

Supporting Growth
and Increasing Prosperity

**A Planning and Transport Strategy for
Thames Gateway South Essex**



‘Achieve transformational development and change throughout TGSE to significantly improve the local economy, quality of life of residents, and natural and built environment.’

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‘Unlock growth now, secure jobs and earnings tomorrow, and create the conditions for long term economic growth and social resilience.’



Policy Framework

The Thames Gateway South Essex (TGSE) area, which covers the Thurrock, Basildon, Castle Point, Rochford and Southend-on-Sea council areas, is already home to over 677,000 residents within almost 280,000 households¹. The presence of this large and growing resident population, a strong employment sector, international ports and airport and its proximity to London provide TGSE with a firm foundation for further growth. Fully realising the potential of the housing and employment development planned across the area will provide a major contribution to the recovery of national and local economies.

The impact of the recession, central government's deficit cutting programme and other economic reforms emphasise the need to focus on the key challenges, drivers and opportunities arising out of the reforms. The National Planning Policy Framework forms a key part of the Government's reform to **promote sustainable growth**, including **building a strong competitive economy, delivering housing, ensuring the vitality of town centres, promoting sustainable transport and supporting high quality communications infrastructure**.

The South East Local Enterprise Partnership

The Strategy will form a key input into the work associated with the South East Local Enterprise Partnership and in particular the Strategic Economic Plan.

TGSE falls wholly within the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) area, whose goal is to promote steady, **sustained economic growth** over the next two decades through four strategic objectives:

- Secure the **growth** of the Thames Gateway, as the largest single regeneration area in Europe, with three out of four key drivers of economic growth in SELEP area located in TGSE (London Gateway and Tilbury Ports and London Southend Airport)
- Promote **investment** in coastal communities, including low-carbon **technology industries**
- Strengthen rural economy, including rolling out **super fast broadband** across the area
- Strengthen **competitive advantage** of strategic growth locations, eg Southend, Basildon & Thurrock.

The Essex Integrated County Strategy

The Greater Essex Integrated County Strategy (ICS, Nov 2010) also focuses on achieving **transformational development** and change throughout TGSE, and **promoting economic growth in these key urban centres**, as well as supporting the renewable and low carbon **technology sectors**. The ICS Vision for TGSE is to:

‘Achieve transformational development and change throughout TGSE to significantly improve the local economy, quality of life for residents, and natural and built environment.’

1 ONS 2011 Census, July 2012 first release

The Essex Economic Growth Strategy (EGS, July 2012) sets out the objectives and guiding principles in order to actively:

‘Unlock growth now, secure jobs and earnings tomorrow, and create the conditions for long term economic growth and social resilience.’

Local Plans

All the Planning Authorities in the Gateway have Local Plans in various stages of development and implementation. Local Plans are the key to delivering sustainable development that reflects the vision and aspirations of local communities. Local planning authorities seek opportunities to achieve each of the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development, supporting jobs, growth and housing.

Local Transport Strategies


The Essex Transport Strategy (ETS, June 2011) sets out the 15 year vision to improve travel in the county, and underlines the importance of the transport network in achieving **sustainable long term economic growth and enriching the life of residents**.

The Southend Local Transport Plan (LTP3) 2011-2015 identifies key themes including to facilitate a thriving and **sustainable local economy**, and minimise environmental impact and **promote sustainability**. The Thurrock LTP3 2012-2026 sets out the long term vision for improving transport, including ensuring the transport system is fully inclusive, is integrated for seamless multi-modal journeys, is assessable, it delivers sustainable community regeneration and growth, and reflects the importance of Thurrock as an international centre for logistics and commercial development.

Attracting and securing investment and promoting sustainable development will increase pressure on the existing road, bus and rail networks. This TGSE Transport Strategy will build on the success of the 2005 Business Plan and will highlight the major transport initiatives and flagship TGSE schemes which are identified in order that sustainable growth can take place, that investment is attracted and the local economy is strengthened.

The 2010 Essex Business Survey identified perceived barriers to growth, one of which was traffic congestion, with the strategic network acknowledged as being at or close to capacity. HGVs make up substantial proportions of road traffic on key sections of the strategic network, and rail freight is set to increase as the ports expand. The strategic rail network is also at or close to capacity with passenger numbers close to all time record levels.

The strategy will be regularly reviewed and updated by the TGSE partners to respond to changing priorities, the emergence of new funding sources and changes to budget allocation systems.



'It is vital that these principles are applied at a grass roots level, within the planning system...'

Our Vision

To support the strategic objective to raise the overall prosperity levels of Thames Gateway South Essex to the average of the Greater South East, and provide a better quality of life for the population by developing and maintaining a sustainable transport system that promotes growth and strengthens provision for all users whilst minimising impact on the built and natural environments.

Delivery of the Vision will be focused on four key Objectives:

Economic Growth

Facilitate sustainable employment, economic and housing growth focused on key regeneration areas in particular on the key urban centres of Southend-on-Sea, Basildon and Thurrock. Optimise the use of the existing transport networks through active management and making improvements to attract employment led development, regeneration across the area, and identifying and delivering new and improved transport connections across the area.

Environment

Minimise the impact of development and transport on the environment by making efficient use of the existing transport networks through active management, minimising carbon emissions, tackling congestion and promoting sustainable travel choices.

Accessibility

Enhance connectivity internationally, nationally and within TGSE to jobs, education and services and deliver reliable and predictable journey times by strengthening the networks for all modes across the sub-region to support the economy, major regeneration and promote more sustainable travel patterns.

Quality of Life, Safety and Health

To enhance the quality of life across TGSE by providing a sustainable transport system that helps to raise the prosperity levels of residents and workers within the area and promotes personal safety and healthier travel choices.

The Vision and Objectives of the Strategy will be achieved through the following principles.

- Facilitating sustainable development across the sub-region in accordance with the core principles of the National Planning Policy Framework
- Enhancing connectivity to the sub-region's economic and employment centres

- Encouraging town centres and strategic employment areas across the sub-region to act as locations for investment and growth to fulfil and further develop their role in the local economy and to encourage policies and programmes to support this role.
- Encouraging the development of appropriate levels of new housing across the sub-region in the locations identified by local agreement and ensure that this is appropriately serviced by all transport modes at the time of delivery
- Recognising and supporting the role of the sub-region as a location for recreation and leisure opportunities
- Recognising the important areas of green open space within the sub-region, acknowledging as well as recognising the environment for its intrinsic value and reflecting this in all policies and delivery programmes
- Encouraging sustainable patterns of movement and growth across the sub-region which can be fully serviced by walking, cycling and public transport networks and to support policies and programmes which give effect to this
- Ensuring effective maintenance and management of the highway network
- Ensuring that congestion is managed proactively and network resilience improved
- Reducing the number of casualties on the transport network

It is vital that these principles are applied at a grass roots level, within the planning system. Planning is at the heart of this strategy and it will need to:

- Encourage the preparation of plans and programmes across the sub-region by effective use of joint working and co-operation between all relevant agencies
- Ensure that sustainable economic development, especially of sub-regional importance, is supported by the appropriate development and transport plans and programmes to allow implementation and delivery at the appropriate time.

An incremental approach will be applied to transport to ensure that the transport network is fit for purpose and enables economic growth. This entails:

- Prioritising the **maintenance and smarter use by all modes of transport** of our existing transport network
- Making targeted investments to **address local network pinch points** and local network development
- Promoting **larger scale projects** where these are required to most effectively address the transport challenges facing TGSE.

The national background to transport delivery is changing rapidly and it is imperative that the approach adopted by this Strategy is flexible and can respond to the Local Growth Fund and the Strategic Economic Plan.



‘There is untapped potential for new housing and employment development across the TGSE area and releasing this potential will allow regeneration across TGSE to catch up with that achieved across the rest of the Thames Gateway.’



Realising the Potential

The Thames Gateway area has already attracted considerable investment due to its location and economic importance to the South-East, London and the rest of the country. There is untapped potential for new housing and employment development across the TGSE area and releasing this potential will allow regeneration across TGSE to catch up with that achieved across the rest of the Thames Gateway.

The TGSE local authorities have developed, or are developing plans, which aim to deliver a significant number of new homes and jobs across the area. A series of developments has been identified within the TGSE area, as set out below:

Thurrock

The **London Gateway Port** development, scheduled to open in 2013, is expected to generate 12,000 direct and 20,000 indirect jobs. This development will provide the UK's newest deep sea container port, capable of handling 3.5 million containers per year, alongside the largest logistics park in Europe.

The expansion of **Tilbury port** to create up to 4,000 new local jobs and contribute to the wider regeneration of Thurrock.

Lakeside to be transformed into a regional town centre, with up to 3,000 new homes, and new employment, retail and leisure facilities with up to 9,000 jobs.

A new town centre in **Purfleet**, with up to 3,000 new homes, and associated mixed use development opportunities, to improve and expand the existing town centre.

Regeneration of **Grays** town centre as a learning, business and public administration hub to complement nearby Lakeside.

Rochford and Southend-on-Sea Joint Area Action Plan (JAAP)

A new terminal, control tower, railway station and hotel have been constructed at **London Southend Airport** and the runway extended to accommodate heavier aircraft along with the new terminal building extension. Currently 620,000 passengers per year use the airport. This is set to rise to 2 million passengers per year.

The **Employment Area** within the JAAP will create high value employment land within **Rochford** to deliver up to 7380 jobs for both Rochford and Southend.

Southend-on-Sea

At **Shoeburyness** the development of the garrison, seafront and commercial areas will stimulate growth, with up to 1,500 jobs and 1,400 homes proposed.

Regeneration of **Southend Town Centre**, central area and seafront, to provide up to 6,500 new jobs and at least 2,000 new homes, retail, office space, campus development and leisure facilities.

Basildon

Regeneration of **Basildon Town Centre**, to include increased retail and office space, a new college campus, and up to 2,000 new homes.

A health and education gateway is being created at **Nether Mayne** to improve the already strong links with local R&D companies. Relocation of the college to the town centre will enable up to 850 new homes to be built.

Castle Point

Transformation of both **Hadleigh Town Centre** and **Canvey Town Centre** is planned.

The **Legacy from the Hadleigh Olympic Event** will result in a new mountain biking facility and improved access.



‘Local transport improvements will be delivered through the Thurrock, Essex and Southend Local Transport Plans which cover the TGSE area.’



Unlocking Growth

If the full potential of these and other developments is to be realised a number of **key transport issues in the TGSE area** need to be addressed.

These include:

- **Capacity and congestion issues affecting connectivity at a national and regional level at:**
 - The **Dartford Crossings** and **M25 J30/31**, where queuing and lengthy delays not only affect national and regional travel but result in diversion to the A13 and congestion on local roads in Thurrock
 - Long term need for further crossing capacity of the **Lower Thames**, subject to Central Government study.
- **Capacity and congestion issues affecting connectivity across the region and between major towns in TGSE:**
 - Congestion affecting **A127 and A13**, which are already operating above their operational capacities, particularly at peak times with congestion effects spreading to local networks
 - **A13** has insufficient capacity to serve the London Gateway Port development and requires widening between **A1014 and A128**, as well as other short term capacity and safety issues; long term more extensive congestion issues may require widening or off-line improvements
 - **A127 in Southend** where capacity access improvements are required to serve the town centre and central area and London Southend Airport Employment Area including the development of high tech businesses adjacent to the airport
 - Both rail lines providing **commuter rail services** between TGSE and London suffer from overcrowding and excessive journey times due to track provision, and lack of rolling stock; conflicting demands of commuter and freight services;
 - There are a high number of level crossings in the Thurrock area, and the highway problems which result will be exacerbated by increased **rail freight** movements for London Gateway.

- **Highway infrastructure in place for many years and needs to be managed and maintained so that it is fit to support economic growth in the 21st century, therefore this strategy needs to address:**
 - **A127 corridor** which has maintenance, capacity and incident management issues, for which further short term route management is required; in the long term infrastructure investment will be needed
 - Local road, rail, bus and cycle networks need investment, maintenance and management to ensure they are fit for purpose and their capacity is maximised.
- **Capacity and congestion issues affecting connectivity and accessibility within and to town centres for all forms of transport, therefore this strategy needs to address:**
 - **Congestion in town centres** to make them more accessible to residents, businesses and visitors
 - **Local access** issues affecting new and existing developments
 - Need to improve accessibility of local and strategic **bus services** and local **cycle and pedestrian** networks through improved infrastructure, connectivity, priority and information.

Local transport improvements will be delivered through the Thurrock, Essex and Southend Local Transport Plans which cover the TGSE area. Examples of the more major local priorities that will be tackled by the individual Local Transport Authorities include the Thurrock Traffic Management Plan, Basildon Town Centre Regeneration, the Southend Central Area Action Plans and the Shoeburyness Action Plan.



***‘Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS)**
will play an increasingly important role in
this strategy and will help to make best
use of the TGSE transport networks.’*



Delivering Growth

In order to address the key transport issues identified above, as well as support the strategy across the Gateway, a number of Transport related schemes have been identified:

London Gateway M25 J30-A13: S278 improvements to mitigate traffic impacts of this development, to improve the interchange between the M25 and A13, including improvements to J30 roundabout and its approaches, and widening of the A13 between J30 and A126 interchange.

Long term capacity improvements to M25 J30/31: existing infrastructure and/or off-line away from M25 J30/A13 corridor.

Free-flow charging at Dartford Crossings: to reduce congestion, involving infrastructure works, new customer charging and enforcement management services, new traffic control measures to ensure continued safety and integrity of tunnels, and installation of roadside communication technology.

The need for further crossing capacity of **Lower Thames** to be studied in detail by Central Government.

Enhanced Public Transport facilities and services: to provide reliable public transport services that link major TGSE development areas through the provision of high quality bus infrastructure improving reliability, journey times and information.

Station Improvements & Improved Accessibility: to facilitate greater integration between bus and rail stations and improve facilities, particularly the major works proposed in Basildon

Addressing rail issues through working with Network Rail and Operators: lobbying to encourage improved infrastructure and rolling stock as part of franchise renewals, and other funding opportunities, as part of their Long Term Planning Process.

A13 Route Management Plan: implementation to provide short term corridor capacity and safety improvements. This will be in conjunction with the Highways Agency’s Route Based Strategies.

A13 between the A128 and the A1014: Manor Way in Thurrock will require greater capacity to serve the London Gateway development. The A13 and A1014 linking the London Gateway to the M25 should be designated as part of the national strategic highway network.

A127 Route Management Plan: will address the three issues of maintenance, traffic management and capacity. The overall plan will take a medium to long term approach to support development across the Gateway while prioritising immediate issues such as the **A127 Southend Junction Improvements:** to reduce congestion and enable housing and employment growth within Southend and Rochford.

Local Access Improvements: involving small-scale junction improvements and local cycling and walking infrastructure improvements.

It will not be possible, affordable or environmentally acceptable to improve the capacity of the strategic road and rail networks to fully accommodate forecast growth. **Demand Management** is a cost effective approach to increasing capacity through the application of a wide range of strategies to reduce travel demand and encourage the development and use of more sustainable travel modes. By reducing the demand for single occupancy private car usage, this can lead to improved environmental conditions, and better public health through the promotion of walking, cycling and public transport.

Smarter Choices will be a vital component in providing residents and workers with a real choice of how they access jobs, education, healthcare services and leisure facilities and how they **plan their travel** to and around town centres. Work on the promotion of the use of sustainable transport and the provision of information to inform transport choice is already well underway within the TGSE area.

Improved **public transport, walking and cycling infrastructure, facilities,** information and priority, throughout TGSE, will include targeting strategic transport corridors and links which serve town centres, residential areas and employment locations.

To facilitate further **travel planning** initiatives, planning obligations will be sought to secure the provision of travel plans at new and expanded employment developments as well as Personal Travel Planning/sustainable transport information packs at new residential developments. Contributions towards improvements to **walking, cycling and passenger transport infrastructure** and services will also be sought from developers.

Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) will play an increasingly important role in this strategy and will help to make best use of the TGSE transport networks. Where possible measures such as Automatic Vehicle Location, CCTV, Variable Message Signing, Real Time Passenger Information, car parking guidance, Automatic Number Plate Recognition, smartphone technology, through-ticketing and smartcards will be used to provide travellers with access to up-to-date information on the road, rail and bus networks and simplify access to passenger transport services.





'The TGSE transport strategy cannot be static and will need to evolve to respond to development opportunities and programmes, the evolving budget allocation systems and new funding sources.'

Delivering the Strategy

The TGSE transport strategy cannot be static and will need to evolve to respond to development opportunities and programmes, the evolving budget allocation systems and new funding sources.

Delivery of the strategy will be guided and promoted by the TGSE Planning and Transport Board which draws together senior representatives from the TGSE Local Authorities, Government Departments, the Highways Agency, rail operators and private businesses including London Southend Airport and the London Gateway Port. The Board recognises that organisations cannot deliver the TGSE transport strategy individually and that partnership working will be vital to develop cost effective transport solutions that deliver growth and reduce carbon emissions.

The TGSE Local Transport Authorities and Local Planning Authorities will work together to develop and promote the major development and transport schemes required to support TGSE economic growth and deliver the Integrated County Strategy for Greater Essex. Continued partnership working will be required to provide unified support for strategic TGSE transport schemes when bidding for funds from the SELEP and Local Transport Body, Government and other sources.

The introduction of funding sources such as the Growing Places Fund, which help to release development but which subsequently need to be repaid and re-invested elsewhere, require early involvement and close working between the public and private sectors.

Government has devolved major scheme transport funding to Local Enterprise Partnerships with the distribution of local growth funds dependant upon the Strategic Economic Plans for the area.

Delivery of this strategy will require continued funding for scheme investigation and development. Early pump priming investment will ensure that strong bids for funding linked to economic growth can be submitted when opportunities arise. The prioritisation of schemes and the programme for scheme development will be determined with regard to key indicators such as impact on congestion, carbon emissions and the release of land for employment and housing uses. The interaction of these indicators is illustrated in the accompanying diagram, and their location is shown in the accompanying map.

Local transport improvements (non-major) will continue to be provided through the three Local Transport Plans. Developers will be obliged to develop green travel plans and provide local improvements for safe access to their sites by all modes. Emerging funding sources such as the Community Infrastructure Levy may allow the Local Highway Authorities to pool contributions and provide wider transport improvements to offset the impact of development on critical links and junctions.

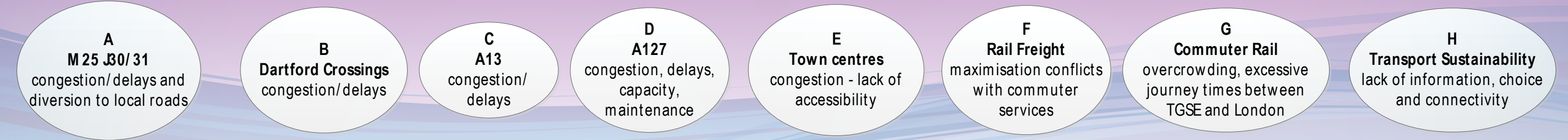




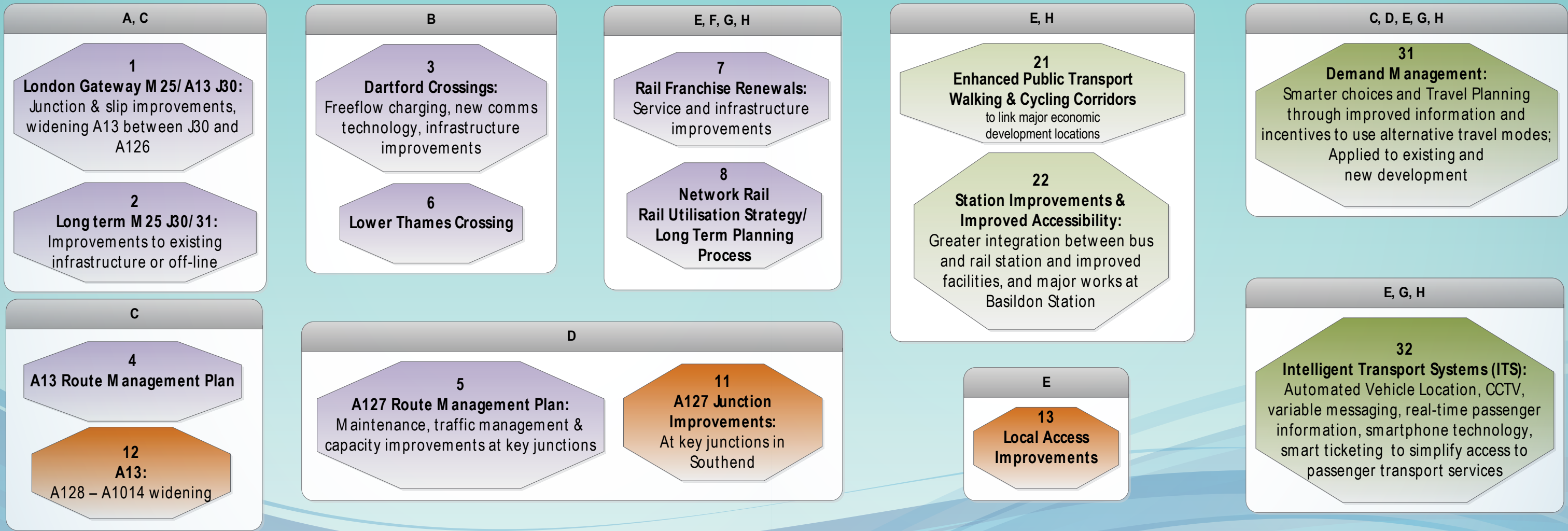
DEVELOPMENTS



ISSUES



SCHEMES / INTERVENTIONS





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