

Transforming Cities Fund *Call for Proposals*



Department
for Transport

Application Form

Applicant Information

Bidding City Region: North East Combined Authority

Bid Manager Name and position:

Rachelle Forsyth-Ward, Senior Specialist Transport Planner

Contact telephone number: 0191 2116445

Email address: rachelle.forsyth-ward@northeastca.gov.uk

Postal address: NECA Regional Transport Team, Floor 2, Newcastle Civic Centre, Barras Bridge, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 8AX

SECTION A – Definition and challenges

A1. Constituent Local Authorities: Durham County Council, Gateshead Council, Newcastle City Council, North Tyneside Council, Northumberland County Council, South Tyneside Council and Sunderland City Council

A2. Geographical area:

Our city region includes Newcastle, Durham and Sunderland, and their surrounding polycentric, inter-dependent labour markets.

We are proud of our vibrant city centres, unspoilt coastline, world heritage sites, and our pioneering spirit, for example producing the world's first trains. Our industrial innovation, flexibility and resilience have created a growing economy that provides 871,000 jobs. Our ambition is that by 2024 there will be 100,000 more jobs in the regional economy compared to 2014. Our GVA is £38.6 billion (2.6% of English output).

Appendix A summarises our Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) and our transport geography.

Appendix B shows the bid area.

A3. Population

Our LEP area matches the boundaries of our constituent authorities. Their combined workday population is 1,908,000 (*Source: Census, 2011*). The area covered by the bid is at the heart of the city region and provides a high proportion of the employment for this population.

A4. Discussion of key transport challenges:

We want to boost productivity by transforming sustainable connectivity and urban mobility, whilst liberating our urban area from polluting forms of transport. We are well placed to respond to the Industrial Strategy's 'Future of Mobility Challenge' using our area's assets and expertise.

Key Challenge 1: Sustainable connectivity – physical barriers

- Metro and local rail systems are not extensive enough to reach all areas of housing and employment opportunity.
- Road congestion affects traffic in and out of city centres and other employment sites, damaging bus reliability.
- Limited river crossings in the urban core generate congestion and can mean that some communities can see opportunities but can't reach them easily.
- Park & Ride sites are not in optimal locations to intercept traffic before it reaches central Newcastle and Gateshead (**Appendix C**).
- Interchange facilities vary in quality and can deter use of sustainable transport through city centres.
- Peripheral areas, for example SE Northumberland, are isolated from the urban core by slow public transport links, leading to economic isolation.
- Out-of-town employment sites such as Doxford Park and Team Valley have limited public transport links.

- Major new housing sites such as Killingworth Moor and Murton Gap and new employment sites such as IAMP risk adding pressure to the existing transport network by building in high levels of car dependence, and need new sustainable links to unlock their potential.
- Digital connectivity can be greatly improved by using transport assets like the Metro network, for example through the region's bid to become a 5G testbed.

Vital statistics

- 8% of households can access two or more of our city centres within 30 minutes by bus, rail or Metro.
- 22% of households are within 800 metres of a rail or Metro station. **Appendix D** shows how the Metro network serves areas of high deprivation.

Key Challenge 2: Mobility – use of sustainable transport

- People are switching away from public transport because of poor perceptions of reliability, value for money, convenience and personal security.
- Young people need to be incentivised to travel sustainably over the long-term, avoiding car-dependency.
- There are NO₂ exceedances in 13 parts of the urban area and on the strategic road network, resulting in poor air quality.
- Some parts of the city region, for example along the banks of the Tyne, have high levels of deprivation and unemployment.
- The North East lags behind other areas of the UK in public health, affecting productivity, but would be improved through increased physical activity linked to sustainable travel.
- ITS is an opportunity to promote sustainable travel choices.

Vital statistics

- The modal share of public transport for travel to work is nearly 15% in total
- Use of both bus and Metro is currently in decline.
- Two thirds of workers in our area travel to work by car.
- Walking and cycling are 10% and 2% mode share respectively.

In order to achieve our vision and improve productivity we must tackle these issues head on, on the corridors where we can make the biggest impact.

Evidence of these challenges can be found in **Appendix E**.

SECTION B: Who & Where

We have chosen four priority corridors for investment, shown in **Appendix F** in spatial form, and **Appendix G** in schematic form.

Together these corridors support the areas of greatest opportunity in the city region. **Appendix H** shows their economic growth potential identified in the North East SEP and **Appendix I** their potential to reduce congestion.

1. North and South

Connectivity: Connecting areas of higher deprivation to city economies, this corridor links key residential sites throughout SE Northumberland, Newcastle, Gateshead and Durham, to employment opportunities including Kingston Park, Metro Centre, Team Valley and Washington. It also links to the energy sector in Blyth, and the International Advanced Manufacturing Park (IAMP).

Mobility: Local commuter and long-distance traffic conflict on the East Coast Main Line and A1 causing overcrowding on trains and traffic congestion. SE Northumberland and Washington are unserved by rail, leading to over-reliance on the congested road network and economic isolation for people without a car.

Benefits: Improvements will connect more residents with jobs and training opportunities; expand the labour pool for employers; speed up freight and long-distance road traffic using the national road and rail networks; and increase the viability of sites for new businesses.

2. Cities and Airport

Connectivity: This corridor links current and future major employment opportunities at Newcastle Airport, Sunderland Enterprise Park, IAMP and Follingsby Park with city centres, new housing in Callerton and numerous residential areas including areas of higher deprivation.

Mobility: Peak-hour congestion is severe leading to poor air quality and unreliable bus journeys, particularly on Tyne crossings and the strategic highways network. Over-crowding on Metro and reliability of the existing fleet are growing issues, as is station quality.

Benefits: Improvements will connect more residents with jobs and training opportunities; expand the labour pool for employers; improve air quality and unlock housing growth sites.

3. Banks of the Tyne

Connectivity: This corridor links Newcastle with major employment sites including Cobalt, Silverlink and Port of Tyne and residential areas including areas of high deprivation in East Newcastle, North Tyneside and South Tyneside. It also covers several Enterprise Zones and new housing opportunities.

Mobility: This corridor suffers from severe peak-hour congestion throughout its length, particularly at city centre river crossings. This leads to unreliable bus journey times and poor air quality.

Benefits: Improvements will connect more residents with jobs and training opportunities; expand the labour pool for employers; improve air quality; and unlock housing growth sites.

4. River Wear

Connectivity: This corridor links existing and new housing sites with areas of employment in Durham and Sunderland city centres, Doxford Park, Rainton Bridge, Port of Sunderland, South Shields and Aykley Heads. Car-based commuting dominates with no direct rail services and limited bus services outside city centres.

Mobility: Sustainable transport options on this corridor are unattractive compared to cars. Journey times on infrequent buses are affected by traffic congestion.

Benefits: Improvements will connect more residents with jobs and training opportunities; expand the labour pool for employers and unlock housing growth sites and town centre regeneration in South Shields.

SECTION C: Ambition for change

Our vision is: ‘more sustainable connectivity, more mobility’, making sustainable transport the natural choice for people moving around our city region, banishing congestion and its polluting effects, and improving air quality and public health.

Our ambition through this bid is to help close our area’s productivity gap, creating more and better jobs.

If our bid is successful we will work in partnership with DfT colleagues to develop a truly transformative programme. Some examples of the types of intervention we will explore are set out below. These will have Transforming Cities funding at their core, but will also exploit other funding and financing opportunities (see below).

More Sustainable Connectivity

North and South	Rail/Metro route expansion, Strategic P&R, bus / cycling / walking improvements to and through city centres, EV infrastructure
Cities and Airport	Rail/Metro route expansion, Strategic P&R, Metro and rail station investment, autonomous ‘last mile’ connections
Banks of the Tyne	Metro capacity, new Metro stations for housing, cycling and walking ‘healthy corridors’, flexible transport solutions connecting to stations, ITS
River Wear	Bus rapid transit, cycling and walking ‘healthy corridors’, ITS

Success will be measured through:

- More households able to reach two or more city centres within 30 minutes by sustainable transport.
- Improvement in peak efficiency on key routes.

More Mobility

The following are activities that will uplift the overall quality of sustainable transport:

- Exploiting digital and intelligent transport assets, including through our 5G programme, making sustainable transport the most positive and attractive travel choice.
- Using intelligent transport systems and investment in traffic signals and our UTMC centre to speed up buses, and use of Bus Services Act to improve bus, ticketing and integration.
- Increase Metro capacity, operating hours and fleet reliability.
- Bring public transport together with other sustainable options in a ‘Mobility as a Service’ package, building on the successful ‘Pop’ card.
- Invest in security on trains, stations and along ‘healthy’ corridors.

Success will be measured through:

- 50% Increase in Metro patronage by 2030.
- Arresting the decline in bus patronage.
- Increase modal share of walking to 11.5% and cycling to 7% by 2027
- Increased customer satisfaction with public transport.
- Improved air quality.

Sources of income and investment

In addition to public funding sources, we expect to secure:

- Developer contributions through sales of land and airspace, S106 agreements and land value uplift.
- Private sector investment in assets where best value for money is achieved.

- Concession and tenancy payments for the use of digital and physical infrastructure assets.
- Tech sector investment for collaborative projects
- Increased farebox income and P&R receipts.
- Investment from Metro, rail and bus operator budgets.

Powers

We expect to use:

- Nexus' existing powers to operate Metro and rail services and to develop transport in the area.
- New powers to create bus partnerships using the Bus Services Act.
- Influence over local rail services through membership of Transport for the North and our partnership with Network Rail.
- Partnership with the LEP to drive investment
- Local Authority planning and highways powers

Support

See **Appendix J**.

The weblink where this bid will be published: <https://northeastca.gov.uk/what-we-do/transport/>