Annotation

One of the greatest problems faced by Czech cities, like most other large cities, is the enormous daily strain placed on it from areas of urban sprawl, with hundreds of thousands of people commuting to the city for work or school or travelling there to obtain services. Over the past ten years, the number of journeys across the border of Prague has tripled. Unfortunately, the large majority of commutes are by car; the modal split of motor transport comprises 79% of the modal split in favour of cars, while Praguers themselves use public transportation to a far greater degree (59%). One tool for reducing the impact of this enormous increase in sprawl around Prague is increased development of rail transportation for trips to the city. A greater number of journeys to the city is also reflected in the continuously rising number of rail passengers. However, rail capacity in the Prague rail node is running up against its maximum limit due to increasing demand not only in suburban, but also in long-distance transportation.

For this reason the Prague Institute of Planning and Development developed a draft Prague Metropolitan Railway Development Strategy in 2018 and the Prague City Council approved it as a binding document.

The Prague Metropolitan Railway Development Strategy is a concept paper summarising the city's idea about railway development in Prague. The paper sets out Prague's basic aims and demands for developing railway transportation and infrastructure resulting from the Strategic Plan. General goals and demands for railway development are defined in the first section of the strategy; the second section, under "railway cards", describes the city's specific infrastructure and operational demands. The aims and measures described further in the strategy enhance the attractiveness of the railway, which the city believes is a very promising form of transportation and on which the city is basing its sustainable mobility development for the centre of a metropolitan region and country. The main principles of this strategy are as follows:

- The current railway network suffers from a lack of capacity, making further development for all transportation segments impossible → The process of increasing the capacity of the current conventional network and building new, high-speed rail must start
- Urban and suburban railways are the backbone of Prague Integrated Transportation, increasing its attractiveness and relieving overstrained public transportation in the city centre → Without new railway capacity, it cannot be developed further
- Attractive long-distance rail service reduces pressure on care use and thus reduces the intensity of car use in Prague, as the centre of the country and a major crossroads in long-distance transportation routes → Attractive connections between Prague and the rest of the world increases the city's potential
- The City of Prague supports the construction of new high-speed rail lines, which will make long-distance rail service more attractive → it will also secure new capacity for urban, suburban and freight transportation
- A lack of railway stops causes a lack of transfer connections to other forms of transportation and a lack of service in important parts of Prague → New stops are proposed where the benefit is higher than the reduction in the railway line's capacity and travel speed
- It includes collaboration between passenger car and public transportation → Construction of park & ride and bike & ride parking areas at train stations and stops

- Freight transportation is an essential part of rail transportation, which reduces the intensity of car traffic on roads → Railway capacity and greater integration in supplying the city must be secured so it may further develop
- Resolving problems with insufficient capacity on some railway lines → It contains a proposal to increase the number of railway tracks, electrify the tracks, and expand several railway stations
- To increase capacity in the city centre → Proposed new railway tunnels for urban and suburban rail under the city centre with the S Metro (also known as New Connection II)