

Quality Bus Corridors in Dublin (IE)

Topic Quality Bus Corridors, Dublin

Summary

The Quality Bus Corridors facilitate the provision of a faster, more frequent and more reliable bus service; provide adequate loading and parking facilities for businesses; improve safety for all classes of road users including pedestrians, combined with new or improved cycling facilities and crossing facilities for pedestrians; They Increase speed for buses, better reliability of service, improve patronage levels, safer environment for pedestrians and cyclists.

Case Study

Quality Bus Corridors increase speed for buses, better reliability of service, improve patronage levels, safer environment for pedestrians and cyclists.

Characteristics of the measure are

- Direct high frequency bus services operated by stylish, comfortable environmentally friendly buses;
- Staff highly trained in customer service
- High quality shelters at most stops, incorporating seats and real-time information
- improved lane markings, using different colored surfaces
- kerb alignments and traffic signals
- Restrictions on parking and turning movements
- bus priority measures, including 'bus gates' to enable buses to go straight on from a left turn only lane at a junction and bypass traffic lights, which are holding back other traffic

Basic facts

- timescale: The duration of the different processes delayed rather than hindered the success of the measure. The consultation process assisted greatly with the success of the measure.
- participation: Public consultation was essential for the success of the measure, though there should have been greater public involvement in the official processes and some market research, involving bus users and car drivers should also have been carried out. Better use should have been made of the DTO's Consultative Panel, which should have wider representation, and should have dealt with the QBC strategy as a whole rather than on a scheme by scheme basis. Enforcement issues should have been better addressed.
- promotion and information campaign: The information process has been very effective; poster adverts on the routes having been more useful than the radio adverts which should be used to express that the QBCs are part of a wider strategy. Improvements, which are in hand, would also include effective information for car drivers and passengers on how to use the QBCs. Such a campaign was essential at both the planning and implementation stages, though in some cases the information was deemed to be inadequate and not interactive enough. This has resulted in a certain amount of conflict from businesses on the

- routes of the QBC and from car drivers, who are frustrated by the "empty" lane next to them when stuck in traffic.
- legal framework: The Corporation has enough competence, including staff competence, to implement the measure in a successful way, though a single department for transport at the local level might have improved the planning and implementation of the schemes.
 - efficiency: In terms of costs, the benefits from improvements in road safety alone should be sufficient. Improvements are related more to the implementation of the operational side of the QBC, such as better facilities at bus stops, real-time passenger information and integrated ticketing.

Users and stakeholders

The implementation of the DTI (Dublin Transport Initiative), which started in 1996, has caused there to be ongoing partnership between local authorities, national government departments, public transport operators, the business community (Chambers of Commerce), NGOs and other community organisations. Public participation has been involved at various stages during the preparation and implementation of the DTI and the QBCs.

Implementation set-up

Implementation elements consisted in the following steps: Study brief prepared for external consultants agreed by Dublin Corporation, Dublin Bus & the Dublin Transportation Office (DTO). Public consultation was undertaken. Final designs were drawn up and agreed. These were then put out to tender for the design process. Key radials based on passenger volumes were designated as part of the Dublin Transportation Initiative. The parent route number was nominated for each QBC and a local network redesign was undertaken. A new fleet was sought and market research into the design was carried out. Construction drawings were submitted to the Road Construction Section of Dublin Corporation. Outside contractors were then appointed for four separate contracts on the Malahide Road QBC covering lights, parking, changing junction layouts, traffic signals (by in house contractor). A new roundabout was put in place on the Malahide Road QBC and a bus gate was constructed on the Lucan and Blanchardstown QBCs. City Swifts (new brand name and new livery) were introduced by Dublin Bus prior to the actual launch of the QBCs. New bus shelters put in place. The staff was retrained in customer care. Major promotional campaign using radio adverts. Additional buses are being purchased and more staff is being recruited from outside Dublin Bus. Mobile offences are the responsibility of the Garda Síochána (State Police) and Parking Warden Service using motorcycle patrols and point duty. Dublin Corporation, through a private contractor, is responsible for clamping and towing. The Urban Traffic Control Centre assists this process with CCTV cameras throughout the City.

Results

Outcomes and impacts can be evaluated in terms of:

- change in use of single modes: Bus journey speeds have increased by 15-20% giving an overall reduction of 10 minutes for the route. Bus passenger numbers in the morning peak have increased by up to 11%, of which 25% are new passengers transferring from cars. Car drivers manage to find alternative routes away from the QBC.
- change in modal split: Bus share has increased by 11% to 57% at the Cordon; Car share has decreased by 6% to 33% at the Cordon
- traffic safety: There are minor accidents involving cars on a daily basis, possibly caused by driver frustration; cars are moving slower as public transport is moving faster.
- environment: Requirement for cleaner fuels, better maintained and more modern buses Combination of cycle track and bus lane has been very positive
- land use development: Increased densities around QBCs. Perception that inclusion of cycleways is a poor use of land due to under use by cyclists.

Future prospects and conclusions

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