

Glasgow Centre for Population Health response to the Public Conversation on Glasgow's Transport Future (Connecting Communities)

November 2020

Glasgow City Council is preparing three new transport plans for the City in 2020/2021. These are:

- an updated Local Transport Strategy – the Glasgow Transport Strategy
- an updated City Centre Transport Strategy – City Centre Transformation Plan
- a completely new Liveable Neighbourhoods Plan.

This response has been prepared to ensure that these connected plans and strategies include policies and actions that support population health, sustainability and inclusion.

GCPH comments on the questions posed in the consultation are provided in blue. The consultation questions and contextual information provided by Glasgow City Council is in black font.

Problems our new transport plans must tackle

In our Public Conversation document, we have listed some of the problems we think we need to tackle. Our Draft Case for Change report has more detail on these and others. Problems:

- Rising traffic and congestion
- Bus use is declining
- Reliability issues with buses
- Less people walk for journeys than comparable areas elsewhere, and people want better quality and safer places to walk
- Rising number of vans and light goods vehicles with associated emissions
- Poverty and unequal access to transport
- High cost of transport particularly public transport
- Physical and mental barriers created by motorways and busy roads

- Complicated governance of transport in the City (lots of organisations involved)
- Different ways to travel are not smart & integrated, including ticketing
- Transport's role in climate change particularly cars
- Poor air quality and health problems from vehicle emissions
- Health inequalities and unequal participation in active ways to travel like walking and cycling
- Mobility difficulties and resulting unequal access to transport
- Safety concerns over cycling on road and lack of a complete cycling network
- Transport as a barrier to economic success

We agree with the 'problems' outlined above. Some specific comments relating to these are:

- The current transport system in Glasgow largely prioritises private cars, but unfettered car use is neither sustainable for our planet nor good for health. Cars also take up considerable space that could be used for public good.
- Air pollution damages health and the main source for pollutants like PM2.5, PM10 and NOx is motorised road transport. Very small particulate matter (PM2.5) have been estimated to contribute to over 1,700 deaths every year in Scotland and over 200 deaths annually in Glasgow¹.
- Approximately half of Glaswegians have access to a car. Many of whom are forced into car ownership due to the lack of alternative modes of transport².
- Public transport is not well-integrated, and the hub-and-spoke system used by buses often requires using multiple buses for relatively short journeys.
- The cost of public transport, particularly when required to use multiple modes to complete a journey, is prohibitive for people on low incomes. These challenges are most common in peripheral parts of the city where poverty rates tend to be high.

- Large roads have severed communities and left areas isolated.
- Pedestrians in the most deprived areas are three-to-four times more likely to be injured in a road collision than those in our least deprived areas³.
- Transport options for people who are vulnerable to the impacts of COVID-19, but whom do not have access to a car, are limited.
- Cycling infrastructure has improved but the coverage is currently not nearly extensive enough to bring about a significant modal shift towards cycling. Behaviour change work is also important. Groups who are currently less likely to cycle – including women, older people, people from a BAME background, people living in more deprived areas – need more support and training to encourage them to take up cycling. Bikes for All demonstrated the value of providing such training for underrepresented groups⁴.
- Many streets do not adequately meet the needs of all users. People with a physical disability or visual impairment face significant challenges in some areas⁵.

Our transport outcomes – do you agree?

We want you to tell us if you agree with the four outcomes we have chosen for our transport plans. Outcomes (or goals) are what we are trying to achieve with all our spending on transport and decision-making on transport in the next 10 years.

Below are our four outcomes. Do you agree or disagree they should be goals we work towards in our new transport plans? (Please delete below until you are left with the statement that applies to you e.g. delete all except slightly agree to indicate you slightly agree.)

Outcomes:

1. Transport contributes to a successful and just transition to a carbon neutral, clean and sustainable city
 - Strongly agree
2. Transport has a positive role in tackling poverty, improving health deprivation and reducing inequalities
 - Strongly agree
3. Transport responds and contributes to continued and inclusive economic success and a dynamic, world-class city
 - Slightly agree
4. Places are created where we can all thrive, regardless of mobility or income, through liveable neighbourhoods and an inclusive City Centre.
 - Slightly agree

Do you think we should have a different outcome? Please write your ideas below.

We broadly agree with the proposed outcomes. Some specific comments on how we would like to see the outcomes revised are as follows:

An accompanying outcome or an addition to outcome 1, *Transport contributes to a successful and just transition to a carbon neutral, clean and sustainable city*, would be to integrate a sustainable low-emission public transport system with a safe and accessible active travel network.

We feel that outcome 3, *Transport responds and contributes to continued and inclusive economic success and a dynamic, world-class city*, requires clarification as the indented definition of 'inclusive economic success' is unclear and will determine how this outcome translates into action. Investment in transport infrastructure that addresses existing transport and economic inequalities is welcome. This could include, for example, investment that provides better active travel routes and access to nextbike in parts of the city that have poorer provision; actions to address

differential exposure to air pollution and other environmental burdens such as vacant land; and ensuring equitable access to good quality public transport options across the city.

Outcome 4, *Places are created where we can all thrive, regardless of mobility or income, through liveable neighbourhoods and an inclusive City Centre*, could suggest equal access for all, with specific reference made to people with protected characteristics (i.e. age, religion and belief, race, disability, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, and gender reassignment).

To achieve these outcomes, we believe that intensive and long-term investment is needed to reduce unsustainable travel, principally private car use, and to increase the use of sustainable forms of public transport and active travel. We would like to see a set of measurable indicators under each outcome for progress to be assessed against.

The City is changing and how we travel in the future might also change.

In our Public Conversation document, we have identified some factors that might change how we travel in the future. These drivers of change include technology, more working from home and a changing world of work, more online services, changing attitudes and greater awareness of climate change. These are the things we think we need to keep an eye on, as they may reduce our need to travel, or change how and when we travel.

Please give us your ideas on how the need to travel (or not) in Glasgow may change in the future.

Investment in sustainable transport is necessary if Glasgow is to achieve net zero-emissions by 2030. During the pandemic, many people have adapted to working from home and meeting virtually. These changes have reduced the need to commute for many and are likely to be part of whatever 'new normality' we eventually settle into. In the future, we are more likely to spend time in our local neighbourhoods, which could boost local economies. To achieve the benefits of localised lives and work, we will need to invest in the creation of places that are safe

for walking, cycling and wheeling. However, encouragement of walking and cycling in neighbourhoods needs to be accompanied by planning practice that supports localism. i.e. that which facilitates the arrival of shops and amenities.

There is a danger that pilots to develop '20-minute neighbourhoods' will focus on areas that are already resourced to allow people to meet their needs, thereby exacerbating existing inequalities. Consideration is needed for how places that have been designed for car use (and without local amenities) can now be adapted to encourage people to walk, cycle and wheel.

Confidence in public transport has fallen as people have been encouraged to avoid using it during the pandemic. Staying at home and avoiding travel completely is not a sustainable option in terms of protecting the population's mental health. We need a clean, safe, affordable, integrated and attractive public transport system that is marketed strongly to convince people to use it and to become much less dependent on the car.

The Council's commitment to doubling the city centre's population, while also reducing car use in the city centre by 30%, needs to be matched by sustainability policies which support this objective. New city centre developments should be created without additional parking and, when viable, workplace parking levies for city centre companies could be introduced to discourage car use.

While there is hope that COVID-19 will be eradicated or managed more easily in the future, the effects of climate change will increase in severity. Small scale actions will only result in more drastic measures needing to be taken in the future. Climate policies should therefore be ambitious, far-sighted and supported by actions and investment that will enable them to be fulfilled.

Your ideas and priorities

Tell us **three things** you would like the Council to include in their future transport strategies and plans for the city. This could be a specific project you would like them

to pursue, or a concept like cheaper public transport fares, safer places to cycle, more dropped kerbs on pavements.

1. We would like to see a firm commitment to taking back road space from cars for the benefit of more sustainable and less congesting forms of travel, with walking and cycling prioritised.

Given that Glasgow has more road space as a percentage of its land mass than many other UK cities⁶, there are ample opportunities to adapt streets in ways that promote walking and cycling and wheeling, as well as making them safer and more pleasant. These changes would help to increase physical activity and would reduce emissions in line with current carbon reduction targets. This should build on the changes already delivered through 'Spaces for People' and be driven by targets and supported by adequate investment.

2. Invest in an affordable, accessible public transport network

Good public transportation systems have both social and economic benefits⁷: efficient mobility in cities creates economic opportunity, facilitates access to services and employment, and encourages people to socialise. Companies running public transport are employers in a city, often large scale, and can offer a range of employment opportunities. Investment in well-planned public transport systems supports economic activity, inclusion in the labour market, and the growth of jobs because of the variety of skills required by transport providers as employers. Meanwhile, jobs that are not accessible to those without a car exclude a considerable proportion of Glasgow's population, which exacerbate inequality.

It can be easier to access Glasgow from outside the city than from some neighbourhoods within the city boundary. Train routes tend to link the least deprived communities, with people in more deprived communities (where car ownership is lower) often having to rely on buses. Bus routes are subject to commercial decisions and so can be unreliable and may not run a full service that supports travel outside of peak travel times. This is a particular issue for those who rely on a bus to get to work on time, who have complex commuting journeys and for those who do shift work. Many work opportunities, such as in the hospitality sector, where shift work is

required, become very difficult for those on low incomes who rely on public transport. Accessibility and affordability of public transport will be key to realising the social and economic benefits it can deliver. Efforts should also be made to ensure that public transport is safe to use while COVID-19 remains in circulation, and where possible, the Council should consider offering alternative travel to vulnerable people at the same cost. People should be able to access transport irrespective of income, location or personal characteristics.

3. Create a safe, affordable, inclusive and comprehensive active travel network across the city.

A costed strategic plan with clear timescales and significant investment is needed to create such a network across the whole city. Lowering road speeds in Glasgow is also required to reduce casualties and encourage more people to walk, cycle and wheel safely. We welcome the Council's existing commitment to introduce 20mph limits across the city. Efforts to do this quickly could save lives, reduce casualties and help to create more people-friendly streets⁸. Reducing the number of cars on the roads would also increase safety for pedestrians and cyclists by lowering the incidence of road accidents and through air quality improvements.

Your City Centre

Glasgow City Centre will be transformed through the creation of a network of Avenues and public spaces integrated with public transport services and cycling infrastructure. Access to the city centre for private cars will be limited with no through trips.

To what extent do you agree with this proposal to transform our city centre as described above?

- Strongly agree

Your Liveable Neighbourhoods

Local Neighbourhoods in Glasgow will be transformed by making the streets safer and work better for people, rather than for vehicles, as part of a wider traffic reduction strategy for the area.

This means:

- Looking at how streets are planned to enable active, inclusive and safe travel helping to encourage a modal shift away from the use of the private car.
- Designing public spaces integrated with public transport services and cycling infrastructure.
- Focusing on improving the local environment.
- Opening school streets.
- Delivering on 20mph speed limits.

To what extent do you agree with this proposal to create liveable neighbourhoods as described above? (Please delete below until you are left with the statement that applies to you e.g. delete all except slightly agree to indicate you slightly agree.)

- [Strongly agree](#)

Our policy focus areas and your priorities

In our Public Conversation document, we have set out the areas of policy we propose to focus on. We would like your views on this. Tell us how much you agree that these should be policy focus areas in our new transport strategies.

Statements:

We **support** the following policy focus areas:

- Investment in cycling infrastructure to produce a city-wide network that people feel safe to cycle on (presented in our updated "Active Travel Plan" which will replace our existing Strategic Plan for Cycling).

- Continued working towards zero serious and fatal injuries on our road network (our updated Road Safety Plan to 2030).
- Efficient management of our road networks through design and technology to make better use of the space we have, ensuring the sustainable travel hierarchy informs our decisions and priorities.
- Reallocation of and better management of access to road space to give priority to people walking, wheeling, cycling and on public transport, and ensure goods get to where they need to go in the city.
- Continued maintenance of what we already have to ensure our pavements, cycleways and roads enable sustainable travel.
- Embedding the Fairer Scotland Duty into our transport decision making alongside our Equality and Climate Duties, and applying a "wellbeing test" to our transport investment decision-making.
- Investment in a modern public transport system that supports our economy, and serves the thousands of households which don't have access to a car, providing a real alternative for those who do. In particular, supporting buses, exploring a Metro, working with SPT to support the modernisation and promotion of the Subway, and exploring innovative models of public transport provision in a changing market.
- A smart, technologically savvy city where we use technology in transport for public benefit, we are open and transparent and encourage innovation through open data. We upskill Glasgow residents in carbon, energy and technological advances related to transport so that everyone benefits.
- We work with partners to reduce the cost of public transport in Glasgow, particularly for young people and for people on low incomes or in poverty.
- We work towards a goal of a single, integrated, smart ticket for public transport in the city (with the potential to include other forms of mobility like cycle hire and car clubs).
- We collectively agree an approach to transport governance in Glasgow that is in the best interests of the users of our transport systems.
- We create financially sustainable models of transport provision in the City and proactively identify sources of income to sustain investment in sustainable transport.

- We work collaboratively with Glasgow's taxis, which often plugs a gap in transport, to improve provision, particularly with the growth of app-based ride and hail services.
- People and place are prioritised in our City Centre - making it easier and quicker for people to walk and cycle and make onward journeys by public transport. A new City Centre Transformation Plan will support existing goals to reduce car journeys in the city centre by 30%, whilst enabling the residential population to double.
- Parking supply and cost are balanced to ensure that using public transport is cheaper than driving into the city centre. An evidence-led and policy-driven car parking strategy is developed for the city.
- Working collaboratively with planners and regeneration teams, 'Liveable Neighbourhoods' are created which maximise the availability of services within 20 minutes walking distance.
- A focus on the journey to school – further investment in walking and cycling infrastructure, working towards a default speed limit of 20mph, and a wide rollout of school road closures.
- A focus on making sure the city centre and neighbourhood environments are accessible for all.
- Local communities are supported and enabled to take forward ideas which benefit their neighbourhood, in line with the community empowerment agenda and recent changes to planning legislation.
- Less vehicles of all kinds on our roads, and a reallocation of road space to sustainable ways to travel.
- Monitoring consumer trends and doing what we can to manage the rising number of light goods vehicles on our roads.
- Considering and using the tools at our disposal to support cleaner vehicles in the city.
- Considering greenspace, open space and biodiversity when we plan transport and placemaking projects, to maximise the benefits of our investment.

We feel **neutral** about the following policy area:

- Ensuring a just transition to a low carbon transport future by first, reducing the need to travel; then, supporting trips by foot, wheeling, bike, public transport and shared transport; finally, moving to low carbon and low emission vehicles.

While we recognise the need to reduce motorised travel to cut emissions, we also recognise the important role that mobility plays in improving people's lives and supporting health and wellbeing. The statement above suggests that reducing the need to travel is more important than supporting trips on foot, by wheeling or by bike, which are all very low carbon journeys, and which have positive impacts on physical and mental health.

What would you be prepared to do to help us achieve our outcomes, and what support do you need from the Council to help you do this?

As an organisation, we are likely to move towards more regular working from home, even beyond the pandemic. This should reduce our carbon footprint through travel.

Many staff already cycle or walk to work. However, given the hub-and-spoke model in the city, the most practical option for some staff is to drive. We will continue to promote walking and cycling within the workplace through the provision of safe cycle parking and, where affordable, we will provide staff with bike maintenance training.

We will continue to promote active, sustainable, affordable and inclusive travel through our research, events and involvement in decision-making.

The impact of COVID-19 on how we travel.

Please comment on whether or not you agree with the following statements during lockdown:

- There was less traffic
- More people were walking
- More people were cycling
- There were parking problems in some areas
- More community spirit and communication.

We agree that there was some evidence of each statement across streets in Glasgow during the full COVID-19 lockdown. Specific comments are as follows:

More people were walking as an alternative to other forms of exercise that were prohibited (e.g. teams sports and gym use)⁹. There is also evidence that people used walking and as a means of coping or reducing stress during the pandemic¹⁰.

More people were cycling^{11 12} and use of the Nextbike bike hire scheme increased as a result of subsidised use¹³. People also reported that they intended to cycle more in the future. However, with fewer people commuting and the weather being less pleasant in the winter, cycling rates are likely to reduce.

Since lockdown in March, congestion levels have been consistently lower in Glasgow than this time last year. However, it is notable that congestion rates were considerably higher than the corresponding period last year for most days prior to lockdown¹⁴. Research from summer 2020 found that people intended to use their car less in the future after restrictions were lifted¹⁵. However, with the Government advising against the use of non-essential travel on public transport and people holidaying at home, car use is returning to pre-COVID-19 levels. Long term, it is envisaged that there will be some benefits from a shift towards homeworking for many organisations.

While reduced travel by car has freed up parking in many areas, the closure of car parks in public parks has meant increased parking on streets near them, creating parking congestion and hazards for residents who live nearby.

Examples of community spirit are largely anecdotal. However, there is some evidence of increased willingness to support people in the community through participation in Mutual Aid groups, by helping neighbours and by signing up for volunteer programmes¹⁶. It should be noted that expressions of solidarity may not be replicated as we enter into a second wave of infections in the winter months. There has been evidence that local people have been more willing to support local businesses in many areas¹⁷, although this trend has not been universal, and where

people do not have local shops or businesses there has been a tendency to order products online.

Below is a list of some of the changes Glasgow City Council have made to respond to physical distancing in our Spaces for People programme, and some changes we are making to support public transport also.

- Pop-up cycle lanes
- Wider pavement space (removing some on-street parking) on busy streets
- Wider spaces around rail stations and bus stops for pedestrians
- More places to sit outside of cafes, bars and restaurants
- More signal priority for buses at traffic lights to help get ahead of traffic
- Pop-up bus lanes and bus gates
- Road Closures

Please comment on whether you would like these measures to be retained or expanded:

GCPH feel that the following changes already made by Glasgow City Council should be retained. There is the potential for conflict between different users of the space, due to queuing, outdoor space being used by cafes, bars and restaurants, a lack of space available for physical distancing and difficulty navigating spaces. Consideration needs to be given to how best to manage the space. We would also recommend that active travel and public transport are prioritised above infrastructure for car use. Many of these changes are progressive and help support sustainable and active travel. The impact of new infrastructure should be evaluated and where successful, changes should be made permanent. Any evaluation should consider the impact on all user groups.

It is notable that the 'Spaces for People' programme encouraged local people to give their ideas about where street improvements could take place across Glasgow. Given the huge number of responses received, it is understandable that only some of the changes could be delivered. However, it has provided a rich source of data

from which future planning can take place. It is also worth considering this type of engagement (alongside others) to canvas public opinion in the future, providing that there is transparency in terms of how decisions are reached on where to prioritise.

One final question for you - your transport vision for Glasgow

Thinking about the city of Glasgow, and the role transport could play in it – give us 5 words that describe the type of transport system you would like Glasgow to have in ten years time.

- Sustainable
- Healthy
- Accessible
- Safe
- Affordable

Please feel free to add any more comments below.

There is an important distinction to be made between the city centre and neighbourhoods in terms of transport priorities. In recent times, investment has been concentrated in the city centre, while many peripheral areas where poverty is highest have not benefitted. While the city centre is already well connected to the rest of the city, the priority here should be to improve air quality, reduce car use and parking, and integrate green infrastructure. For neighbourhoods with less existing infrastructure, this needs to be developed in ways that meet the needs of local people. Connections should extend in all directions and transport should facilitate, rather than inhibit, movement. We would like the Council to undertake an assessment of the city's transport offer across all neighbourhoods, with consideration given to how connectivity can be improved across the whole city, as well as for how barriers in peripheral or more deprived areas can be overcome by making transport more accessible and affordable.

We agree with the notion that transport plays a crucial role in the creation of well-functioning neighbourhoods. As such, transport policy should align more closely with planning, particularly at a neighbourhood level. To prevent unnecessary car use,

new developments should incorporate active travel measures and ensure the provision of basic amenities. While we agree with the principles of 20-minute neighbourhoods, in many areas this aspiration is not realistic. Some areas of the city are more accurately described as housing developments rather than neighbourhoods. Instead of piloting areas that already meet, or nearly meet, the criteria of a 20-minute neighbourhood, we would like to see pilots that can support housing areas to become more sustainable neighbourhoods.

Joined up ticketing: The recent report of the Climate Change Working Group includes the following recommendation: “The Council investigates use of the 'franchising' powers set out in the Transport Bill to regulate the city’s bus network and to work on the principles of one network, one timetable, one ticket.” We would welcome any efforts to make this vision a reality.

There is an urgent need to improve air quality. The ill-health, mortality and social care costs to cities due to air pollution is becoming increasingly evident. Providing clean air should therefore be one of the Council’s key overall objectives.

A joined-up approach is needed to build on recent increases in cycling uptake. Although year-on-year increases in cycling are positive, it remains a minority form of travel and more investment is required to normalise it. This should include the provision of infrastructure, alongside education across all age groups, affordable, or free, bike hire and support to take up cycling for people from under-represented groups and older people. While studies have shown that regular cycling has overall health benefits, for example in relation to reduced mortality, cycling safety is still an issue in Glasgow and serious cycling casualties have been going up in the city in the last decade¹⁸. To increase cycling levels in the city, accelerated progress is needed in creating a safe active travel network and in introducing 20mph limit across the whole city.

The existing hub-and-spoke model is outdated, and severance from major roads continues to prevent movement across the city, despite some recent efforts to improve connectivity. Given the high proportion of the land mass already taken up by

roads, we feel there is a good opportunity to pedestrianise some roads or to create more infrastructure for walking and cycling.

We would like the Council and partners to build on the interventions made during the pandemic to transform the way bus services are provided in the future. We feel that they should be run with the principal aims of protecting health and connecting communities socially and economically. However services are delivered, the Council should ensure that pollutant emissions are minimised, services are affordable, routes meet the needs of all users and services support people in the more deprived and isolated communities.

As one of the proposed outcomes is to tackle poverty, improve health deprivation and reduce inequalities, we would expect to see a range of policies to meet this outcome, including measures to increase affordability for people in deprived areas and prioritisation of improvements in these areas. We would also like the council to take an active role in promoting and enabling active travel in peripheral areas.

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