

Submission from Cllr Martina Kinane, Stradbally North Clarinbridge, Co Galway

Role: Member of Galway County Council and Northern and Western Regional Assembly

This submission relates to Ireland 2040 Our Plan Chapter 6 Infrastructure

As a member of Galway County Council and North Western Regional Assembly I had the pleasure of attending two engagements on the topic long- term planning for Ireland, in the form of the Ireland 2040 Plan. I found the discussions thought provoking and hope that the National Planning Framework will deliver for Rural Ireland unlike that of its predecessor the National Spatial Strategy.

I fully acknowledge that an overall coherent strategy is essential in creating a National Planning Framework that will ensure that national growth can be shared by people throughout Ireland. However, I strongly believe that high-quality infrastructure in terms of public transport is the key to the success of this plan and therefore critical investment decisions for Rural Ireland needs to be prioritised for in this plan..

Public transport is the lifeline to rural communities all over the country. The social dimension of the city and rural rail services is recognised by the State and rail routes that service these regions receive subvention from the government funded by both rural and urban tax payers. The lack of conveyance in rural areas remains the biggest pressure on people as it affects their ability to access employment, education opportunities and services.

Minister Coveney stated in his letter on 10th March 2017 that he “believes that Local Government is one of the key stakeholder in the preparation of a National Planning Framework for Ireland” and went on to ask for councillors engagement with the plan.

In this context, I wish to forward my submission seeking funding to be provide to create a **Commuter rail line from Galway City to Athenry that will incorporate strategically selected hubs along the routes with feeder buses servicing Parkmore Industrial Estate and other key sites within Galway City.** Adapting this section of railroad infrastructure from

Ceannt station Galway to Athenry train station with the inclusion of feeder buses to designated areas around the city ,would equip Galway city and county for future development and would be the catalyst to solving Galway City traffic congestion. I would also ask that this proposal for a commuter rail service for Galway/ Athenry- Oranmore Municipal District be considered when commencing the mid-term review of the current Capital Plan 2021

Presently, the traffic congestion in Galway City, a city region with the foremost potential to lead Ireland into 2040 is at crisis point. Traffic congestion in Galway has been outlined by IBEC during a recent presentation to NWRA as a “bigger threat to the future of Galway city than Brexit”

Critical enabling transport Infrastructure between the Athenry- Oranmore Municipal and Galway City is also an integral ingredient in the emerging growth sector for the region which is tourism

I am of the firm opinion to facilitate the expansion of Galway as one of the 3 suggested main Urban centres within the next 20 years funding this project is central.

I believe I have identified a step that will also provide positive outcomes for air pollution and other quality-of-life factors for communities living in Galway city and county.

Notwithstanding the short period available to me before sending in this submission I held a public meeting in Oranmore on April 9th, 2017 to discuss this topic and received immense backing both from the local and business communities in the region. Please note I can provide a detailed plan for this proposal but regrettably unable to have available before dateline

Look forward to hearing your response to my submission.

Regards,

Martina Kinane Cllr

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