

Subject: A message from the Light Rail Committee: Paris [Ile de France]

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A MESSAGE FROM THE LIGHT RAIL COMMITTEE:

Trams/LRT and other affordable, effective transportation options

While TransLink and GVRD planners still plan for light metro (SkyTrain and/or rapid transit), transit planners in Paris are returning to the tram. Much cheaper to build, more flexible in operation, modern LRT can economically reach ridership that otherwise would reject using the bus!

The success of the *return of trams* is such that there is an ongoing program of light rail construction! Unlike Vancouver, where hugely expensive *mini-metro* is built, strictly for political and bureaucratic prestige. Never fulfilling its promises, SkyTrain trundles on and on, racking up huge annual debts - **about CAD \$200 million annually for both the Expo and Millennium Lines**. RAV is just more of the same - SkyTrain, built to suit political needs rather than transit needs. The result: more of the same, a grossly underused mini-metro with a huge escalating annual debt!

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INTRODUCTION

There are currently two tram/light rail routes in the Paris area (T1 & T2) both of which offer orbital links between inner suburban areas. At present there are no tram routes within Paris itself.

T1 runs from St Denis (immediately to the north of Paris) to Bobigny in the north-eastern suburbs and has now been extended to Noisy-le-Sec. It is a conventional tram route running mostly on reserved tracks built on the central reservation of a dual-carriageway road (N186) with just short stretches of street running.



T2 runs from Issy - Val de Seine (south-west of Paris on the SNCF RER Line C) to the important commercial and office development at La Défense (north-west of Paris on RER Line A). It is more a light-rail route having been converted from an SNCF route used by a little-used shuttle service. A remnant of a previous third-rail electric service linking Invalides to St Lazare, the shuttle was an isolated link created when the busier suburban lines were converted to overhead electrification. In its later years, with a very infrequent service, passenger loadings were very low indeed - a complete contrast to its reincarnation as a light-rail route with tramcars running every three minutes and filled to capacity! (*Very much like the Arbutus Corridor! Malcolm*)

Both routes originally used Alstom cars almost identical to those used in Grenoble. They are 75% low-floor six-axle units.

EXTENSION T1 to NOISY-LE-SEC

An extension southwards from Bobigny to the SNCF station at Noisy-le-Sec (suburban services to Paris-Est and new RER line E to St Lazare). There are five new stops on this approx. 3 km extension which opened on 15 December 2003. A further 5km extension from Noisy-Le-Sec to Montreuil-Théophile Sueur would add 11 or 12 further stops. EXTENSION T1 to ASNIERES-GENNEVILLIERS

A 4.8km extension westwards from St Denis along the N186 road to Gennevilliers station (RER Line C) and then south-west to Asnières. This would add a further 10 stops and is expected to be completed by 2008.

EXTENSION T2 to BEZONS

A 4.2 kms extension north-westwards from La Défense. After tunnelling below the adjacent SNCF suburban lines from St Lazare (future RER Line E), the new tram route will emerge on a newly created central reservation along the N192 road. There will be eight new stops along this busy road. Completion expected for 2008. EXTENSION T2 to Porte de Versailles

A 2.7km extension eastwards from the southern end of T2 from Issy-Val de Seine to Porte de Versailles adding an extra 3 stops.

Completion expected for 2006. This line is intended to link up to the proposed Tramway Maréchaux Sud which would run from Pont du Garigliano-Bd Victor via Porte de Versailles to Porte d'Ivry - a distance of 8km. This would later be extended as Maréchaux Est to Porte de Charenton a further 2.4km and 4 stops.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS A full list of proposals for Metro, Tram, TVR and bus can be found on the [RATP](#) website.

VEHICLES

With the opening of the extension of line T1 to Noisy le Sec cars have been transferred from line T2 with the latter being operated by new Alstom 'Citadis' cars

Information provided by Joseph Pestell
Pictures and updates by Brian Lomas

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