

## Candidate for Trackless Trams Pilot programs through reuse of existing tracks

---

These corridors give you a starting list of places where abandoned rail is abundant and often publicly documented, making them prime candidates for transit renewal, trails, or mixed-use redevelopment.

Below are ten cities where you can still find long stretches of disused or lightly used rail corridors. Each city offers different lessons for reuse, from greenways to new transit. This is an outline needs further analysis and city plans and updated information:

1. **Paris, France – Petite Ceinture**

A 32.5 km ring railway closed to regular passengers in 1934. Sections are now open as wild greenways, and more will be accessible by 2026. [Paris je t'aime - Tourist office](#)

2. **London, UK – Parkland Walk & Camden Highline**

Four miles of former rail between Finsbury Park and Alexandra Palace now form the Parkland Walk nature reserve, while the planned Camden Highline will link Camden Town to King's Cross along another disused viaduct. [noplacelike.itCamden Highline](#)

3. **Berlin, Germany – Siemensbahn & Other Ghost Lines**

The 4.5 km Siemensbahn has sat idle since 1980. City and state plans aim to reopen it to serve new housing developments, highlighting Berlin's wider web of mothballed S-Bahn branches. [Abandoned Berlin](#)

4. **Detroit, USA – Freight Spurs around Michigan Central**

Heavy-industry lines once fed Michigan Central Station; many were abandoned after the 1980s. The station's 2024 reopening is part of a 30-acre district that could reactivate nearby rails for future mobility pilots. [American Society of Civil Engineers](#)

5. **Chicago, USA – Bloomingdale Line (The 606) & Beyond**

The 2.7-mile elevated Bloomingdale freight spur became The 606 trail in 2015. Chicago still has other dormant corridors, like the planned Englewood Nature Trail, showing a deep reserve of unused track. [the606.org](#)

6. **Philadelphia, USA – Reading Viaduct / Rail Park**

A half-mile section opened as the Rail Park in 2018, but the full viaduct stretches roughly three miles. The city is negotiating acquisition to extend the park and reconnect neighborhoods. [Wikipedia](#)

7. **New York City, USA – High Line & Queens Freight Spurs**

The 1.45-mile High Line sparked over \$5 billion in development. Other abandoned lines, such as the QueensWay and Bay Ridge Branch, add dozens of miles of latent rail. [DS+R](#)

8. **Atlanta, USA – BeltLine Loop**

A 22-mile circle of former freight track is being converted into trails and planned light rail. Most of the corridor was sitting unused before the project began. [Wikipedia](#)

9. **Melbourne, Australia – Outer & Inner Circle Lines**

The 15-km Outer Circle and shorter Inner Circle were closed early in the 20th century; both now serve as linear parks and cycle paths, yet large segments remain undeveloped. [Wikipedia](#)

#### 10. Sydney, Australia – Metropolitan Goods Line / The Goods Line

An 800-m downtown segment is now a pedestrian greenway, and other stretches of the wider goods network have light-rail potential, illustrating how freight corridors can be repurposed. [Wikipedia](#)

---

Here are seven more cities that hold long corridors of abandoned or lightly used rail and match your “reuse first, build later” brief for modular trackless-tram deployment.

- **Los Angeles, USA** – Dozens of freight spurs parallel the L.A. River and criss-cross South-Central. Metro’s new 5.5-mile Rail-to-Rail path shows how a single dormant line can be opened first for active travel and later upgraded for higher-capacity transit. [movela.org](#)
- **Toronto, Canada** – The SmartTrack program will add new stations on GO’s existing corridors rather than laying new track. It proves that spare rail capacity, plus infill stops, can lift ridership fast and pave the way for guided electric fleets. [metrolinx.com](#)
- **Manchester, UK** – Metrolink’s latest phases converted 5 miles of closed rail and 32.9 miles of under-used heavy rail into light rail, with another 25 miles of new links added only where gaps remained. The network’s mix of reused and purpose-built segments is a textbook modular rollout. [democracy.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk](#)
- **Glasgow, UK** – A web of disused tunnels and cuttings still lies beneath the city. Local planners keep spotlighting these ghost lines as ready-made corridors for a future tram-train or trackless-tram grid. [glasgowpunter.blogspot.com](#)
- **Dublin, Ireland** – The Phoenix Park Tunnel branch, long under-utilised, is being upgraded and will gain a new Cabra station under the DART+ programme. It shows how lightly trafficked routes can be reactivated first, then strengthened once demand builds. [Irish Rail](#)
- **Vancouver, Canada** – The 9 km Arbutus Corridor, bought from Canadian Pacific after decades of disuse, is now a greenway with space reserved for a future street-running tram. The city’s phased plan makes it a prime candidate for a battery trackless-tram pilot. [Participedia](#)
- **São Paulo, Brazil** – The abandoned Santos-Juquiá railway is slated for revival with a regional train and VLT (tram-like light vehicle). Its length and straight geometry offer an ideal spine for incremental, low-impact deployment. [CPG Click Petroleo e Gas](#)

#### Why they fit the brief

All seven cities combine three advantages: sizable dormant rail corridors, surrounding districts that need better transit, and active public discussions about rail reuse. That mix lets planners start with surface upgrades and digital guidance, add dedicated lanes only where ridership warrants, and postpone heavy civil works until value capture is proven. The result mirrors the staged model set out in your London paper: quick starts, minimal disruption, and room to grow.

•