

From: Michael Flynn [REDACTED]
Sent: 31 March 2017 08:33
To: National Planning Framework
Subject: Mick Flynn - Submission to National Planning Framework

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
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Sir/Madam,

Here are a few points I would like to make by way of a submission to this framework:

1. The regional role of all the cities outside Dublin should be made explicit and contain a commitment over time to provide a minimum level of services. I speak as a resident of Waterford, where all our political energies are spent trying either to campaign for services that are taken as a given by other cities (university, 24x7 cardiac care, airport), or else trying to fight a rearguard action against government/political initiatives that undermine our regional role (splitting of south-east hospital group, closure of local VEC offices and removal to Wexford, abolition of our city council, etc.). Making legal and cross-party political commitments to the full support of these cities' roles will allow local politicians and business/community groupings the space to concentrate on higher-level matters.
2. Sligo, Athlone and possibly Dundalk would seem to me to be ideally located (in a spatial sense) to be included as the main cities for their regions, and should be included in the commitments mentioned above.
3. All the cities should connect to one another via the motorway network. Having this network concentrated on Dublin only gives the capital yet another competitive advantage where investment decisions are concerned. There should be an outer bypass of Dublin from about Kilcullen to Drogheda, to carry traffic from Belfast to the other cities. Also, these roads should be specified as motorways so that they are not used to open up land for development with direct access.
4. Local government should no longer be organised along county lines. People in areas such as south Kilkenny would be much happier about being administered from the neighbouring city if the whole set of county boundaries were scrapped altogether and replaced with districts each centering on a major town, and with boundaries running through less populated rural areas, mountains, etc. There should be a further regional tier grouping these districts together, based roughly on the old health-board regions (each could then have a "capital" in one of the main cities, to include Sligo, Athlone and Dundalk). The counties can remain in place for ceremonial and of course sporting purposes, as is the case in Northern Ireland, where the GAA still organises along county lines, and not according to local authority boundaries.
5. Everything possible should be done to ensure that as many people as possible live in or near to city centres. This would include incentives for renovating buildings and high quality transport links to suburban centres of employment, like industrial estates, major hospitals, and centres of education. It may also have to include added provision for city-centre parking, which should be reasonably cheap and easy to access for residents. Additional greenways should be provided so as to make walking and cycling safer and more attractive not just for leisure, but for commuting too.
6. Having test-driven a number of electric cars, I believe these are the way forward for more environmentally friendly transport and the problem of air pollution. Newer models are well within the range capabilities

needed for most people's transport needs, and they should be encouraged. This means keeping (and indeed increasing) the SEAI grant, subsidising further home chargers, and providing more fast chargers along main routes. Norway appears to be the country to look to in this regard.

7. A site-value tax is the best way to tax land use efficiently, should replace the property tax, and be used to fund local authorities and water infrastructure. Professor Ronan Lyons's arguments in favour of this are easily accessible online, and in my view are convincing.

In case this is important, I am not affiliated with any political party, community group, business association, etc. I work in a financial institution, but these are purely my personal views.

Regards,

Mick Flynn

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