

# Chelmsford City Growth Package

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**Q: What ‘significant growth’ is Chelmsford undergoing?**

Currently, Chelmsford supports around 83,000 jobs – the second highest of any local council in Essex, and Chelmsford has around 8,500 businesses.

To positively and proactively encourage sustainable and diverse economic growth across Chelmsford, an average of 725 new jobs per-year (11,000 in total or a 13% increase from 2017 figures) are needed in the period to 2036.

Chelmsford City Council is the Planning Authority for the city and has been consulting on the Preferred Options for the [Draft Local Plan](#) which will shape future growth and development in Chelmsford until 2036. The plan shows 22,000 homes are expected to be built between 2013 and 2036.

**Q: Surely the growth that Chelmsford City Council is planning simply can’t happen?**

Without planning where new homes and business will be, local councils – as the planning authorities - will have little evidence to reject unsuitable planning applications. Furthermore, without building new homes or areas for businesses there simply won’t be the homes or jobs in Chelmsford for future generations.

For the latest on the development of the local plan please visit:

<https://www.chelmsford.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy-and-new-local-plan/new-local-plan/developing-the-new-local-plan/>

**Q: We heard similar plans for transport earlier this year? Why is this being done again now? Surely this is just re-hashing other strategies?**

In March 2017, we wanted to hear your views on ‘Chelmsford’s Future Transport Network’ between now and the year 2036. The vision is to create a transport network for Chelmsford which is on its way to becoming ‘best in class’, meaning it can stand proudly alongside other cities in the UK that already boast excellent networks with enhanced connectivity, and access to opportunities for residents, visitors and businesses.

The Vision will require a lot of investment which it will take time to secure. The intention is to make all modes of transport attractive, giving people real choice in the way they travel to work, to the shops and to their families and friends. Encouraging more sustainable travel on foot, by bicycle and on public transport will hopefully reduce the number of cars making short journeys on the road network.

To kick start this new modal-shift approach, Essex County Council has secured £15 million for a series of improvements in and around the city. This is the ‘Chelmsford City Growth Package’, which we are consulting on now, with a view to building the schemes shown by 2021.

**Q: Where can I find out more about the Future Transport Network?**

[www.essex.gov.uk/chelmsfordtransport](http://www.essex.gov.uk/chelmsfordtransport)

**Q: Why is focusing on congestion so important?**

Chelmsford is growing and demand for travel on our already busy road network is increasing. Today, the city's roads are under a lot of pressure, with only 4% space (capacity) remaining on our highways during morning and evening peak times. This means that in these periods the network can no longer cope with incidents, maintenance needs and the level of traffic generally, and bus users and cyclists are just as affected as car users, as everyone sits in the same traffic queues. Increased congestion is also being shown through research to be leading to worsening air quality.

**Q: How was the £15 million secured for this series of improvements in and around the city?**

The County Council successfully bid for £10m 'Growth Deal' funding from SELEP (The South East Local Enterprise Partnership, who in turn received this money from Central Government). Essex County Council has contributed a further £5m. The Local Growth Fund is the Government's 'Growth Deal' funding pot of at least £2bn a year from 2015/16 to 2020/21. The second of three rounds of Local Growth Funds between 2014 and 2017 secured the £10m for Chelmsford, which is for projects to be delivered up to 2021.

**Q: Will you deliver all of the schemes by 2021?**

The total cost of all of the schemes consulted upon exceeded the £15m budget and the purpose of the consultation was to allow the public to help inform the choice on which schemes were to progress. This process is now complete and a full list of the chosen proposals can be found on the Chelmsford City Growth Package website: [www.essex.gov.uk/chelmsfordtransport](http://www.essex.gov.uk/chelmsfordtransport)

**Q: Why is the County Council only investing £15 million? Why hasn't more been put into funding for Chelmsford?**

The County Council believe that residents shouldn't have to wait for investment in Chelmsford until large projects have secured funding. The £15 million on this occasion is intended just to be an initial phase of 'Chelmsford's Future Transport Network, with a focus on sustainable transport schemes supporting future housing and job growth, with highways improvements to help tackle congestion hotspots. These schemes must be delivered by 2021. Between now and then, the County Council will still participate in Central Government funding 'competitions' via SELEP, and are looking at a range of other funding channels, so other funding will likely be available post-2021, providing Essex are successful in bidding for it.

The initial £15m will help attract developers to the Chelmsford area. As part of future planning applications the traffic impacts on the network will be assessed and where necessary the Developer will be required to contribute towards measures to reduce this impact.

**Q: Why is the Chelmsford City Growth Package only focused on short-term 'sustainable' schemes?**

The funding from SELEP requires schemes being delivered through it to be undertaken by 2021. This time period is not sufficient to design and deliver large complex schemes so in this period we are focusing on short term schemes that can be implemented within the time scale. Chelmsford's Future Transport Network 'Vision to 2036' is also in place and takes the larger more complex schemes into account. We remain committed to delivering a range of other improvements in Chelmsford.

**Q: When will funding be available for long term schemes?**

With the past financial crisis, changes to the way Central Government funds schemes and the UK leaving the EU, there are and will be fewer opportunities to secure large funding packages. However, we are committed to delivering larger schemes both around Chelmsford and across Essex, and are actively looking at a range of funding channels. On average it can take up to 10 years for a major road improvement to go from an idea to 'tyres on tarmac' (i.e. a fully operational road).

**Q: What are some of these long term schemes?**

Chelmsford North East Bypass – A safeguarded corridor for this bypass will be allocated in Chelmsford City Council's New Local Plan. The City Council consulted on the Draft New Local Plan – Preferred Options from late March until mid-May 2017, which included the updated safeguarded corridor for the Chelmsford North East Bypass. The City Council consultation did not re-examine the case for the bypass, the preferred route or junction designs. The time frame for the delivery of the scheme has still not been determined, but the County Council is working closely with the City Council to identify funding sources to deliver the bypass within the next Local Plan, i.e. up to 2036. Identifying a funding source and promoting the importance of the scheme will remain key objectives going forward.

A12 Widening - Highways England is currently moving forward with its Road Investment Strategy (RIS) Programme proposals to widen the A12 between the M25 and Colchester. A consultation on widening between junction 19 (Boreham Interchange) and junction 25 (Marks Tey interchange) took place in 2017, with estimates putting the start of construction for this scheme at March 2020.

Funding has been announced by the DfT to make sufficient progress for widening of the A12 between the M25/Brentwood and Chelmsford to be developed to public consultation. Essex County Council is awaiting the preferred routes to be announced for other projects on the A12, such as the Brook Street roundabout (junction 28 of the M25) and the above Chelmsford to Colchester widening.

**Q: Why isn't more being done to build bypasses? Surely this is the only way traffic will be reduced in Chelmsford?**

Bypasses won't solve all the problems on the road network within Chelmsford city centre. Many of the problems are not caused by through traffic, but more by short

journeys within the city at identified congestion hotspots, which bypasses could not resolve.

**Q: “The County Council isn’t doing anything other than telling residents not to use their car, right?”**

This is not the case. The County Council is investing in all modes of transport to make sure there is a range of attractive travel options available to all in Chelmsford. Of course the personal car is needed for some trips, but possibly not for all, and the Chelmsford City Growth Package will provide schemes that encourage more sustainable travel on foot, by bicycle and on public transport, which will hopefully reduce the number of cars making short journeys on the road network, thereby reducing traffic queues, and improving air quality for all residents.

**Q: Will I have more travel choices to commute to and from work?**

Yes. The improvements will make bus journeys, cycling and walking a real alternative to using the car for short to medium journeys. Many of the schemes will provide the missing links between existing cycle routes, and therefore make these more attractive for some short journeys. The non-cycling schemes such as existing bus lane improvements, a new bus priority lane are anticipated to make bus travel more reliable and speed up journey times. The congestion-alleviating schemes should help to reduce traffic queuing at some of the worst hotspots, making commuting by bus more attractive than at present, where the buses sit in the same traffic queues as private single-occupant cars.

**Q: How will quality of life be improved for local residents and visitors by these schemes?**

It is expected that those schemes providing the missing links between existing cycle routes will make these routes and cycling in general more attractive across Chelmsford, and consequently lead to a greater number of people cycling within the city, with the associated health benefits this brings. The schemes that are planned to improve the reliability of bus travel will hopefully lead to modal shift away from the private car, which will mean less queuing traffic, and therefore an improvement in local air quality where queuing traffic and poor air quality is currently recognised as an issue.

**Q: What congestion hotspots will be addressed by the schemes?**

- Army and Navy Roundabout – Baddow Road Approach
- Odeon Roundabout at High Bridge Road
- Parkway Westbound between the Army and Navy Roundabout and New London Road
- New London Road inbound towards Chelmsford, including the junction with Parkway

**Q: How were the public informed about these proposals?**

During the summer of 2017, a public consultation was held across Chelmsford, combining online material with events at the following locations:

<b>Location</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Event Time</b>
Broomfield Village Hall	Tuesday 18 <sup>th</sup> July	12:30 – 17:30
Essex County Cricket Club	Wednesday 19 <sup>th</sup> July	13:00 – 20:00
Chelmsford City Football Club	Thursday 20 <sup>th</sup> July	13:00 – 20:00
Broomfield Hospital	Monday 24 <sup>th</sup> July	10:00 – 16:00
Chelmsford Rugby Club	Tuesday 1 <sup>st</sup> August	13:00 – 20:00
Great Baddow Parish Hall	Monday 7 <sup>th</sup> August	13:00 – 20:00
High Chelmer Shopping Centre	Saturday 12 <sup>th</sup> August	10:00 – 16:00

We used the following ways to publicise the consultation:

- Briefed all local County and City Council Members about the consultation events.
- Held a press launch to encourage the press to publicise the consultation.
- Circulated all the information about the proposals to the local press. The publicity via the local press has been excellent and we have already had over 300 responses to the consultation.
- Sent information to all Parish Councils informing them of the events and providing posters and leaflets that they could use in their local areas.
- Provided copies of the consultation material to local libraries
- Informed local Residents Associations
- Arranged consultation events to engage with disability groups

We received over 900 responses to the public consultation. Further information can be found on the Chelmsford City Growth Package website at:

[www.essex.gov.uk/chelmsfordtransport](http://www.essex.gov.uk/chelmsfordtransport)

**Q: What happens next?**

The purpose of the public consultation exercise over Summer 2017 was to share the details of the Chelmsford City Growth Package sustainable transport and congestion-relieving proposals. The consultation process is now closed.

We have taken the extensive feedback received from the public, businesses and stakeholders, using it to inform our selection of which schemes are delivered from the £15m allocated funding. The proposals will then be installed across the city between now and March 2021.