



Glasgow City Council

Economy, Housing, Transport and Regeneration
City Policy Committee

Report by George Gillespie, Executive Director
Neighbourhoods, Regeneration and Sustainability

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Item 4

19th November 2024

CITY CENTRE AVENUES PROGRAMME UPDATE: 2024

Purpose of Report:

To provide an update to Members on progress of the City Deal and Sustrans funded Avenues Programme.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that Members:

- i. Consider the contents of the report;
- ii. Note that further updates will be reported back to Committee on an annual basis.

Ward No(s): 10

Citywide:

Local member(s) advised: Yes No consulted: Yes No

PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING:

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Members will be aware that the Glasgow City Region City Deal is investing approximately £115 million within Glasgow city centre to deliver the Enabling Infrastructure - Integrated Public Realm (EIIPR) programme – also known as the Avenues Programme. This has also been supplemented by an additional £21 million from Sustrans. The Avenues Programme is essentially a quality place-making scheme that will transform key streets in Glasgow’s city centre. This investment will introduce a network of pedestrian and cycle priority routes across Glasgow city centre that will incorporate green/blue infrastructure, increased pedestrian and cycle space, and improved connectivity.
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to provide an annual update on progress of the Avenues Programme since the last report was presented to [Economy, Housing, Transport and Regeneration City Policy Committee on 14 November 2023](#)

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The City Deal funded Avenues programme was first conceived as part of the 2014-19 City Centre Strategy (CCS). The streets, or ‘Avenues’, will benefit from the following direct deliverables:
 - Green/Blue Infrastructure such as street trees and rain gardens
 - Reduction in traffic lanes
 - Enhanced and widened footways
 - Segregated cycle infrastructure
 - Improved lighting features
- 2.2 In addition to City Deal funding, The Council secured an additional £21m worth of funding from Sustrans. Sustrans funding has enabled the delivery of an additional four Avenue projects. The Sustrans funded element of the wider programme is referred to as the ‘Avenues Plus Project’ or Block S.

3 CURRENT ISSUES AFFECTING PROGRAMME DELIVERY

- 3.1 As Members will be aware, programme delivery over recent years has been significantly impacted by issues associated with Brexit, Covid-19 and the crisis in Ukraine (as detailed in previous reports to [Neighbourhoods, Housing & Public Realm City Policy Committee on 27th September 2022](#) and [Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee on 2nd November 2022](#)), with high inflation continuing to impact the construction sector and thus the delivery of the Avenues.
- 3.2 Given current market conditions and resulting budgetary pressures, the Avenues Programme has been reviewed as part of the full City Deal Infrastructure Investment Programme Revision 10 exercise, which has been undertaken at the request of the Glasgow City Region with the agreement of UK and Scottish Governments, in response to the impact of inflationary pressures on the construction sector over the past four-year period.

- 3.3 This work has revised and reprioritised the programme to ensure delivery of the key Avenues. It will also support the Council's case in requesting additional Infrastructure funds that have been made available by the Glasgow City Region for existing City Deal projects to deal with inflationary pressures. A full report on the revised City Deal programme was presented to City Administration Committee on 24 October 2024 and Glasgow City Region Cabinet on 5 November 2024.
- 3.4 In line with the above factors, the EIIPR Programme has seen the number of Avenues being delivered via the current City Deal funding reduced. This has resulted in several Avenues being placed on a "deferred list". While these streets will not see construction activity progressed as part of the current programme, other funding opportunities are being continually explored.
- 3.5 Project teams are continually assessing cost savings, efficiencies, and more effective ways of working throughout design development and construction. This will continue with the final round of approved Avenues now entering the design stages, through to construction completion.

4 AVENUES: BLOCK UPDATES

- 4.1 To simplify programme delivery, the Avenues programme has been sub-divided into smaller packages of works known as Blocks. Each Block contains a number of streets and spaces. Updates on each of these Blocks will be provided as part of this report. A map highlighting each Avenue is provided at **Appendix A**. A summary of the current programme is in **Appendix B**, and **Appendix C** provides some visuals.

4.1.1 Block A

Block A of the wider Avenues programme comprises of the following Avenues:

- Argyle Street West (Kingston Bridge to Union St)
- Argyle Street East (Union St to Glasgow Cross) and
- North Hanover Street (Cathedral St to Kyle St) and Kyle Street
- Sauchiehall Street Precinct and Cambridge Street (the Underline Phase 1)

The following Avenues have been deferred:

- St Enoch Square/Dixon Street
- Cathedral Street and Bath Street East
- The Underline Phase 2 (New City Road)

The rationale for the selection of the Deferred Avenues in Block A is largely related to the impact of changes to the proposals for the St Enoch Centre and thus the reduced economic benefit that associated works to Dixon Street and St Enoch Square would generate; the ongoing works to the M8 Woodside Viaduct impacting the Underline; the competing priorities regarding the use of Cathedral Street which have removed opportunities to introduce Avenue features like segregated cycle lanes.

Notable updates:

- a. Argyle Street West is currently under construction and progressing well with works due to complete in October 2025.
- b. Argyle St East is in the detailed design stage with tendering for a construction contractor to commence in late 2024.
- c. North Hanover Street and Kyle Street construction tender package has been published with a contractor likely to be appointed in early 2025.
- d. Sauchiehall Street Precinct and The Underline Phase 1 - Cambridge Street continue onsite following delays to the programme with all efforts being made to have substantial elements complete for Christmas 2024 and final areas completed by end of March 2025.

4.1.2 **Block B**

Block B of the wider Avenues programme comprises of the following Avenues:

- Holland Street/Pitt Street
- Stockwell Street
- Broomielaw/Clyde Street
- High Street

The following Avenues have been deferred:

- Elmbank Street/Elmbank Crescent
- Glassford Street

The rationale for the selection of the Deferred Avenues in Block B is largely related to the aspiration/timing of private development in the Elmbank Street/Crescent vicinity. There is scope for the proposed public realm intervention to be covered during the development activity, or to be picked up thereafter. Glassford Street was removed at concept design stage due to its role as a key north/south link of the city's bus network, resulting in limited capacity for core Avenue requirements i.e. cycling and green/blue infrastructure.

Notable updates:

- a. The Holland Street/Pitt Street construction works are in the final stages and will be completed by January 2025.
- b. Stockwell Street construction tender package was published at the end of September 2024 and works are expected to start in Spring 2025.
- c. Broomielaw/Clyde Street concept layouts were taken to public consultation in mid-2024 and designs are being progressed.
- d. High Street is being progressed through the stages as part of the Avenues Programme with consultation on the concepts having just completed.

4.1.3 **Block C**

Block C of the wider Avenues programme comprises of the following Avenues:

- North Hanover Street (George Square to Cathedral Street)
- George Square and surrounding Avenues:
 - a. St Vincent Place and Cochrane Street

b. George Street Montrose Street to High Street)

There are currently two separate, adjacent Avenue sub-projects relating to the area around George Square:

- a. St Vincent Place Phase 1 (Montrose Street to Buchanan Street)
- b. George Street Phase 1 (Nelson Mandela Place to Montrose Street)

In order to simplify programming and management of construction phases, a single construction contractor will be procured to deliver George Square as well as the two adjacent Avenue sub-projects. This has been formalised with the approval of Revision 10 by the Glasgow City Region Cabinet on 5 November.

The following Avenues have been deferred:

- St Vincent Street Phase 2 (Buchanan Street to Newton Street)
- John Street

The rationale for the selection of the Deferred Avenues in Block C is largely related to the general cost pressures which have required a reduction in scope leading to an inability to deliver the key Avenue deliverables (green infrastructure, segregated cycle lanes) that are essential for programme eligibility. Other funding options will continue to be explored for those streets.

Notable updates:

- a. Phase 1 of Block C includes George Square and the surrounding streets (George Square/St Vincent Place/Cochrane Street/West George Street/George Street/North Hanover Street) construction tender has now been published with a contractor to be appointed in February 2025 and site works commencing in April 2025.
- b. Separate contracts to hoard George Square and conserve the statues have also been finalised and will commence alongside the main public realm contract.
- c. Phase 2 of Block C included George Street between Montrose Street and High Street and will begin the design stage in early 2025.

4.1.4 Block D

Block D of the wider Avenues programme comprises of the following Avenues, both of which have been deferred at this time:

- International Financial Services District (IFSD) West
- Hope Street

Notable updates:

- Hope Street has instead benefited from an allocation of SPT funding which has allowed for some improvements to be made to the public realm and bus infrastructure.

The rationale for the selection of the Deferred Avenues in Block D is largely related to the slow development of the IFSD, and in the case of Hope Street, public realm improvements have already been undertaken through other external grant funding.

4.1.5 **Block S**

Block S (Avenues Plus Project), which is fully funded by Sustrans, comprises of the following Avenues (with no deferrals from this Block):

- South Portland Street
- Dobbie's Loan
- Cowcaddens Road
- Duke Street and John Knox Street

Notable updates:

- a. South Portland Street construction contract is likely to be awarded in November 2024 and will commence on site in early 2025.
- b. Cowcaddens Road and Dobbies Loan construction packages have been combined with the tendering process nearing completion and works to commence in early 2025.
- c. Duke Street and John Knox Street tendering process has concluded and a contractor has been appointed with works to commence in January 2025.
- d. Automated secure cycle parking facilities in the city centre also form part of the Block S project and have been well utilised since the start of the scheme in September 2023.

5 FUTURE PUBLIC REALM PROJECTS

- 5.1 Members will be aware of the restricted financial circumstances affecting many public sector organisations. While it is unclear whether any significant new capital funding options will become available in the coming years, officers are starting to develop the next phase of city centre public realm priorities to ensure that Glasgow is in a strong position to react to any new funding opportunities. Priorities and options will be discussed with Members in due course.

6 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT APPROACH

- 6.1 The process for the Avenues in relation to public engagement has been extensive. The broad approach mirrors the requirements of RIBA, with a range of widely-publicised engagement events to inform the design or development work, and thereafter to test the resulting findings. The City Centre Regeneration Group holds a large mail list for city centre stakeholders and organisations, including a broad range of cultural and tourism bodies, community organisations, and groups that represent people with protected characteristics. Regular updates are provided to the city centre community councils.

- 6.2 As the scale of activity ramps up in the city centre, the approach to public engagement is evolving. While most of the design and development work is now complete or nearing completion, the next period of implementation will inevitably result in disruption as the works progress. A new comms and marketing group including key partners is in the process of being established, along with improvements to the **Get Ready Glasgow** website, and this will ensure that useful information, including traffic impact, can be easily and regularly communicated to the public. **Get Ready Glasgow** can be accessed [here](#).
- 6.3 Given the importance of tourism to the city centre, a further exercise is being progressed to ensure that those involved in licensing, managing or operating activities that take place in public spaces, are also a key part of the comms plan and receive the necessary guidance around working in Glasgow city centre and the plans for the Avenues programme in the coming years.
- 6.4 General enquiries on any related matter can be directed to the **Avenues** website where there are contact details for the team. The website contains a range of information about each Avenue including plans, images and information on timescales and scope can be accessed here: [Avenues - Glasgow City Council](#).

7 POLICY AND RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

Resource Implications:

<i>Financial:</i>	There are no new financial implications arising from this report. However, there is a need to review cost increases at a future date.
<i>Legal:</i>	No immediate legal issues are raised by this report however these will be assessed as individual actions are developed.
<i>Personnel:</i>	There are no direct personnel implications from this report.
<i>Procurement:</i>	Procurement resources will be required to progress individual contracts and related project activity. CPU will be engaged as these are developed.

Council Strategic Plan:

<i>Specify which Grand Challenge (s) and Mission (s) the proposal supports. Where appropriate the</i>	The project supports the following items:
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relevant Commitment can also be listed.

GRAND CHALLENGE ONE – Reduce poverty and inequality in our communities

MISSION 3: Improve the health and wellbeing of our local communities
Commitments: 2

GRAND CHALLENGE TWO – Increase opportunity and prosperity for all our citizens

MISSION 1: Support Glasgow residents into sustainable and fair work
Commitments: 1,5

GRAND CHALLENGE THREE – Fight the climate emergency in a just transition to a net zero Glasgow

MISSION 1: Deliver sustainable transport and travel aligned with the city region
Commitments: 3,4,10,11,16,26
MISSION 2: Become a net zero carbon city by 2030
Commitments: 9,14,15

GRAND CHALLENGE FOUR – Enable staff to deliver essential services in a sustainable, innovative and efficient way for our communities

MISSION 1: Create safe, clean and thriving neighbourhoods
Commitments: 18,19

Equality and Socio-Economic Impacts:

Does the proposal support the Council's Equality Outcomes 2021-25? Please specify.

The Avenues programme considers inclusion, accessibility and sustainability. These apply to public realm, enhanced active travel, community wealth building and the 20 min neighbourhood, etc. EQIAs will be considered for each of the projects as these are brought forward.

What are the potential equality impacts as a result of this report?

Positive - The Avenues programme will encourage, employment opportunities and opportunities for all city centre residents and beyond by improving connectivity and accessibility.

Please highlight if the policy/proposal will help address socio-economic disadvantage.

The Avenues programme will encourage skills development and business development more generally by improving access to jobs and areas of prosperity.

Climate Impacts:

Does the proposal support any Climate Plan actions? Please specify:

The Avenues programme provides surface water management measures through street trees and SUD's. Green infrastructure and reduced carriageway space for motorized vehicles will improve air quality and help contribute towards carbon net zero by 2030.

What are the potential climate impacts as a result of this proposal?

The potential impacts are on carbon reduction, increases in active travel, connected green and open spaces, support for circularity, public realm that promotes well-being and empowers local communities and community wealth building.

Will the proposal contribute to Glasgow's net zero carbon target?

The proposals will contribute to Glasgow's net zero target. The delivery of the Avenues will reduce the space for private vehicles, will improve bus journey times in the city centre and will improve SUDS and greening.

Privacy and Data Protection Impacts:

Are there any potential data protection impacts as a result of this report

No

If Yes, please confirm that a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) has been carried out.

NA

8 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 It is recommended that Members:
- i. Consider the contents of the report;

- ii. Note that further updates will be reported back to Committee on an annual basis.

Appendices

- Appendix A: Avenues Map
- Appendix B: Avenues Programme (Oct 24)
- Appendix C: Avenues Visualisations

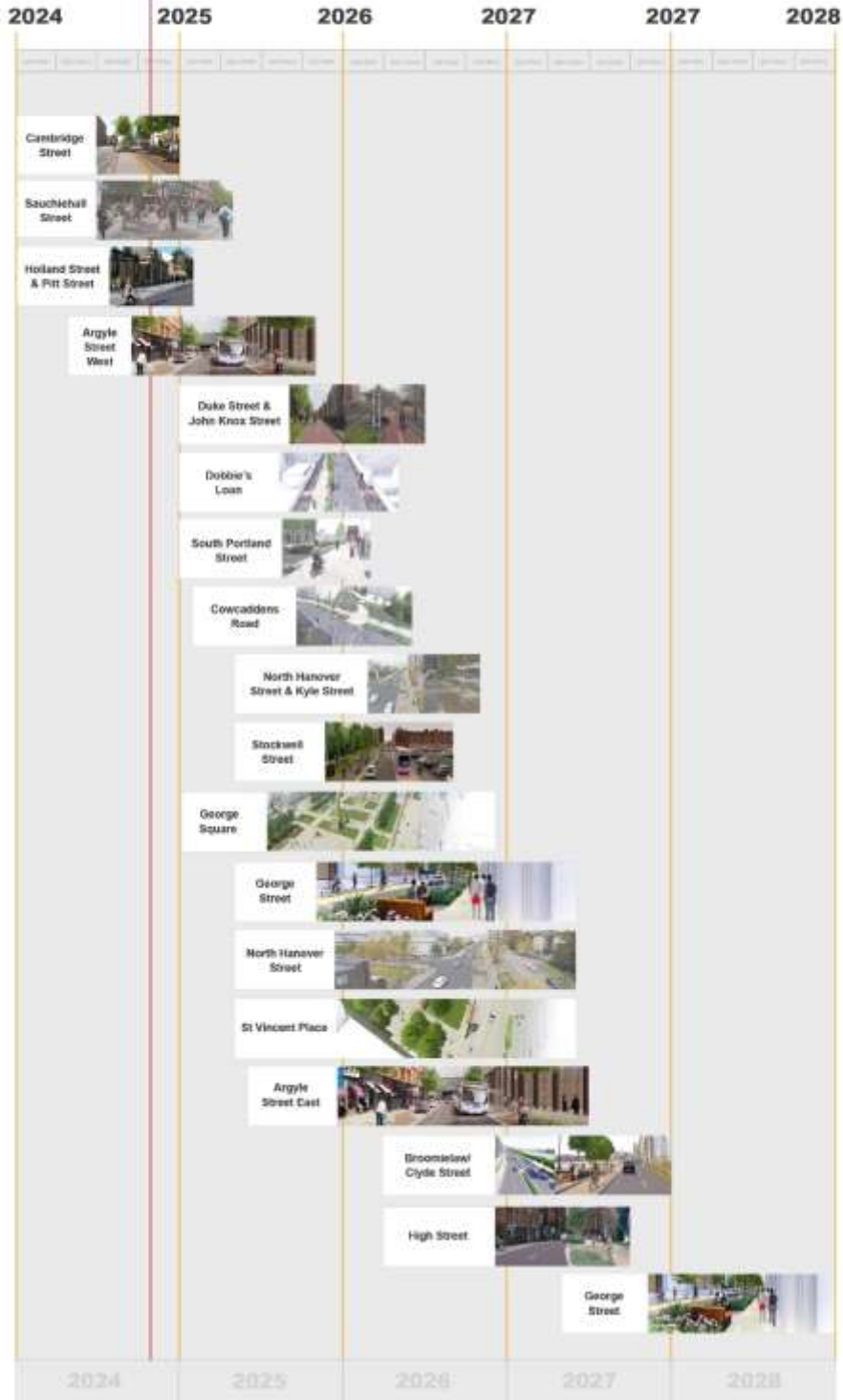
Appendix B: Avenues Programme (Oct 24)

Glasgow Avenues Timeline

October 2024



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Appendix C: Avenues Visualisations
Argyle Street West



North Hanover Street



George Square

