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## Light rail rolls south next

### As the system turns 20, RT officials discuss its expansion to Cosumnes River College.

**By Ralph Montaña - Bee Staff Writer**

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It was 20 years ago this month that Sacramento Regional Transit District brought light-rail service back to the city of Sacramento. On March 12, 1987, thousands of people ignored the rain to be among the first to take the train down a nine-mile stretch into downtown.

Sacramento's rail transit system has done a lot of growing since then. Today, the rails cover 37 miles, from Folsom to Meadowview Road in south Sacramento.

Last week, members of the RT board of directors marked the anniversary by holding a public discussion on the system's next expansion -- a 4.2-mile stretch that will go to the doorstep of Elk Grove.

Known as Phase 2 of the South Line, the proposed extension will run south and west from the Meadowview Road Station to the Cosumnes River College Station. It will follow the Union Pacific Railroad line south for more than a mile before turning east over Morrison Creek. Following Union House Creek, the track will run east to Cosumnes River Boulevard then follow the road until turning south on Bruceville Road and ending at a large station on the east side of the college campus.

The project's estimated cost is \$226 million, half of which will have to come from federal government funding that has yet to be approved. If the funds do materialize, planners estimate the project can be built in 2010.

For residents of the Valley Hi and North Laguna neighborhood, such as Al Estrada, the wait has already been a long one.

"I was looking forward to this when I moved here 18 years ago," Estrada said.

Plans to expand the South Line were delayed more than a decade in favor of the expansion to Folsom.

Estrada said he takes the South Line to work daily from the Meadowview Station. The proposed extension would place one of four new stations about five blocks from his home.

"Since they opened the South Line, I've saved money. It's convenient and timely," Estrada said.

About 40 people attended last week's meeting at the Samuel C. Pannell Community Center on Meadowview Road. None spoke out against improvements to the rail system. But some expressed concern about a 20-inch natural gas line that would have to be moved because of the extension.

The gas line runs south in the Union Pacific right-of-way. Officials say the gas line will have to be moved under Detroit Boulevard.

That worries some residents along the street, such as Alex Kotko.

"It's a concern to me," Kotko said. "It's going to disrupt the neighborhood for six to nine months. I've got my grandkids and daughter here so they can learn about what is going on."

Sacramento City Councilwoman Bonnie Pannell said meetings have been held on the issue of relocating the gas line.

"I'm talking to people, and we will have more meetings as we need to," Pannell said. "They tell me Detroit is the best route."

RT has made the supplemental draft environmental impact statement/subsequent draft environmental impact report on the expansion available for public review.

It can be viewed and downloaded at [www.slp2.org](http://www.slp2.org). A computer disk copy can be obtained by calling (916) 491-5003 and stating your name, address and the desired format.

The document is also available at the following locations:

- Regional Transit administrative office, 1400 29th St., Sacramento.
- FTA office, 201 Mission St., Suite 1650, San Francisco.
- Elk Grove Community Library, 8962 Elk Grove Blvd., Elk Grove.
- Franklin Community Library, 10055 Franklin High Road, Elk Grove.
- Southgate Community Library, 6132 66th Ave., Sacramento.
- Valley Hi-North Laguna Library, 6351 Mack Road, Sacramento.
- Cosumnes River College Library, 8401 Center Parkway, Sacramento.
- Sacramento Central Library, 828 I St., Sacramento.

The public has until April 3 to review the document.

For more information, call Regional Transit at (916) 321-2843 or visit the project Web site at [www.slp2.org](http://www.slp2.org) or RT's Web site at [www.sacrt.com](http://www.sacrt.com).

Go to: [Sacbee](#) / [Back to story](#)

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## Light-rail extension

The Sacramento Regional Transit District is planning a 4.2-mile extension that will add four stations and extend the system's South Line to Cosumnes River College. The expansion is expected to be completed by 2011.



Source: Regional Transit; map data: ESRI, TeleAtlas Sacramento Bee/Nathaniel Levine

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