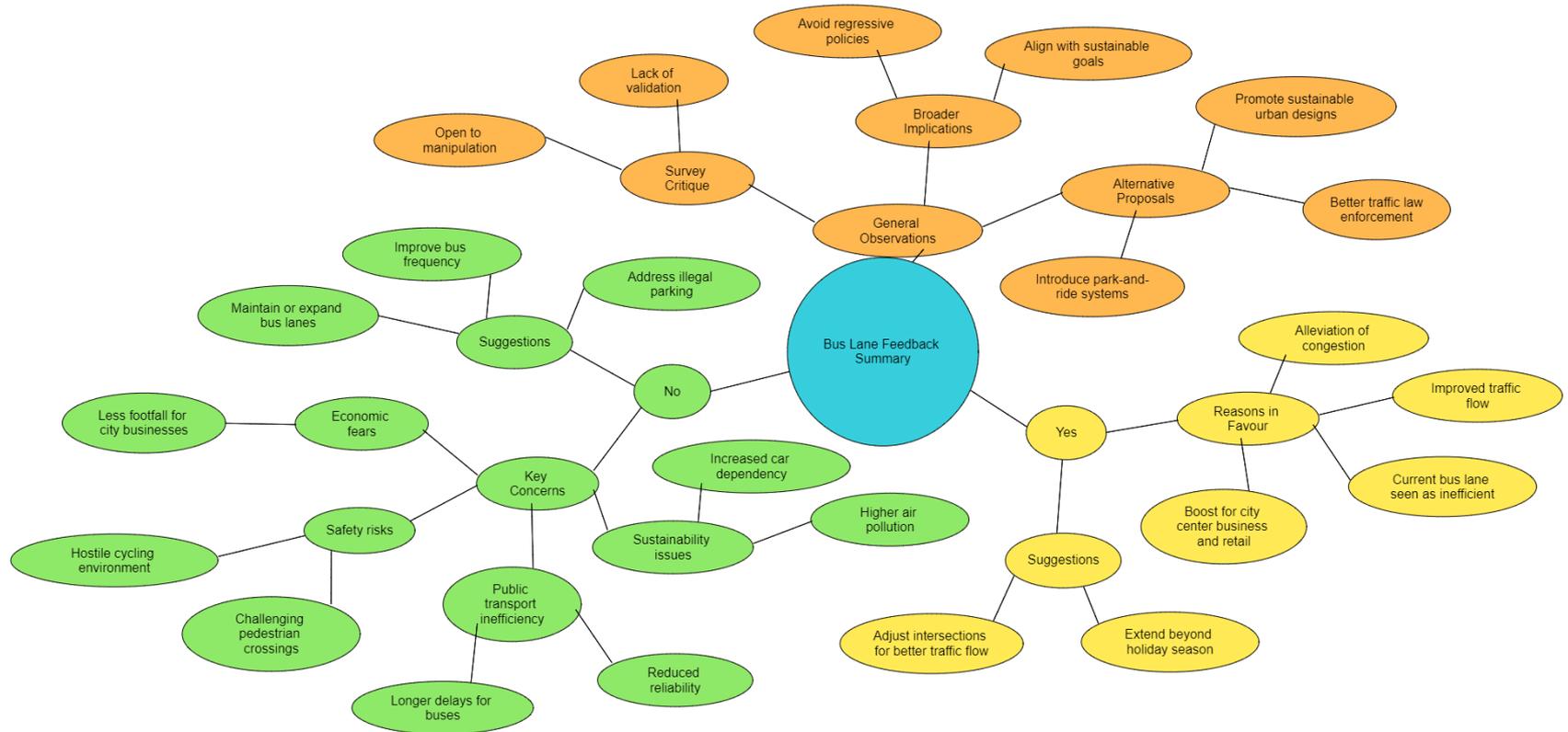


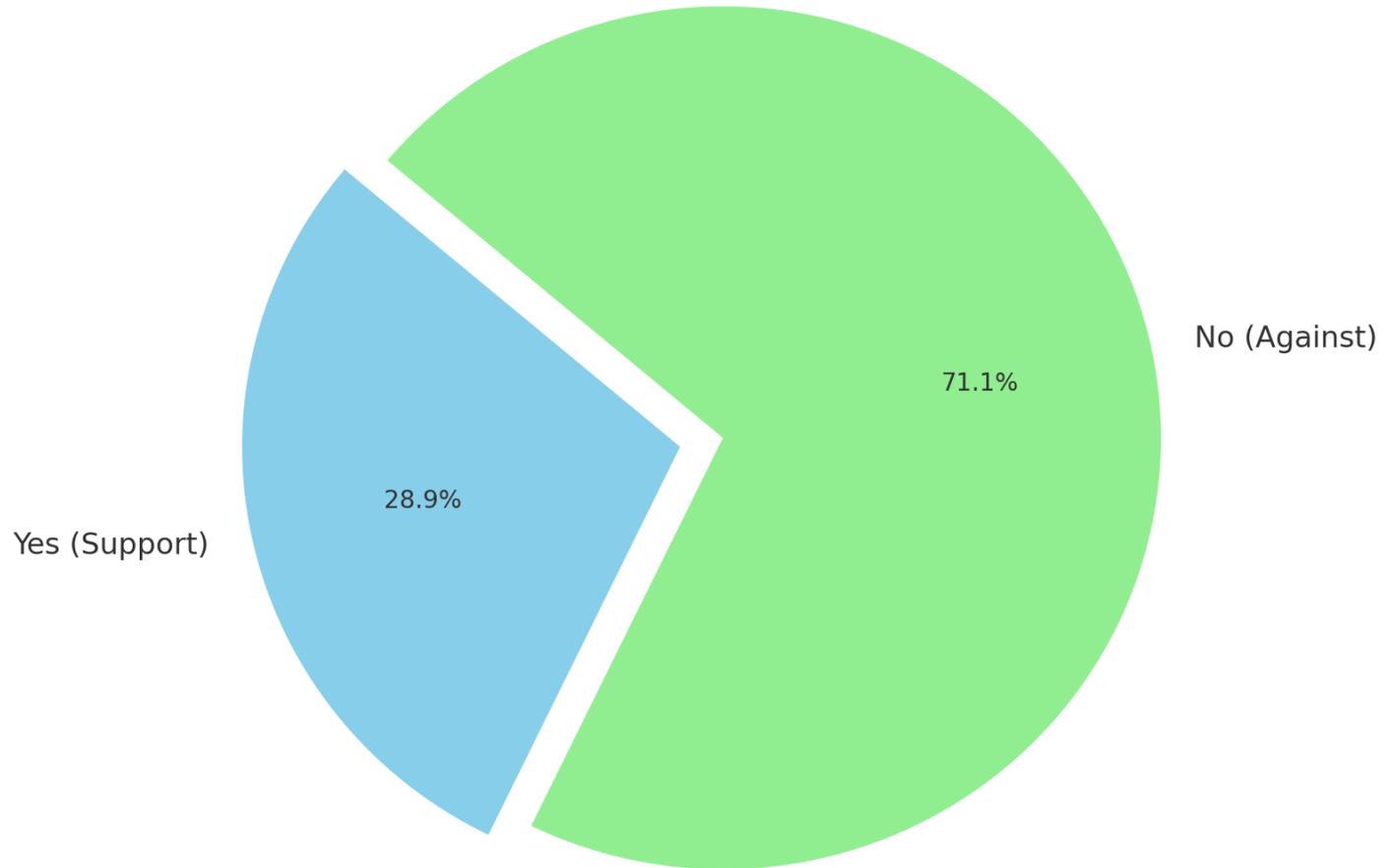
O'Connell Street Bus Lane Survey – Email Analysis

December 2024

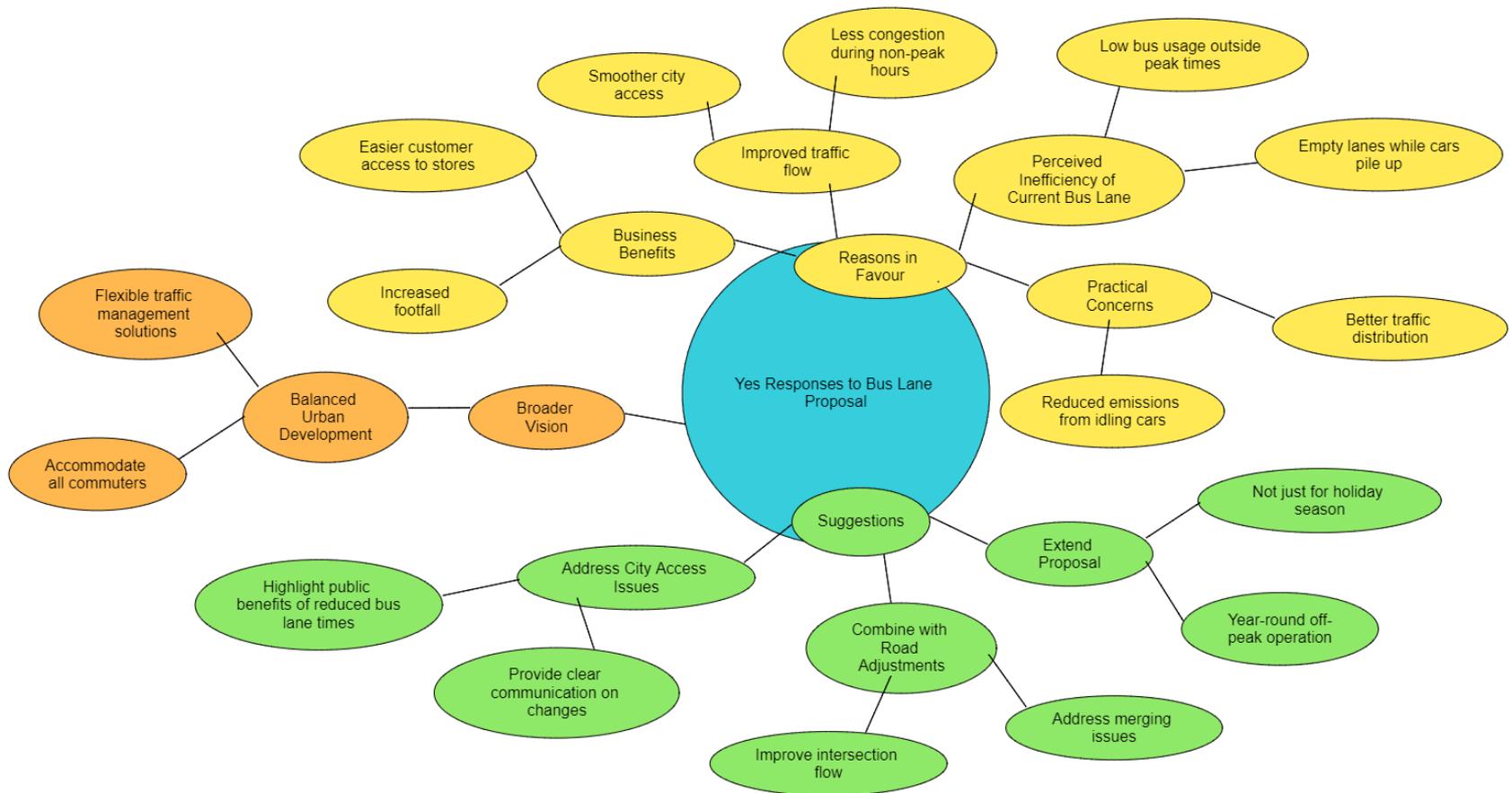
Mind Map Overview of Email Responses



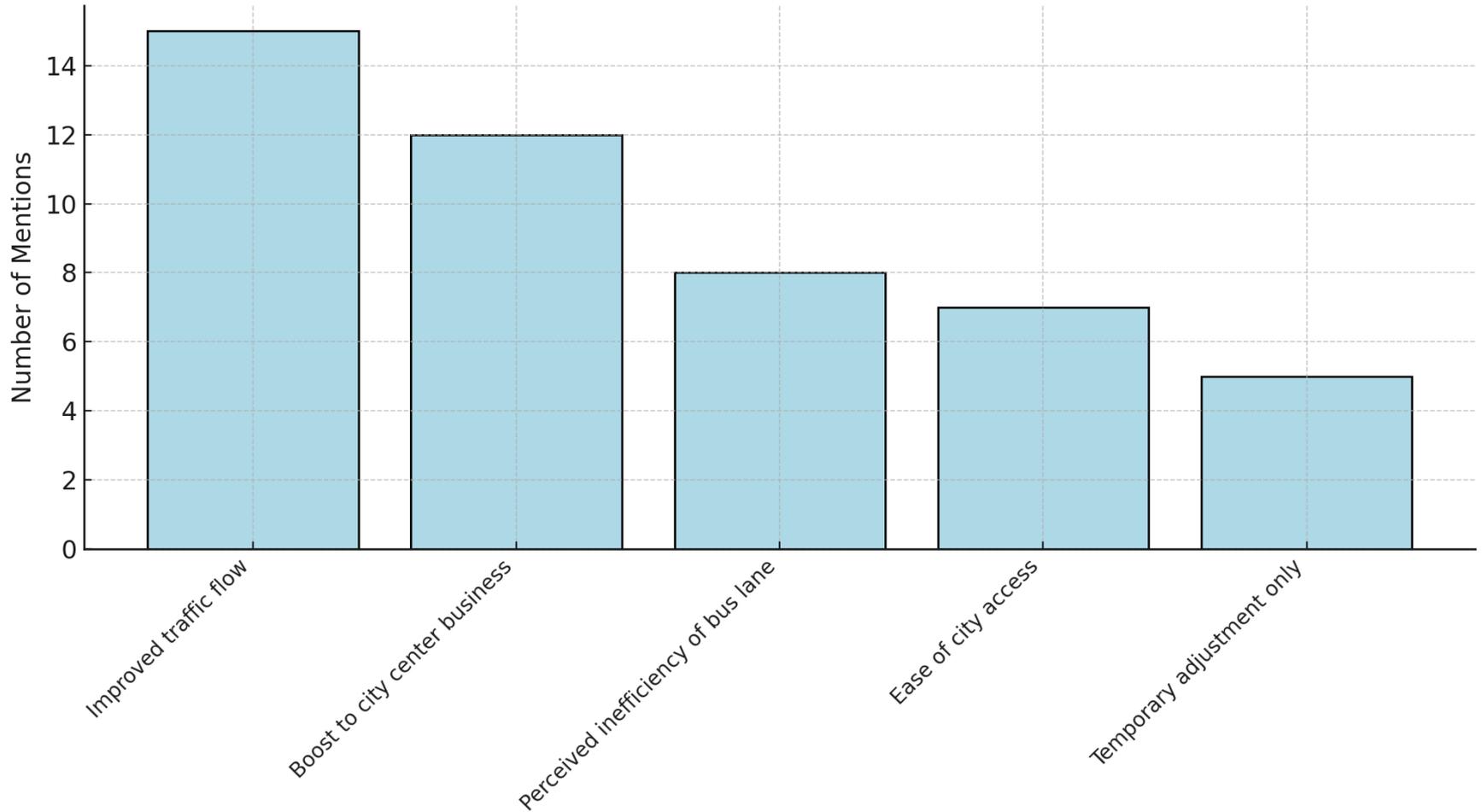
Breakdown of Feedback on Bus Lane Proposal



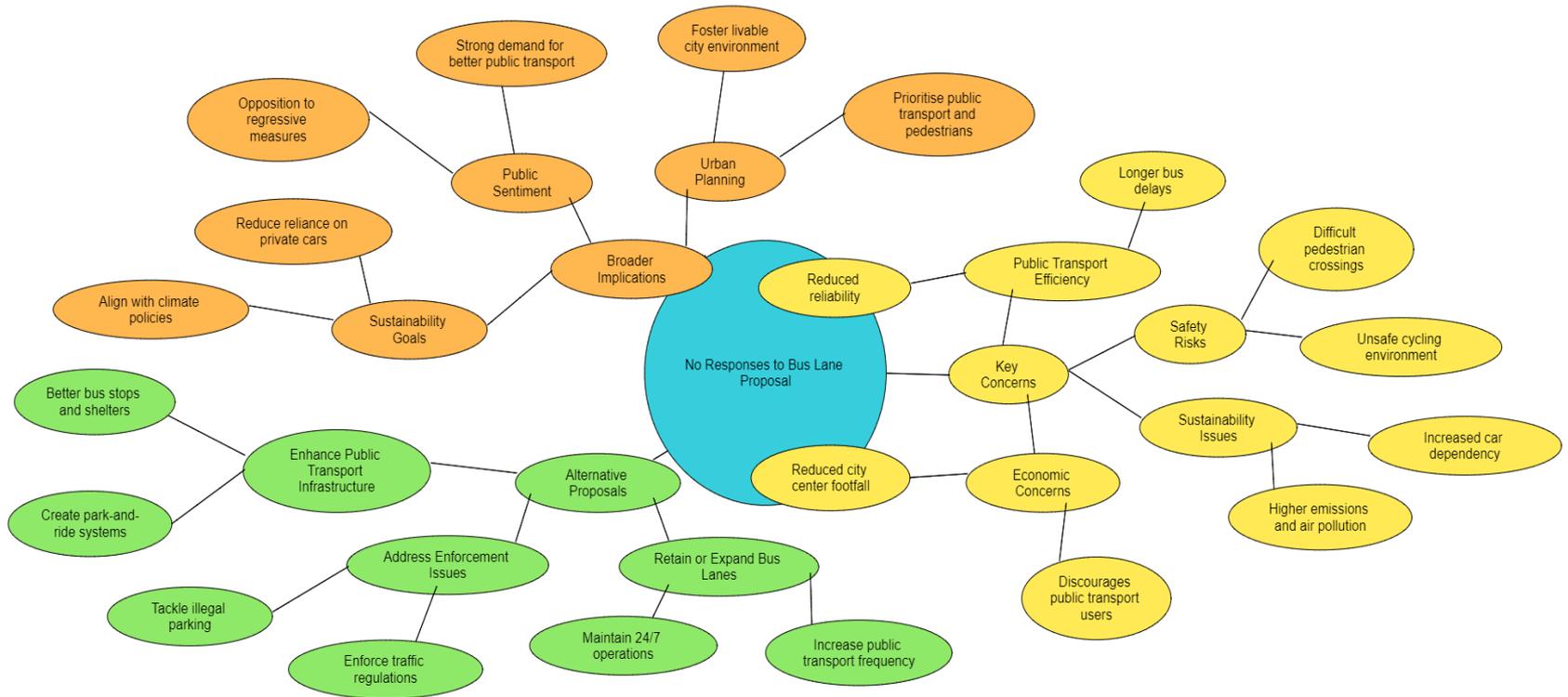
Mind Map of Reasons – In Favour



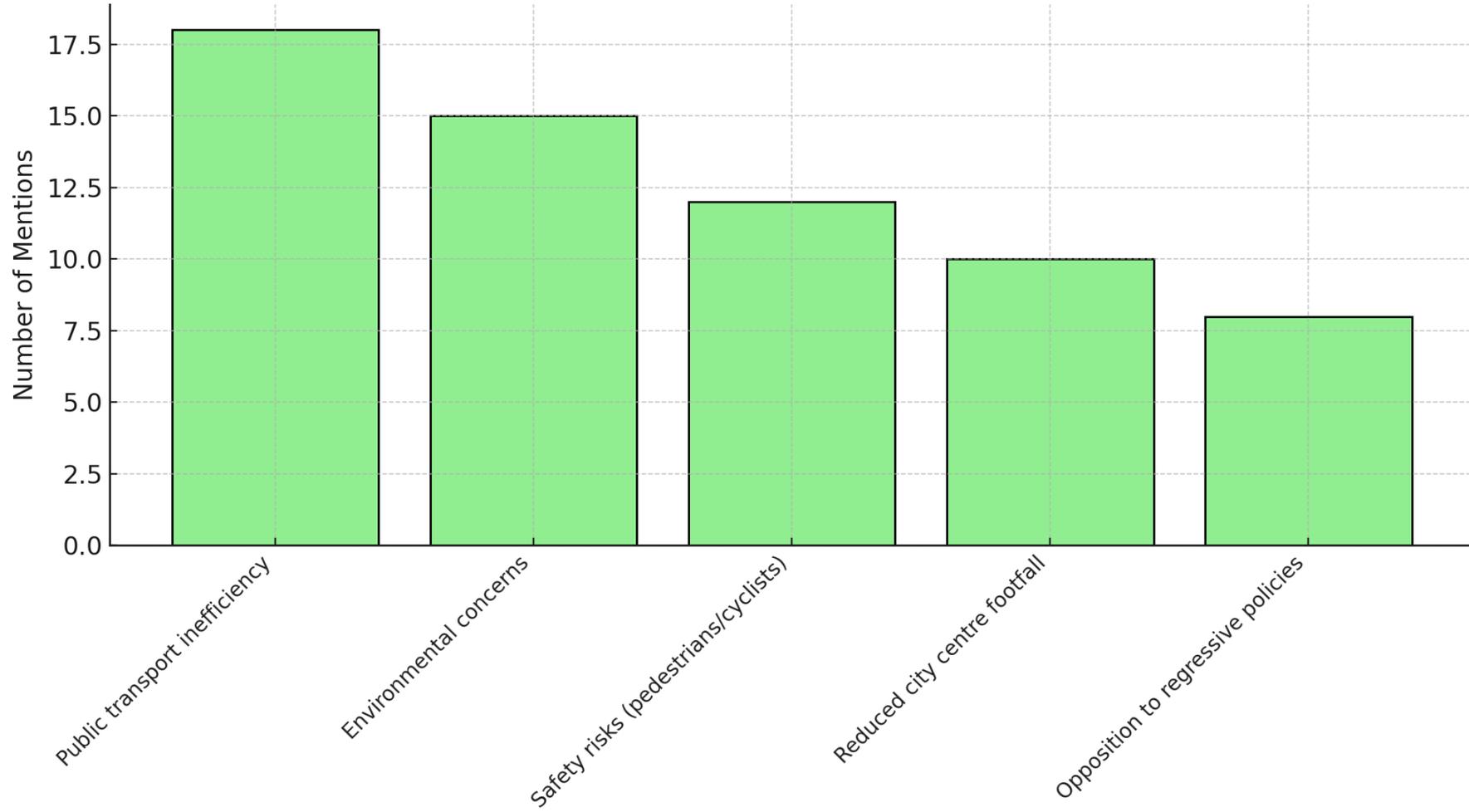
Top 5 Common Themes on the Yes Side



Mind Map of Reasons – Not in Favour



Top 5 Common Themes on the No Side



Sample of Responses from Survey – In Favour

"Why not open it up permanently off peak hours There's no need for a 24/7 bus lane I'm a motorist and a cyclist."

"I would be very much in favour of opening the street to 2 lanes."

"It's a sad thing to see a city centre dying and that's exactly what has happened since the introduction of bus lanes in the city centre. The bus lanes are empty and cars are at a standstill. It simply is driving shoppers elsewhere. On the north side of the city its faster for me to drive to Shannon than go to the city centre. The bus lane hours should be reduced/removed and some stimulus put forward to encourage people to visit and shop in the city."

"I believe having seen and been in stacked traffic on O' Connell st. In past months, it is not a case of weather the bus lane should be reduced in hours just for Christmas but removed altogether."

Sample of Responses from Survey – In Favour

"Please god remove the bus lane. Ye are destroying what is left of Limerick city. It only takes a look from a distance to see the backlog of traffic on the single lane for private cars and an empty bus lane. It beggars belief. The O'Connell Street redevelopment has been a complete waste of money. A very dull and uninspiring plan for our main thoroughfare. Return to a normal 2 lane and remove the pointless chicane in the middle of the street.

Listen to the public. Stop removing what's left of on street parking and actually implement a proper public traffic infrastructure before decimating private transport in the city. An alternative has to be in place before even considering this.

Commuter passengers trains on the Ennis, Nenagh, Foynes & Dublin lines would be a start. The Crescent shopping centre has unfortunately become our city centre and the council has been a lot of the cause of this."

"Current traffic flows in the city centre are resulting in more people choosing to shop in the centres based on the outskirts of the city. These shoppers generally travel after 10AM. If the lane is open, we have a chance to tempt some of them back."

Sample of Responses from Survey – In Favour

"O'Connell St is unnecessarily congested because traffic is backed up from the lights at Roches St due partly to being restricted to one lane and this pushes back to William St and Patrick St. I can see the need for a bus lane at peak hours but it is very frustrating to have traffic congestion outside of peak hours, for example at 7:30pm and on a Sunday afternoon, especially when it can be simply and effectively remediated by allowing traffic to use the bus lane. I'd allow this year round."

"It should be removed completely. The amount of cars that are idling because of the back up of traffic all the way out to corbally utter madness. Removed the bike lanes that are only used by e scooters and replace with a bus lane."

"Further to the ongoing consultation in regard to limiting the bus lane in O'Connell Street for the Christmas period, I am fulling in favour of reducing its operating time. The existence in such a short bus lane is farcical. It is causing increased pollution in the area and also huge congestion in the city centre particularly when it comes to Rutland Street, sarsfield street and O'Connell Street as well. If the change is to be made, the turning left only lane outside eason store needs to be adjusted to allow traffic in the left lane travel onwards as well. I really think the Council needs to reassess whether a 300m bus lane is of any benefit to the people of limerick when it is causing delay, congestion and pollution all year round."

Sample of Responses from Survey – In Favour

"We have experienced an extreme drop in footfall over the past 2 years and have daily conversations with consumers about how they don't want to come into the city because it is so inaccessible due to the traffic congestion. The feeling is that the bus lanes are ineffective due to lack of continuity in and around the city, they create traffic congestion leading to delays due to merging issues. The congestion is leading to excessive fumes and noise within the city and it makes it impossible to manoeuvre from street to street. Limiting the bus lane times would be an incredibly positive move for the city."

"The bus lane in town is not needed. The impact on traffic is significant while the benefit of the bus lane is minimal, if there is a benefit at all. I voted to reduce the hours as that is all that is being proposed. However, I believe it should be scrapped entirely."

"Thanks to be able to respond. Trading over 50 years in our City, pre Covid slow decline, post Covid Dramatic, Footfall down just under 40%, Vacancies of City commercial property s highest in Country. We need an honest assessment. O Connell ST, Bus Lane in City Centre is a disaster access stops customers. All Detour, proof is declining footfall, Traders calling out for Survival. Please realise and get to understanding of a Great City in serious decline."

Sample of Responses from Survey – In Favour

"Yes, They should be reduced to peak times only. It should also apply all year round.....

Yee have destroyed the City Centre & created more traffic congestion with your so called improvements.

There is no designated set down areas to drop people off in OConnell St. A Taxi can't even drop old or disabled people off to mass in The Augustinian Church.

There are no designated delivery bays for delivery trucks.

Forced to park illegally while trying to do their job & cause traffic blockages."

"I think this is a really good idea to ease traffic during the Christmas period. As our city is dying might I suggest that busses and parking be free over the holiday period too, to encourage footfall and spending?"

"As a city dweller in my opinion the bus lane is a disaster. I now totally avoid driving down the Main Street and disinclined to support retail as a result , as it is just too much hassle."

"To whom it may concern. I would love to see the bus lane on o Connell st opened to cars on non peak times as I feel it would be massively beneficial to the flow of traffic in the city."

Sample of Responses from Survey – In Favour

"My opinion on this is that since the bus lane introduction it has permanently messed up the traffic with no viable alternatives to cross the city, O'Connell street is like a car park full with cars stopped and pumping out fumes for the citizens to inhale. The main problem is the Shannon Street turn, that is the blockage, traffic turning right here is holding up all of the traffic going straight as far back as Patrick Street, so you might look at synchronising the lights at this junction with lights at the Henry St junction so that Shannon St is not full of traffic blocking all of the traffic on O'Connell. Anyway I want to register my wish that you certainly should restrict the hours of the bus lane, permanently! preferably remove it completely. Please forward my comments to whoever is in charge of the traffic mismanagement in this city."

"I would be in favour of the proposal to make the bus lanes available to all traffic over the Xmas period. With a plan to highlight same to the public for awareness in the hope of increasing footfall."

Sample of Responses from Survey – In Favour

"I would agree for the timed closing of the bus lane in Limericks O'Connell street."

"I am all in favour of opening up the bus lane to traffic for Christmas. It is very difficult get through town at the moment, and having the bus lane closed doesn't make sense for the next few weeks."

"Yes, I agree."

"I would be fully in favour of opening up the bus lane on O Connell street to traffic on off peak hours. It makes no sense to have this lane empty 99% of the day and cars backed up to CORBALLY.

Customers complain to me on a daily basis about trying to access the city centre and how difficult it has become ((which we all know is deliberate to squeeze out cars). However it is also going to put us out of business and believe me that is not a throwaway comment. Not that too many in City Hall really care."

"It is essential that the bus lane will be open for Christmas trading.

Traffic in the city is under pressure anything that can be done to alleviate this will benefit Christmas trade in the city centre."

Sample of Responses from Survey – In Favour

"Opening the O'Connell Street, Limerick bus lane to all commuters for the 2024/25 Christmas holiday season would greatly help the flow of business to the traders in the city centre. The action would reduce the present gridlock and consequent carbon emissions. It would help shoppers and patrons have a more positive and enjoyable Christmas experience of visiting the city centre.

Visitors and patrons from County Limerick and surrounding Counties are a vital life blood to the vitality of the city centre and as such ease of access and circulation is a key element to a successful experience for these visitors. Opening the O'Connell Street bus lane would be a positive for the entire community. I respectfully ask you to open the O'Connell Street Limerick bus lane at this crucial time."

"Short-term opening of bus lane on O Connell Street I would support over Christmas Period.."

"Reduce bus lane hours forever. Limerick City centre traffic a joke."

"I think the Bus Lane on O'Connell Street should be reduced from 24 hours to peak rush hours only. All year round."

Sample of Responses from Survey – In Favour

"With regards to the opening of the bus lane I would like to remind you all that we are now on December 9th which leaves about 14/15 days to Christmas. We work in retail all day every day and every second person coming to the counter is asking the same question. What have they done to the city you can't get in or out? As a matter of urgency we ask you to open the bus lane and after Christmas it might be an idea to survey the numbers using the busses in the lane, and also measure the amount of time busses are actually using the lane. I think that information would make interesting reading."

"We fully support the proposal to open the bus lane."

"We would be very grateful if you will open the bus lanes as per the times mentioned on the consultation survey for the month of December. This will allow our members more access during this busy period. It will also give a good indication whether it is in everyone's best interest to have the bus lanes open at specific times all year round."

Sample of Responses from Survey – In Favour

"I am in favour of the O'Connell Street Bus Lane hours being reduced from the current 24hour operation to the hours of 07:00 to 10:00 and 16:00."

"I am e-mailing to submit my yes vote to opening the bus lane on O'Connell street to traffic to facilitate a free flow of traffic over the xmas period. I think it would be a positive move."

"Please open the bus lane to car users as it is causing congestion and this is not eco friendly to greenhouse gas. Sick of the roads been narrowed for bike lanes as emergency services are delayed on call outs someone will die before a change will be made."

"Please open the bus lane for public traffic for December to make the city accessible for the Christmas period. If keeping strictly as a bus lane, increase the number of buses using the bus lane to make it a viable addition to allow the public access the city centre. Please also look at dropping the barriers along O'Connell st every day from 7am to 11am to allow for deliveries. Shannon st is blocked most days in the morning due to the number of delivery trucks delivering to O'Connell st businesses. We need to make limerick more flexible and open for business to operate."

Sample of Responses from Survey – NOT In Favour

"Limerick is already heavily car-centric, with little accommodation for pedestrians, cyclists, and public transport users. The current environment in the city centre exemplifies this: illegal parking is rampant, often obstructing bus lanes, cycle lanes and pedestrian crossings, yet there seems to be zero enforcement of traffic regulations. The absence of consistent penalties for infringements has created an atmosphere where disregard for public transport and cycling/pedestrian safety goes unchecked. Removing the bus lane not only worsens the situation but actively undermines the city's stated goals of improving public transport infrastructure and reducing car dependency. The bus lane is a vital artery for those who rely on buses, particularly during peak hours. Its removal would discourage public transport use and increase congestion, as more people feel forced to turn to private cars."

"It would be pointless to take away the 24hr status of the bus lane. The roads are already not busy at those times and it will just inevitably lead to rampant breaking of the rules at peak time. It will also do nothing to improve footfall for the shops who claim these drivers are potential shoppers. They are not. They are just using the street to traverse the city. Where as people on buses actually use the centre and you are looking to dissuade from coming to the city."

Sample of Responses from Survey – NOT In Favour

"I want to state that I am very against the proposal for the bus lane to be used by cars in December. Please make changes to encourage the use of the bus over December. The proposed change will only encourage people from Corbally to drive straight to the Crescent shopping centre faster."

"No don't take the bus lane or the busses away. It's difficult enough to get into, or get across city without closing bus lane. There would be NO scheduled bus, hard enough as it is. There would be no guarantee of being in time for appointments. Taxies are expensive."

"A 24h bus lane is very clear and easy to follow. When busgate times have been introduced on Patrick St. in Cork or in front of Trinity in Dublin, it causes more breaking the rules when the bus lane is busses only. Furthermore, the goal of the traffic plan should be to route private cars away from O'Connell St, not to encourage them to clog it up. Access to main parking zones in the city is not via O'Connell Street anyway."

"please please please don't open the bus lane its a ridiculous idea it will only make traffic worse."

Sample of Responses from Survey – NOT In Favour

"This is an appalling plan and should not be entertained. If the traders think by allowing more traffic into town and driving up O'Connell St, is going to help trade, they are delusional. O'Connell St should be completely pedestrianised up to at least Cecil St. We had the same whining about closing the Crescent to traffic for 3 Sundays in December. This was subsequently watered down. We had the same whining from traders about the Crescent in August. If we can't pedestrianise small street like this, the city centre hasn't a hope. The pleasant cities in Europe have bus lanes, cycle lanes and pedestrianised city centres and are pleasant places to spend time in. The traders are living in the last century. Limerick City is not a pleasant place to shop at the moment."

"I do not feel that the information provided has demonstrated that serious consideration and planning has been put into this. Who will police the active bus lane times? Will cameras be put in? What fines are in place for illegal use of bus lanes. The two buses that use this lane appear to have excellent capacity. The impact this plan would have on 100s of people who use the buses will only encourage car use. I would suggest that the council negotiate car parking fees to €1 per hour at weekends and provide free on street parking to 7days a week over the Christmas period."

Sample of Responses from Survey – NOT In Favour

"Please maintain the bus lanes. Add more when possible to keep the flow of more city visitors over the festive season."

"This is completely ridiculous and solely pushed by a few business owners who feel that more cars will increase "footfall" to their business. Multiple studies have shown that footfall is increased by improved public transport and pedestrianisation of city centres. I strongly oppose this proposition and even the suggestion of limiting public transport in favour of private cars is a huge step backwards for Limerick. Shameful."

"There was extensive consultation carried out before the current layout was agreed. The current layout (24 hours dedicated bus lane) represents the wishes of stakeholders across the city and was voted on and approved by the City Councillors at the time. It is a waste of time and effort carrying out yet another round of consultation to appease the interests of a handful of city businesses, and indeed councillors who voted for the current layout in the first place. Active travel measures such as the 24 hour bus lane are vital to the smooth transit of public transport users through the city. Any regress on such measures to favour private car travel is a retrograde step and should not be considered."

Sample of Responses from Survey – NOT In Favour

"I am strongly opposed to the reduction in operating hours for Bus lanes during the Christmas period. I agree that the city needs more footfall but I do not agree that the needs of motorists should take precedence over all other city users. Pedestrians need safe streets. Cyclists need safe streets. Public transport users are not less deserving of swift transport times than private motorists. Rate payers are important but residents of the city also deserve consideration and increasing traffic levels in our city neighbourhoods has a detrimental effect on our quality of life. We should have more bus journeys over Christmas, not less. I am quite shocked that this proposal is getting serious consideration. Also that the poll is so poorly designed and circulated."

"I'm thoroughly opposed to the regressive proposal to reduce the operation of the O'Connell street bus lane. Where Limerick lags behind most modern cities it's the relative lack of priority corridors for public transport - instead commuters endure an incoherent journey through the city with priority in some sections and delays in shared sections elsewhere. If the (weak) argument in favour of reducing bus infrastructure is the perception that it is under-utilised, it really would be welcome for the council to champion increasing buses, rather than diminishing lanes. More journeys on shared transport is better for journey times."

Sample of Responses from Survey – NOT In Favour

"I would have no issues with bus lanes allowing cars for a period after say 8pm at night or before 8am in the morning but I cannot for the life of me figure out how anybody could possibly justify clogging up the city even more than it already is, at one of the busiest times of the year and on top of that then trying to miraculously clear the bus lanes for the two rush hour periods! If we want to have more people coming in to shop in the city we should be providing free park and ride facilities with more buses rather than less buses! If you are providing these already, well done but I haven't heard about them yet! I am lucky to live within 20 mins walk of the city and when I come in to do my Christmas shopping as I will be doing on several occasions, I want to be able to hop into a taxi or a bus and get home nice and fast. A few on demand little shuttle buses would be a wonderful addition to city shopping for the next few weeks....not more cars! It's not going to feel very festive in town if it's a continuous car park!"

"Don't reduce the bus lanes please. Any serious traffic study shows that increasing lanes for cars does not actually help traffic. Buses carry way more people than cars. "One more lane" has never worked in any city ever. Be smart about this please."

Sample of Responses from Survey – NOT In Favour

"The suggestion to remove the bus lane on O'Connell St in Limerick is nonsense. It's a retrograde step...Limerick will be the only city in Europe where they want to put more cars in the city centre, not less. The excuse that it's to generate more footfall of shoppers to use city retailers is a fallacy. The street will be used to enable more cars traverse the city and beyond to the Crescent Shopping Centre. Whilst at the same time, slowing the buses to lessen significantly the experience of many more passengers and potential customers through the city. It's nonsense and based on the obvious efforts of particularly FG councillors, to thwart the efforts of the Mayoral program to enliven the city centre. Finally, the suggestion of times periods in the morning and in the evening will be unworkable on the ground. When does a car know when to join the lane and when not?? Stupid idea, politically based and will be remembered when those councillors come to the doorsteps for re-election."

"I would not be in favour of relaxing the operating the bus lane on O Connell Street for the following reasons 1. It will lead to increased congestion, 2. It will lead to a reduction in air quality during the colder months when air quality can be poor also, 3. It will create a more hostile street environment for pedestrians and shoppers reducing footfall, 4. It will reduce footfall to retailers impacting shops over the crucial Christmas period, 5. It will increase traffic on the street making it more dangerous for pedestrians and cyclists. And finally it sends out a message that Limerick city is not serious about Climate change, Improving its urban environment. Limerick is a beautiful city and deserves better."

Sample of Responses from Survey – NOT In Favour

"I am really disappointed to see such a short sighted and ill- thought out proposal being entertained by the council. It is essential that buses can proceed through the city without being caught in traffic from private cars. The council should be encouraging the public to use public transport to get into the city centre for the Christmas period- why not share more information on bus routes on social media, create a number of park and ride facilities for people from the county and neighbouring counties? Many people who use the buses are elderly or disabled, why should they have to wait in backed up traffic because of private car users? Opening this bus lane will also make it extremely dangerous for pedestrians to cross at Bedford Row to Thomas Street. I am really disappointed to see that the council can be swayed to this extent by a small group of traders without thought for the people who live, work and travel into the city centre and the online poll cannot give any conclusion as to public sentiment when it can be voted on numerous times without validating an email address."

Sample of Responses from Survey – NOT In Favour

"I am opposed to the proposal to reduce the hours of the bus lane over Christmas. It would be far better to increase the usage of public transport into the city centre by increasing services and making these free of charge over the Christmas period."

"Bus lanes are a vital part of city life. It is known that the more car lanes you introduce, the more people use cars. This has a cumulative effect such that traffic doesn't change - you just end up with 2 lanes of traffic instead of 1. Bus services that are only open at certain times or that change times are extremely unreliable. It requires people to research before their trip as to whether a bus is there or not. this undermines trust in the system and does a disservice to those who just hop on and hop off without giving it much thought. People will always do what is more convenient. So make the busses more convenient than the cars. I understand the business community is often very car-friendly, because they have an intuitive understanding that people drive in and do their shopping. However yet again, studies show that less cars make for a more friendly atmosphere, and this atmosphere is what invites people in. Once people are in they then freely wander around and are more inclined to shop and spend. I would strongly oppose any effort to reduce bus and cycle lanes in the city centre. Our city was built for people, not cars. Cars are loud, dangerous, and inviting. The number of people who use the city as a through-put is far greater than the number who drive in to shop. Increasing bus and cycle lanes will, I assure you, allow for more shopping."

Sample of Responses from Survey – NOT In Favour

“we reject the proposal on two grounds:

1. It’s unsafe: O’Connell Street was re-designed as a low-traffic bus only corridor. Pedestrian safety infrastructure was removed to facilitate this. Adding even more vehicular traffic to this stretch at the heart of the city at the busiest shopping time of the year is directly endangering pedestrians. We have told the Council on many occasions that this area is unsafe. The Council has a responsibility to protect the most vulnerable street users, and cannot consider further risking their safety by doubling vehicles on O’Connell Street.

2. It won’t work: removing a bus lane for a tiny stretch of road will not improve congestion. This is not an opinion, it is fact. More road space makes more cars - this is induced demand. Cars will simply bottleneck a little further down the road, while buses get stuck. The proposal is dangerous nonsense, and it should have been clearly answered as such.

We are genuinely disheartened to have to engage seriously with this process, as so little seriousness has been shown in its conception. It disrespects the pedestrians of Limerick city, and should never have been brought this far. We demand the removal of the “survey” today.”

Sample of Responses from Survey – NOT In Favour

"I just wanted to write a brief message to state that I am categorically against the removal or downgrading of the Limerick O'Connell Street bus lane. Limerick is moving forward with the provision of safe cycling infrastructure and bus lanes and this would be a complete backward step and would lead to the erosion over time of this infrastructure in favour of private car use. It is quite possibly also illegal as no section 38 notice or no planning permission will have been made to allow for the change of use of this space. I work in the city and a number of people in the office use the bus every day to get to and from the office and benefit massively from the bus lane. The city traders are not the only group who should be listened to here! Rather than allowing public traffic on this lane the council should be focusing their attention on using camera technology to fine private motorists from using the lane. I can personally attest that the reason the traffic is backed up is primarily down to at least 50% of the traffic who use the private vehicle lane cutting in at the last minute at the junction with William Street. This means that those waiting in traffic cannot proceed and slows down the traffic overall due to merging. This needs to be stopped and the council would do well to focus their attention on this rather than reopening the bus lane to traffic. "

Sample of Responses from Survey – NOT In Favour

"I would like to air my concerns at the proposal to temporarily remove the bus lane from O'Connell Street. I will offer one reason as to why I believe this is a bad idea. If we give cars priority on both lanes on O'Connell Street, how do we allow for emergency services? The bus lane, while it looks empty most of time actually does allow buses to travel hastily from one end of our city center to the other. In turn, it also allows emergency services a clear path up our thoroughfare, on the direct route to UHL from our center. Should cars be given free reign to both lanes once again, I believe emergency services will be greatly impacted. And in a solely negative way. I firmly believe this proposal will be a massively retrograde step for Limerick City and our citizens, and I hope the council make the correct decision and reject it."

"To remove this bus lane for any length of time is a backward step. Cars are ruining our city, not adding anything to it. I am surprised that in this day and age, this is even being considered. I use the bus a lot more now as it's so fast getting through town. I have a car but rarely use it to go to the city. Please do not undo a good thing."

"Please keep the 24hr bus lane in place for O'Connell St. Please do not pander to the people who are too lazy to walk or cycle, too impatient to drive a different route or the people who will not themselves get the bus into town."

Sample of Responses from Survey – NOT In Favour

"The proposal represents the deprioritisation of bus users for the benefit of the drivers of private motor vehicles. Even at off-peak times, people use the bus to get to work, college, medical appointments, etc. Many of these have no alternative means of getting to their destination. Removing the bus lane during off-peak times will have the inevitable effect of disimproving the service by delaying busses behind private motor vehicles. Any bus users that own cars will be incentivised to drive instead of taking the bus while those without cars will be stuck with inevitable delays. It would be logically inconsistent to suggest that removing the bus lane would not delay buses, but would improve the flow of private motor traffic. Any improvement in the flow of private traffic would come as a result of funnelling some of this traffic into the bus lane where it would cause delays to bus services. Added to this, is the issue of induced demand. It has been shown that as roadways become wider and able to accommodate higher volumes of traffic, additional vehicles will materialize as drivers feel incentivised to use the expanded road due to the belief that added lanes have reduced congestion. For example the bus users I mentioned above who would be incentivised to drive if bus service is delayed. Or people who would be incentivised to drive through the city to avoid tolls rather than taking the tunnel based on a promise of faster travel times through the City. It is therefore likely that the proposal would not improve travel times along O'Connell Street in any meaningful way. Surely a more sensible approach to traffic management would be to encourage as many people as possible to utilise public transport over the Christmas period which would reduce private motor traffic and make it easier for anyone for whom driving is the only option available. I implore you to scrap this ill thought out proposal. It represents a retrograde car-centric approach to traffic management which was proven to be ineffective decades ago."

Sample of Responses from Survey – NOT In Favour

"I have voted no in the online consultation as this step seems nonsensical to me. Whenever I drive on O'Connell St outside of rush hour I rarely experience heavy traffic so I do not see any point in opening up the bus lane to private cars at those times. I am also concerned that this is the thin edge of the wedge in undermining the existence of the bus lane. I am well aware that there is strong pro-car/anti-public transport in Limerick and there are those who would be delighted to have private cars dominating the city centre, mostly using O'Connell St as a route through the city rather than a route into the city centre. If we don't maintain and further develop other transport options we will never make any headway in reducing travel by car. Finally, I would like to point out that an online survey which allows people to vote as many times as they want/have time for is a pretty poor way of garnering public opinion - even anti-democratic I would suggest."

"I am opposed to the proposal to reduce the hours of the bus lane over Christmas. It would be far better to increase the usage of public transport into the city centre by increasing services and making these free of charge over the Christmas period."

Sample of Responses from Survey – NOT In Favour

"I was disappointed today to see the council propose a temporary change to the bus lane on O Connell Street Why should bus users be put out to allow faster travel been corbally/ ardnacrusha and the crescent by car. During the month of December bus users have enough to be worrying about, waiting in the freezing cold for a bus that might or might not arrive for example. Do the right thing and keep this a bus lane on a 24h 7 days a week basis."

"I am writing to urge you to reconsider any plans to close the bus lane on O'Connell Street during the Christmas period. Such a decision could have significant negative impacts on the city, including:

1. **Increased Traffic Congestion** - Closing the bus lane would force buses to share lanes with general traffic, leading to delays for both public transport and private vehicles. This would be especially problematic during the festive period when traffic levels are naturally higher.
2. **Undermining the Existing Transport System** - The bus lane plays a critical role in ensuring efficient public transport in Limerick. Removing it, even temporarily, could discourage bus usage, undermining years of progress in promoting sustainable transit.
3. **Air Pollution** - With buses stuck in traffic and more people likely opting for private cars, emissions will increase, contradicting efforts to reduce Limerick's carbon footprint.
4. **Impact on the Christmas Atmosphere** - Traffic jams and pollution would detract from the festive charm of the city. The Christmas period should be a time of ease and enjoyment, not frustration caused by unnecessary transport disruptions."

Sample of Responses from Survey – NOT In Favour

"I am a motorist and a bus user. I object to the removal of the bus lane during certain time periods. I often take the bus to town with my kids instead of driving as it is convenient, faster and less hassle than looking for parking spaces. The bus service brings a huge amount of people into the City center. The council should be incentivising people to use the bus not punishing them by removing the bus lane and increasing journey times. In LSMATS it states that bus services must be prioritised above general traffic. Why are our councillors/ LCC not abiding by a policy that they voted for? If you remove the bus lane you are only going to allow people to drive across the city to get to the Crescent shopping center more quickly. Cars do not make a vibrant city people do."

"I think the full time (24 hour) Bus Lane on O'Connell Street southbound from William Street to Cecil Street should not change. If the bus lane hours are reduced it will lead to longer bus journeys like the 304 route. I believe if this change is approved it will cause more traffic problems and this will make the public less inclined to shop in the city centre. Limerick city centre needs less cars not more."

Sample of Responses from Survey – NOT In Favour

"I'm really shocked that this has come up. In LSMATS it was outlined that Limerick would finally try to develop transport sustainably. You can't reduce congestion without offering alternatives to driving. If buses have no priority then there is no alternative to driving. Everyone will drive and everyone is worse off. This is literally so basic in transport. Fully against this insane idea. We needed to switch more people onto PT or walking and cycling to reduce our emissions, create a more fair transport system (currently everything favours the car) and also encourage people to walk to a bus stop etc to increase how much people move. We are also in the midst of an obesity health issue in Ireland. Please please see some sense on this."

"As both a car and bus user. I drive to town for shopping and some days for work, but I mainly use the bus to travel to work, and to be honest, I rarely use the O'Connell Street bus lane. But I believe the use of the bus lane for public traffic, even on a temporary basis is a retrograde step. At present bus lanes all over the city are being incorrectly used as there is not enough policing of them and their incorrect use. So trying to implement the times listed on the public consultation will never be abided too as they are currently not properly policed and you can often see private motor vehicles using this and other bus lanes on a daily basis."

Sample of Responses from Survey – NOT In Favour

"The decision to even consider removing this critical section of bus lane defies logic and stands in opposition to both local and national policies aimed at promoting sustainable transport. This small stretch of road provides significant benefits, including time savings of up to 10 minutes for public transport users, allowing them to access the city centre more efficiently. Public transport doesn't just serve bus users; it removes cars from the road, freeing up space for those who genuinely need to drive. Undermining this system during the holiday season is not just a short-term inconvenience, it is a blow to businesses and traders who rely on public transport to bring customers into the city. What makes this proposal particularly disappointing is that, as mayor and director of transport, you have both been steadfast allies in the fight for safer, more accessible, and sustainable transport for all. Your leadership has driven forward initiatives that have positioned Limerick as a national leader in modernising transport systems, ensuring equitable access, and addressing the challenges of climate breakdown. These efforts have been instrumental in shaping a more sustainable and inclusive future for our city. However, this current decision represents a troubling departure from those principles and threatens to unravel the progress you have worked so hard to achieve. We urge you to reconsider and realign with the values and vision that have defined your leadership. Equally concerning is the MyPoint consultation process. Allowing people to vote multiple times without requiring login or verification makes the entire exercise laughably open to abuse. How can any credible decision be made based on such a flawed process? This isn't consultation - it's chaos. The results of this survey will be entirely invalid, and relying on them to justify such a misguided proposal would be completely irresponsible. This proposal flies in the face of the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (LSMATS), which aims to increase public transport usage from 3% to 11% of all trips by 2040 and expand the share of walking and cycling trips to 20%. The bus lane on O'Connell Street plays a critical role in achieving these targets, as it reduces bus travel times by up to 10 minutes, making public transport a more viable and attractive option. Removing this lane will not only hinder these objectives but also exacerbate congestion, delay progress toward reducing car dependency, and undermine efforts to meet the LSMATS goal of cutting transport-related emissions by 51% by 2030. The recent Limerick City Centre Report from Limerick Chamber highlights that 57% of city center households do not own a car, emphasizing the reliance of a significant portion of residents on sustainable transport modes. Additionally, public transport plays an equally critical role, as as many city center residents commute by bus as those who drive. These figures underscore the need to enhance, not reduce, infrastructure supporting public and active transport to cater to the city's evolving mobility needs and reduce car dependency."

Sample of Responses from Survey – NOT In Favour

"Do not open the bus lanes but police the traffic parking and obstructing the free flow of traffic also take away the ciquane at Thomas St junction."

"We think this is an awful idea as the buses are very necessary for ordinary commuters who regularly travel on that route."

"I would be opposed to the idea, as I believe it is a short term reactive measure that will do nothing more than increasing the amount of traffic in the city. If we take Galway city as an example, their major widening of roads only reduced congestion for short amount of time. Now not only is it is back to gridlocked traffic, but there is even more cars. Instead of focusing on private car drivers, the council should explore how to make bus travel more appealing. Such as shelters to keep passengers out of the rain, increase the frequency of buses and broaden the overall network, so more people have the option of getting the bus. I live in Annacotty, and it is very difficult for me to get into town via bus. Its even harder for me to get home, with no late night buses. I understand why people think reopening the bus lane to traffic would help, however I believe this is because these people like myself are let down by Limerick's public transport network."

Sample of Responses from Survey – NOT In Favour

"I do not think we should time restrict the bus lane. It will delay far more people who get the bus than the time it might save for motorists, who are responsible for the traffic in a way that public transport users aren't. I strongly disagree with this proposal.."

"If the bus lanes are seen to be empty at any time during the day, then they are doing their job and working effectively, allowing the free flow of buses through this portion of the street. Buses carry large numbers of people every day, transporting far more people than often single passengers cars that use the same route. They are a much more efficient means of transport and should be encouraged. Buses are the only means of transport for many people, often those socio-economically disadvantaged. To suggest slowing down the flow of buses through this street by allowing cars to use the bus lane and impede their progress is extremely regressive."

"I am completely opposed to any changes being made to the bus lane on O'Connell Street. Any change to this vital public infrastructure should be evidence-based and based on best practice for public transport, not on the whim of Councillors who have no expertise in this area."

"I would like to register my strong objection to the proposal to reduce the hours of the bus lane on O'Connell St. This proposal is regressive and insulting to all public transport users in Limerick."

Sample of Responses from Survey – NOT In Favour

“Drivers of cars do not have a monopoly on the use of our roads. Public transport, pedestrians and cyclists are just as important as cars. Adding an additional lane of car traffic to O'Connell St would make it incredibly dangerous for pedestrians trying to cross from the two pedestrianised streets at Bedford Row to Thomas Street. There is currently no pedestrian crossing here and the potential for accidents involving pedestrians would be greatly increased if there were two lanes of traffic to traverse. Adding an extra lane of car traffic to the street will have no benefit to any traders in Limerick city centre. It will simply make it encourage more cars onto the street to traverse it as they head to the Crescent and ... suburbs. Allowing cars to use the bus lane would be disastrous also because of Limerick's drivers habit of parking illegally. The traffic flows smoothly on the street at the moment but I have no doubt that we would see people pulling up in the bus lane and parking in it while going into shops and blocking up the entire street. We see this every day on William St. We can't let it happen to this vital artery through the city. Finally, opening up the bus lane to cars temporarily would be a disaster because once people develop the habit, they will use it all the time. They won't bother checking what times they are allowed to use the lane or what dates, they will just use it all the time. It will be impossible to enforce, there would be no going back from it and we would effectively use the bus lane forever.”

"Reducing the hours of the bus lane on O'Connell Street is an absolutely ridiculous idea, and I vehemently oppose it.”

Sample of Responses from Survey – NOT In Favour

"I've voted no in the consultation about opening bus lanes on non peak times but wanted to share my opinion with you also. The idea that this will help the city is actually ridiculous, it's an idea pushed by people with their own agenda which is not how I want my city to be run. We need to be encouraging people to use public transport into the city as opposed to driving. Cars are taking over our city and too much discussion and priority is given to cars and parking rather than actual people in the city. Why is this even a discussion topic? Why aren't we focusing on events to bring people to our dying city. More cars isn't the answer. For clarity I am someone who doesn't drive but gets lifts or taxis to town as I hate my bus service. And I still think we don't need to go ahead with this idea. There is a small group of people OBESSED with cars in limerick city rather than focusing on bringing life into a centre that is dying. I'd rather see more bus services, more pedestrian streets, more accessibility in the city rather than cars taking over."

"I hear that there is a plan to stop the bus lanes in the city centre from being 24 hour bus lanes in the month of December, this is a time of the year where bus journeys are already put at jeopardy enough with all the extra traffic and now ye are looking to make it even more unattractive. I think this is. Bad idea and must go against the principles of why it was decided upon in the first place. I also hear the are running an unvetted online poll to gauge support for the proposal, just bonkers,"

Sample of Responses from Survey – NOT In Favour

"The proposed opening of bus lanes in the city to other traffic during the Christmas period is utterly retrograde. There is nothing quite so depressing as sitting on a bus, stuck behind a line of cars - mostly single occupancy, driving through the city with no intention of stopping - crawling up a street right across the city of Limerick. The O'Connell street bus lane is one small respite from this nonsense. It's not the 1990's - shopping habits have changed and will never change back - open the city up for people not cars and we'll find new ways to use it, ie. great to see the LSAD using the old Debenhams, small step but great to see."

"I wanted to just express my disappointment at this entire consultation and the process behind it. Allowing a couple of individuals to try and roll back positive public transportation developments in a dying city centre is a very disappointing development. And using a poll where anyone can vote as many times as they like with zero verification as a basis for doing so goes against any competent planning policy and honestly against common sense. I voted no, and while I only voted three times I hope that goes to highlight just how silly this whole thing is."

Sample of Responses from Survey – NOT In Favour

"I would like to voice my opposition to the proposal to open the bus lane for cars for the month of December. This proposal removes the benefits of public transportation with minimal benefits to public. This proposal is short sighted by business interests that do now have the interest of the public at all. It has been proven that additional lanes does not alleviate traffic and only leads to increased traffic. This does not benefit the city at all."

"I am writing to oppose the proposed trial to restrict the bus lane hours on O'Connell Street. This goes against all the progress the city has made towards encouraging public transport and will increase the wait times for people who rely on buses during the colder months."

"I want to register my support for keeping the bus lane open and to commend you for the recent improvements in Active Travel throughout the city. We need to promote all measures that reduce the volume of cars in our city and we can best achieve this by ensuring people have access to reliable public transport. It is a regressive proposal to increase inconvenience for public transport users, if anything, we need to prioritise public transport in our city. "

Sample of Responses from Survey – NOT In Favour

"I am a resident of Limerick city and frequent user of public transport. I wish to make known my strong feeling that the hours for the bus lane should under no circumstances be reduced. Limerick needs less cars, more buses and more foot traffic. "

"Please dont reduce bus lane hours. Please expand services like this. We need more busses cycling etc. not less."

"I strongly oppose any move to change the operating hours of the bus lane on O'Connell Street, as a regular bus user I wish to make my comments below. Furthermore, the consultation through the Limerick City/County Council MyPoint system allows people to vote multiple times without requiring login or verification, which undermines the validity of the process. It should be declared void."

"The idea of reducing the bus lane hours in the city centre is ridiculous. We are approaching a climate crisis and they want to restrict the use of a bus lane? The buses can hardly run on time as it is and the car usage in the city is ridiculous, we should not be encouraging more traffic and instead encourage public transport. Limerick city Council should focus on working with Dublin Coach and Bus Éireann to ensure 3 buses don't drive in and out of town together, literally bumper to bumper instead of worrying about traffic from the overuse of personal vehicles."

Sample of Responses from Survey – NOT In Favour

"I am emailing as a Limerick voter and resident to oppose the proposed reduction in bus lane hours for O'Connell Street as not only short sighted and foolish but also as a shocking waste of the resources of the people of Limerick who paid for the construction of this necessary piece of public infrastructure. Businesses in the city centre should be calling for park and ride facilities and supporting more buses, not less."

"I just wanted to write to you as a King's Island resident about the proposed changes to the O'Connell Street bus lane to turn it from a 24 hour lane into a bus lane for peak times only. I think this is an incredibly bad idea and am not alone in this thought as this question about the bus corridor was already asked years ago during the development of the LSMATS. December is a terrible month to trial something like this as it is unfair to leave people standing in the cold longer waiting for a bus and will not actually help traffic in any way. Every study throughout the history of the car has shown that introducing more roads, as this plan would do, does not alleviate traffic, it just brings more cars onto that road. To try and cohesively sum up my thoughts, the plan is cynical as it was suggested by one business owner who claims to represent over 100 businesses in the city centre but refuses to provide proof of this, the plan will be ineffective in achieving what it claims to want to achieve, and it will actively harm those who rely on public transport during a month where people are most vulnerable. We need to facilitate busses more, national policy is actively using the stick to get people out of cars, local policy needs to provide the carrot to help people move to public transport."

Sample of Responses from Survey – NOT In Favour

"Id like to note this is absolutely awful idea especially during cold months like December to make people wait longer in this weather. There's plenty people that travel daily to Hospital in Dooradoyle or Crescent shopping center. Not to mention some people travel as well to/from work using buses like 304 or 301. Proposal of reducing bus lane to peak times only also does not help being environmentally sustainable. I thought that was Limerick City's intention with all the new cycle lanes and improved bus lanes. Please take into consideration all people that do not have cars or any personal means of transportation and rely on these buses to get home/work or even to get to the Crescent shopping center for their leisure time. Approving such set up would negatively impact these peoples lives."

"It's a disappointing email I write to elected councillors and a local authority to ask not to change the time lines on bus corridors in Limerick city. Disappointing for the simple reason the world is screaming for change to the way us humans travel due to the impact we are having on our environment. You know this already as Limerick needs to be applauded for its change in active travel and is an outlier in its approach to bicycle infrastructure in particular even though more regions are following the lead with one or two exceptions (Waterford city the obvious one with no plans as of yet in place)."

Sample of Responses from Survey – NOT In Favour

"As both a regular public transport user and frequent driver on this route, I believe I offer a balanced perspective on this matter. I strongly oppose the removal of the bus lane for the following reasons:

Passenger Comfort and Waiting Times- The bus service along O'Connell Avenue already experiences delays, and during the current cold weather, these waiting times are particularly challenging for passengers. Removing the dedicated bus lane would likely increase these delays further, forcing passengers to endure even longer periods in cold conditions at exposed bus stops. This is particularly concerning for elderly passengers, those with mobility issues, and parents with young children.

Traffic Flow Considerations- From my regular experience driving through this stretch, traffic rarely exceeds an 8-minute wait time even during peak hours. Removing the bus lane to create two general traffic lanes would not necessarily improve flow, as there would simply be twice the number of vehicles moving at the same reduced pace. The fundamental capacity issues would remain unchanged.

Limited Business Benefits- The suggestion that removing the bus lane might benefit local businesses appears unfounded. The layout of O'Connell Avenue provides very limited pulling-in opportunities for vehicles, meaning that additional road space would not translate into increased customer access or parking availability for local establishments.

Public Transport Efficiency - Dedicated bus lanes are crucial for maintaining reliable public transport services. They allow buses to maintain consistent schedules regardless of general traffic conditions, making public transport a more attractive and dependable option for commuters. Removing this infrastructure, even temporarily, would be a step backward in promoting sustainable urban transport.

I urge the council to maintain the current bus lane configuration and instead consider other measures to improve traffic flow that don't compromise public transport efficiency. Perhaps we could explore alternative solutions such as improved signal timing or enhanced bus stop designs."

Sample of Responses from Survey – NOT In Favour

"I'm baffled by the proposal to change the hours of operation of O'Connell Street Bus Lane. Bringing more Cars into the city center at the expense of increasing the times for bus to travel through the city can only be seen as a stepback in town planning. Has any analysis been done of what % of cars going through Limerick city are destined for the Shopping areas. Increasing the allocation of space to cars simply enables more cars to use the city center as a link from one side to the other of the city. This has the cost of making road crossing harder also for pedestrians. After spending so much on the redevelopment of o'Connell street a decision like this would illustrate an absolute lack of any foresight in the Limerick planning office when spending tax payers money."

"I haven't much to add that hasn't been said before. Just that any limitation of the O'Connell street bus lane will achieve nothing and risk making Limerick Council look foolish and amateurish. Leave as is!"

Sample of Responses from Survey – NOT In Favour

"I am against any changes to the vital city centre bus lane. We should not be encouraging more car traffic through our city centre. We also should not be forcing bus users to stand for longer periods waiting in the darkest coldest time of year."

"I am opposed to the idea to make the bus lane available for regular traffic in off peak hours. Report after report has shown that more lanes does not improve traffic, you will not get less congestion, eventually you will just get more cars on the road and in the city, the extra capacity will be expanded into and the same amount of traffic issues will remain. It is like water flowing, the traffic will just expand and fill the space allowed and lead to later buses and longer wait times. The end effect of this proposal, especially during the cold winter, will be an active discouragement for people to use public transportation, because of the increase in waiting time, and even more unpredictable timetables, people will not want to be waiting an unknown amount of time in low temperatures and rain, especially at bus stops with little to no shelter. They will choose to not venture into the city or just drive in, increasing the amount of cars in the city. Similar rules were put in to practice in Cork, on Patrick St, and it is a mess. Rather than hijack the public transportation routes, maybe create incentives for people to leave the private car at home or outside the city and take the bus"

Sample of Responses from Survey – NOT In Favour

"In a world where cities are heavily congested with cars, we are seeing a step change in reallocating road space to prioritise people walking, cycling and using public transport, to reduce congestion. This begs the question, why are we asking the people of Limerick if they would like to reverse this trend? It contradicts the Government of Ireland's National Sustainable Mobility Policy as well as our own Limerick City and County Council's Development Plan, both of which aim to promote a shift away from private car ownership to more sustainable modes of transport such as walking, cycling and using public transport. With Limerick seeing significant infrastructure upgrades to improve walking, cycling and the use of public transport, in recent years, thanks to the National Transport Authority funded Active Travel department, we have made great strides in the right direction. The Bus connects programme however is still a long way off delivering the targeted 70% increase in capacity that Limerick desperately needs. With the Bus connects Infrastructure upgrades yet to begin for many the option of using the bus is not a viable one. With current bus services not early enough, frequent enough, reliable enough, late enough, too full and in some cases too expensive is it any wonder people are firmly attached to the car? I believe the question being asked of the public on the loosening of bus lane hours is one brought out through frustration. If I can't take the bus, I have to use my car, and if I use my car I'm frustrated by the fact everybody else is in the same situation and the streets are so heavily congested. For many car owners travelling along O'Connell Street it will seem like a win if they can drive in the bus lane. However it won't be long before both lanes are congested and we are back to the same problem. Whilst also making it more polluted, less safe and less desirable for pedestrians doing their Christmas shopping. If there was an attractive, viable alternative, such as a free park and ride facility we may well see people opting to leave cars on the outskirts of the city in favour of trying to drive through the congested streets. Perhaps we shouldn't be offering free parking in the city over Christmas period, but instead offer the free park and ride?"

Sample of Responses from Survey – NOT In Favour

"As a resident of the City West suburbs who makes regular use of the 304 bus to access the city centre, I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed closure of the bus lane on O'Connell Street to allow car traffic during the Christmas period. This decision contradicts key transport policies and dismisses robust evidence supporting sustainable infrastructure, including the Council's own findings from multiple surveys and reports."

"The lane has already delivered measurable success. Since it became operational, peak journey times for buses on O'Connell Street have reduced from 9 minutes to 3 minutes, according to data from the NTA and Bus Éireann. This improvement is particularly vital for high-frequency routes like the 304, which connects key destinations such as the University Hospital Limerick (UHL), business parks in Raheen and Castletroy, and numerous schools and universities. It is no coincidence that Limerick saw a 15% increase in bus journeys in 2023—a rise of 600,000 trips compared to 2022—followed by further growth of over 5% in 2024. This demonstrates the growing public preference for reliable public transport when supported by targeted infrastructure investments."

Sample of Responses from Survey – NOT In Favour

"As a Limerick City centre resident and daily bus user, I rely heavily on the bus system for commuting to work, shopping, hospital visits, and social engagements. Public transport, alongside walking, is my primary mode of travel, a conscious choice influenced by the improved frequency and reliability of bus services in the city. The recent enhancements to the public transport network are commendable and have undoubtedly contributed to a more sustainable, accessible, and efficient urban environment. I even believe the council has conducted its own research on shopping and modes of transport. Closing this bus lane, even temporarily, would represent a significant step backward. Research consistently demonstrates that protected bus lanes play a vital role in maintaining the reliability, efficiency, and attractiveness of public transport systems."

"I personally am astutely against such a proposal. I am a student in UL, from rural north Clare, and I have plenty of personal experience from the isolation and inaccessibility created by a lack of transport alternatives to car-based traffic. I understand that the proposal seeks not to remove buses entirely, however public transport is the safest, cleanest and quickest way of moving people around, especially and irrefutably in population-dense areas such as Limerick city."

Sample of Responses from Survey – NOT In Favour

"I am against any changes to the vital city centre bus lane. We should not be encouraging more car traffic through our city centre. We also should not be forcing bus users to stand for longer periods waiting in the darkest coldest time of year."

"As a Limerick city centre resident for many decades who has seen hard-fought improvements in Limerick bus services and pedestrian infrastructure finally begin to arrive after years of urban planners, residents, and business owners argued for them, I would like to express my vehement opposition to the proposal that the section of bus lane on O'Connell Street be restricted at all, let alone be restricted to the hours of 07:00 to 10:00 and 16:00 to 19:00."

"I am writing to express my unequivocal opposition to the proposal to restrict the city centre bus lane to peak hours only. This idea is not only regressive but also diametrically opposed to the vision of a livable, thriving, and sustainable Limerick."

"I both drive and use the bus in the city centre. Please don't open the bus lane to car traffic."

Sample of Responses from Survey – NOT In Favour

"I would like to lodge my opposition to the opening of the O'Connell Street Bus Lane to Private Vehicles. This is a short sighted attempt to appease a small group of local business owners, some of whom have already halted other works in the city that would have increased footfall. The city centre isn't less attractive than Jetland or the Crescent because of the bus lane but a perceived inaccessibility and high rents driving businesses out of the city centre. Opening up the bus lane to cars will only make this hollowing out of the city centre worse as busses get caught in the same traffic as everyone else clogging up the road and making it take even longer to get into the city centre for everyone reducing footfall even more."

"I am against any closing of the O'Connell St bus lane. It's a vital link into town for people who don't own a car. Opening up OConnell St to 2 lanes of car traffic will only encourage car owners to use OCS as a rat run to Crescent SC."

"I'm writing because I disagree with the closure of the bus lane on O'Connell Street in the name of 'traffic control'. I don't believe it makes sense. I believe that encouraging more uses of buses or perhaps a park and ride for Christmas shoppers who may be driving from afar makes more sense."

Sample of Responses from Survey – NOT In Favour

“I would like to briefly set out my strong opposition to this. As a resident of the Ennis Road who attended University of Limerick and has made great use of the bus services to access the Crescent Shopping Centre and Childers Road shopping centre, as well as returning to the city from various surround areas, I must wholly endorse the bus services for allowing this travel and reducing the terrible congestion seen on these routes. Having grown up on the Ennis Road at the doorstep of the city I am no stranger to the woeful traffic that dominated the city centre. The reduction of this thanks to better transport links in the form of buses and cycling infrastructure can only be a positive. I would also like to reference that the objective data of the NTA and Bus Éireann which sets out the success of the bus route for reducing peak journey time. My own experiences of being in the city the last few years is also much more pleasant with the lack of gridlock. We are also in a climate emergency and the investment in better public transport is an inarguable social good and necessity that cannot be ignored. I would also like to register my disappointment in this unnecessary retreading of old ground. The bus lane was installed as part of the local Limerick development plan 22-28 and also the wider national strategy and the course must be stayed as part of the larger objective. Any issues within the city centre will not be suddenly solved by the removal of a new bus lane, as they existed before it's installation. Having also lived in Dublin and Cork city for a time, it is clear that the higher standard and reliability of public transport is an attraction for shoppers and workers in knowing they can use and rely on these services to access the city centre. This is an unfortunate use of time and resources that could be better allocated. I strongly recommend, and hope for, the maintaining of this bus lane as it has operated for the past 2 and a half years, as well as further developments and improvements. It is a change from the Limerick we know, but a better one.”

Sample of Responses from Survey – NOT In Favour

"In relation to the proposal raised at the Limerick City & County Council meeting on November 25th 2024 I wish to register my strong opposition to any changes to the operating hours of the bus lane on O'Connell St."

"I think reopening the bus lane to more car traffic is a bad idea. Limerick needs to pedestrianise more streets in the city, not add more cars. Galway and Dublin pedestrianised their main shopping streets (Shop st and Grafton) decades ago, and nobody has ever proposed reopening these to cars. For those who point to Cruises St, it is simply too small to have a real effect. Councillors need to stop pandering to the whims of a small number of city traders, who are simply resisting change, and would prefer Limerick to stay a 'big town' instead of a modern city for residents. Change will come to them whether they like it or not, be brave and tell them to move with the times."

"I would like to register my strong objection to the reduction of the O'Connell Street bus lane. As someone who drives and owns a car, I can clearly understand that the closure of this bus lane would be detrimental to the city and its honest traders. The 304 is a regular and convenient bus and would always be my, and my peers, preference for travelling into the city. Without an efficient service like this, I do not believe I would travel into the city as often as I do."

Sample of Responses from Survey – NOT In Favour

"The current 24-hour operation of the bus lane on O'Connell Street plays a critical role in ensuring reliable and efficient transportation for students and the public. Reducing the operating hours to only cover peak times would significantly disrupt daily commutes, impede access to education, and ultimately, could lead to increased traffic congestion and associated environmental impacts."

"I am a city homeowner and operate a small company from my home. In 2019, I sold my car as I could easily get to and from University Limerick, while studying for my Masters Degree, and the Crescent Shopping Centre using the 304 buses, which rely on a clear bus lane on O'Connell Street to be punctual. This system has worked very well for me. Additionally, I use the Citylink commercial bus service from Arthur's Quay when travelling on business trips abroad to get to Dublin Airport. Citylink and the Green Bus services are critical in bringing students and tourists to and from Limerick city, with the Green Bus travelling on to Tralee and Ennis. All buses utilise the O'Connell Street bus lane to access the city, operating an hourly service 24 hours a day. Altering the operation of the O'Connell Street bus lane will jeopardise the viability of these services if they have to share it with car traffic on O'Connell Street."

"I am not in favour of reducing the bus lanes operating hours. I firmly believe 24 hour bus lanes are appropriate in Limerick and on O'Connell street specifically."

Sample of Responses from Survey – NOT In Favour

"I would like to voice my extremely strong opposition to the proposal to restrict the hours of operation of the O'Connell Street bus lane. The 301 and 304 buses both use this lane, both have a high passenger load factor and these are two very important routes as they connect some of the biggest centers of employment, education and retail in the entire of Limerick City and indeed the whole of Munster. These include University of Limerick, the hospital at UHL, Crescent Shopping Center (the largest shopping center in all of Munster), Childers Road Retail Park, plus many large residential areas. Removing the bus lane on O'Connell Street will greatly diminish the attractiveness of taking the bus, as it will now be subjected to far greater delays. I use the 301 to travel from the end of the 301 line to the hospital. This can save me nearly €50 per week in car parking fees at the hospital (sometimes more)."

"I would like state that I think reducing the bus lane hours in Limerick city centre would be a backwards move. The reason people don't shop as much in the city is not down to the bus lane. I primarily use the car to travel into the city only because it is cheaper go travel that way as family of four. The fares for the four of us in and out are higher than parking for a short stay. Improvements to bus frequency, bus shelter placement and pricing would allow more people to use the bus."

Sample of Responses from Survey – NOT In Favour

"I can't believe I'm even having to send this email to register my protest in relation to this nonsensical proposal to essentially remove the O'Connell St bus lane for any period over Christmas. I've been listening to Christmas FM a lot over the festive period and they do a lot of traffic updates. Ones that have jumped out at me are for places like Galway, Cork and Belfast - warning of road closure and diversions for Christmas related activity -and here we are with someone proposing to invite more through-traffic into the city at the expense of the means by which those stopping and spending money get here -and all because some individuals purporting to represent traders essentially gate crashed a council meeting -and worse were indulged to do so. This needs to stop, the proposal needs to be binned and you collectively need to stop deferring to these people like they're the pipers paymaster."

"I read with disbelief the suggestion that bus lanes would be REMOVED from the city centre when everywhere else in Ireland and across Europe the move is to facilitate more NOT less public transport. Dublin Bus for example say that every single full bus replaces the equivalent of 80 cars on our roads, reducing emissions by over 90% and freeing up 300 metres of roadway. Please do not go down this road, retain and expand public transport priority infrastructure."

Sample of Responses from Survey – NOT In Favour

"I'm completely against any reduction in priority given to public transport on O'Connell St. It shouldn't even be considered in any way other than emergency. Limerick has suffered from disastrous decisions in past and we need to stick with making the city less car-centric and focus on progressing residential + amenity space there. Speeding cars hamper progress."

"I oppose the proposal to reduce the hours of the bus lane through Limerick. We need more bus lanes, not less. We need more buses. A modern city needs an efficient public transport system - look at any successful big city around the world and almost all have decent public transport. Please do what you can to increase public transport options in the city, including more buses and bus lanes. "