



Rt Hon Gordon Brown MP
Prime Minister
10 Downing St
London SW1A 2AA

13 March 2009

Dear Mr Brown,

We are writing to express support for a fiscal stimulus using spending on transport projects and other infrastructure to help the economy, and to suggest that the Government should invest in local transport projects as the fastest and most effective way of achieving this.

The Government has already announced some spending on transport projects as part of the fiscal stimulus, including £1bn of projects in the last PBR and some further spending on managed motorways within recent transport announcements.

However, most of the spending announced so far is for national projects (Highways Agency or rail) which are large scale and in some cases will take a long time to get off the ground

In contrast, spending on local transport projects would be a far quicker way of getting projects off the ground and delivering benefits including:

- Generating significant employment relatively quickly
- A noticeable impact on the ground within the next 12-18 months
- Assisting in creating a greener and more sustainable economy and in reviving communities and local economies

We have between us examples of projects that could go forward if extra funding were made available. These include:

- Increased investment in road maintenance which would improve the road network and stimulate the local economy
- Local public transport projects, including enhanced bus services using new powers in the Government's Local Transport Act
- Local transport schemes such as Merseytram line 1
- Schemes to enable and promote walking and cycling
- "Smarter choice" projects such as car clubs and travel plans for employers and schools
- Mainstreaming by DWP of 'WorkWise' which puts travel advisors in JobCentres to help with journey planning and fares for job seekers
- Streetscape schemes that are part of wider town centre regeneration
- Previously proposed projects developed for Growth Point funding which would improve transport infrastructure to support growth

In addition, we would support the bringing forward of local rail projects such as station upgrades and local capacity improvements for passenger and freight traffic. Some of these are already in Network Rail's programme but could be brought forward; others are not currently in the Network Rail programme but could be easily progressed and would have good local transport and employment benefits.

These schemes will meet many of the Government's objectives. For example, Merseytram line 1, which has all necessary powers and contractors in place, would create 1000 construction jobs on Merseyside and also safeguard skilled engineering jobs at the Bombardier works in Derby where the trams would be made. These jobs would be in green technology, which you have said the Government is keen to promote. Projects to promote walking and cycling will assist the Government's anti-obesity drive. Accelerating road maintenance programmes will help reduce delays in cities that affect business. Workplace travel plans can increase access to jobs by those without cars and also help reduce carbon emissions.

We are not arguing for extra money for transport. Instead, we suggest that these schemes can be funded by using underspends, accelerating investment or increasing flexibility within existing programmes. Examples include the £1.5bn Congestion Transport Innovation Funding that would have gone to Manchester and unspent transport PFI allocations.

We understand that there is concern about whether local transport schemes can be delivered. We think that the schemes and projects we have in mind can be delivered efficiently and effectively. Local Transport Authorities and Passenger Transport Executives have a good track record in delivering these kinds of transport schemes on time and on budget. Walking, cycling and other "Active Travel" schemes can be delivered through charities such as Sustrans (which has already a good track record of delivering lottery-funded projects) as well as by local authorities. Increasing road maintenance budgets and spending would be a fast and effective way of delivering benefits because mechanisms and demand already exist and programmes of work are ready to go. Streetscape and local town centre schemes can be supported by a wealth of knowledge on what works.

We hope that you and relevant Ministers will agree to look seriously at these proposals. If you are interested, we can supply more detail on which projects can be easily delivered and the economic, employment and other benefits they might bring.

We look forward to hearing from you.

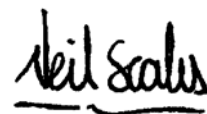
Yours sincerely,



Stephen Joseph,
Executive Director
Campaign for Better Transport



Keith Sonnett,
Deputy General Secretary
Unison



Neil Scales,
Chair
PTEG

CC: Alistair Darling, Geoff Hoon, Ed Miliband, Hilary Benn, James Purnell, Liam Byrne and Hazel Blears.