CITY OF BERNE: DIRECTORATE OF CIVIL ENGINEERING, TRANSPORT AND GREEN SPACES

EXPEDIENCY ASSESSMENT
2. TRAMWAY AXIS BERNE CITY CENTRE

Client	City of Berne, TBA
Processing period	2011 - 2012
Project costs	CHF 110 million

Today, the entire tram traffic in the historic center of the city of Berne is concentrated on the Marktgasse and Spitalgasse route. This section connects the eastern and western parts of the tramway network. A second tram route is expected to reduce the strain on the central network segments and to increase the operational reliability.

Berne's historically grown tramway network is focusing on the central railway station. All feeder lines in the station area are using a single corridor, passing through Marktgasse and Spitalgasse in the upper part of the old town and thus through a central area of the UNESCO World Heritage perimeter. As this main axis is at the same time the most important shopping street in Berne's historical center, conflicts with pedestrian traffic and supply logistics are inevitable.

With the planned construction of a new tramway line to Ostermundigen, the unsatisfactory situation will become even worse. After completion, this network section will have to accommodate 46 trams and 12 busses in each direction during peak hours. To alleviate the strain on the main axes and to establish a network less prone to operational limitations, plans for a second tramway axis between the central railway station and the "Zytglogge" clock tower are prepared.

R+R developed proposals for the alignment of the second axis as part of an expediency assessment, offered technical support and evaluated the layout options. The optimal solution suggests an alignment through Speichergasse and Nägeligasse. This would result in a substantial reduction of strain on the existing axis and, in the event of an incident, would allow for the rerouting of all tram lines onto the new route.

In addition, R+R examined alternative options to infrastructure extension and developed possible measures to optimise the existing network and improve operational efficiency.