

# Trams from Granton to Edinburgh BioQuarter and Beyond Strategic Business Case Report Easy Read

## **What is this document about?**

Edinburgh already has an established and well used tram system running from Edinburgh Airport to the city centre and to Leith and Newhaven. The Council is looking at expanding the tram network in the city. In 2025, the Council asked the public and organisations for their views on a new tram route. This tram route would run from the north of the city, to the city centre, and then on to the south of the city, and possibly into Midlothian and East Lothian. It would link to major hospitals, universities and colleges, to places where people live and work. People gave us their views on this proposal in late 2025, and a report detailing what they said was presented to the Council's Transport and Environment Committee on 18 June 2026. It was agreed that another report would be presented on 10 September 2026 on whether there is a good 'case' to progress further with this project, and what the next steps might be.

## **Why do we need more trams?**

Edinburgh is the fastest growing city in Scotland in terms of population and is getting busier all the time. Edinburgh is also very popular with visitors. Passenger numbers on the existing tram network are increasing every year, as are passenger numbers on Lothian Buses. All of this means more and more people need to move around the city.

How people move around the city really matters:

- transport can cause pollution in the air and through noise, too many cars can slow traffic down which is bad for the city's economy and impacts jobs
- sometimes people can get hurt by vehicles
- using cars too much means people don't get as much exercise as they need

The Council is trying to help more people move around the city on foot or on wheels (e.g. a wheelchair), by cycling, on public transport (trains, trams, buses) and on transport people can share (e.g. car clubs). This helps people move around Edinburgh in a way that keeps our air clean, keeps people safe, keeps people healthy, and helps everyone get to where they need to be.

## **What did people tell us when asked about building more trams?**

Opinions and views given to the Council through the consultation survey and the market research in late 2025 were very useful and important.

Over 11,000 people gave their views. In the consultation survey, many people agreed with the idea of more trams, but slightly more people disagreed. In the market research, more people agreed with the idea of more trams than disagreed, although a lot of people weren't sure.

The part of the tram idea that got most support was the route to the south, between the city centre and the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh (hospital) and the BioQuarter area beside it, known as Edinburgh BioQuarter.

Some people agreed that trams are a good way to travel. They are easy to use, quick and reliable. They could especially help people in areas where people don't have as many cars. They could help keep people moving around the city as the population grows, as they can carry lots of people in one go.

Other people were worried about how much more trams would cost. Some said building trams can make it hard for people moving around and for businesses, as the roads and routes have to be dug up. Many were also very concerned about an idea to use a popular path for part of a tram route.

### **Developing a Strategic Business Case**

Building a north – south tram route will be complicated and would cost a lot of money. The Council follows government advice on developing a business case to understand if investing time and money in a big project like this is the right thing to do.

Developing a business case for a project this size has three stages and the Council has just finished a Strategic Business Case which is the first stage of the process. A business case is an important part of any new project and is required by Government – it broadly answers the questions “is this project needed and is it worth doing?”.

To develop a Strategic Business Case, the Council has looked at how many people will live, work, visit and study here in the years to come, how much house building is needed, and has estimated how many people will use the tram as part of public transport in the city and city region. There is also an estimate of how much it would cost to build and run.

The findings of the Strategic Business Case show that building a north – south tram route would be a good idea and deliver real benefits to Edinburgh and surrounding Local Authorities. It recommends going to the next stage of developing a business case, which is called an Outline Business Case, if money can be found to pay for it. This would involve looking in greater detail at the design of streets, cycling lanes and pavements, trees and parks, and tram stop locations. There would also be more work done on how much it would cost, how it would be paid for, and how many passengers would be expected to use it.

It would be highly unlikely that a tram route of this length (18km) would be built in one go. Based on forecast passengers and other factors, the Strategic Business Case recommends prioritising the section from city centre to the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh / Edinburgh BioQuarter using a route via North and South Bridges, Newington, and Cameron Toll. This would also complement work that is being done on a possible South Suburban Railway by Transport Scotland and Network Rail.

While the section from Granton to the city centre is still important to deliver the full north-south route, further work on this section is needed.

Edinburgh's elected Councillors will make a decision on what to do next at the [Transport and Environment Committee on 10 September 2026](#).

For anyone wanting to stay updated on this idea, email [futuretrams@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:futuretrams@edinburgh.gov.uk) and ask to be added to the mailing list. There is also further information available at [www.edinburgh.gov.uk/futuretrams](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/futuretrams).