

Brown Line monorail gets nod under PPP framework

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The 22-kilometre Brown Line monorail project linking Khae Rai in Nonthaburi and Lam Sali in Bangkok worth 48.38 billion baht will be developed under the public-private partnership (PPP) model.

Yesterday's meeting of the Land Traffic Management Commission chaired by Deputy Prime Minister Somkid Jatusripitak approved the PPP scheme for the Brown Line, to be handled by the Mass Rapid Transit Authority of Thailand (MRTA).

The Brown Line will connect with seven other lines. They are the Purple Line (Tao Poon-Klong Bang Phai in the western suburbs), the Pink Line (Khae Rai-Min Buri in eastern Bangkok), the Red Line (Bang Sue-Rangsit), the Green Line (Mor Chit-Khu Khot in Pathum Thani), the Grey Line (Watcharaphon to Rama IX Bridge), the Yellow Line (Lat Phrao-Samrong in Samut Prakan) and the Orange Line (Thailand Cultural Centre-Min Buri).

The monorail's development will include 7.25 billion baht for expropriation costs, 34.67 billion baht for construction costs, 1.25 billion baht for consultant costs and 5.20 billion baht for other costs.

The Brown Line will have 20 stations. Starting at the Khae Rai intersection, the route will head east along Ngam Wong Wan Road towards Bang Khen and the Kasetsart intersection. Continuing along Prasert Manoonkij road, the route will take a southbound right turn at the Nawamin intersection, towards Bang Kapi. The route will terminate service at the Lam Sali intersection.

The Brown Line will act as a feeder system for the seven larger routes.

Chaiwat Thingkamkoon, the transport permanent secretary, said the Brown Line is expected to take three years to build, in line with construction of the other seven lines.

Once the proposal is endorsed by the cabinet, the MRTA will start handling design work for the project.

According to Mr Chaiwat, the Office of Transport and Traffic Policy and Planning will later include the Brown Line in the mass transit master plan for Bangkok and surrounding provinces.

The master plan envisions 10 mass transit lines.

In a related development, the commission yesterday authorised the Expressway Authority of Thailand (Exat) to implement the third-phase expressway's northern section in Bangkok from the Bang Yai intersection in western Bangkok to the Kasetsart intersection (known as the N1 section) and from the Kasetsart intersection to Nawamin Road (the N2 section).

Mr Somkid ordered Exat to build an expressway accompanying the Brown Line. The expressway would make use of the pillars along Prasert Manoonkij Road, part of an abandoned project from 1994.

The construction of the expressway will be divided into two phases. The first 12.2km phase will run from the Bangkok's third-phase expressway's northern section from the Kasetsart intersection to Nawamin Road, linking to the Outer Ring Road. The second phase will be 7km in length, from Klong Bang Bua to Klong Bang Khen, running parallel to the Don Muang tollway.

Mr Chaiwat said the commission also approved a feasibility study of rail and rail-related industry development.

The study showed that Thailand is appropriate to establish train manufacturing because of high domestic demand.

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