

# TRANSform Scotland

*the campaign for sustainable transport*

## 'A Vision for Capital Growth: 2020-2040 - Draft for Consultation May 2006'

Consultation response to The City of Edinburgh Council  
30th June 2006

### 1. General comments

1.1 TRANSform Scotland is the national sustainable transport alliance, campaigning for a more sustainable and socially-just transport system. Our membership includes bus, rail and shipping operators, local authorities, national environment and conservation groups, consultancies and local transport campaigns.

1.2 Thank you for inviting us to comment on the above document.

### 2. Question 'Do you think that the Edinburgh city region should plan for significant growth in the period 2020-2040?'

2.1 We have as yet no settled view. We are not minded to view the growth in the city-region as a good in and of itself, and are not as yet convinced that steps should be taken to seek a major expansion in the geographical or population size of the city.

2.2 We would however accept that if the city is due to grow because of exogenous factors (e.g. housing or labour market shortages) then the City Council would be remiss not to master plan to growth of the city.<sup>1</sup>

2.3 We consider the comparison of Edinburgh with Stockholm / Helsinki / Oslo as being somewhat misleading. Unlike Scotland, each of these cities are the largest cities of their respective countries. None of these cities have a large conurbation such as Glasgow (1.9 million inhabitants) within forty miles.<sup>2</sup>

### 3. Question 'If there is to be growth, should the emphasis be on concentrating it around Edinburgh, dispersing development around the city-region or some other approach?'

3.1 Should growth be necessary, then we broadly welcome a model based on the Copenhagen 'Finger Plan' comparison. This model is widely held to have been successful at master planning city development.

3.2 We would however note that the Copenhagen Finger Plan is not just about public transport investment. As Robert Cervero concludes in the book 'The Transit Metropolis: A Global Inquiry':<sup>3</sup>

*"Copenhagen is not just a story of building rail-oriented new towns along fingers. The municipality has strengthened the integration of transit and urban development by enhancing the viability and aesthetic qualities of the traditional city core. Streets and curbsides have been dedicated to pedestrians and bicycles. Most transit users today reach central city train stations by bike and foot."*

3.3 Cervero also highlights the policy of "managed congestion": restrictions on road space, reductions in car traffic levels, and high parking fees. Denmark also retains a high national purchase tax on new cars.

---

<sup>1</sup> We do however think that it would aid informed discussion if daft and misleading terms such as "Capital Gains" and "Capital Punishment" were avoided.

<sup>2</sup> We have for some time considered that a more relevant comparison for Edinburgh might perhaps be with Zürich.

<sup>3</sup> Cervero, Robert 'The Transit Metropolis: A Global Inquiry' (The Island Press, Washington D.C., 1998).

3.4 So, in conclusion, while we find the 'Finger Plan' model attractive, development along these lines would have to include demand management measures as well as public transport investment.

**4. Question 'How can we ensure that development on the ground is delivered as sustainably as possible and its full environmental impact assessed and mitigated?'**

4.1 We welcome the commitment to tackling the environmental impact of future city development and, in particular, the awareness of climate change impacts expressed in the introduction.

4.2 The best way to ensure that the external impacts of road traffic is mitigated remains the application of cost internalisation measures: in essence, for transport, road pricing.

**5. Comments on 'Realising the Vision – A Suggested Approach'**

5.1 While we recognise that *Figure 5: Transport Schemes* reflects current infrastructure aspirations rather than a set of interventions that would help deliver on a Finger Plan-type model post-2020, we wish to make some comments about the current plans as set out in this diagram.

5.2 Firstly, while we remain strong advocates of trams / light rail, we are not necessarily convinced that the tram corridors proposed for Livingston, Loanhead/Penicuik and Dalkeith would provide the same line speed or passenger volume public transport services as the heavy rail corridors arranged around Copenhagen undoubtedly have done.

5.3 We do however accept that heavy rail corridors are in place on the Fife, Bathgate, Shotts and East Lothian lines – all of which could be provided with significantly enhanced commuter heavy-rail services.

5.4 Figure 6 suggests 'Currie/The Calders' as a 'candidate development / public transport corridor'. We are not convinced that the proposed public transport interventions are adequate to serve this corridor. (The historic development on this corridor e.g. Balerno / Currie was of course at least in part due to the now disused heavy rail route on that corridor.)

5.5 The map completely fails to take account of the opportunities provided by the Edinburgh South Suburban Railway for cross-city rail journeys. Provision of passenger services on this line would allow rail commuter corridors at Newcraighall (Edinburgh Crossrail / Borders Rail services), Cameron Toll (Tram Line 3 services), Haymarket (for interchange by tram to Granton and Leith) and Waverley (for access by foot to the city centre).

5.6 By contrast, the broad red line marked 'Orbital Public Transport' would appear to be rather misleading if, as we understand correctly, this is to be provided by bus services along the City Bypass.

5.7 Putting aside the merits or otherwise of an Edinburgh-Glasgow high-speed rail link, we don't see how this fits with the 'Finger Plan' model described earlier in the document.

5.8 Similarly, the reference to the proposed Edinburgh Airport Rail Link would seem to be a complete red herring in the context of the model described here (unless, of course, CEC is planning to encourage in-bound commuting by air!) As aviation is a major contributor to climate change and dependent on (dwindling) oil reserves the endorsement of proposals that would lead to an expansion of Edinburgh Airport would severely undermine the sustainability of the plan.

**TRANSform Scotland**

*the campaign for sustainable transport*

Lamb's House, Burgess Street, Leith, Edinburgh, EH6 6RD

Tel: 0131 467 7714

Fax: 0131 554 8656

Email: [info@transformscotland.org.uk](mailto:info@transformscotland.org.uk)

Web: <http://www.transformscotland.org.uk>