



**Comhairle Cathrach na Gaillimhe
Galway City Council**

**Comhaire Chontae na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council**

**Galway Transportation and Planning Study (GTPS)
Integration Study**

**Overview of Study Background
and
Recommendations**



March, 2002

Foreword

A strategic transportation and planning study for the Galway region, encompassing Galway City and its catchment in County Galway was completed in 1999. This study – the Galway Transportation and Planning Study (GTPS) – was aimed at establishing a development framework in land use and transportation terms for the overall Galway area and its two constituent components, Galway City and Galway County. This development framework was aimed at supporting and facilitating dynamic, sustainable and quality based economic, social and physical development.

The rapid pace of development experienced by the Irish economy in recent years, together with an increased emphasis on strategic planning at the European, national and other levels brought forward the need for a review of the original Strategy. The review has now been integrated with the original GTPS in the form of the Galway Planning and Transportation Integration Study.

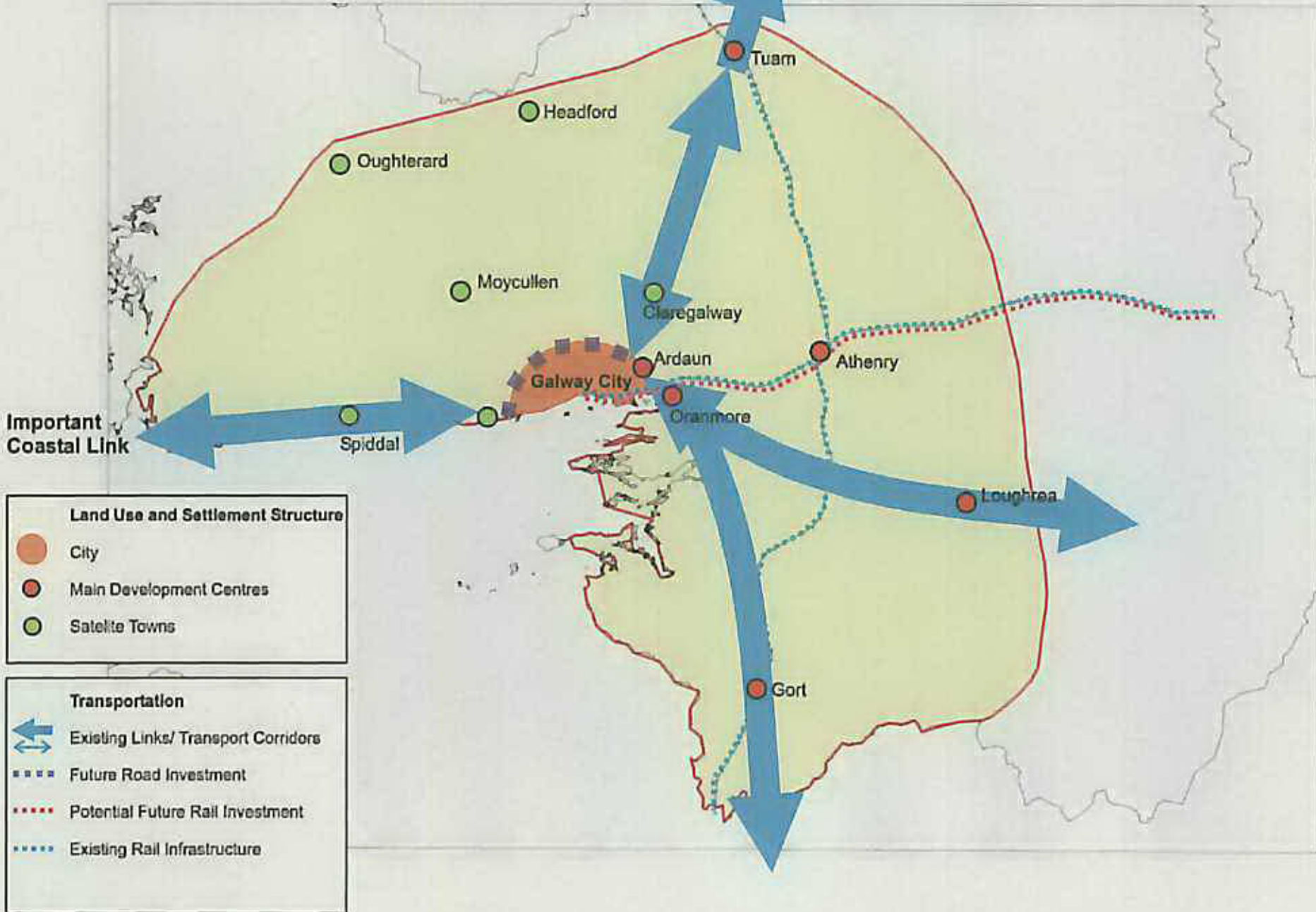
This Overview Report summarises the main findings of the Integration Study and sets out the details of the updated GTPS Strategy that is proposed as a result.

- **Section 1: 1999 GTPS Strategy** provides a summary of the 1999 GTPS, explains the background to the Integration Study and how it updates the 1999 GTPS.
- **Section 2: Changes in the GTPS Policy Context** explains the policy developments since the 1999 GTPS, sets out the spatial trends within the GTPS area and the required policy principles developed in response.
- **Section 3: Meeting the Needs of the Galway Region - Potential Ways Forward** sets out the revised growth forecasts for the GTPS area to 2016 and summarises the approaches examined to accommodate this growth.
- **Section 4: The Recommended Strategy – Galway, A Region In Balance** sets out the details of the updated GTPS Strategy and what it means for the Galway Region.
- **Section 5: Commitment and Implementation** highlights the importance of agreeing the updated GTPS Strategy so that priority can be given to its implementation in order to benefit the whole of the Galway Region.

1. 1999 GTPS Strategy

- 1.1 The 1999 Galway Transportation and Planning Study (GTPS) marked an important step in an ongoing process of strategic planning for Galway City and its surrounding region in Galway County. The study embraced land use and transportation planning within Galway City and County together with proposals for continuous monitoring and review. It highlighted the need for more sustainable forms of development in Galway with an emphasis on public transport, considering the rapid pace of growth, uncoordinated patterns of development, trends of increasing dependency on the private car and the need to protect quality of life, economic competitiveness and environmental quality within Galway.
- 1.2 Analysis of population and economic trends confirmed that Galway would continue to develop, with a projected increase in population in the region of around 30,000 people between 1996 and 2016, requiring approximately 17,000 extra houses and land in the order of 1,100 hectares.
- 1.3 In response, the strategy provided an integrated framework for accommodating this level of development in an approach that placed emphasis on two key elements:
- **Focus on Galway City:** Consolidating development within Galway City and County within a major new corridor for expansion to the east, the 'Ardaun Corridor'. This was based on a high quality living and working environment with bus based public transport links to and within Galway City utilising appropriate prioritisation measures and investment in vehicles, information, park and ride, stops and termini; and
 - **Focus on Main County Towns:** Encouraging the development of the main towns within Galway's catchment, including Tuam, Oranmore, Athenry, Loughrea and Gort together with the satellite towns of Oughterard, Headford, Claregalway, Moycullen, Barna and Spiddal and linking these to Galway City via a County based fixed route radial network serving the main towns and villages and a 'Dial-a-Bus' facility to serve the rural areas outside the fixed routes.
- 1.4 The 1999 GTPS Strategy also identified strategic road priorities to remove through traffic within the City, improve road access from outside the GTPS area and open up development opportunities in the Ardaun Corridor. The approach of the 1999 GTPS is illustrated by Concept Diagram 1 overleaf.

**Concept Diagram 1
1999 GTPS**



Progress

1.5 Progress has been made towards the implementation of a number of transport improvements within the Galway Region that are of particular significance. These include:

- Planning in progress on a number of major road projects:
 - The new N6 linking Dublin to Galway
 - The new N17/N18 linking Galway to Sligo and Limerick/Cork
 - The Galway City Outer Bypass (GCOB)
 - The R336 Western Approach Road
- Investment in the fleet and development of routes by Bus Eireann for urban bus services, which has facilitated increased frequency of service; and
- A Study commissioned jointly by Bus Eireann and Galway City Council into bus priority measures, to be completed by April 2002.

The GTPS Integration Study

1.6 This Integration Study has updated the original GTPS with respect to:

- Members concerns for a more balanced Strategy in particular:
 - promoting growth and development of the County as well as the City
 - public transport connections between Galway City and surrounding towns that considered the role of the rail network as well as the bus network
- The changing national and local policy context; and
- Accelerated levels of growth with the Region.

1.7 This Integration Study was carried out in full consultation with the City and County Councils, Members of the City and County Strategic Planning and Transportation Committees (SPCs), representatives of the Department of the Environment and Local Government's Spatial Planning Unit and the Department of Public Enterprise. In particular, the Study incorporated an extensive consultation process that provided the opportunity for Members of the City and County SPCs to contribute at each stage of the Study.

1.8 The Integration Study confirms the appropriateness of many of the strategic policies in the 1999 GTPS. It reaffirms the importance of the Ardaun Corridor as a sustainable solution to City and County growth. It also supports the need for growth within the main centres outside Galway City.

1.9 However, in response to the original brief, this Integration Study also combines and extends the 1999 GTPS with a number of new recommendations:

- **Recognising and harnessing the complementary strengths of City and County.** The revised recommendations aim to create the conditions for a better balance within the Galway Region through establishing strategic points in the County where critical mass can be established at various large town, small town and village levels. The 1999 GTPS was focused on some