



Cork Chamber
Fitzgerald House
Summerhill North
Cork

Anne Graham
Chief Executive Officer
National Transport Authority
Dún Scéine
Harcourt Lane
Dublin 2
D02 WT20

15th April 2020

Re: Cork Public Bike scheme expansion

Dear Ms. Graham,

Firstly, I write to communicate the sincere gratitude of Cork Chamber for the exceptional responsiveness of our national public transport providers in implementing measures to facilitate social distancing and best practices in adherence with HSE guidelines. We also take this opportunity to thank the NTA in facilitating continued public transport services throughout these challenging times, and in doing so acknowledge the extraordinary efforts being made.

As we move through the pandemic crisis it will be critical that investment and efforts committed to increasing the public and sustainable transport offering for the Cork City region are maintained. A key element of our public transport offering in Cork City is the public bike scheme, and we encourage continued commitment in delivering the ten additional bike stations, originally planned for 2019. As a representative of the voice of business, I highlight the criticality of enabling infrastructure in meeting the growth plans of the Cork region and present the strong support of Cork Chamber for the further development of the public bike scheme. Overall, and across our rail and bus services we have seen a significant increase in passenger numbers, reflective of the appetite in Cork for enhanced public transport services and network connectivity.

While we note the reduction in usage numbers recently reported for the public bike share scheme, we highlight that while this may be correlated in part to increasing bus usage, it may also be influenced by persistent issues with bike station and bike stock maintenance which we believe important to highlight. Cork Chamber are committed to progressing the development of public transport infrastructure for Cork and we view the public bike scheme as an essential element of this, with latent opportunity to connect existing transport routes, increase the accessibility and permeability of Cork City, and diversify commuter options.



To achieve metropolitan locations that are sustainable, it is important that alongside the larger infrastructure projects, that the less costly but highly impactful infrastructure projects are supported. In a previous survey conducted by Cork Chamber to the business community, there was a clear demand for the employment and student hubs of Cork University Hospital, Blackpool Shopping Centre, Cork Institute of Technology and commuter locations as Douglas, to be connected to the scheme. In Scandinavian cities, 98% of people using public transport begin their journey on foot or by bicycle. The opportunity exists in Cork to mirror this, connecting residential zones to commuter hubs and centres of employment/ commercial activity.

Furthermore, in the context of Government formation, we highlight the need to maintain commitment to the Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy, to keep its delivery solidly on the national and regional transport investment agenda. CMATS is a crucial building block to ensuring the sustainable development of Cork. As such it is crucial that we avoid the difficult lessons of the last recessionary period where investment in public transport became a good to have instead of a must have, a legacy we are still overcoming today.

In conclusion, we thank you for your commitment to the public bike scheme thus far and encourage the continued commitment of the NTA and the expansion of the scheme to match its potential.

I thank you for your time and consideration of this matter.

Yours sincerely,

CEO
Cork Chamber

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