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## Tram project progresses smoothly in Dubai

*By Ashfaq Ahmed, Chief Reporter*

Some 9.5 kilometres of the Al Sufouh Tram Project is being built as part of the first phase of the project at a cost of Dh3.18 billion.

Dubai: Dubai's first Tram Project is taking shape along Al Sufouh Road as the work is progressing smoothly, Gulf News has learnt.

"Work on the first phase of the Al Sufouh Tram project is progressing but with [a] revised schedule," according to a senior official at the Dubai Roads and Transport Authority (RTA).

"We have extended the completion period due to [a] slowdown in property development projects but the project is on track and will be completed as planned," the official said.

Some 9.5 kilometres of the Al Sufouh Tram Project is being built as part of the first phase of the project at a cost of Dh3.18 billion.

The total length of the tram track will be 14.5 kilometres and it will have a total of 19 stations.

The official said the second phase will be built at a later stage, taking into consideration the development in the area.

The first phase, which was earlier scheduled to open in April 2011, will now be complete by the end of 2012. The project will have 13 stations and a depot as well as multimodal interchange stations to connect the tram with the Red Line of the Metro on Shaikh Zayed Road. The stations, which will be connected with the train, include Mall of the Emirates, Dubai Marina and Jumeirah Lake Towers.

A consortium of the French Alstom, the Belgian Besix, the American Parsons and the French Sistra companies, which have been awarded the contract, are working on the project along Al Sufouh Road.

Once completed, the tram will pass through Dubai Marina and Jumeirah Beach Residence, Dubai Media City, Knowledge Village, Madinat Jumeirah, Mall of the Emirates and the Burj Al Arab.

The Sufouh Tram also links up with the monorail of the Palm Jumeirah at the entrance of the Palm from Sufouh Road.



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It will provide a convenient connection to passengers using the monorail and the Metro.

The aim of the tram project is to encourage people in the upmarket areas to use an alternative mode of transport instead of private cars.

The project is expected to serve about half a million people in the area, which has witnessed massive growth during the past few years.

### **Controlling congestion**

Demographic surveys, population density estimates and manpower distribution along the tram path revealed that these areas will be inhabited by about 180,000 residents, 210,000 people working in offices and 20,000 visitors per day. The tram project will help control traffic congestion in such a high-concentration area.

The tram track extends at the ground level along Al Sufouh Road but rises in an elevated section across certain areas of Dubai Marina.

The tram will have a first class (Golden Suite) section and a carriage dedicated to women and children, in addition to a silver carriage for economy class travel. The front design of the tram is inspired by the shape of a diamond and each tram measures 44 metres in length and will have the capacity to accommodate 305 passengers and will not require overhead electrical cables as the electricity will be supplied through a safe and modern ground cable system.

### **Bicycle parking**

Each tram will have space to cater for bicycles while the stations will have provisions for bicycle parking.

According to initial design specifications, Al Sufouh Tram will be the world's first tram network to use platform screen doors fully aligned with the train doors' opening and closing mechanisms. It will also be the world's first tram project with fully enclosed air-conditioned stations.

### **On Track: Project**

- Development: Al Sufouh Tram Project
- Developer: Dubai Roads and Transport Authority
- Location: Al Sufouh Road
- Cost: Around Dh3.18 billion
- Completion: 2012/2013 (in phases)