

## 'Floating' rail link gets support

**Strathclyde's public transport chief has said building a 300mph magnetic rail link between Glasgow and Edinburgh is an "attractive option".**

Councillor Alistair Watson, head of Strathclyde Partnership for Transport, said the hi-tech Maglev trains would cut the journey time to 15 minutes.

Mr Watson said he believed the trains could "transform" Scotland's economy.

He was responding to a new SPT report into options for improving rail links between the cities.

**A high-speed link between Glasgow and Edinburgh would transform the future growth potential of their economies**  
Councillor Alistair Watson

The SPT report examined all possible options for reducing journey times from Glasgow to Edinburgh from the current 50 minutes to at least 40 minutes, with half-an-hour highlighted as the ideal time.

After seeing the report, Mr Watson said: "The conventional options identified in the study, which are lowest cost, only take minutes off the journey time from Glasgow to Edinburgh or involve huge reconstruction costs to get the journey anywhere near 30 minutes.

"With the makers of the Maglev system in the UK claiming their system can go from Glasgow to Edinburgh in 15 minutes, I think it's time to look at that case in detail.

"It appears to me that Maglev could be the most attractive option to emerge from this study. Such a high-speed link between Glasgow and Edinburgh would transform the future growth potential of their economies and of Scotland's economy as a whole."

### 'Modern demands'

The findings concluded that the Maglev system was one of only two options considered which would create a sub-30minute journey time between the two cities.

The other involves building two tunnels in Edinburgh and Glasgow at a cost of £2.4bn. The study identified Maglev as an achievable long-term solution that needed further investigation.

Mr Watson added: "As this report shows, there are many issues we need to look at in much greater detail but, in my opinion, we need a high-speed rail link between Scotland's two largest cities to meet the demands of modern society.

"I believe this kind of bold investment to move our transport infrastructure into the 21st Century and beyond would pay dividends. Look at what the Channel Tunnel has delivered for the UK economy."

The other options looked at how existing rail routes between Glasgow-Shotts-Edinburgh Waverley and Glasgow-Carstairs-Edinburgh Waverley could be improved. SPT has agreed to further investigate all of the major options identified.

Story from BBC NEWS:

[http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/uk\\_news/scotland/glasgow\\_and\\_west/6577311.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/uk_news/scotland/glasgow_and_west/6577311.stm)

Published: 2007/04/21 10:02:53 GMT

© BBC MMVII