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## **Breakthrough in Preparation of Railway to the Airport: Správa železnic Will Continue to Develop the Southern Tunnel Variant under Střešovice**

Správa železnic has taken an important step in the preparation of the modernisation of the railway line from Prague to Kladno with a branch to Václav Havel Airport. Based on the expert's opinion on the most suitable variant of the tunnel route under Prague's Střešovice, prepared by the team of the Ruhr University in Bochum, representatives of the Czech Geological Survey and vibration specialist Milan Brož, decided to continue preparing the southern variant of the tunnel between Dejvice and Veleslavín. With this intention and the results of expert opinions, it also acquainted the members of the Assembly of the Municipal District of Prague 6 today. The Assembly expressed support for the implementation of this option in its resolution.

Czech and foreign expert teams examined four variants of the railway line routing: widening and recess of the track in the existing trail and three routes of the tunnel led under Střešovice and excavated using the TBM method, i.e. using earth-punching shields. Expert opinions agree that the most suitable variant is the so-called South variant, which leads under the Central Military Hospital, the Church of St. Norbert and Pod Hradbami Street.

*"Správa železnic has put a great effort into choosing the route. We wanted to be absolutely sure that we had done everything essential to be able with a clear conscience to choose the best option. That is why it is very important for us that the greatest Czech professional authority and the greatest European professional authority have issued the same recommendation,"* says Petr Hofhanzl, Director of the Civil Engineering Administration West. Prague is again a bit closer to being among the dozens of European cities that already have their modern railway to the airport.

*"The opinions of the University of Ruhr and the Czech Geological Survey are important not only for the line, but also for the inhabitants of Střešovice. Apart from a clear recommendation of the so-called southern variants, it confirms that the line will not have any negative impact on the inhabitants of Střešovice or on the buildings located near the tunnel,"* adds Deputy Director of the Civil Engineering Administration West Jakub Bazgier. In areas where the tunnel will be closer to the surface, there is soft soil that absorbs vibrations. The parts that lead through the rock mass are again deep enough so that vibrations from construction or operation do not reach the surface. Besides, to the general impact on the buildings in the proximity of the new tunnel, experts from the University of Ruhr also dealt specifically with the impact

on a number of concrete important buildings. These were, for example, the Institute of Physics of the Czech Academy of Sciences, the Veleslavín Heating Plant, the Tram depot Střešovice and the Central Military Hospital. The opinion showed that the construction of the tunnel would not have any negative impact on these buildings.

The new line will significantly improve the lives of all residents of Prague 6, but not only them. It will also be a fast and convenient alternative for the inhabitants of Kladno, who commute to the metropolis every day to work by car via Prague 6. After new line completion, so-called Green Radial, a relaxation zone with cycle paths, promenade and sports elements will be created on the route of the original railway.

The new tunnel under Střešovice on the line between the Praha-Dejvice and Praha-Veleslavín stations will be part of the project of modernisation of the Praha – Kladno line with the connection of Václav Havel Airport, which is one of the largest planned infrastructure projects in the Czech Republic. Its goal is to connect Václav Havel Airport to the railway and modernise the existing single-track line between Prague and Kladno, the largest Central Bohemian agglomeration with the highest number of commuters.