.
- Support good practice case studies for successful preparation and implementation of LTPs.
- Support the work of transport agencies, Local Authorities and other stakeholders for coordinated project management delivery of transport projects and land use projects in our cities and metropolitan areas in a programmed manner.

The above objective and actions will assist the implementation of RSES Regional Policy Objectives (RPOs) including:

RPO 11 Key Towns	RPOs 12-25 for each Key Town	RPO 29 Rural Settlement Networks
RPO 151 Integration of land use and transport integration	RPO 152 Local Planning Objectives	RPO 154 Land Use Plans
RPO 157 Local Transport Plans	RPO 160 Smart and Sustainable Mobility	RPO 162 Multi Modal Travel Integration
RPO 163 Sustainable Mobility Targets	RPO 174 Walking and Cycling	RPO 176 "10-minute" city and town concepts

2.5: Recommended Objective: To support the implementation of 10 Minute City & Town Concepts

The RSES supports a 10-Minute City/ Town as a concept whereby a range of community facilities and services (across health, education, retail, sports and recreation etc) are accessible in short walking and cycling timeframes from homes or are accessible by high quality public transport services by connecting people to larger scaled settlements delivering these services.

Funding for Local Authority works that progress smarter travel, public transport services and improve walking and cycling permeability to achieve sustainable 10-Minute City and Town Concepts need support.

Through our role in both an EU Interreg Europe project called MATCH-UP, which aims to achieve significant improvements of modal interchange to foster low-carbon urban mobility, and implementation of the RSES, the SRA have created a framework tool (Accessibility and Framework Report -10 Minute Towns) for the implementation of 10 Minute City/Town concepts across all neighbourhoods and settlements in our Region.

The framework examined three case studies Carlow, Ennis and Tralee and shows stakeholders important steps for mapping catchments, identifying services, identifying constraints and recommending opportunities to improve permeability. It integrates good practice guidance and key learnings which are transferable to other settlements.

The benefits of achieving this framework are considerable. Recommendations compliment on-going analysis in this area by the NTA including connectivity analysis tools investigating accessibility to public transport nodes and to services. These tools are PTALS (Public Transport Accessibility Level) and ATOS (accessibility to opportunities and services). Such analysis and tools will be a significant resource to

assist Local Authorities in the identification of interventions and projects to achieve sustainable 10 Minute cities and towns. Through this positive work of the NTA, the concept can be integrated as a core principle in the implementation of Metropolitan Transport Strategies, Local Transport Plans and other transport initiatives delivered by Local Authorities and transport agencies.

The SRA will welcome an opportunity to discuss effectiveness of supporting our frameworks with the Department.

Potential Actions

- Support sustainable 10 Minute City and Town Concepts as a key principle of sustainable mobility policy and support the initiatives of stakeholders promoting these concepts, including the implementation of the SRA’s Accessibility and Framework Report -10 Minute Towns, support for NTA’s development of PTALS and ATOS connectivity analysis tools and the initiatives of Local Authorities and other stakeholders in promoting 10 Minute City and Town Concepts.
- Support investment packages for cities and towns to help achieve projects that enhance permeability to achieve sustainable 10 Minute City and Town concepts. Such projects can be cost effective and delivered in the short term.
- Support proactive marketing, public awareness and incentives for Local Authorities and communities to participate in initiatives promoting sustainable 10 Minute City and Town Concepts.

The above objective and actions will assist the implementation of RSES Regional Policy Objectives (RPOs) including:

RPO 151 Integration of land use and transport integration	RPO 152 Local Planning Objectives	RPO 154 Land Use Plans
RPO 157 Local Transport Plans	RPO 160 Smart and Sustainable Mobility	RPO 162 Multi Modal Travel Integration
RPO 163 Sustainable Mobility Targets	RPO 174 Walking and Cycling	RPO 176 “10-minute” city and town concepts

Conclusion

The SRA as a key regional stakeholder welcomes future consultations with the Department of Transport on further developing the above regional priorities through the Statement of Strategy 2020-2023 as well as engaging with the Department on several initiatives that have been mentioned in this submission, especially on Regional Freight, Port and Airport strategies, contributions made by the SRA to Department reviews on Sustainable Mobility Policy, National Rail Freight, Five Cities Demand Management and to support 10 Minute City and Town concepts.

The SRA would also welcome the opportunity to engage with the Department on their initiative on the National Investment Framework for Transport in Ireland. This framework will assist funding and delivery for key transport projects connecting our Region’s economic drivers and within our cities, metropolitan areas and key settlements and is an important tool to assist RSES/MASP implementation and track project progress.

The SRA welcome continued engagement with the Department and the Regional Assembly's RSES team are available for future consultation and clarities required regarding this submission.

Mise le meas,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'David Kelly', written in a cursive style.

David Kelly,
Director