

£43 million to extend West Midlands depot given green light

March 18, 2022



The West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) has given the thumbs up to four major transport projects to be delivered as part of the **£1.3 billion City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS)** backed investment.

The schemes that can go ahead pending final approval from government are:

- £24 million to seek sites for, plan and deliver a network of 10 EV transit stations across the West Midlands
- £43 million to extend the West Midlands Metro depot at Wednesbury to service the region's growing tram fleet and network – including the extension to Dudley in 2024.
- £17 million to replace and upgrade the Metro power supply on the existing Wolverhampton to Birmingham line for the first time since it opened 22 years ago.
- £56 million to deliver phase two of the Sprint bus priority corridor with more bus lanes and junction upgrades along the full route between Solihull and Walsall. Phase one along the A34 and A45 in Birmingham is nearing completion.

Transport for West Midlands (TfWM), which is part of the WMCA, has been awarded £1.05 billion CRSTS funding which, topped up with local funds, will deliver £1.3 billion investment across 50 large and small transport projects over the next five years.

Projects to promote the decarbonisation of transport, target investment into areas of poor connectivity and support inclusive growth have been prioritised.

Design and delivery work on these first four schemes will begin as soon as the Government approval is confirmed.

Andy Street, the Mayor of the West Midlands and chair of the WMCA Board, said: "These projects are just the start of our £1.3 billion investment to de-carbonise and revolutionise our transport network across the West Midlands.

"We know that many people and businesses would like to switch to electric vehicles but are worried about the availability of chargers – so these 10 electric vehicle transit stations show we are serious about supporting that transition.

"And our Metro depot expansion is also a clear sign that we are making progress on extending our tram network into Sandwell and Dudley and then onto Digbeth, offering even more people fast and frequent transport links to the jobs and opportunities our region has to offer."

Cllr Ian Ward, WMCA portfolio lead for transport and leader of Birmingham City Council, said: "We have set out the priorities for investment in transport across our seven local authorities and these are the first of many projects coming forward over the next few months.

"Together we're working to address the major challenges of traffic congestion and poor air quality and this investment is designed to make alternatives to petrol and diesel vehicles more convenient and affordable, making it easier for people can make that switch and support our net-zero ambitions."

Photo credit: Shutterstock