

**TRANSPORT**

# Purple Line, Phuket light rail among projects up for PPP

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The MRT's Purple Line southern extension from Kanchanaphisek Outer Ring Road to Tao Poon and provincial mass transit projects in Phuket are expected to seek approval from the public-private partnership (PPP) committee early next year before proceeding under the fast-track PPP scheme.

But the committee has instructed the Mass Rapid Transit Authority of Thailand (MRTA) to reconsider the Orange Line's eastern and western sections, saying the proposed civil construction cost is too high, said Prapas Kong-ied, director-general of the State Enterprise Policy Office, after a PPP committee meeting chaired by Deputy Prime Minister Somkid Jatusripitak.

The Orange Line extension from Taling Chan to Min Buri is expected to be operational in 2025, with the eastern section opening from 2023, he said.

The route, worth a combined 235 billion baht, will help ease travel from Bangkok's western and eastern districts to the capital's centre and alleviate traffic jams.

Phuket's provincial mass transit plan includes a 58.5-kilometre light rail (tram) worth 39.4 billion baht, running from Tha Noon in Phangnga province to Chalong intersection in the south of Phuket. The MRTA will build the first phase from Phuket airport to Chalong circle, with 24 stations worth 30.15 billion baht.

The Purple Line's southern extension route is valued at 128 billion baht.

Mr Prapas said two provincial mass transit projects, in Chiang Mai and Nakhon Ratchasima, are expected to go before the PPP committee by next year.



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Director-general, State Enterprise Policy Office

The eight projects comprising the Purple Line's southern extension, the Orange Line's western and eastern projects, three provincial mass transit projects and three motorways are in the pipeline under the fast-track PPP investment scheme.

The motorways will run from Nakhon Pathom to Phetchaburi's Cha-am, Bang Pa-in to Nakhon Ratchasima, and Bang Yai to Kanchanaburi.

Fast-track PPP projects are generally approved in nine months, compared with two years under the normal process.

The Nakhon Pathom-Cha-am motorway project, worth 79 billion baht, is being considered by the Highways Department and related agencies and is expected to go before the cabinet this month.