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Introduction

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1.1. Purpose of this document

- 1.1.1. The purpose of this document is to set out the Department for Regional Development's (DRD) Regional Transportation Strategy (RTS) for Northern Ireland 2002 – 2012. The Strategy presents a clear framework for action which will facilitate implementation of a range of initiatives aimed at bringing about a stepped change in the quality of infrastructure and services, in line with the longer-term transportation vision for the region:

“to have a modern, sustainable, safe transportation system which benefits society, the economy and the environment and which actively contributes to social inclusion and everyone’s quality of life.”¹

1.2. Purpose of the Regional Transportation Strategy

- 1.2.1. The 10-year Regional Transportation Strategy is a vital component of the Regional Development Strategy² (RDS), which was agreed by the Assembly in September 2001. The RDS will shape the social, economic and environmental well-being of Northern Ireland up to the year 2025.
- 1.2.2. It is the purpose of the RTS to support the Regional Development Strategy and to move significantly, over a 10-year period, towards achievement of the longer-term transportation vision.
- 1.2.3. Within the specific commitments of the Programme for Government³ agreed by the Assembly, the RTS establishes strategic transportation investment priorities and considers the potential funding sources and affordability of the planned initiatives. The Strategy considers the funding that would be available if existing levels of investment in transportation were to be continued over the 10-year period (described as the Reference Case), as well as the additional investment (described as Additional Funding) required in order to deliver the initiatives. Together these two elements comprise the overall funding that would be required to deliver the Strategy.
- 1.2.4. It is important to note that, in relation to the level of public expenditure funding for the Strategy, the outcome will be determined through the normal Budgetary process which will take account of the financial needs of other Departments and decisions on priorities. In addition, as far as capital works are concerned, commitments to implement major infrastructure schemes cannot be given until appropriate economic and other relevant assessments have been considered, and statutory procedures (such as Public Inquiries) have been satisfactorily concluded.

¹ Shaping Our Future: Regional Development Strategy for Northern Ireland 2025 (page 157), DRD, September 2001

² Shaping Our Future: Regional Development Strategy for Northern Ireland 2025, DRD, September 2001

³ Programme for Government, Northern Ireland Executive, March 2002

- 1.2.5. It is also recognised that, where the benefits of initiatives are more difficult to predict with certainty – such as the retention of the full rail network, extension of a rapid transit network and provision of new cycling facilities - the full extent of the investment proposed will be conditional upon successful results from relevant investment in the early years of the Strategy. The flexibility of this phased approach will enable monitoring of the performance and impact of initial investments to inform decisions at mid-Strategy review stage.

1.3. Content

- 1.3.1. In addition to the core chapters dealing with the RTS content (Chapter 5), affordability (Chapter 6), outcomes (Chapter 7) and implementation (Chapter 8), this document:
- establishes the need for a RTS describing the policy context and providing background information (Chapter 2);
 - shows how the RTS will contribute towards achievement of the transportation vision (Chapter 3); and
 - outlines the methodology used in development of the Strategy (Chapter 4).
- 1.3.2. An Appraisal Summary Table is included at Annex A, with the purpose of articulating as clearly as possible the benefits and costs (disbenefits) of the initiatives within the Additional Funding, so that their combined overall value for money can be estimated.
- 1.3.3. Related initiatives by DRD, other Government Departments and public sector organisations, which are not part of the Strategy, but which are supportive of it, are listed in Annex C.
- 1.3.4. Associated reports which have informed the development of the RTS are published alongside this document and are available from the RTS Secretariat and on the RTS website at www.drdni.gov.uk/rts
These are:
- Equality Impact Assessment;
 - Health Impact Assessment; and
 - Consultation Process Report.

Regional Transportation Strategy

for Northern Ireland 2002 - 2012