



DRAFT PROPOSALS

GUIDING LIMERICK THROUGH COVID-19

Transforming a challenge
into an opportunity



Comhairle Cathrach
& Contae **Luimnigh**

Limerick City
& County Council

ATLANTIC EDGE
LIMERICK
EUROPEAN EMBRACE

Introduction

The Covid-19 pandemic has transformed the way we live our lives.

As we move through the re-opening stages, we want to explore how we can harness this crisis to bring about positive change in Limerick.

Throughout Summer 2020, we propose to re-allocate space, pedestrianise and animate certain city centre streets that were once dominated by traffic to boost footfall and aid our economic recovery from this pandemic.

Whilst it is too early to say what the post-Covid-19 normal will look like, we believe this opportunity will give Limerick city centre and its towns the edge, by making them desirable, safe and fun places to live, work, shop and visit.

By temporarily pedestrianising the heart of our city centre, widening our footpaths and animating some of our public spaces, we can engage all our communities, people of all ages and abilities. We acknowledge that it's difficult for young families in the city to get fresh air and exercise while trips to parks and beaches are restricted due to Covid-19.

We want to creatively use our public spaces to reflect the new normal of the city centre experience. This means allowing footpath widening and family activities to take place during the summer months, creating a pop up urban playground, allowing performance spaces and programming bespoke activities unique to Limerick. Carefully placed street seating and pavement cafés enable people to rest, to talk, and take time to soak up the experience.

We have listened to our community who have asked us to re-allocate road space to help people enjoy walking and cycling in our city centre. We will do this to accommodate additional space for pedestrians and cyclists and provide street furniture to allow for social distancing.

We will introduce an advisory speed limit of 25kph in the core city centre and in county towns to make it safer. We will facilitate safe segregated cycle routes in the city to encourage family and novice cyclists to come out and get some exercise.

Our small businesses and retailers are particularly affected by Covid 19.

We are facilitating retailers across Limerick to showcase their online offering and adapt to the new retail environment by offering key supports and establishing and marketing a virtual marketplace [Limerick.ie/Shop](https://limerick.ie/Shop). We will programme a series of family friendly events on our newly pedestrianised streets to help increase footfall and social activity in the city.

Many families will now holiday locally and we are developing a package of measures to encourage visitors to Limerick this Summer. In accordance with national guidelines, we will develop creative activations on our shared public spaces.

The potential for urban spaces to support growth in the evening and night-time economy while observing social distancing is important – not just in terms of outside seating areas for pubs, bars and restaurants, but also events.

We are investigating the possibility of hosting night markets, drive in movies and concerts and evening street performances. All proposed activities will need to be considered in partnership with stakeholders and national guideline requirements. Any agreed activities or events will be managed sensitively and carefully to preserve acceptable crowd behaviour and respect public health guidelines.

Limerick will get through this current public health crisis.

This plan will be reviewed at the end of August 2020.

This opportunity will allow us to study the future of Limerick in a way that boosts the quality of life for all who live, work and socialise here.



Cllr Michael Sheahan
*Mayor Of The City And
County Of Limerick*



Dr Pat Daly
*Chief Executive,
Limerick City and County
Council*

Document Outline

	Page
Changing Our Public Spaces	4
The Milk Market	8
Our Towns and Villages	8
Culture & Place-making	9
Business Supports	10
Implementation Plan	11

Changing Our Public Spaces

Prior to the COVID19 pandemic, approximately 20,000 cars passed through the heart of the city on a daily basis. The 2016 Census listed the transport modal split for Limerick as outlined in the table below. The lockdown has had a major impact on all modes of transport and the journey to be undertaken on our Road Map to Recovery will result in changes to these figures as we get back to normal ways over the coming months. Based on our own and data from other urban centres on modal shift, we are making some adjustments to facilitate changes to the way we will travel around and use our city centre over the next couple of months.

	Mode of Travel*	Likely Immediate Future Change**
Public Transport	10%	80% Capacity Reduction
Car	60%	Approx. 30% reduction
Walking	15%	Target 100% increase
Cycling	2.8%	Target 300% increase
Other	12.2%	No Change

*Based on CSO 2016 Data for Limerick

**Assumptions by National Transport Authority for Interim Mobility Measures in Dublin City

Limerick City and County Council working with the National Transport Authority (NTA) is preparing a new transport strategy for the greater Limerick Metropolitan Area that will consider the future investment in our transport system up to the year 2040. The Transport Strategy is due to commence the public consultation phase shortly. The implementation plan within the strategy will identify strategic sustainable transport and cycling corridors into the city from the suburbs creating greater connectivity between the city centre, residential and employment areas in the city. We would like to bring forward some of these schemes which are currently being planned on a pilot basis where regulations permit.

1. Street Changes

a. We propose to reassign road space for public use. The capacity of certain roads to accommodate additional space for pedestrian and cyclists, street furniture and social distancing is being examined. The provision of soft landscaping and seating could be a feature of the new space. A variety of different options are being proposed. (See Map). To facilitate Social Distancing the following streets are currently being proposed for temporary pedestrianisation: -

- Catherine Street,
- Denmark Street,
- Upper Denmark Street,
- Robert Street,
- Howley's Quay.
- Nicholas Street

These measures will require some removal of parking, local footpath widening, partial road closures and temporary traffic management.

b. Reassignment of Road Space; O'Connell Street – footpath buildouts at cafes/shops.

We also propose advancing the following schemes, which will improve comfort and safety for cyclists commuting from the suburbs. We are proposing to designate a number of these routes where vehicular traffic volumes will be reduced by restricting vehicle access to these roads.

In this regard, we propose the following short-term measures on a temporary basis;

1. Extension of the Condell Road cycle paths by provision of a cycle route across Shannon Bridge onto Bishops Quay down to Howley's Quay.
2. O'Callaghan Strand- Close access at the Ennis Road end to reduce traffic volume along this River side walk and form a link to the Condell Road cycle paths.

Changing Our Public Spaces

3. South Circular Road to Upper Henry Street- Restrict access to inbound traffic by closing inbound access at Ballinacurra Road to reduce commuting traffic on the route and provide an advisory speed limit of 25KPH.
4. Old Dublin Road- Restrict access inbound on the old Dublin Road to reduce commuting traffic on this route and through Rhebogues thus creating a safer walking and cycling environment and provide for an advisory speed limit of 25KPH and linkage to the riverside cycle/walking route.

Other measures we are proposing include:

- Advance the design of a new cycle route from Limerick Institute of Technology to the city centre through the Part VIII planning process which is intended to be lodged within the next month.
- Recovery of road markings and increased maintenance on existing cycle tracks.

2. Speed Limits

The introduction of a 25KPH advisory speed limit is being considered for the core city centre and our county towns. Traffic reduction will allow pedestrians and cyclists a greater degree of safety to social distance at certain pinch points, and this will be monitored with a view to a permanent speed limit reduction.

3. Signage

Installation of physical distancing reminder signage on footpaths.

4. Bicycle Parking

We propose to increase cycle parking in the city centre to facilitate the increased volume of cyclists. In this regard, we propose;

- Michael Street- Designate a large area of the current car park on Michael Street to cycle parking
- Pery Square; Designate a large number of the on-street car parking outside the People's Park to cycle parking.

- Other locations are currently being identified where additional bike parking will be provided to facilitate increases in bicycle use.

5. Pedestrian Crossings

Pedestrian crossings have been optimised in the city to provide for increased pedestrian priority.

6. Licence System for Street Animation

There is a range of mechanisms by which structures on a public road can be installed, such as the introduction of on-street parklets/ buildouts outside premises, as outlined below;

a. Street Furniture – Businesses may wish to place tables and chairs on a public street to facilitate social distancing. In order to meet health and safety requirements, an application for a street furniture licence will be necessary (details are available at Limerick.ie/Council). Once the requirements of the application are met (subject to consultation with Development Control, Fire and Rescue Services and An Garda Síochána), a licence will be issued as quickly as possible.

b. Public Space Licences – public space licences are granted upon an application to use one of the designated public spaces in the city.

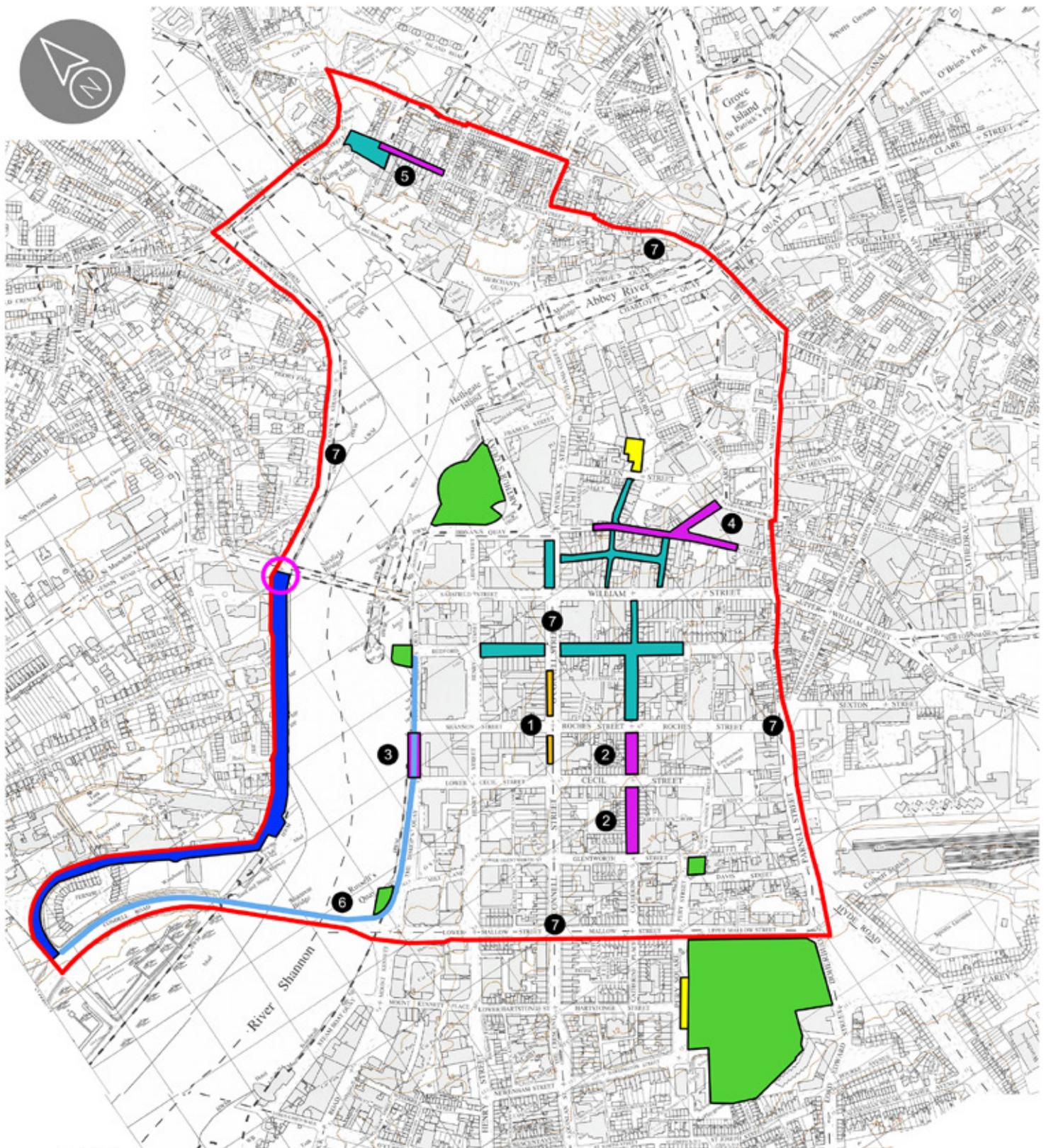
For further details contact Planning Department on **061-556000**

7. Street Cleaning

A process of intensive street cleaning has begun with a number of streets already complete. This included extensive deep clean with power washers and road cleaning machinery in the city centre.

8. Park and Walk

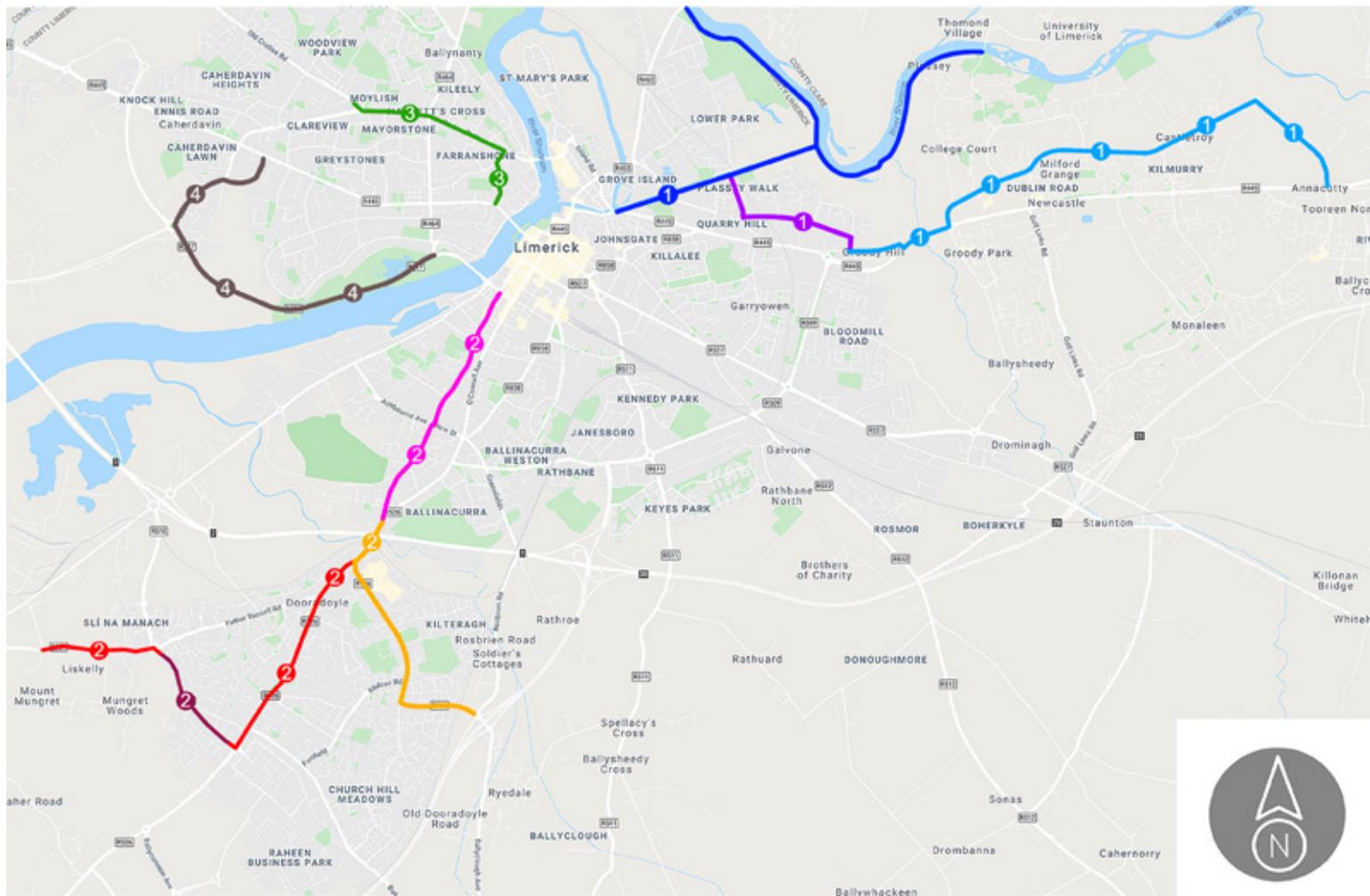
Identify and open suitable Park and Walk sites adjacent to the city.



Legend:

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <p>1 Footpath widening to facilitate street furniture at various locations in the City Centre.</p> <p>2 Pedestrianisation daily from 11AM of Catherine Street between Roches Street & Cecil Street and between Cecil Street & Glentworth Street.</p> <p>3 Pedestrianisation from 11AM of Howley's Quay.</p> <p>4 Pedestrianisation from 11AM of Denmark Street (Part), Upper Denmark Street (Part) and Robert Street. Access to Multi Storey car parks maintained.</p> | <p>5 Pedestrianisation from 11AM of Nicholas Street from Newgate Lane to Castle Street.</p> <p>6 Cycle lane on Condell Road extended across Shannon Bridge to Bedford Row.</p> <p>7 Reduction in speed limit from 50 & 30 km/h to 25 km/h (advisory).</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> City Centre Public Parks & Public Spaces Existing Pedestrian/ Pedestrian Friendly Streets Proposed Footpath Widening (Number of locations to be increased in consultation with Traders) Proposed Pedestrian Streets Proposed Designated Bicycle Parking Proposed Car Restricted Zone (O'Callaghan's Strand to Condell Road) Proposed Restricted Access Point (Junction of O'Callaghan's Strand & Ennis Road) Proposed 25 km/h Zone Proposed Cycle Path |
|--|---|--|

Map 1: City Centre Proposals



- 1
Route 1:
 - Annacotty to Rhebogogue Road - On Road Cycle Facilities
 - Rhebogogue Road to Park Canal - Restricted Car Zone
 - Existing Cycle Path

- 2
Route 2:
 - Raheen to The Crescent SC - On Road Cycle Facilities
 - Proposed Cycle Path
 - Existing Cycle Path
 - South Circular Road to Henry Street - Traffic Calming (Restricted Car Zone) to improve the road for cyclists and walking

- 3
Route 3:
 - Part 8 Planning Application - LIT to Ennis Road

- 4
Route 4:
 - Existing Cycle Path

Map 2: Cycle routes from Suburbs to City Centre

The Milk Market

Measures have been put in place to provide for a safe re-opening of the historical market and to provide a link between the Market and the shopping area of the city.



Our County Towns and Villages

Limerick City and County Council staff in area offices across the county are working with local stakeholders in our towns and villages to examine measures to make more pedestrian friendly changes and to provide spaces for local open air events across Summer 2020.

A €5 million investment programme to totally upgrade the Great Southern Greenway surface has just been announced.



Culture & Place-Making

Limerick Tourism, Culture and Arts Recovery Programme 2020

In line with the national easing of restrictions, animation and promotion of footfall in urban areas can commence from Phase 3 of the plan. Therefore, we propose the following staggered escalation from Animation to Activity and Events as follows:

Animations	PHASE 3	Currently proposed for June 29th
Activities	PHASE 4	Currently proposed for July 20th
Events	PHASE 5	Currently proposed for August 10th

Animations

Luke Jerram's Gaia

Install this beautiful artwork outdoors at a city centre location as a beacon of hope visible from key vantage points. This artwork is illuminated at night and can be augmented with special performances each evening.

3D Street Art & Games

Work with artists specialising in 3D street art to create giant games in urban areas in our city and towns which respond to location and are interactive.

Pop up street spectacle

Harness the element of surprise to create unexpected animations which promote a renewed curiosity. Pop up street spectacle events in the city and county town e.g. A Glass Bell Jar with a live performer inside. Locations: key retail districts and pedestrianised areas of the city centre and county towns.

Activities

Food Trail

Engage with Limerick Food Strategy, Limerick Food Group, Pigtown Food Series and the hospitality sector to establish a food trail/ tapas trail package that coincides with the re-opening of restaurants and hotels, supporting 'alfresco' eating and visitor packages.

Outdoor & Drive-In Movies

Working with stakeholders to support outdoor movie events in public spaces, like the People's Park, Cleve's and our towns and villages.

Weekly Summer Street Food

Re-establish the Summer Street Food Market. With outdoor seating, live performances and Giant deck chairs for a riverside 'beach' summer feel. Using multiple locations from Thomas Street/Catherine St, Bedford Row to The Boardwalk and in our county towns.

Farmers Markets

Work with our county market towns to augment our farmers markets and animate our market squares.

Museums and Galleries

Develop family activity packages and possible outreach programmes across Limerick e.g. Pop-up Museum events outdoors.

Events

Focus on Night-Time Economy

Working with key stakeholders to roll out a series of night-time economy focused events such as drive-in concerts and movies, night-time markets and street performances and a light show.

Theatres and Venues

Support the delivery of events, which can be packaged as part of weekend and midweek hotel packages.

Funfair and Circus

Work with stakeholders to invite funfair and circus operators back to Limerick.

Festival of Lights

Explore the potential for a new Festival of Lights for Limerick to take place in late 2020.

Business Supports

Limerick City and County Council and the Local Enterprise Office are providing a number of measures to assist business through this difficult time.

- 1. The Business Restart Grant** - Available to businesses with a turnover of less than €5m and employing less than 50 people the payments will be equivalent to the rates bill of the business in 2019, with a minimum payment of €2,000 and a maximum of €10,000.
- 2. Rates Deferral** - The Council will be deferring rates payments for the most immediately impacted businesses primarily in the retail, hospitality, leisure and childcare sectors for a period of three months until the end of May.
- 3. COVID-19 Business Loans** - The Local Enterprise Offices (LEO) is administering the COVID-19 Business Loan from Microfinance Ireland to support small businesses.
- 4. Trading Online Voucher Scheme** - The expanded Trading Online Voucher Scheme helps small businesses with up to 10 employees to trade online. Grants of up to €2,500 are available.
- 5. Mentoring Advice** - The LEO Mentor Programme will provide clients with an experienced mentor free of charge to identify solutions to areas of exposure within their business.
- 6. LEO Financial Supports Grants** – Grants for new and established businesses and potential start-ups that meet eligibility criteria are available including;
 - a. Business Priming Grants
 - b. Business Expansion Grants
 - c. Feasibility Study Grants
 - d. Technical Assistance for Micro-Exporters Grant
- 7. LEAN for Micro** - LEO clients can avail of consultancy support with a LEAN Expert, who will work with the company to introduce lean principles.
- 8. SHOP LIMERICK** - Limerick.ie/Shop provides an opportunity for retailers to display their online offering and trade on-line with the development of this new one-stop platform on the local authority's digital platform
- 9. Marketing promotion** for local business initiatives like Lean on Me, which allows customers buy vouchers to use at a later date, has also been provided to promote economic recovery.
- 10. Training and Webinars** - LEO has moved its free training programmes online, covering areas such as cash management and leading your business through COVID-19.
- 11. Small and Medium Enterprise Support Scheme** - This rates rebate scheme is paid as a financial support to occupiers of commercial properties with annual rates bills up to and including €25,000. The payment is set at 9% of the annual cost of commercial rates for the rated occupier up to a maximum of €1000
- 12. Business & Retail Incentive Scheme** - The Council is offering incentives to encourage new Business and Retail within the core city centre, and the centre of towns and villages. The grant is a contribution towards fit out costs subject to a maximum of 50% relief of the annual rates liability in year 1 and subject to a maximum of 25% in year 2.
- 13. Tourism Sector Support Scheme** – Aimed at businesses with a rates liability in excess of €25,000, it pays a financial support of up to 4% to occupiers of commercial properties, directly linked to the tourism and hospitality Sector.

FOR FURTHER DETAILS OF THESE BUSINESS SUPPORTS PLEASE VISIT

[Limerick.ie/business](https://limerick.ie/business)

Implementation Plan

During this time of anxiety and business interruption Limerick City and County Council recognises the need to listen to and take account of the needs of all citizens, businesses

and street users. We will endeavour to engage in effective communication by way of all media platforms and simple clear signage.

Summary	Phase 1 Start 18th May	Phase 2 8th June	Phase 3 29th June	Phase 4 20th July	Phase 5 10th August
Public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 25km Speed Limit • Consultation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Street interventions at South Circular Rd, Shannon Bridge, Howley's Quay O'Callaghan Strand, Old Dublin Rd • Accommodate Individual Business • Consultation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animations • Changes in Upper Catherine St, Nicholas St, O'Connell St • Lodge Part VIII for LIT to City Centre Cycle Route 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programmed Activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Events • Denmark St Changes • Robert St Changes
Business / City Centre Traders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Supports • 25km Speed Limit • Consultation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accommodate Individual Business 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animations • Changes in Upper Catherine St, Nicholas St, O'Connell St 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programmed Activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Events • Denmark St Changes • Robert St Changes



LEAN ON ME

Lean on Me is a Limerick volunteer led initiative that uses smart technology to connect customers who want to support their favourite local business.

The web portal allows customers to pay for a voucher for their chosen local shop/retailer during the Covid 19 crisis which is collected at a later date after the business reopens.

www.leanonme.eu

To give feedback on the proposals and changes set out in this document please email: ecdev@limerick.ie

SHOP LIMERICK, SAVE LIVELIHOODS.

Limerick's retailers need us now, more than ever.

[Limerick.ie/Shop](https://limerick.ie/shop) lets you connect with, browse and buy from businesses across Limerick.

Please support your local community - buy a local business voucher, find out about neighbourhood food deliveries or order a take-out from your favourite restaurant.

Follow [@limerick.ie](https://twitter.com/limerick.ie) for unmissable offers and updates.

   [#ShopLimerick](https://twitter.com/limerick.ie) [#EmbraceLimerick](https://twitter.com/limerick.ie)



STEP 1

Go online at [Limerick.ie/shop](https://limerick.ie/shop)



STEP 2

Browse and buy from your favourite homegrown Limerick retailers



STEP 3

Share your support using [#ShopLimerick](https://twitter.com/limerick.ie) and [#EmbraceLimerick](https://twitter.com/limerick.ie)