

# \$62 Million/km!?

## Why is CRD LRT Cost Estimate so Astronomical?

By Louis Guilbault, June 2011



The May 2011 SNC-Lavalin/HDR Engineering study compares per-kilometre cost of Victoria LRT with the Edmonton North, Ottawa Metro, Calgary West and Vancouver Canada lines. All four of these other Canadian lines are completely or largely underground or elevated. This is emphatically not the case in Victoria. Recent at-grade tram lines in Salt Lake City, Charlotte and Norfolk VA cost around \$30 million/km. France has proven over and over that you can lay down high-quality tramways for around \$30 million/km figure. Other developed countries like Italy and Spain also pull this off. Why can't we?

SNC-Lavalin (Montreal)/HDR Engineering (Omaha) seems incapable of coming up with a reasonable cost estimate.

## Recent Tramway Costs

City	System/ Line	Completion Year	Cost/ \$million/km
Angers, France	Avrillé-La Roseraie	2010	€20.7 (appr. Cdn\$27.7)
Bergen, Norway	Nestun	2010	NK 224 (appr. Cdn\$37.5)
Brest, France	Métropole	2011	€26.1 (appr. Cdn\$35)
Charlotte NC	Lynx Blue Line	2007	US\$30
Dallas	Green Line	2010	US\$40.2
Dijon, France	Chenôve/Queitgny	2013	€20 (appr. Cdn\$26.8)
Florence, Italy	Scandicci	2010	€22.9 (appr. Cdn\$30.7)
Lens region, NE France	Liéven/Beuvry	2011	€17.2 (appr. Cdn\$23.5)
Minneapolis	Hiawatha	2004	US\$37.3
Mulhouse, France	Soléa	2006	€20.7 (appr. Cdn\$28.2)
Norfolk VA	Tide	2011	US\$28.6
Phoenix	METRO	2008	US\$43.5
Portland	Green Line	2009	US\$43.35
Salt Lake City	Airport TRAX	2013	US\$25.9-31
Tours, France	Fil Bleu	2013	€21.8 (appr. Cdn\$29.72)
<b>Victoria</b>	<b>Western Comm.</b>	<b>?</b>	<b>\$62</b>
Vitoria-Gasteiz, Spain	EuskoTran	2008	€16.5 (appr. Cdn\$22.4)

Other firms build high-quality tramways at prices that don't gouge taxpayers; try these:

Consultant	Base	Tram Projects
LTK	Philadelphia	Houston, Los Angeles, Portland, San Jose, Twin Cities
PGH Wong	San Francisco	Salt Lake City
Parsons Brinkerhoff	New York City	Norfolk
S&ME	Raleigh	Charlotte
Systra	Paris	Bordeaux, Brest, Le Havre, Lyon, Mulhouse, Tours

## Sources

**Angers:** railway-technology.com/projects/angers. Angers' metro. population is appr. 283,000.

**Bergen:** Taplin, Michael; applrguk.co.uk/"les/Irta erg three decades of Irt update - web site.pdf

**Brest:** systra.com/Brest-Tramway-France?lang=fr

**Charlotte:** Slade, David; Charlotte "nds light-rail success; Post and Courier; July 9, 2008

**Dallas:** Schlosser, Nicole; Dallas light rail opens on time, under budget; Metro Magazine; Jan. 2011

**Denver:** eastcorridor.com/media/uploads/main/pdf

**Dijon:** railwaygazette.com/nc/news/single-view/view/brest-and-dijon-award-joint-tram-order.html

**Lens:** railwaygazette.com/nc/news/single-view/view/tram-projects-planned-in-northern-france.html

**Minneapolis:** www.metrocouncil.org/about/facts/HiawathaLRTFacts.pdf

**Mulhouse:** www.systra.com/IMG/pdf/Ang\_-\_Mulhouse\_BD.pdf. Mulhouse's metro. pop. is appr. 278,000

**Norfolk:** ridethetide.com/about\_the\_tide/about-the-tide.shtml

**Phoenix:** valleymetro.org/images/uploads/lightrail\_publications/System-Factsheet-011211.pdf

**Portland:** Rivera, Dylan; Riders pack MAX Green Line on "rst day of service; Oregonian; September 12, 2009

**Salt Lake City:** railway-technology.com/projects/frontlines-2015. Davidson, Lee; Feds give UTA unexpected, big gi#; Salt Lake Tribune; Dec 27, 2010. Salt Lake's project has a target of building 70 miles (112 km) of commuter and light rail in 7 years, and is on time and under-budget.

**Tours:** info-projet.fr/2010/tramway-de-tours. Tours' metro population is appr. 300,000.

**Victoria:** Victoria Regional Rapid Transit Project; BC Transit/Ministry of Transportation/CRD; May 2011.

**Vitoria:** Young, Tony; applrguk.co.uk/"les/Irta system "le.pdf. Vitoria's metro population is appr. 240,000.