Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

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Project Ireland
2040

National Development Plan Review 2025

Securing Ireland's Future

Sectoral Investment Plan:
Transport

Prepared by the Department of Transport

November 2025 | gov.ie

Ministerial Foreword

The transport sector is fundamental to our national development, economic resilience, and climate responsibilities. Transport is not simply about moving people and goods; it is about connecting communities, enabling opportunity, and shaping a more inclusive and sustainable future for all. This National Development Plan Sectoral Plan 2026–2030 outlines the pathway for future investment in Ireland's transport system.

The plan for transport sets out an ambitious programme of investment in transport infrastructure and services over the next five years. It reflects the Government's determination to build a transport system which is efficient, low-carbon, and responsive to the evolving needs of our people, our economy, and our environment.

As committed to in the Programme for Government, this National Development Plan provides extra funding for the improvement of transport networks across the country. It reaffirms this Government's commitment to the transport sector, with a multi-billion euro allocation to support the delivery of key projects and policy objectives. This includes landmark investments in MetroLink, DART+, and BusConnects, which will transform urban mobility in our cities, alongside expanded support for regional and rural connectivity.

Balanced investment across all regions and modes of transport is essential — not only to enhance economic competitiveness and respond to population growth, but also to meet our climate obligations. Through targeted investment in low-carbon and active travel solutions, we are advancing Ireland's climate goals whilst fostering long-term economic and social resilience. The delivery of new walking and cycling infrastructure, the electrification of our public transport fleet, and the expansion of rural mobility services are all tangible examples of this progress.

Looking ahead, our focus will be on the effective and efficient delivery of this plan. We are determined to ensure that public investment delivers maximum value for money and real, measurable benefits for individuals, families, communities, and businesses across Ireland. This includes not only infrastructure delivery, but also the development of innovative policy solutions, digital transformation, and enhanced governance and oversight.

This sectoral plan sets out a bold and ambitious vision for transport in Ireland—one grounded in sustainability, inclusion, and innovation. It is a vision that recognises transport as a driver of national progress and positive change. By working together across government, industry, and society, we can build a transport system that improves quality of life for all our citizens, supports our climate goals, and strengthens our economy.

Darragh O'Brien T.D.
Minister for Transport

Seán Canney T.D.
Minister of State

Jerry Buttimer T.D.
Minister of State

Executive Summary

The transport sector is positioned to play a crucial role in achieving the policy goals set out in the latest Programme for Government and in the National Planning Framework. The National Development Plan Review offers an opportunity to address current transport infrastructure deficits, build on the progress made to-date, assess changing domestic and international economic conditions, and reprioritise capital ceilings and investment strategies accordingly, in line with continued ambition for the sector.

Policy Background & Sectoral Strategy

Various national policies have informed the development of this sectoral investment plan, notably:
- the National Planning Framework
- the Sustainable Mobility Policy, and
- the Climate Action Plan.

The National Planning Framework is the Government's high-level strategic plan for shaping the future growth and development of Ireland out to 2040. It sets out ten National Strategic Outcomes and related Strategic Investment Priorities, and National Policy Objectives, a number of which have direct relevance to the transport sector. The Sustainable Mobility Policy sets out a strategic framework to 2030 for active travel (walking and cycling) and public transport journeys to help Ireland meet its climate obligations, as well as its social and economic objectives. The transport chapters in successive Climate Action Plans set the strategic Avoid / Shift / Improve approach and high-level actions required to deliver Ireland's sectoral emissions reductions by 2030.

The National Investment Framework for Transport in Ireland (NIFTI) is the high-level strategic framework to support the consideration and prioritisation of future investment in land transport; it helps to identify the most sustainable and cost-effective transport solution to a particular challenge. The main land transport investment agencies – the National Transport Authority and Transport Infrastructure Ireland – have long-standing track records in delivering infrastructure in often challenging and complex contexts. The Transport Appraisal Framework plays a crucial role in ensuring this is achieved by acting as a sector-specific set of guidelines which provide appraisal and implementation guidance for investment in the transport system which fulfils strategic policy objectives and delivers value for money.

Demographic Pressure and Transport Orientated Development

Population growth targets and projections are crucial evidentiary inputs for the National Planning Framework and National Development Plan; they play a significant role in planning and allocating resources efficiently and equitably. The transport sector is positioned to play a crucial role in achieving the policy goals set out in the latest Programme for Government and the National Planning Framework. The National Planning Framework acknowledges pent-up unmet housing demand and the need to plan for population growth above projections. Any progress in this regard would require additional transport investment in the context of existing policy commitments to Transport Orientated Development.

Wider Economic Impacts of Transport Sector

The economic costs of congestion represent a significant negative drag on the Irish economy. The Department of Transport estimates congestion costs to be approximately €330m a year for the Greater Dublin Area; these costs are forecast to increase to €1.5bn per annum by 2040; the respective figures for Cork and Galway are approximately €100m per annum. These estimates have been reaffirmed by a 2024 international study which ranked Dublin as the third worst city in Europe for congestion. As noted by the National Competitiveness and Productivity Council, congestion also acts as a deterrent to external investment in Ireland.

A further rationale for continued investment in transport infrastructure relates to the wider economic benefits that can be realised from this investment such as the development of regional economic corridors e.g. the Cork-Limerick N/M20, Cork-Kerry N22 corridors. Transport infrastructure has significant direct impacts on beneficiaries in respect of time savings, emissions, safety, and reliability; it also has wider impacts on the broader economy which extend beyond the direct benefit to users. When transport infrastructure can successfully lower travel costs, the associated improvements in accessibility can also influence productivity, employment, investment, land use patterns, and overall economic performance.

The National Planning Framework recognises the importance of high-quality international connectivity to Ireland's overall competitiveness; investment in our ports and airports will be key to achieving this. Improving access to Dublin airport, our key international gateway, through strengthened public transport access and improved connections from the road network from the west and north will be critical to facilitating the further growth of the airport to underpin our competitiveness.

Climate Ambitions

Successful decarbonisation of the transport sector to meet Ireland's ambitious climate action commitments is another major priority that will require sustained investment. The emissions footprint of the transport sector is second after agriculture in terms of total national share. The transport sector is expected to contribute to the national targets by reducing transport emissions by 50% between 2018 and 2030.

Funding Allocations 2026 to 2030

Funding Allocations 2026 to 2030* Department of Transport Capital Ceilings 2026 to 2030					
	2026	**2027**	**2028**	**2029**	**2030**
Total	€3.430bn	€4.175bn	€4.675bn	€4.925bn	€5.125bn
Active Travel	€360m	€360m	€360m	€360m	€360m
Public Transport **	€1.4bn	€2bn	€2.5bn	€2.3bn	€1.9bn
Road Networks & Road Safety	€1.6bn	€1.6bn	€1.7bn	€2.1bn	€2.7bn
Civil Aviation	€8.9m	€9.5m	€10m	€8.2m	€8m
Maritime Transport & Safety	€8m	€8m	€43m	€43m	€43m
ICT etc.	€31m	€50m	€50m	€50m	€50m

*Rounding affects totals. Multiannual commitments in principle are made to specific programmes in accordance with the specific requirements for each programme and in accordance with applicable decisions of the Minister and/or Government. The Department and Minister retain the option to re-prioritise capital expenditure commitments to address emerging priorities within the overall capital ceilings for the Department set by the Government. All programme envelopes set out in this plan are therefore indicative and may be subject to future adjustment in line with programme expenditure and are subject to the annual Estimates process.

**Public transport allocations exclude €2bn from the Infrastructure, Nature and Climate Fund.

1. Introduction

The National Development Plan (NDP) outlines Ireland's strategic investment plan for public infrastructure, setting out a framework to guide and prioritise investment across sectors and to support the delivery of the National Strategic Outcomes set out in the National Planning Framework (NPF). The transport sector is positioned to play a crucial role in achieving the policy goals set out in the NDP and NPF. NDP funding will facilitate delivery of transport infrastructure across all regions of the State and expansion of capacity across all modes of travel in a sustainable manner to meet the needs of a growing population. The transport sector also works closely with other sectors and acts as a key enabler to many of the strategic objectives set out in the NPF, facilitating the expansion of housing supply by unlocking and improving access to developable land, contributing towards climate emissions targets by alleviating car dependency, and promoting better economic outcomes more generally via increased economic mobility and accessibility.

The National Competitiveness and Productivity Council (NCPC) has highlighted deficits in infrastructure as a risk to Ireland's competitiveness within a broader context of demographic pressures and the economy operating at near full capacity. Infrastructure deficits add to the cost of doing business and reduce Ireland's attractiveness for inward investment. If infrastructure bottlenecks persist - in the context of continuing demographic pressures - they are expected to have a real impact on the growth path of the Irish economy.

Successful decarbonisation of the transport sector to meet Ireland's ambitious climate action commitments is another major priority that will require sustained investment. The emissions footprint of the transport sector is second after agriculture in terms of total national share. The transport sector is expected to contribute by reducing transport emissions by 50% between 2018 and 2030.

There is likely to be significant costs associated with non-compliance with EU obligations at a national level, though it is still unclear what form these will take. The challenge of decarbonisation in the transport sector is compounded by the car-dependent nature of Ireland's transport system. Achieving emissions reduction at this scale requires substantial investment across a range of areas along with significant behavioural change to reduce Ireland's dependency on private vehicles. Electrification of the car fleet and associated infrastructure represents the largest and most immediate contribution to achieving our 2030 emissions reduction.

Expansion of public transport and active travel infrastructure, allied with implementation of demand management measures, will deliver lasting modal shift towards more sustainable modes. Finally, greater use of alternative fuels in transport is already delivering significant emissions reduction, primarily using existing technologies. This final measure is being achieved largely through regulatory measures. The Government's Climate Action Plan sets out the policy pathway to achieving these emission reductions in transport and, critically, to release wider societal and health benefits from the transition.

This paper is structured as follows. Section 2 outlines the Transport Sectoral Strategy and Delivery Capability by outlining the achievements, delivery pipelines, and ambitions of various elements of the transport sector. Section 3 takes stock of latest demographic trends and discusses their implications for transport infrastructure investment and achievement of national strategic objectives. Section 4 outlines the broader economic benefits that transport infrastructure can deliver, with a view to strengthening the case for continued investment. Section 5 discusses Transport Orientated Development, and section 6 outlines the funding allocations for each programme area over 2026 to 2030.

2. Policy Background, Sectoral Strategy & Delivery Capabilities

Policy Background

The revised NPF, introduced in April 2025, sets out a strategic vision for Ireland's development to 2040. It responds to significant demographic and policy changes since the original 2018 framework, aiming to accommodate a projected population of 6.1 million by 2040. Central to the revised NPF is the emphasis on compact urban growth, sustainable housing delivery, and the alignment of development with high-capacity public transport corridors. Transport plays a pivotal role in the framework, underpinning the strategy for spatial planning and economic development. The NPF promotes transport-oriented development (TOD), prioritising housing and infrastructure near existing and planned public transport hubs to reduce emissions, enhance connectivity, and support regional balance. This approach is integrated with national transport policies such as the National Investment Framework for Transport in Ireland (NIFTI) and the National Sustainable Mobility Policy (SMP), ensuring that transport infrastructure supports the framework's goals for climate action, accessibility, and inclusive growth.

The SMP, which was published in April 2022, sets out a strategic framework to 2030 for active travel (walking and cycling) and public transport journeys. It is accompanied by an Action Plan to 2025 detailing 91 actions to support the achievement of key sustainable mobility targets, which were further defined in the Climate Action Plan 2023. These key Climate Action Plan targets are:

- a 50% increase in daily active travel journeys,
- a 130% increase in daily public transport journeys, and
- a 20% reduction in total vehicle kilometres travelled by 2030.

Delivery of the SMP Action Plan is overseen by the Sustainable Mobility Leadership Group, which was established in 2022 to drive the implementation of the SMP. The Leadership Group is supported by a Project Management Office. By implementing a best practice approach to project management, through strengthened governance and risk management structures, the Department is optimising conditions for delivery of sustainable mobility interventions. The next action plan, currently in development, will reflect the ambition of this NDP sectoral plan and will continue to work toward these targets from 2026 to 2030.

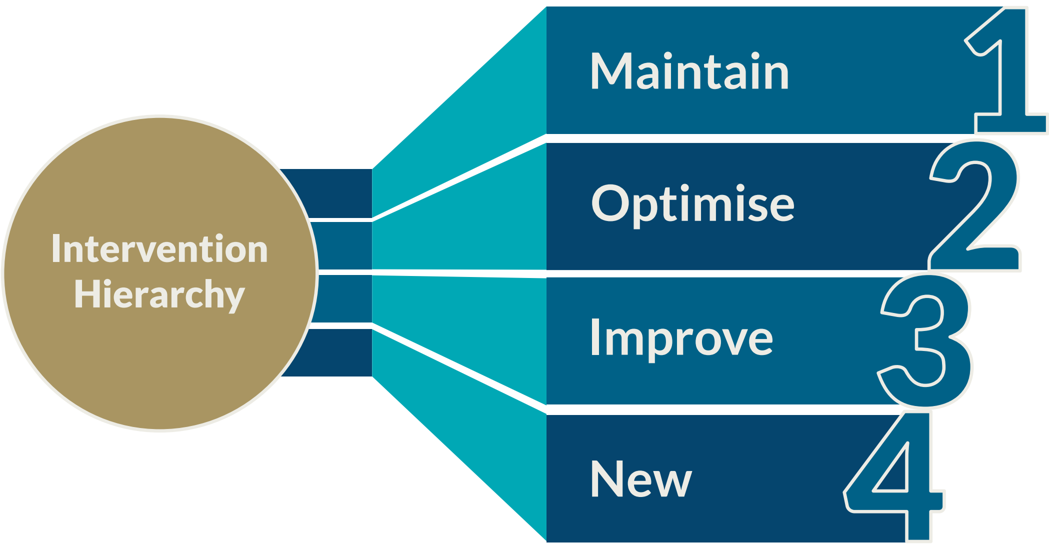
Within this context, the Climate Action Plans 2023-2025 outlines the Government's roadmap to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 51% by 2030 and achieve climate neutrality by 2050, as mandated by the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2021. It builds on previous plans and sets sectoral targets across energy, transport, agriculture, and industry. Transport plays a pivotal role in the Climate Action Plan by aiming to significantly reduce emissions from the second highest-emitting sector. The Plan sets ambitious targets in relation to electrification of private vehicle fleets, supported by an expanded EV charging network, as well as the increased use of alternative fuels, complemented by a significantly expanded investment programme in active travel and public transport.

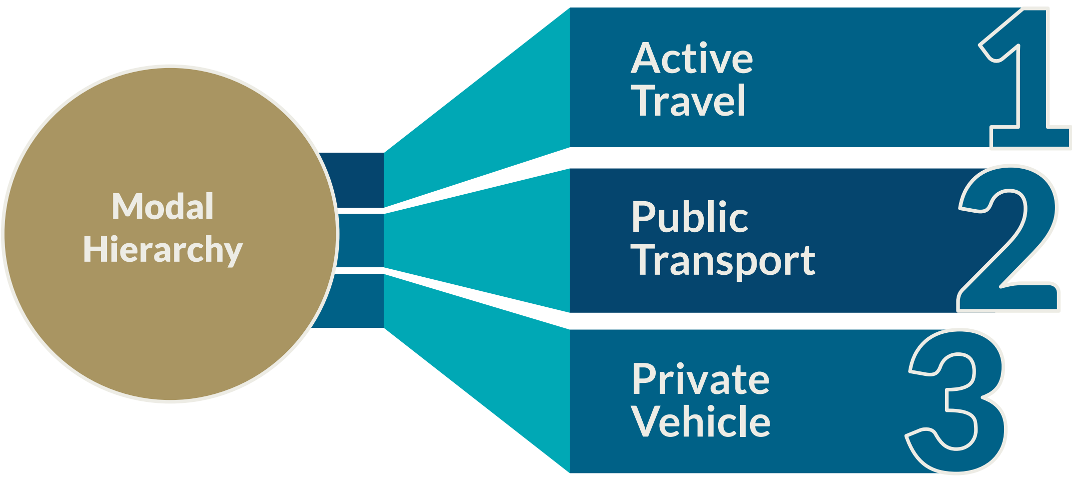
Sectoral Strategy

The National Investment Framework for Transport in Ireland (NIFTI) is the Department of Transport's high-level strategic framework to support the consideration and prioritisation of future investment in land transport. NIFTI establishes strategic investment priorities and a common lens through which to consider transport investment.

NIFTI's strategic investment priorities are supplemented by modal and intervention hierarchies, which are intended to guide project sponsors in their consideration and assessment of potential solutions to an identified need or problem. For instance, NIFTI requires sponsoring agencies to consider active travel and public transport solutions before private ones and to consider maintenance and optimisation of existing assets before substantial improvements or new infrastructure.

This approach, which helps to ensure that the most sustainable and cost-effective solution to a given transport need is identified, will continue to play a critical role in transport as the sector decarbonises over the coming years.





Delivery Capability

Given the broader economic context, climate commitments, and the competing demands of multiple sectors on finite Exchequer resources in the context of population growth, as well as other delivery challenges such as planning delays, it is essential that capital expenditure is carefully managed. Delivering transport infrastructure projects depends on a highly integrated approach between the Department of Transport, the day-to-day approving authorities, and sponsoring agencies. As previously noted in the Supporting Excellence: Capital Project and Programme Delivery Capability Review, the National Transport Authority (NTA) and Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) as day-to-day approving authorities have a 'greater level of capability' and a 'high degree of experience and specialism' and bring a wealth of experience and a track record of delivery to their respective roles.

Figure 1 – Land Transport Delivery Framework

Department of Transport

Policy & management of overall capital budget as ultimate Approving Authority

'Day to Day' Approving Authorities

Active Travel NTA	Public Transport NTA	National Roads TII	Regional & Local Roads Department

Sponsoring Agencies

Local Authorities	Iarnród Éireann / TII / Bus Operators	Local Authorities	Local Authorities

All public investment in capital infrastructure is subject to the requirements of the Infrastructure Guidelines which sets out a five-stage project lifecycle as shown below.

Figure 2 – Project Lifecycle

Stage	1. Strategic Assessment and preliminary Business Case	2. Project Design, Planning and Procurement Strategy	3. Post-Tender - Final Business Case	4. Implementation	5. Post Completion Review and Benefits Realisation	
Product	Preliminary Business Case (to be published)	Detailed Business Case and Procurement Strategy	Final Business Case (to be published)	Monitoring	Project Completion Report (to be published)	Ex-post Evaluation Report (to be published)
Governance	Approving Authority Approval Gate 1 - Approval in Principle	Approving Authority Approval Gate 2 - Pre-tender Approval	Approving Authority Approval Gate 3 - Approval to Proceed	Approving Authority Intervention Points were required	Approving Authority - Reflection of findings in Public Spending Code implementation arrangements	
Major Project Requirements	1. EAP process 2. MPAG Review 3. Government Consent	1. Ministerial Approval	1. Government Consent			

The roles and responsibilities of the sponsoring agencies and the approving authorities of the various agencies is set out in detail in the Transport Appraisal Framework (TAF). The TAF is the sector-specific set of guidelines which provides appraisal and implementation guidance to promote effective investment in the transport system, and which helps to ensure that investments meet strategic policy objectives, while delivering value for money. The TAF draws from international best practice and promotes the application of mechanisms to help predict and manage costs (such as Reference Class Forecasting and independent verification of costs). Development of the TAF, coupled with experienced day-to-day approving authorities and sponsoring agencies with track-records of delivery, places the transport sector on a strong footing regarding ensuring transport projects align with national objectives and deliver value for money.

Shared Island

The Government, through the Shared Island Initiative, is putting a sustained focus on building a shared, reconciled future for all communities on the island. In an expanded phase for the Shared Island Initiative, the Government is doubling the resourcing to the Shared Island Fund (SIF), now a €2 billion commitment out to 2035, to drive all-island investment to foster reconciliation, mutual respect, and growth.

Transport is an important sector which can support these objectives in a very visible and tangible manner. Shared Island funding has already supported a variety of cooperative initiatives in transport. In terms of the next 5 year period of the NDP, Shared Island funding will seek to support transport programmes across all modes, including aviation (air services between Dublin and Derry), maritime (recognising the importance of commercial ports for facilitating the development of offshore wind and the greening of Ireland's shipping corridors), and land transport (e.g. Dublin-Belfast hourly frequency train service, supporting the All-Island Strategic Rail Review, roll-out of publicly-accessible EV charging points, and further Greenway delivery). Government has also previously committed €600 million to support the A5 North-West transport corridor (project currently subject to legal proceedings).

The level of additional funding from SIF for new projects and programmes has yet to be determined by Government and is not included in the transport sectoral figures.

NDP 2021: Delivery to-date

Active Travel

Since publication of NDP 2021, significant progress has been made on delivering active travel infrastructure, including:

- 664km of walking infrastructure,
- 399km of cycling infrastructure, and
- 287km of Greenways delivered across the country.

The NTA has delivered over 120 comprehensive Safe Routes to Schools projects, with a further 24 at construction. Over 360 other schools have benefitted from walking and cycling infrastructure upgrades in their immediate vicinity since 2021. Building on these achievements, the NTA has developed CycleConnects to improve sustainable travel by providing the potential for more trips on a safe, accessible, and convenient cycling network. Draft proposals through this scheme envisage an extensive cycling network across 22 counties. In addition, TII launched the National Cycle Network plan, which identifies 85 corridors across approximately 3,500km and connects to over 200 settlements, with a combined population of over 2.8 million people with a commitment to deliver 1,000km by 2030. These projects will contribute to Ireland's inter urban connectivity, as well as to sustainability and decarbonisation commitments.

Decarbonisation of Private Car Fleet

Zero Emission Vehicles Ireland (ZEVI) was established in 2022 as a division within the Department of Transport to provide leadership and coordinate across the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI), NTA, TII, local authorities, and ESB in delivering Climate Action Plan targets for electrification of the private fleet. ZEVI is delivering several programmes to incentivise EV uptake and accelerate delivery of public EV charging infrastructure across the transport network in line with EU (Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Regulation, i.e. AFIR) requirements. These include grant incentives for the purchase of Battery Electric Vehicles, grant incentives for the installation of private charging infrastructure, and procurement and delivery of public charging infrastructure.

Investment in EVs and EV infrastructure has steadily increased over the lifetime of the NDP to-date, with significant investment anticipated to 2030 through both EV grant incentives to offset the price differential with ICE equivalents and investment in EV infrastructure to accelerate delivery of required charging infrastructure through leveraging private sector investment, ensuring that EV infrastructure is deployed not only in the more commercially profitable locations but also in locations across the country, establishing a network that meets citizens' needs. Sustaining grants for the purchase of Battery Electric Vehicles over the medium term is essential to achieving Ireland's transport emissions reduction targets.

Public investment in charging infrastructure has to-date leveraged almost matching investments by commercial operators for deployment on the motorway network. However, infrastructure for regional and local roads may require a higher level of Exchequer investment as it is currently less commercially viable. All public charging infrastructure in Ireland falls under the EU AFIR requirements, a conservative estimate of public charging capacity (to be clarified in 2025) suggests that Ireland is currently delivering 60% of the required power capacity on the public charging network for the number of EVs currently registered in Ireland. Significant additional deployment is therefore needed over the coming years to deliver AFIR requirements.

Public Transport

Public Transport delivery under the NDP to-date encompasses the rollout of the first seven phases of the BusConnects Dublin Network Redesign, implementation of the Connecting Ireland Rural Mobility Plan, Limerick Colbert Station redevelopment, 41 additional Intercity Railcars in service, and approximately 200 fully electric buses in service in Athlone, Dublin and Limerick, with associated charging infrastructure installed in depots. A range of projects are currently under construction such as the National Train Control Centre, Cork Area Commuter Rail Phase 1, Galway Ceannt Station redevelopment, and Waterford Plunkett Station redevelopment.

Other major projects in the delivery pipeline are reflected in Railway Orders received in relation to DART+ West, DART+ Southwest and DART+ Coastal North. An Coimisiún Pleanála planning decisions have been received in relation to all 12 BusConnects Dublin Core Bus Corridors, with construction to commence on the first two shortly. The new DART+ fleet is currently in safety testing and is expected to start entering service in 2027 on the Northern Commuter Line. The Enterprise Fleet Replacement project is expected to reach Approval Gate 3 stage shortly. An Coimisiún Pleanála published its decision to grant a Railway Order for MetroLink in October 2025, marking a major milestone in progressing this project towards construction in the years ahead.

Roads

Road projects delivered to completion under the NDP to-date include: the Dunkettle Interchange, N4 Castlebaldwin/Collooney, N5 Westport/Turlough, N22 Baile Bhuirne/Macroom, N69 Listowel Bypass, N59 Moycullen Bypass, Athy Distributor Road, Edenderry Inner Relief Road, Sallins Bypass and M7 Naas Newbridge Bypass Upgrade, Portlaoise Southern Relief Road, Sligo Western Distributor Road, Grange Castle Business Park, Bettystown to Laytown link road, and Killaloe Bypass / Shannon Crossing / R494 Road Improvement.

Many more road projects are currently under construction, including the N5 Ballaghdereen/Scramoge, the Adare Bypass section of Limerick/Foynes, Coonagh Knockalisheen Distributor Road in Limerick City, Tralee Northern Relief Road, and M28 Cork/Ringaskiddy. The Government has also approved the Donegal TEN-T scheme, and the scheme is at Approval Gate 1 stage, with a planning application to be lodged shortly.

3. Drivers of Capital Need

Climate

Ireland's climate ambition is anchored in the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021, which sets a legally binding target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 51% by 2030 and achieve net-zero emissions by 2050. The Climate Action Plan sets out the policy pathway to achieve these emission reductions in transport and release wider societal and health benefits from the transition.

The transport sector plays a pivotal role in meeting these national climate objectives. As one of the largest contributors to Ireland's emissions, transport must undergo a significant transformation. Successful decarbonisation of the transport sector to meet Ireland's commitments is a major priority that will require sustained investment. The emissions footprint of the transport sector is second after agriculture in terms of total national share. The EU's Green Deal and associated sectoral legislation under the EU Fit for 55 package place extremely onerous obligations directly and indirectly on Ireland's transport sector, and non-compliance costs are potentially very significant.

Transport is widely acknowledged to be a challenging sector to decarbonise. Based on emissions between 2021 and 2024, and fuel usage in 2025, it is expected that the sector will overshoot its 54Mt sectoral emissions ceiling for 2021-2025 by around 4 Mt (or 7.5%). The following carbon budget period (2026-2030) will be increasingly challenging. The EPA projects that, even with 'additional' policy measures as outlined in Climate Action Plans, the transport sector is likely to achieve a 21% reduction in its 2018 emissions by 2030 – well short of its target of a 50% reduction.

Despite continued economic and population growth, transport emissions have started to drop year-on-year. Investments to-date are paying off; just not quickly enough. To address this, the Department of Transport is collaborating closely with its agencies and stakeholders on the 'Corrective Action Modelling Project', a project to identify potential pathways to correct the trajectory of carbon emissions from the transport sector out to 2030 and to deliver sustained and accelerated emissions abatement beyond 2030 into Carbon Budget 3 (2031-2035). This work includes detailed transport emissions modelling of intervention scenarios, as well as socio-economic analysis and high-level costing of those potential pathways.

The outputs of this work and the subsequent decisions about which policy pathways to pursue will be essential in informing the specific investment decisions needed to deliver on our legally-binding climate targets for transport. A degree of flexibility will be necessary around the prioritisation and allocation of funds until such time as this work is completed and decisions have been taken on the specific decarbonisation policy pathway to be pursued. This is particularly relevant across infrastructure for public transport and active travel, EV incentives and charging infrastructure, and other decarbonisation infrastructure. Given that transport makes up over a fifth of Ireland's greenhouse gas emissions, investment in transport infrastructure should be agile and responsive to meeting Ireland's climate goals.

Congestion

As population grows and travel demand increases, the costs of congestion on our transport network are increasing significantly, with impacts on quality of life as well as the economy. Various studies published recently by the Department have provided strong evidence supporting the urgency in addressing congestion in our cities in particular. Congested traffic makes public transport less reliable, often discouraging people from using it. It also makes the environment for vulnerable road users, such as pedestrians and cyclists, less safe, again leading people away from using active travel, particularly for shorter journeys.

Implementation of demand management measures alongside investments in sustainable modes will ultimately serve to reduce congestion and drive more efficient utilisation of public transport and active travel modes. To this end, the Department of Transport is finalising a new 'Moving Together' strategy, which will support improved efficiencies in the transport system and enhanced cross-sectoral collaboration to alleviate the significant impacts of traffic congestion on our economy, the environment, and personal well-being. The Strategy was approved for consultation last year and will shortly be brought to Government for consideration and approval. The direct Exchequer cost for the measures identified are minimal. The benefits in terms of addressing congestion, releasing the full benefits from public transport and active travel investment and enhancing well-being, particularly in urban areas, will be significant.

Implementation of Intelligent Transport Systems Technologies in a cohesive manner - including on connected and autonomous vehicles - will have many benefits in relation to safety, climate, efficiencies, and competitiveness. As much of this technology is already being implemented internationally it is important that Ireland is positioned that it can gain from these benefits and meets its obligations. Such solutions, if correctly adopted, have the potential to be transformative in terms of safety, transport, and competitiveness. Necessary measures to support these technologies include the implementation of advanced traffic management solutions that will also benefit congestion.

Demographics

Population growth and its geographic distribution are central to shaping transport demand in Ireland. As the population expands, projected to increase by 950,000 between 2022 and 2040, commuter activity and the movement of goods intensify, placing pressure on existing infrastructure. If transport systems fail to keep pace, consequences include congestion, longer travel times, higher emissions, and reduced economic competitiveness. The NPF sets out regional and city-level population targets to guide development. These targets are supported by CSO population projections, which estimate the population could reach between 5.7 and 7 million by 2057, depending on migration trends. Migration remains a volatile factor, influenced by global and domestic events. Migration has historically exceeded expectations, highlighting the need for flexible planning and potential revisions to capital allocations.

The NPF seeks to counteract the long-standing over-concentration of population and economic activity in Dublin and the Eastern and Midlands region by promoting 'regional parity.' This approach aims to distribute population growth more evenly across Ireland's three regional assemblies: Eastern and Midlands Region; Northern and Western Region; and Southern Region. Transport infrastructure is a key lever in supporting this goal. Strategic investment can improve accessibility, reduce commuting costs, and make less populated areas more attractive for residents and businesses. International evidence suggests that improved transport connectivity can help disperse economic activity away from urban centres, supporting more balanced regional development.

Ultimately, the challenge lies not in enforcing rigid population targets, but in ensuring that infrastructure planning and resource allocation are responsive to actual demographic trends. If growth continues to exceed expectations in certain regions, failure to adjust investment priorities could result in persistent transport infrastructure shortfalls, undermining economic resilience and social equity. Transport policy must therefore remain adaptive, using population data to guide strategic investment and support sustainable growth across the country.

4. Wider Economic Impacts of Transport Investment

Transport infrastructure is a fundamental part of a country's capital stock and a key driver of economic competitiveness. While it plays a direct role in tackling challenges like congestion, emissions, and road safety, its broader impact extends across sectors such as housing, trade, and access to essential services like healthcare and education.

Beyond addressing existing infrastructure gaps and demographic pressures, continued investment in transport is justified by the wider economic benefits it can generate. These benefits go beyond the immediate advantages to users — such as shorter travel times — and include broader impacts on productivity, employment, investment, and land use. Transport infrastructure improves connectivity and accessibility, which can help correct inefficiencies in other markets, such as labour or housing, where pricing or information failures exist. By lowering travel costs and improving access, transport can shift economic activity toward more productive areas. Transport can therefore act as a catalyst for broader productivity and competitiveness.

Transport infrastructure plays a crucial role in shaping economic growth by making it easier for people, businesses, and services to connect. When travel times and costs are reduced, cities become more accessible and concentrated, which boosts productivity through better collaboration, knowledge sharing, and access to specialised services. This clustering effect — known as agglomeration economies — helps firms operate more efficiently and encourages innovation. It also expands labour markets, allowing workers to reach more job opportunities and employers to find better matches for their needs, which can lead to higher wages and improved employment outcomes.

Beyond productivity, better transport links increase market access for businesses, reduce delivery costs, and enhance competition, all of which benefit consumers. They also make certain areas more attractive for investment and development, helping to balance growth between urban and rural regions. Overall, transport infrastructure is a powerful enabler of economic development, especially when it helps unlock the potential of underdeveloped or isolated regions.

5. Transport Orientated Development

The NPF affirms a strong commitment to Transport Orientated Development (TOD), which is defined as a form of urban development that seeks to maximise the provision of housing, employment, public services, and leisure space near frequent, high quality transport services. TOD is to be achieved through a variety of targets that prioritise a certain amount of new housing development to occur within cities and the existing footprint of built-up settlements. Achieving these strategic objectives requires substantial investment in transport infrastructure to meet the associated increased demand in urban areas. Guiding these strategic objectives is a report prepared by ESRI which outlines annual regional housing targets based on demographic modelling.

Notably, the revised NPF explicitly acknowledges historic deficits in pent-up unmet housing demand in Dublin and the Mid-Eastern Region, noting "this has the potential to undermine national competitiveness and social cohesion. As a result, there may be a requirement to plan for population growth that would exceed the overall 6.1 million projection." While new housing development is a driver of demand for local transport services, transport infrastructure is also an essential enabler of housing infrastructure. A lack of transport infrastructure in areas with acute housing demand can have a tangible negative impact on the ability to deliver new housing supply. For example, there have been cases of planning permissions being refused for new housing development on the basis of insufficient transport infrastructure in the local area.

The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and the Department of Transport jointly established a working group in December 2021 under the Government's Housing for All plan to consider opportunities for TOD in major urban centres. The group comprises membership from both Departments, the NTA, and the Land Development Agency. The working group published a report on TOD opportunities in Dublin in June 2023, and reports on Cork, Limerick, Galway, Waterford, and the Eastern Region are at finalisation stage and will be brought to Cabinet shortly for information and for publication thereafter.

The Dublin TOD study involved a review of lands in the administrative areas of the four Dublin local authorities that are located close to existing or proposed high-capacity public transport nodes, including DART, MetroLink, Luas, and BusConnects. This covers undeveloped greenfield lands and brownfield lands considered suitable by reference to their location for intensive residential and urban development at scale. The working group identified short- to medium-term opportunities with planned capacity for up to circa 60,000 residential units at nine locations – in other words, housing over 100,000 people.

Whilst these sites are already planned and many are under construction, it is critical that the necessary investment in transport and other infrastructure is delivered to ensure that the potential of the sites for new housing and related development can be realised. Medium- to long-term opportunities in five locations were also identified, with an estimated capacity of up to a further 70,000 residential units. These are locations that are at an early stage in the planning process and/or where future development will be dependent on the delivery of a major public transport project.

Further opportunities have been identified in the other yet unpublished reports. For example, potential opportunities for c 11,000 residential units in the short to medium term were identified in the Eastern Region report, and potential opportunities with an estimated capacity of c 20,000+ residential units - again in the short to medium term - were identified in the Cork TOD report.

With opportunities in Limerick, Waterford, and Galway, it is clear these reports identify the potential for significant numbers of residential units, and the analysis undertaken underlines the role that targeted public investment in certain transport projects can play in enabling the delivery of large-scale housing delivery in the major metropolitan areas. Given the scale of capacity for development of housing units at locations, having regard to the capacity and frequency of existing or proposed public transport at each location (e.g. heavy rail, light rail, or BusConnects) and the potential for interchange between different modes, there is now an opportunity to align public investment across different sectors within the NDP in line with the principles of transport orientated development and support the delivery of housing at a large scale at key strategic sites across each of the five cities.

This NDP will see construction commence on a number of key projects identified in these studies and support the delivery of tens of thousands of housing units across the five cities.

In Cork, the Cork Area Commuter Rail Programme will support housing in Blackpool, Carrigtwohill, the City Quays area, and Mahon, with the M28 Cork to Ringaskiddy project facilitating the longer term development of housing at Tivoli, while in Dublin projects commenced under this NDP will support housing delivery in Ballymun, Barnhill/Kellystown, Broombridge, Clonburris, Dunsink, and Lissenhall.

The redevelopment of Ceannt and Oranmore stations in Galway will enable the delivery of approximately 2,000 units, with Limerick's redeveloped Colbert and the new station at Moyross supporting up to 6,500 new homes, as well as student accommodation. Finally, the relocated Plunkett Station in Waterford, as well as the newly constructed sustainable transport bridge and supporting active travel and local road infrastructure, will enable the creation of a new city quarter on the North Quays.

Together, these projects reflect a coordinated national effort to integrate transport investment with sustainable urban development, unlocking tens of thousands of new homes in well-connected, high-capacity corridors.

6. NDP Funding Allocations 2026-2030

6.1 Programme A - Active Travel & Greenways

High Level Goal: To deliver an accessible, efficient, safe and sustainable Active Travel network that supports communities, households and businesses.

National Planning Framework

NSO 3: Strengthened Rural Economies & Communities

NSO 5: Sustainable Mobility

NSO 8: Transition to a Low Carbon & Climate Resilient Society

Active Travel & Greenways Indicative Annual Allocations

Programme A: Active Travel & Greenways*				
2026	**2027**	**2028**	**2029**	**2030**
€360m	**€360m**	**€360m**	**€360m**	**€360m**

*All funding is indicative and subject to annual Estimates process. Rounding may affect totals.

Investment Strategies

There are a number of different but complementary investment strategies guiding project level allocations within the Active Travel and Greenways Programmes. Active travel forms an important part of the metropolitan area transport strategies which have been developed for each of the five metropolitan cities – Cork, Dublin, Galway, Limerick, and Waterford – and which set out multi-modal investment strategies for twenty-year periods, reviewed every six years.

In 2024, the National Cycle Network Plan was published, which proposes a network of approximately 3,500km linking cities and towns of over 5,000 people via a safe, connected, and inviting cycle network. In addition, the NTA has developed CycleConnects which sets out an approach toward developing an interconnected network of primary, secondary, and tertiary routes within cities, towns, and villages across every county. CycleConnects outlines an extensive cycling network across the 22 counties, complementing the cycling plans already developed for the Greater Dublin Area (Meath, Kildare, Wicklow, and Dublin). Together these plans will create an overall comprehensive cycle network for Ireland.

Programme Summary

The Active Travel and Greenways Programmes aim to deliver 1000km of new and upgraded walking and cycling infrastructure by 2030. Several active travel and greenway projects will be completed in 2026, including the Sustainable Transport Bridge in Waterford, the Glanmire Urban Greenway in Cork City, and the Ballybane & Castlepark Cycle Network in Galway. Other significant projects under construction in 2026 include the South Kerry Greenway, the South East Greenway, and the Grand Canal Greenway (Counties Kildare and Dublin).

A pipeline of new projects will also be supported, with several entering construction in 2026, including the final sections of the Dodder Greenway starting construction in both Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown and Dublin City, Western Distributor Road upgrade in Galway, and the Monaghan to the Border Greenway Project as part of the Ulster Canal Greenway.

Over the lifetime of the NDP it is anticipated that many more active travel/greenway schemes, and Safe Routes to School schemes, will also be supported through the design, feasibility, route selection, statutory consent, and construction processes.

Delivery Structures

Active Travel and Greenway projects are delivered by local authorities' active travel units which have been established in every local authority through funding provided by Programme A. Projects are typically delivered through a mixture of Part 8 planning permissions and Section 38 permissions, with Greenways and some of the larger Active Travel projects requiring An Coimisiún Pleanála approval. Delivery is overseen by the day-to-day Approving Authorities: NTA (Active Travel and Urban Greenways) and TII (Rural Greenways and Active Travel on National Roads), while the Department of Transport provides governance and policy oversight for both Programmes.

6.2 Programme B - Public Transport

High Level Goal: To deliver an accessible, efficient safe and sustainable Public Transport system that supports communities, households and businesses.

National Planning Framework

- NSO 1: Compact Growth
- NSO 2: Enhanced Regional Accessibility
- NSO 3: Strengthened Rural Economies & Communities
- NSO 4: High-Quality International Connectivity
- NSO 5: Sustainable Mobility
- NSO 8: Transition to a Low Carbon & Climate Resilient Society

Public Transport Indicative Annual Allocations

Programme B: Public Transport*				
2026	**2027**	**2028**	**2029**	**2030**
€1.4bn	**€2bn**	**€2.5bn**	**€2.3bn**	**€1.9bn**

*All funding is indicative, subject to annual Estimates process, and excludes the provision of €2 billion from the Infrastructure, Climate and Nature Fund to support the commencement of MetroLink's construction. Rounding may affect totals.

Investment Strategies

NDP investment in the public transport network in each of the five cities is guided by the metropolitan area transport strategies, which have been developed by the NTA. This evidence-informed, plan-led approach to transport investment is in line with international best-practice, and each of the strategies sets out investment priorities over the short, medium, and longer term. Outside of the five cities, the All-Island Strategic Rail Review sets out an ambitious vision for the future development of the inter-city and inter-regional rail network, while investment in rural bus infrastructure is informed by requirements arising from the continued implementation of the Connecting Ireland Rural Mobility plan.

Programme Summary

The NDP funding for public transport is allocated primarily in line with the Department's NIFTI intervention hierarchy of Maintain, Optimise, Improve, and New. This approach involves prioritising investment in the protection and renewal of existing assets before investing in new ones, on economic and environmental grounds. All of the investment supports the aim of a modal shift to public transport.

Under **Maintain**, the key programmes include protection and renewal of the heavy rail network through increased allocations provided toward the Infrastructure Manager Multi-Annual Contract (IMMAC), continued investment in bus and light rail fleets, supporting the bus stop enhancement programme, and the replacement of the original DART fleet. Construction will also commence on the East Coast Railway Infrastructure Protection Projects (ECRIPP).

In terms of **Optimise**, funding allocated under this NDP will support the NTA to commence delivery of Next Generation Ticketing, incorporating the latest developments in account-based ticketing technology, and to deliver Next Generation Automatic Vehicle Location, improving the quality of real-time bus service information for passengers across the country. To support decarbonisation and to improve the passenger experience, the NTA will continue to roll out zero emission buses in each of the five cities, in addition to the electrification of existing depots and construction of new depots.

Turning to **Improve**, the next five years will see Iarnród Éireann complete Phase 1 of the Cork Area Commuter Rail Programme and commence Phase 2, starting with new train stations at Blackpool and Dunkettle and initial electrification works and depot construction. It will deliver the National Train Control Centre and introduce a new Real Time Passenger Information app. NDP funding will also progress the replacement of the Enterprise intercity train fleet on the Dublin to Belfast line with support from the EU's PEACEPLUS programme, and it will start the roll-out of a new Train Protection System across the network.

Funding under this NDP will ensure delivery of the priority public transport accessibility actions and commitments in the Programme for Government and the 'National Human Rights Strategy for Disabled People 2025-2030', including reducing the periods of 'Advance Notice' and the expansion of the Independent Travel Assist scheme.

Furthermore, over the period to 2030, it is planned to commence implementation of the All-Island Strategic Rail Review, which was published in July 2024. Specifically, as part of follow-on work on implementing the Review's recommendations with the European Investment Bank, a range of priority and relatively low-cost interventions have been identified for delivery such as a new platform at Limerick Junction to assist train journeys between Galway/Ennis and Waterford, new track passing loops covering the Limerick to Waterford line, Sligo line, Westport/Ballina line and Dublin-Belfast Northern line, and additional platforms for stations on the Galway and Sligo routes, all of which will help enhance rail resilience and services. There will also be removal of level crossings on the Dublin-Cork main line.

With regard to **New**, this NDP will see construction commence on BusConnects, the DART+ Programme, MetroLink, and the Western Rail Corridor. On BusConnects, construction will commence on new bus corridors in Cork (subject to planning), Dublin, and Galway, significantly improving the infrastructure available to support the continued investment in bus services as supported through the PSO programme.

On the heavy rail system, NDP funding will allow Iarnród Éireann to start construction on the DART+ Programme, including construction of the new Spencer Dock station and the new DART+ depot, electrification of DART+ West, extension of the DART to Wicklow town, improvements on the Bray to Greystones section of the line, and continued progression of the wider programme through land acquisition on foot of Railway Orders received. New DART+ fleet will enter service on the network in 2027, starting with the Northern Line, while there is also potential to commence works on other elements of DART+ Coastal North, including supporting infrastucture such as track passing loops and a new platform at Drogheda station, prior to 2030, in advance of works on Overhead Line Equipment (OHLE).

Funding provided under this NDP will also see the Navan Rail Line progress through the statutory planning system to Railway Order stage, as well as supporting the construction of new train stations. Moreover, this NDP will also see construction commence on the Western Rail Corridor between Athenry and Claremorris, in line with the recommendation of the All-Island Strategic Rail Review and Ireland's obligations under the EU's TEN-T Regulation.

In advance of that, and as recommended by the All-Island Strategic Rail Review, works will take place to safeguard the corridor to accommodate its reinstatement.

Since the last NDP, there has been significant progress on MetroLink, including most recently the positive planning decision by An Coimisiún Pleanála, as well as this NDP's allocation of €2bn from the Infrastructure, Climate and Nature Fund to ensure MetroLink moves forward to construction within the lifetime of this NDP.

On light rail, construction will commence on Luas Finglas, with a Railway Order application expected to be lodged in respect of Luas Cork.

Investment under the public transport programme will also help support improved access to Dublin Airport, complementing improved connections from the road network from the west and north of the airport campus.

Delivery Structures

There are well-established delivery structures in place in the public transport programme, with the NTA acting as day-to-day Approving Authority and different agencies acting as Sponsoring Agencies under the Infrastructure Guidelines. The protection and renewal of the rail network is undertaken by Iarnród Éireann's Infrastructure Manager Division, under the statutory oversight of the Commission for Railway Regulation (CRR) and reporting to the Department.

The Department fulfils its obligations as the ultimate Approving Authority through different governance arrangements, including the Major Projects Governance Oversight Group for the major public transport projects and quarterly meetings with the CRR and Iarnród Éireann as part of the IMMAC.

List of Major Public Transport Projects (>€200m) Scheduled to Commence Construction / Procurement by 2030.[1]

Project	Approving Authority	Sponsoring Agency	Current Stage of Project Lifecycle	Next Approval Gate	Procurement Timeline	Construction Timeline	Successful Tenderer	Cost Range
Bus Connects Cork	NTA	NTA & transport operators	Strategic Assessment & Preliminary Business Case	Various, mostly AG2	Various, due to different projects involved	Various, 2026-2030+	Various	€1bn+
Bus Connects Dublin	NTA	NTA & transport operators	Various, due to different projects involved	Various, mostly at AG2-3	Various, due to different projects involved	Various, 2026-2030+	Various	€1bn+
Bus Connects Galway	NTA	NTA & transport operators	Strategic Assessment & Preliminary Business Case	AG1	Various, due to different projects involved	Various, 2026-2030+	Not yet awarded	€500m - €1bn
Bus Connects Limerick	NTA	NTA & transport operators	Strategic Assessment & Preliminary Business Case	AG1	Various, due to different projects involved	Various, 2026-2030+	Not yet awarded	€500m - €1bn
BusConnects Waterford	NTA	NTA & transport operators	Strategic Assessment & Preliminary Business Case	AG1	Various, due to different projects involved	Various, 2026-2030+	Not yet awarded	€200m - €500m

1 Progression of all individual projects remains subject to compliance with the Infrastructure Guidelines, statutory planning and procurement requirements, as relevant.

Project	Approving Authority	Sponsoring Agency	Current Stage of Project Lifecycle	Next Approval Gate	Procurement Timeline	Construction Timeline	Successful Tenderer	Cost Range
Cork Area Commuter Rail	NTA	Iarnród Éireann	Implementation (Phase 1) Strategic Assessment & Preliminary Business Case (Phase 2)	N/A (Phase 1) AG1 (Phase 2)	2026-2027	2026-2030+	Alstom, John Cradock Ltd, AECOM, TYPSA and Roughan O'Donovan (Phase 2 Design)	€1bn+
Cork Northern Distributor Road	NTA	Cork City Council	Strategic Assessment & Preliminary Business Case	AG1	2028-2029	2030+	Not yet awarded	€200m - €500m
DART+ West	NTA	Iarnród Éireann	Project Design, Planning & Procurement Strategy	AG2	2026	Commence by 2027	Not yet awarded	€1bn+
DART+ South West	NTA	Iarnród Éireann	Project Design, Planning & Procurement Strategy	AG2	2028-2029	2030+	Not yet awarded	€1bn+
DART+ Coastal North	NTA	Iarnród Éireann	Project Design, Planning & Procurement Strategy	AG2	2027	2028-2030+	Not yet awarded	€500m - €1bn
DART+ Coastal South	NTA	Iarnród Éireann	Project Design, Planning & Procurement Strategy	AG1	2026	2027-2030+	Not yet awarded	€200m - €500m
DART+ to Wicklow Town	NTA	Iarnród Éireann	Strategic Assessment & Preliminary Business Case	AG1	2026	2027	Not yet awarded	€50m - €100m
DART and DART+ fleet	NTA	Iarnród Éireann	Implementation	Post-AG3	N/A	2026-2030	Alstom	€200m - €500m
ECRIPP	NTA	Iarnród Éireann	Strategic Assessment & Preliminary Business Case	AG1	Various	2026-2030+	Not yet awarded	€200m - €500m
Enterprise Fleet Replacement Programme	DoT / Department for Infrastructure (NI)	Iarnród Éireann / Translink	Final Business Case	AG3	2024-2025	2026-2030+	Not yet awarded	€500m - €1bn
IMMAC	DoT	Iarnród Éireann	Implementation	AG3	N/A	2026-2030	Various	€1bn+
Luas Finglas	NTA	TII	Project Design, Planning & Procurement Strategy	AG2	2027-2028	Commence by 2029	Not yet awarded	€500m - €1bn
Luas Red Line Fleet	NTA	TII	Final Business Case	AG3	2026	2026-2030+	Not yet awarded	€100m -€200m
MetroLink	NTA	Metrolink delivery body	Project Design, Planning & Procurement Strategy	AG2	2026-2027	Commence by 2027	Not yet awarded	€1bn+
Next Generation Ticketing	NTA	NTA & transport operators	Implementation	Post-AG3	N/A	2027-2030+	Indra Sistemas	€200m - €500m
Train Protection System	NTA	Iarnród Éireann	Strategic Assessment & Preliminary Business Case	AG1	2026	2026-2030+	Not yet awarded	€500m - €1bn
Western Rail Corridor	NTA	Iarnród Éireann	Strategic Assessment & Preliminary Business Case	AG1	By 2027	Commence By 2028	Not yet awarded	€500m - €1bn

6.3 Programme C - Road Networks & Road Safety

High Level Goal: To deliver an accessible, efficient, safe and sustainable Road networks system that supports communities, households, and businesses.

Road Networks & Road Safety Indicative Annual Allocations

Programme Area C- Road Networks & Road Safety*				
2026	**2027**	**2028**	**2029**	**2030**
€1.6bn	**€1.6bn**	**€1.7bn**	**€2.1bn**	**€2.7bn**

*All funding is indicative and subject to annual Estimates process; rounding may affect totals.

Investment Strategies

Roads Network

Investment in Ireland's national road network is a cornerstone of the **Road Safety Strategy 2021–2030,** which aims to halve road deaths and serious injuries by 2030. This is further recognised in a number of priority actions in the Phase 2 Action 2025-2027 under the Strategy, approved by Government earlier in 2025.

National Roads 2040 (NR2040) is a long-term investment framework for the maintenance, development, and management of Ireland's National Roads network. This aims to enable the delivery of Project Ireland 2040 (National Planning Framework), support the realisation of several National Strategic Outcomes and align with NIFTI and government policy.

Investment in the Regional and Local Roads Programme is guided by the TAF, and the Department works in collaboration with local authorities to deliver the programme.

Decarbonising Transport

Strategies for the decarbonisation of road transport are set out in the Climate Action Plan, which sets a target of 30% of the private car fleet being electric by 2030. The 2025 interim target of 195,000 EVs on the road has been met. In accordance with this strategy, funding is provided to bridge the purchase price gap between ICEs and EVs and so incentivise the uptake of zero emission vehicles.

Funding is also provided to support the adoption of home charging and depot charging solutions, as these provide a low cost and convenient charging option for EV drivers and place the least demand on the constrained electricity grid.

ZEVI has also developed strategies for a planned roll out of national EV charging infrastructure, with plans for delivery at national road and at regional and local level. Investment in EV infrastructure is vital to ensuring consumer confidence and encouraging widespread adoption. Incentives for public charging infrastructure not only complement significant private sector investment but enable a just transition across the country. While private operators may invest in more commercially viable locations, government supports can ensure that rural, regional, and community areas are equally as accessible, to ensure a charging network that meets the needs of all citizens across Ireland.

HDV

For heavy duty vehicles, targeted grants are essential to address both technological and cost barriers. HDVs contribute approximately 20% of transport emissions, and supporting their transition to zero-emission will be significant to achieving Ireland's overall emissions goals. Maintaining schemes like the ZEHDV Grant, ZEHDV-I/P Grant, and the Fleet Assessment Grant, supports operator's transition and the delivery of infrastructure required along key routes. ZEVI is developing a framework for the decarbonisation of the HDV fleet, in collaboration with industry, to demonstrate a pathway for the electrification of this more challenging sector.

Programme Summary

Our road network is approximately 102,000km in length. Of this, 5,300km consists of national roads and motorways, with the remainder forming the regional and local road network. Taken together, this network is a critical national asset, facilitating the movement of people and goods across the country. It facilitates business, education, tourism, healthcare, agriculture, and the provision of critical services and activities.

The NDP funding for roads is allocated by the Department and its agency TII to Local Authorities in line with the Department's NIFTI intervention hierarchy of Maintain, Optimise, Improve, and New. This approach involves prioritising investment in the protection and renewal of existing assets before investing in new ones, on economic, safety, and environmental grounds.

Under **Maintain**, key road programmes are funded, including the funding of the protection and renewal of the national, regional, and local road network. This enables the maintenance of the road network to a safe standard, maintenance of motorway network, management of seasonal and climate impacts, and ensuring roads comply with the Pavement Condition Survey Indicator (PCSI) metrics.

In terms of **Optimise**, this NDP funding will support TII and Local Authorities in delivering additional Park and Ride facilities, the roll out of EV charging infrastructure to support the decarbonisation of the network, delivery of adaptation measures on our road network response to the climate emergency, and support the deployment of Intelligent Transport Systems.

With regard to **Improve,** there will be targeted road safety improvements such as removing dangerous bends, junction improvements, and a focus on improved road signage and line markings. Upgraded strategic urban roads and bypasses will be delivered improving access to towns and the public realm space, while, in addition, bus priority measures will be developed on the road network. There will also be continued investment in Active Travel improvements along both our national and regional road network, including wider footpaths and segregated cycleways. Upgraded strategic urban roads and bypasses will be delivered, improving access to towns and the public realm space, while, in addition, bus priority measures will be developed on the road network.

This NDP will see the construction of many **new** national and regional roads across the state, with many others commencing construction or being advanced through the planning and procurement process. This funding will allow TII and the Local Authorities to complete schemes such as the M28 Cork to Ringaskiddy, N21/69 Limerick to Foynes (incl. Adare Bypass), and the N5 Ballaghaderreen to Scramoge projects, as well as commencing construction on schemes such as the Donegal TEN-T Project, the N24 Cahir to Limerick Junction, and the Slane Bypass among others.

Furthermore, on the regional and local road networks, projects such as Coonagh Knockalisheen Distributor Road in Limerick, Eastern Garvoge Bridge and Approach Roads in Sligo and the Great Island Connectivity Scheme (R624 Cobh Road) will continue / commence construction. In addition, and as summarised in the Appendix, funding under the NDP will also ensure the continued development of a pipeline of projects for future construction.

Investment under the roads programme will also improve connections to Dublin Airport from the north and west, complementing improved public transport infrastructure and services to / from the airport.

The Programme for Government places strong emphasis on decarbonising transport as part of its climate commitments. As referenced earlier, ZEVI is a dedicated Office within the Department of Transport, charged with supporting consumers, the public sector, and businesses to continue to make the switch to zero emission vehicles. The Office plays a strategic role in supporting the NDP by accelerating Ireland's transition to reducing emissions and leads on the delivery of Ireland's ambitious targets under the Climate Action Plan 2023 to have an expected 30% of our private car fleet switched to electric by 2030.

The 'Avoid, Shift, Improve' approach presents a framework for structuring policy measures within ZEVI Climate Action in the Transport sector. As part of the 'Improve' element, electrification has a key role in decarbonising transport, accounting for nearly two thirds of transport mitigation measures under the Climate Action Plan. Electric vehicles have a lead role to play in transforming the Irish transport system into one that is clean, green, and sustainable. This improved system will support communities and economic growth as we move towards a net zero carbon future.

This NDP will see EV charging infrastructure deployed along our National Primary and Secondary roads, as well as the delivery of a public Regional and Local EV recharging network at destination and neighbourhood areas through Local Authorities to maximise electric mobility transition for all citizens, as well as supports for citizens and businesses to switch to electric vehicles .

Delivery Structures

National Road projects are delivered by TII as the day-to-day Approving Authority working in consultation with relevant local authorities as the Sponsoring Agencies. The Department sets policy and funds the roads programme while retaining oversight of TII. The Governance arrangements include quarterly Governance meetings, quarterly National Roads and Greenways Monitoring Group meetings, and regular ongoing communications between the Department, TII, and Local Authorities.

The Regional and Local Roads Programme has well-established governance and delivery structures, with the Department of Transport acting as the Approving Authority working in consultation with the road (local) authority sector as the Sponsoring Agencies. The Department is in regular contact with Local Authorities and conducts frequent operational meetings with Local Authority staff and engineers.

For decarbonisation of road transport, vehicle schemes are administered by the SEAI, TII, and the NTA, with the Department as Approving Authority. Infrastructure delivery is through the SEAI, Local Authorities, and TII, with the Department and TII acting as Approving Authorities. As part of a strategic realignment to enhance the delivery of Ireland's sustainable transport objectives, infrastructure functions of the ZEVI office are transitioning to TII.

This move reflects the growing integration of EV policy with broader transport infrastructure planning and delivery. The transition aims to streamline the implementation of certain EV grants, recharging infrastructure, alternative fuels data, and public engagement initiatives, ensuring they are closely aligned with national transport strategies and infrastructure development.

The transition will also support more cohesive planning across urban and regional mobility, helping accelerate the shift to zero-emission transport in line with climate targets. Governance arrangements, vehicle grants, certain data functions, and some communications functions will remain in the Department, with Regional and Local plan related infrastructure work transferring to TII in 2026. New governance mechanisms are being established as part of the transition working groups key activities.

List of of Major National Roads Projects (>€200m) Scheduled to Commence Construction / Procurement by 2030 [2]

Project	Approving Authority	Sponsoring Agency	Current Stage of Project Lifecycle	Next Approval Gate	Procurement Timeline *	Construction Timeline	Successful Tenderer	Cost Range
Donegal TEN-T Project	TII	Donegal County Council	Project Design, Planning & Procurement Strategy	AG2	By 2027	Commence By 2028	Not yet awarded	€500m-€1bn
N2 Ardee to South of Castleblayney	TII	Monaghan County Council	Strategic Assessment & Preliminary Business Case	AG1	By 2030	2030+	Not yet awarded	€250m-€500m
N2 Clontibret to the Border	TII	Monaghan County Council	Strategic Assessment & Preliminary Business Case	AG1	By 2029	Commence By 2030	Not yet awarded	€250m-€500m
N2 Slane Bypass	TII	Meath County Council	Project Design, Planning & Procurement Strategy	AG2	By 2027	Commence By 2028	Not yet awarded	€100m-€250m
N3 Virginia Bypass	TII	Cavan County Council	Strategic Assessment & Preliminary Business Case	AG1	By 2028	Commence By 2029	Not yet awarded	€250m-€500m
N4 Carrick on Shannon Bypass and Traffic Management Project	TII	Leitrim County Council	Strategic Assessment & Preliminary Business Case	AG1	By 2027	Commence By 2028	Not yet awarded	€250m-€500m

2 Progression of all individual projects remains subject to compliance with the Infrastructure Guidelines, statutory planning and procurement requirements, as relevant.

Project	Approving Authority	Sponsoring Agency	Current Stage of Project Lifecycle	Next Approval Gate	Procurement Timeline *	Construction Timeline	Successful Tenderer	Cost Range
M4 Maynooth to Leixlip	TII	Kildare County Council	Strategic Assessment & Preliminary Business Case	AG1	By 2029	Commence By 2030	Not yet awarded	€100m-€250m
N4 Mullingar to Longford	TII	Westmeath County Council	Strategic Assessment & Preliminary Business Case	AG1	By 2030	2030+	Not yet awarded	€500m-€1bn
N5 Ballaghaderreen to Scramoge	TII	Roscommon County Council	Implementation	N/A	N/A	Completion by 2027	Wills Bros Ltd	€250m-€500m
N6 Galway City Ring Road	TII	Galway County Council	Project Design, Planning & Procurement Strategy	AG2	By 2028	Commence By 2029	Not yet awarded	€1bn+
N11/25 Oilgate to Rosslare	TII	Wexford County Council	Strategic Assessment & Preliminary Business Case	AG1	By 2029	Commence By 2030	Not yet awarded	€250m-€500m
N17 Knock to Collooney	TII	Sligo County Council	Strategic Assessment & Preliminary Business Case	AG1	By 2029	2030+	Not yet awarded	€500m-€1bn
N/M20 Cork to Limerick	TII	Limerick City and County Council	Strategic Assessment & Preliminary Business Case	AG1	By 2029	2030+	Not yet awarded	€1bn+
N21 Abbeyfeale Relief Road	TII	Limerick City and County Council	Strategic Assessment & Preliminary Business Case	AG1	By 2029	Commence By 2030	Not yet awarded	€100m-€250m
N21/69 Limerick to Foynes (inc Adare Bypass)	TII	Limerick City and County Council	Project Design, Planning & Procurement Strategy	AG2	By 2027	Adare Bypass element completion due in 2027	Not yet awarded	€500m-€1bn
N21 Newcastle West Relief Road	TII	Limerick City and County Council	Strategic Assessment & Preliminary Business Case	AG1	By 2028	Commence by 2029	Not yet awarded	€100m-€250m
N22 Farranfore to Killarney	TII	Kerry County Council	Strategic Assessment & Preliminary Business Case	AG1	By 2029	Commence by 2030	Not yet awarded	€250m-€500m
N24 Cahir to Limerick Junction	TII	Tipperary County Council	Strategic Assessment & Preliminary Business Case	AG1	By 2029	2030+	Not yet awarded	€500m-€1bn
N25 Midleton to Youghal (Castlemartyr and Killeagh Bypasses)	TII	Cork County Council	Strategic Assessment & Preliminary Business Case	AG1	By 2029	Commence By 2030	Not yet awarded	€100m-€250m
M28 Cork to Ringaskiddy	TII	Cork County Council	Implementation	N/A	N/A	Completion By 2028	BAM Civil Ltd	€250m-€500m

List of Strategic Regional Road Projects Scheduled to Commence Construction by 2030 [3]

Project	Approving Authority	Sponsoring Agency	Current Stage of Project Lifecycle	Next Approval Gate	Procurement Timeline	Construction Timeline	Successful Tenderer	Cost Range
Athenry Relief Road, section 3 and 5	DoT	Galway County Council	Implementation	N/A	N/A	Completion due 2026	Tower Civil Engineering	€5m-€10m
Coonagh to Knockalisheen Distributor Road	DoT	Limerick City & County Council	Implementation	N/A	N/A	Completion due 2027	Roadbridge Ltd	€50m-€100m
Eastern Garavoge Bridge and Approach Roads	DoT	Sligo County Council	Strategic Assessment & Preliminary Business Case	AG2	N/A	Commence by 2026	RPS / Hewson	€20m-€50m
Great Island Connectivity Scheme (R624 Cobh Road)	DoT	Cork County Council	Strategic Assessment & Preliminary Business Case	AG1	Procurement by 2029	Commence by 2030	Not yet awarded	€100m-€250m
Killarney Strategic Links Project	DoT	Kerry County Council	Strategic Assessment & Preliminary Business Case	AG1	Procurement by 2026	Commence by 2027	Not yet awarded	€10m-€20m
R188 Rathkenny East West Road (Cavan)	DoT	Cavan County Council	Strategic Assessment & Preliminary Business Case	AG1	Procurement by 2028	Commence by 2029	Not yet awarded	€20m-€50m
R263 Fintra Bridge and Road Realignment	DoT	Donegal County Council	Implementation	N/A	N/A	Completion due 2026	BAM Civil Ltd	€10m-€20m
R498 Latteragh Upgrade	DoT	Tipperary County Council	Final Business Case	AG3	N/A	Commence by 2025	Wills Bros Ltd	€20m-€50m
Thurles Inner Relief Road	DoT	Tipperary County Council	Strategic Assessment & Preliminary Business Case	AG1	Procurement by 2026	Commence by 2027	Not yet awarded	€10m-€20m
Tralee Northern Relief Road	DoT	Kerry County Council	Implementation	N/A	N/A	Phase 1 completion due 2026	Alan O Connell Developments Limited & TBC	€20m-€50m

3 Progression of all individual projects remains subject to compliance with the Infrastructure Guidelines, statutory planning and procurement requirements, as relevant.

6.4 Programme D – Civil Aviation

High Level Goal: To deliver an accessible, efficient safe and sustainable Aviation system that supports communities, households and businesses.

Civil Aviation Indicative Annual Allocations

Programme D: Civil Aviation*				
2026	**2027**	**2028**	**2029**	**2030**
€8.9m	**€9.5m**	**€10m**	**€8.2m**	**€8m**

*All funding is indicative and subject to annual Estimates process; rounding may affect totals.

Programme Summary

The Programme for Government acknowledges the value of aviation in supporting international connectivity, economic development, and tourism via our airports. Furthermore, Government policy on regional airports seeks to optimise conditions for connectivity and regional development, both for the social and economic benefits that can be derived from facilitating access to and from the associated regions. It is recognised that as employers, airports contribute to the local economy; employment is also supported through the various ancillary services that are provided to airports.

Policy on regional airports is currently being implemented and delivered under an Exchequer-funded Regional Airports Programme. The Programme supports Ireland's smallest regional airports. Eligibility for supports is determined by both average annual passenger numbers (over the preceding two financial years) and the scheduled passenger services they provide. Scheduled services must facilitate international connectivity, either directly or via another national hub airport such as Dublin.

Capital investment under the programme supports safety and security related activities, to assist airports in meeting relevant related regulatory requirements. Projects with a sustainability focus are also supported, assisting airports in meeting their carbon emission reduction targets under the Climate Action Plan, as well as to build resilience against the likely impact of climate change.

The Programme for Government has committed to continue to invest in the Regional Airports Programme and to develop a new Regional Airports Programme 2026-2030.

Delivery Structures

Projects supported under the Regional Airports Programme 2026-2030 will be dependent on detailed project proposals being submitted by airports and then evaluated and assessed for eligibility and suitability for funding by the Department in Q1 in each funding year.

Funding to support approved projects will then be provided on a recoupment basis each year as projects progress and complete and at a rate in line with relevant State aid rules.

While it is likely that the majority of projects proposed for support by airports will be below €500,000 (as was the case in recent years), larger projects may also be considered. Such project proposals will be appraised in accordance with the Infrastructure Guidelines.

In all cases the Department will be the Approving Authority, and the relevant airport will be the Sponsoring Agency.

6.5 Programme E – Maritime Transport & Safety

High Level Goal: To deliver an accessible, efficient, safe and sustainable Maritime system that supports communities, households, and businesses.

National Planning Framework

NSO 4: High-Quality International Connectivity

Maritime Transport & Safety Indicative Annual Allocations

Programme E: Maritime Transport & Safety*				
2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
€8m	€8m	€43m	€43m	€43m

*All funding is indicative and subject to annual Estimates process; rounding may affect totals.

Programme Summary

This programme comprises two key aspects over the period 2026 to 2030: the Irish Coast Guard buildings programme and the proposed replacement of the Commissioners of Irish Lights' (CIL) vessel ILV Granuaile.

The Irish Coast Guard is supported by approximately 1,000 volunteers in 44 units around our coast. Many of these facilities are not fit for purpose. Following a full review of the building programme, a new strategy was launched in 2025, with a focus on more agile delivery mechanisms and more diverse range of solutions to include leasing, upgrades, etc.

The CIL is tasked with upholding the State's statutory obligations for the provision of marine aids to navigation (AtoN). The Irish State has international and national legal obligations to provide for maritime safety, including to uphold the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea 1974 (SOLAS Convention) and the provisions for the safety of all vessels at sea set out in the Merchant Shipping Acts. The replacement of the CIL vessel ILV Granuaile was included as an objective of the National Development Plan 2021-2030 and was subsequently set out in the Programme for Government (2025).

Delivery Structures

In relation to the Irish Coast Guard (IRCG) building programme, the Department will be the Approving Authority with the IRCG as the Sponsoring Agency and the Office of Public Works as the Contracting Authority.

For the ILV Granuaile project, the Department will be the Approving Authority, with the CIL acting as the Sponsoring Agency.

6.6 Programme F – Information Technology, Engagement and Research Delivery, Organisation requirements

High Level Goal: To provide essential support for the delivery of the Department's strategic objectives.

National Planning Framework

NSO 6: A strong Economy supported by Enterprise, Innovation & Skills

Information Technology, Engagement and Research Delivery, Organisation Indicative Annual Allocations

Programme F- Information Technology, Engagement and Research Delivery, Organisation requirements *				
2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
€31m	€50m	€50m	€50m	€50m

*All funding is indicative and subject to annual Estimates process; rounding may affect totals.

Programme Summary

Advanced Traffic Management

Advanced traffic management is a system of technologies that uses real-time data, intelligent algorithms, and communication to improve road safety and efficiency, and to reduce congestion. It involves a centralized control hub that integrates various subsystems - such as sensors, cameras, and adaptive traffic signals - to make dynamic adjustments and optimise traffic flow for drivers and pedestrians. Unlike traditional systems, advanced systems are very dependent on vehicle communications and use of sensors, as well as data collection and management techniques. Key elements are data collection, data analysis, dynamic control, and integrated systems.

Advance traffic management is a core component of ITS, the implementation of the ITS Directive, and the implementation of Connected and autonomous vehicles, particularly in urban areas. It includes adaptive and connected traffic signals, CCTV monitoring, and variable messaging signs (roadside, in-vehicle). Benefits include improved safety, reduced congestion, and increased efficiency.

Connected and Autonomous Vehicles
Connected and autonomous vehicles (CAVs) are vehicles that use a combination of sensors, artificial intelligence, and wireless communication to drive themselves and interact with their surroundings. They can connect to other vehicles, infrastructure, and the cloud to improve safety by preventing collisions, reducing congestion, and optimising traffic flow. The 'connected' aspect involves communication for elements like map and software updates, while 'autonomous' refers to the vehicle's ability to drive without human input. Ultimately, CAV is a fusion of vehicles and civil infrastructure for which road safety and ITS are key enablers.

CAVs are already appearing on our roads. Implementation is based on implementing roadside and cloud based digital infrastructure and the connections to vehicles in a secure and safe manner. Supporting structures will also need to be put in place in relation to testing, collisions, and road data. Much of this will align with the requirements of the ITS Directive and other international legislation.

Digital Hub
The Department consolidated all digital and ICT functions into one business unit in 2024, and this 'Digital Hub' is tasked with driving the Department's ambitious digital transformation plan for its citizen services.

The Department administers Motor Tax (collection of circa €1bn in tax receipts annually) and the registration of change of vehicle ownership (processing over 1 million ownership change requests and issuances of new registration certificates each year), as well as providing the IT infrastructure that underpins the issuing of driver licences and record keeping of penalty points. The expenditure will support transformation projects in these customer services, including the digitalisation required to remove the need for paper discs in vehicle windscreens and the expansion of the online change of vehicle ownership service.

The Department is also working with the Department of Public Expenditure, Infrastructure, Public Service Reform and Digitalisation to ensure all appropriate driver and vehicle services are aligned to the Life Events programme of work under the Better Public Services initiative. This includes participation in Digital Government Wallet. Underneath the customer facing services, the Department will continue to invest in the technology refresh programme needed to move away from legacy software, including the movement to cloud where appropriate. An improved cyber security posture is also central to the technology changes being implemented, as is the deployment of a new data analytics platform which allows for advanced analytics and the Department's AI proof of concepts.
- Process Automation programme – the Department is reviewing manual processes to determine where efficiencies can be gained by digitising them and introducing automation where appropriate.
- Business application developments - working with all Department Divisions in modernising legacy business applications to facilitate migration to digital systems to allow integration with citizen portals and access to online systems.
- Expanded use of cloud technology to enable collaboration with external parties/agencies.
- Cyber Security - ensuring that all digital solutions meet the ever-demanding requirements in the cyber security environment. This will require annual investment in resources and technology and ensuring that the applications are used securely and in compliance with various governance obligations, including Data Protection/GDPR.
- The Department is working with the OGCIO and the Road Safety Authority on development of a life events portal and digital wallet that would include a digital driving licence and other Departmental legal certificates currently issued in paper format.

- Multi-annual technology refresh programme that is critical to ensure that all Departmental IT systems are operating at maximum capacity, are resilient, have increased scalability, and keep pace with industry standards, including legal obligations.

Intelligent Transport Systems

Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) refer to the application of technologies, communication, and information systems to transportation, making them safer, more efficient, and more sustainable. ITS encompasses a broad range of technologies and applications, including traffic management, public transport management, and vehicle safety systems. Much work and expenditure in relation to ITS relates to physical and civil infrastructure deployment and maintenance.

ITS delivery under the NDP is not only based on implementation of the ITS Directive requirements but also supporting EVs (e.g. ZEVI), Integrated Ticketing, and CAVs/Road Safety. This is based on implementing supporting structures but also on a National Access Point and implementing improved and new process to support ITS Services.

Appendix A – Road Projects to be advanced for future construction

Project	Approving Authority	Sponsoring Agency	Current Stage of Project Lifecycle	Next Approval Gate
N2 Rath Roundabout to Kilmoon Cross	TII	Meath County Council	Pre-AG1	AG1
N11 Junction 4 to 14 Project	TII	Wicklow County Council	Pre-AG1	AG1
N15 Sligo to County Boundary	TII	Sligo County Council	Pre-AG1	AG1
N22 Macroom to Ovens	TII	Cork County Council	Pre-AG1	AG1
N24 Waterford to Cahir	TII	Kilkenny County Council	Pre-AG1	AG1
N25 Carrigtwohill to Midleton	TII	Cork County Council	Pre-AG1	AG1
N25 Waterford to Glenmore	TII	Kilkenny County Council	Pre-AG1	AG1
N52 Tullamore to Kilbeggan	TII	Westmeath County Council	Pre-AG1	AG1
N59 Clifden to Maam Cross	TII	Galway County Council	Pre-AG1	AG1
Bypass / Relief Road Programme (e.g. Athlone, Claregalway, Thurles, Ballina)	TII/DoT	Various	Pre-AG1	AG1
Carlow Southern Relief Road	DoT	Carlow County Council	Pre-AG1	AG1
Cork City Northern Transport Project	TII	Cork City Council	Pre-AG1	AG1
Cork Southern Ring Road (TEN-T)	TII	Cork City Council	Pre-AG1	AG1
Shannon Airport Access Road	TII	Clare County Council	Pre-AG1	AG1

Appendix B –List of Acronyms

Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Regulation	AFIR
Approval Gate	AG
Aids to Navigation	AtoN
Climate Action Plan	CAP
Connected and Autonomous Vehicles	CAVs
Commissioners of Irish Lights	CIL
Commission for Railway Regulation	CRR
East Coast Railway Infrastructure Protection Projects	ECRIPP
Environmental Protection Agency	EPA
Electric Vehicle	EV
Heavy Duty Vehicle	HDV
Internal Combustion Engine	ICE
Infrastructure Manager Multi-Annual Contract	IMMAC
Intelligent Transport Systems	ITS
Land Development Agency	LDA
National Cycle Network	NCN
National Competitiveness and Productivity Council	NCPC
National Development Plan	NDP
National Investment Framework for Transport in Ireland	NIFTI
National Planning Framework	NPF
National Roads 2040	NRA2040
National Transport Authority	NTA
Pavement Condition Survey Indicator	PCSI
Public Service Obligation	PSO
Shared Island Fund	SIF

Sustainable Mobility Policy	SMP
Transport Appraisal Framework	TAF
Trans-European Transport Network	TEN-T
Transport Infrastructure Ireland	TII
Transport Orientated Development	TOD
Zero-Emission Heavy Duty Vehicle Purchase Grant Scheme	ZEHDV
Zero Emission Vehicles Ireland	ZEVI

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Prepared by the Department of Transport
November 2025 | gov.ie