



CITY PROPERTY ASSOCIATION

TRANSPORT UPDATE – JANUARY 2024

This transport note sets out the key transport issues relevant to the City of London since October 2023.

Streets & Walkways Sub Committee

The Streets & Walkways Sub Committee met on 7th November. Below are items of interest from the agenda/minutes:

City Public Realm Guidance

In December 2020, the Committee agreed to review and update public realm guidance and technical information. It was recognised that a more proactive approach to the future design of City streets and spaces was needed. High quality and inclusive public realm where people want to spend time is essential to the City's future as a global destination.

A draft Public Realm Vision document has been created, which included a review of the public realm Supplementary Planning Document (2016), due to changing policy and competing demands on the public realm in the City. The draft document identifies key themes and City-wide 'transformational moves' that are being fed into the updated Transport Strategy and the emerging Local Plan.

Additionally, the Committee agreed to adopt the City Public Realm Design Toolkit as design guidance. The Toolkit is an updated version, and replacement of, the Public Realm Technical Manual (2016). It aims to provide a coordinated approach to the design and management of the public realm, promotes high quality design and sets standards for public realm features. The Toolkit supports the delivery of the City's Transport Strategy, Climate Action Strategy, Destination City initiative and Sport's Strategy.

Enhancing Cheapside Programme

A £1 million bid to deliver improvements in the Cheapside area was approved in September 2023. It aims to support the recovery of the City's principal shopping street and Destination City initiative. The bid includes enhancements to the wider Cheapside area, Bow Churchyard and permanent improvements to the Bus Gate (east of Bread Street), where temporary changes were initially delivered as part of the Pedestrian Priority Project. The programme will be phased and key areas for improvement are:

- Greening
- Enhanced lighting
- Additional seating
- Improved pedestrian movement and better wayfinding
- Pavement widening and traffic calming measures
- Declutter and rationalise street furniture along Cheapside and review accessibility to align with the Healthy Streets approach

The programme will be developed with key stakeholders including local businesses and landowners, the Cheapside Business Alliance and Destination City.

The design consultation is planned for mid-2024, with the overall project estimated to be completed by quarter one of 2026.

Fleet Street Area Healthy Streets Plan

The Fleet Street Area Healthy Streets Plan (HSP) will provide a framework for improvements to streets and public realm in the area. Public consultation was undertaken from May to June 2023 with just under 70% of consultation participants expressing a positive opinion on the proposed improvements and changes to the five neighbourhoods. The results have been fed into the HSP with further design and feasibility studies being undertaken for Fleet Street and the Whitefriars Neighbourhood. Proposals identified in the Fleet Street Quarter BID Placemaking and Public Realm Strategy have also been included. The revised HSP can be [found here](#), which was approved by the Planning and Transportation Committee in November 2023.

A Fleet Street Area Programme Working Group will be established by January 2024 and will manage the delivery of projects and identify those for prioritisation.

Bank Junction Improvements: All Change at Bank

Work to improve the safety, air quality and pedestrian experience around Bank junction has progressed to programme, with a substantial part now complete.

Following the Lord Mayor's Show in November, new traffic signals with the correct signal cycle times have come into operation as well as a permanent traffic order on Princes Street, whereby a southbound compulsory left turn for all traffic, except buses and cycles, will be operational at all times. Additionally, work will be undertaken on Queen Victoria Street, including improved cycle parking facilities, the relocation of a taxi rank and pavement widening. Pavement widening will also be undertaken on Threadneedle Street.

The project is due for completion in Spring 2024, although there is now a further traffic study underway to analyse the decrease in traffic and review the potential to re-introduce licensed taxis.

Planning and Transportation Committee

The Planning and Transportation Committee met on 3rd October, 21st November and 12th December. Below are items of interest from the agenda.

Transport Strategy Review

The City of London Transport Strategy was adopted in 2019 and sets out a framework for the design and management of transport and streets up to 2044. The current review period has been extended to Spring 2024 due to the impacts of the pandemic and to support alignment with the review of the City Plan. It was agreed an update, rather than a full revision, of the Transport Strategy was required.

All proposals were reviewed and revised where necessary, with the most significant changes including:

- A new proposal setting out the approach to embedding inclusion and accessibility in transport planning and delivery.
- Continuing support for the introduction of next generation road user charging and removing the commitment to develop City-specific charging.
- Revising the cycling outcome and proposals to include e-scooters and other forms of 'micromobility'.
- Removing the commitment to introduce local zero emission zones.
- Updating freight-related proposals to reflect development in recent years, including removing the commitment to provide a consolidation centre given the availability of commercial consolidation services.

The review has been informed by engagement with stakeholders and analysis of recent and long-term transport data. The draft changes underwent public consultation which closed on 7th January 2024. The final revised Transport Strategy is planned for publication in May 2024.



Bank Junction Improvements (All Change at Bank): Traffic Mix and Timing Review Update

As mentioned above, the All Change at Bank project is currently being constructed and due to be completed in Spring 2024. Following a Court of Common Council Motion in April 2022, a review of traffic and timing restrictions at Bank is being undertaken. In February 2023 it was agreed that no further work on the option to reintroduce general traffic into Bank would be undertaken due to the likely negative impacts on bus journey times.

The review is now focussed on assessing the need for changes to restrictions to allow access for taxis and/or powered two wheelers. In July 2023 the Court of Common Council agreed to pause further work on the traffic modelling exercise and would focus on identifying and evidencing the need for change and how this can be best addressed. Data collection and analysis for the review is ongoing and is focussed on taxi availability and journey lengths and costs for people who rely on taxis for door-to-door transportation. This will inform the Equalities Impact Assessment. In addition, to inform the next stage of traffic modelling, further work is required on understanding how many taxis are likely to travel through the junction if allowed.

The Planning and Transportation Committee agreed in November 2023 to immediately restart the transport impact modelling, in parallel with the data collection and analysis to identify and evidence the need for change. This potentially could reduce the timetable to implementation by up to four months, rather than waiting for a decision on whether to pursue a change to restrictions in May and July 2024 at the Planning and Transportation Committee and the Court of Common Council.

Early data collection indicates that daytime taxi volumes in 2022 were 35% lower in the Bank area and 27% lower for the City than in 2017. This is in line with the reduction in taxi volumes in the West End and the congestion charge area as a whole. Engagement with the taxi trade is ongoing following a Member request to explore short-term measures to improve access to taxis. Measures identified include:

- Working with BIDs, venues and businesses to raise awareness of taxi hailing apps as an alternative to on-street hailing. The initial data collection indicates average wait times for taxis hailed via an app are between three and five minutes.
- Providing event venues within the City of details of social media accounts that inform drivers of events that are likely to have a high demand for taxis, so drivers are aware.
- Sharing details of recent traffic management changes with drivers.
- Continuing to review taxi rank provision and explore the potential for new ranks in areas that may have higher demand, particularly at night.
- Exploring the potential for rank marshalling to improve late night availability and safety at taxi ranks. This is currently being piloted at the Liverpool Street rank by the City of London Crime Prevention Association.

Vision Zero Plan 2023 – 2028

The City of London Corporation made a commitment that by 2040, all transport related deaths and serious injuries will be eliminated from the streets of the Square Mile. This commitment is included within the City's Transport Strategy and several road danger reduction measures have been delivered. However, the City is not currently on track to achieve this target and as a result, a new Vision Zero Plan has been devised. This includes additional measures to reduce road risk structured around the Safe Systems themes of Safe Speeds, Safe Streets, Safe Vehicles, Safe Behaviours and Post Collision Response. New interim targets have also been set for 2026 and 2030 to support the overall 2040 commitment.

The Vision Zero Plan was developed through extensive engagement and collaboration with stakeholders within and external to the City Corporation. Following the presentation of the draft Vision Zero Plan to members at the Police Authority Board and the Planning and Transportation Committee

several revisions have been made, including a 'Delivering the Plan' section. The Vision Zero Plan 2023 – 2028 was approved by the Planning and Transportation Committee and can be [found here](#).

OTHER UPDATES

Second phase of London's rental e-scooter trial launched

In late September 2023, the second phase of the London e-scooter trials was launched. This was following a competitive procurement process with operators which included strict safety requirements and operating standards. Dott, Lime and Voi were selected. The second phase builds on learnings from the first phase and provides opportunities to test new onboard technologies. These include AI to improve parking compliance and exploring the use of pavement riding detection technology and audible vehicle alerts.

Since the trials first began in June 2021, more than three million trips have been undertaken on London's rental e-scooters. Fewer than 0.001% of these trips have resulted in a serious injury.

TfL, London Councils and London boroughs will also explore the design of one coordinated future scheme to manage dockless e-bikes and e-scooters in London, through a contract, to improve parking of the vehicles and the quality and sustainability of these services in London.

TfL Travel Data

The number of journeys on TfL services continues to grow. Midweek ridership on the Tube is now regularly over 3.7 million journeys, up 6.5% compared to 2022, and Monday and Friday ridership regularly above 3 million journeys a day. Weekend ridership also continues growing, with several Tube stations in central London close to or exceeding pre-pandemic levels.

In addition, TfL has published new data from its annual Travel in London report, which shows there has been continued increases in walking and cycling levels. The number of daily cycling journeys increased in 2023 to 1.26 million journeys per day, up by 6.3% on 2022 and up 20% since 2019. This level of growth was not seen in the years leading up to the pandemic, however central London has seen a smaller level of growth reflecting hybrid working and less commuter cycling. The percentage of all journeys made by cycling reached 4.5% in the 2022/23 financial year, a significant increase compared to 3.6% in 2019/20. Walking accounts for 39% of all trips made by London residents.

TfL Government funding announcement

The Government confirmed on 18th December that it will provide £250 million of capital investment for TfL over the next year. This is half the amount that TfL required and as such some amendments have been made to the now agreed Business Plan to ensure TfL can deliver its planned improvements for 2024/25. This includes rephrasing the timing of payments related to the new Piccadilly line trains which are currently under construction.

TfL's 2024/25 Business Plan continues to assume that 50% of funding for TfL's major capital investment programmes from 2025/26 onwards is provided by the Government.

Roy.mcgowan@momentum-transport.com