

## Actions to deliver Edinburgh City Mobility Plan Consultation

Cycling Scotland submission  
June 2023

### Delivering our City Mobility plan

The following questions focus on proposals and priorities in a range of areas, including:

- making streets more accessible
- improving public transport and active travel networks
- achieving ambitious road safety targets; and creating people-friendly, thriving neighbourhoods and shopping streets.
- There is an opportunity at the end of this survey to provide additional comments regarding these.

**Question 6 - How important do you think the following measures are to help make our streets accessible for everyone? (Extremely important; very important; important; not so important; not important at all.)**

- Speed up installing dropped kerbs, including tactile paving to help visually impaired people.  
Answer: **Extremely important**
- Improve footways around the city by providing safe smooth pavements free from trip hazards.  
Answer: **Extremely important**
- Continue to remove clutter on pavements and paths focusing on unnecessary poles and signs.  
Answer: **Extremely important**
- Introduce more rest places and benches.  
Answer: **Very important**
- Implement the powers to enforce the pavement parking ban when available.  
Answer: **Extremely important**

**Question 7 – Delivering these measures across the city is a major task that will take years to deliver in full. Which of the following locations do you think should be a priority for early delivery? Rank 1 (top priority) to 4 (least priority)**

- The city centre **4**
- Our high streets and shopping streets **1**
- Routes to public transport **3**
- Routes to neighbourhood services, e.g., health centres **2**

### Delivering a joined-up cycle network

We want Edinburgh to be a city where everyone, including children, has the freedom to cycle safely, whatever your destination, at all times of day. Our vision is that everyone will feel safe to make cycling a natural choice for local and longer trips around the city.

Edinburgh's existing cycle network relies on our traffic-free paths, which can be very pleasant to use during the day. However, these paths are often not overlooked by houses and can feel quite unsafe for many users, especially women, at night or less busy times of day.

To help us deliver City Mobility Plan objectives, we propose to expand the cycling network so that every household is within 250 to 400 metres of a high-quality cycle route that everyone can safely use at all times of day.

### **Question 10 – To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed expansion of Edinburgh's cycle network so that every household is within 250m – 400m of a high-quality cycle route?**

- Strongly agree; agree; neither agree nor disagree; disagree; strongly disagree  
Answer: **Strongly agree**

## Delivering improvements to our public transport network

Public transport is the most efficient way of moving large numbers of people longer distances into and across the city and is likely to make the biggest contribution to achieving the targeted 30% reduction in car kilometres by 2030.

Public transport, like walking and cycling, makes much more efficient use of street space than car use. To help deliver City Mobility Plan objectives, we aim to:

- find ways to provide faster and more reliable bus services.
- make sure everyone using public transport in the city has a high-quality experience, wherever you live, whatever your age, gender or ability or whatever your destination.
- aim to provide flexible and affordable fares across public transport services.

### **Question 11 – How important do you think the following measures are to improve bus stops and make travelling by bus more accessible and attractive for all users? (Extremely important; very important; important; not so important; not important at all.)**

- Improve the layout of bus stops to make it easier for everyone to get both to the stop and onto the bus.  
Answer: **Important**
- Deliver improved bus shelters including the provision of seating and lighting.  
Answer: **Very important**
- Provide improved real-time information including information on available wheelchair spaces.  
Answer: **Extremely important**

We need faster and more reliable bus services so that everyone has convenient, affordable and accessible choices for moving around Edinburgh. This should reduce the use of private cars, and help reduce carbon emissions and improve air quality.

We can provide faster and more reliable bus services through bus priority measures while maintaining adequate access to servicing and loading for residents and businesses. We will also take account of previous consultation feedback when considering additional bus priority measures.

**Question 15 – How important do you think the following bus priority measures are to providing faster and more reliable bus services? (Extremely important; very important; important; not so important; not important at all.)**

- The introduction of additional bus lanes.  
Answer: **Extremely important**
- The extension of bus lane operating hours, to 7am to 7pm, seven days a week.  
Answer: **Extremely important**
- Bus priority at traffic signals.  
Answer: **Very important**

## Delivering a people-friendly city centre

Our **Edinburgh City Centre Transformation strategy**, approved in 2019, focuses on delivering a high-quality, people-friendly street environment.

The strategy has begun to deliver across the Old and New Towns. Streets including Victoria Street and Cockburn Street are largely vehicle free and others including George Street, George IV Bridge and Lothian Road are being redesigned to provide a welcoming and accessible environment to all users.

As we continue to prioritise walking, wheeling and cycling in the city centre, we want to identify further streets where we could reduce or remove through traffic. Any restrictions would still allow essential vehicle movements such as access for city centre residents, to multi-storey car parks, and access for deliveries and blue badge parking.

**Question 16 – To what extent do you agree or disagree with investigating some more restrictions to through traffic in the city centre so that we can deliver a friendlier environment for people living and spending time in, shopping, working and visiting?**

- Strongly agree; agree; neither agree nor disagree; disagree; strongly disagree  
Answer: **Strongly agree**

On some streets across the city centre, parked vehicles can limit our ability to provide wider pavements, seating and planting.

Easy availability of kerbside parking when other car parks are available can encourage non-essential traffic into the city centre, while also restricting deliveries, resident and blue badge parking.

**Question 18 – To what extent do you agree or disagree with introducing a targeted reduction in kerbside parking within the city centre to provide a more welcoming environment for everyone?**

- Strongly agree; agree; neither agree nor disagree; disagree; strongly disagree  
Answer: **Strongly agree**

## Achieving city-wide road safety targets

We need more measures to make our streets safer for everyone, especially the most vulnerable – people walking, wheeling and cycling. For example, lower speed limits and improved routes to schools make it safer for everyone to move around.

We have set out ambitious **road safety targets**, including achieving zero fatalities on our road network by 2030.

**Question 19 – How important do you think the following measures are to achieve our zero fatalities target by 2030? (Extremely important; very important; important; not so important; not important at all.)**

- Re-design major junctions in the city to improve the safety of vulnerable road users.  
Answer: **Extremely important**
- Explore introducing speed limits under 20 miles per hour in busy shopping streets.  
Answer: **Extremely important**
- Expand the number of schools with ‘school streets’.  
Answer: **Extremely important**
- Review both rural speed limits and 40mph speed limits.  
Answer: **Extremely important**

Accident data shows that junctions are typically the most dangerous parts of the journey for people walking, wheeling and cycling. These are often the most challenging places to improve pedestrian crossing facilities or cycling infrastructure without impacting on other travel modes.

To meet our road safety targets, we will need to introduce changes to major junctions to improve everyone’s safety, particularly vulnerable road users – those walking, wheeling and cycling.

**Question 20 – How much do you agree or disagree with taking action to protect vulnerable road users at major junctions which may impact motorised traffic?**

- Strongly agree; agree; neither agree nor disagree; disagree; strongly disagree  
Answer: **Strongly agree**

## Improving our public transport and active travel corridors

On some of our main roads, parked vehicles restrict our ability to:

- widen narrow pavements.
- improve bus journey times by introducing bus lanes.
- expand the cycle network including segregated cycle lanes.

**Question 21 – To what extent do you agree or disagree with reducing parking on main roads to provide more space for everyone to walk, wheel, cycle and move around on public transport?**

- Strongly agree; agree; neither agree nor disagree; disagree; strongly disagree

Answer: **Strongly agree**

## Delivering vibrant shopping streets

In some of our shopping streets, parked vehicles can take up over 25% of the available street space. This restricts our ability to:

- widen narrow pavements.
- introduce benches and seating.
- introduce trees or planting.
- provide cycle parking.

**Question 22 – To what extent do you agree or disagree with reducing parking on our shopping streets to provide a vibrant environment for everyone while still providing essential access for deliveries and people with mobility difficulties?**

- Strongly agree; agree; neither agree nor disagree; disagree; strongly disagree

Answer: **Strongly agree**

## Any further comments

**Question 27 – Are there any other measures that you think we should consider to help achieve a net zero city by 2030 and meet our ambitious target to lower the number of kilometres travelled by car in Edinburgh by 30%? Are there any of the measures proposed where you have concerns about the potential impacts? Any other comments?**

We welcome the measures set out towards delivering the City Mobility Plan and helping Edinburgh become a net zero city by 2030. We are supportive of the vision to increase rates of active travel, reduce car use and congestion, and improve air quality in the city.

We strongly agree with the proposed expansion of Edinburgh's cycle network so that every household is within 250m – 400m of a high-quality cycle route.

A network of safe, easy to use dedicated cycling infrastructure that enables anyone anywhere to cycle in the city centre is required to achieve modal shift towards active travel and improve safety. This entails cohesive, comprehensive and seamless networks of on-road segregated paths in cities and, where appropriate, alongside trunk roads and busier local roads. In the urban setting, such networks will link into and incorporate existing off-road networks where they deliver direct and high-quality routes. 'Success' in this regard should not only be measured in terms of additional kilometres of network but have a qualitative aspect, including following good practice design standards, making routes accessible to more users and integration with public transport.

While very supportive and acknowledging the challenges in implementing what is already committed, we believe the plans for separated cycle lanes should be accelerated as the key priority for making cycling accessible to more of the population and joining up the existing off-road networks.

Where such routes are created, it is important that they are well-connected and of high-quality to allow people to travel safely and efficiently in and out of the city from surrounding areas, facilitating sustainable door-to-door journeys. E-bikes should be considered in priorities in this regard, as they drastically increase the number and distance of commuting journeys possible by bike. The council should expand co-ordination with surrounding local authorities and SEStran to coordinate action on long distance (up to 10 miles) routes.

While technological advances with regards to electric vehicles are important, it is important not to rely too heavily on fuel efficiency and other technology improvements, as the pace of change and rate of uptake of such vehicles cannot be guaranteed. Electric and other low emission vehicles still contribute to particulate matter emissions, through braking and tyre wear, negatively impacting on air quality, and also, as vehicles, do not reduce congestion in city centre streets. They continue to take up street space and still require space to be parked.

In this regard, continuing to prioritise road development and car-focused infrastructure, places an unequal burden on those in the most deprived communities, and there is a risk that growth in car ownership further isolates those without access to a car. In Edinburgh, almost 40% of households do not have access to a car<sup>1</sup>. Re-focusing on providing integrated and responsive active travel services and infrastructure is essential and will contribute significantly to reducing inequality. Where electric vehicle charging infrastructure does exist, it is important that this is readily accessible by e-bikes.

We strongly agree with the prioritisation of measures to improve safety for the most vulnerable road users and achieve a zero fatalities target by 2030 or sooner. We strongly support the measures listed, including: redesigning major junctions in the city, exploring speed limits under 20mph in busy shopping streets, expanding the number of school streets, and reviewing both rural speed limits and existing 40mph speed limits. Improving enforcement of parking regulations and improving the layout of more junctions are also vital to improve safety for people walking, wheeling and cycling.

Finally, although not specifically the subject of the City Mobility Plan, it is vital that cycle training expands in the city in order to meet the ambitions in an inclusive fashion. Bikeability Scotland cycle training in primary schools gives children the skills and confidence to cycle safely on road, and to encourage them to carry on cycling into adulthood. Every child in every school should have the opportunity to learn to cycle confidently on-road. We would also highlight the utmost importance of having somewhere safe and secure to store a bike.

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<sup>1</sup> Cycling Scotland (2019) Annual Cycling Monitoring Report  
<https://www.cycling.scot/mediaLibrary/other/english/6353.pdf>