



NEWS

MAY 5, 1994

CONTACT: BILL HEARD/JIM SMART
MTA PRESS RELATIONS
(213) 244-7047, 244-6347
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

METRO RED LINE SUBWAY TUNNELING CREW BREAKS THROUGH TO THE FUTURE WILSHIRE/VERMONT STATION

A giant tunnel digging machine pushed through the final wall of dirt separating the tunnel beneath Vermont Avenue from the future Wilshire/Vermont station early Thursday afternoon in the latest milestone to be met in Segment 2 of the Metro Red Line Subway project.

The breakthrough marked the completion of the first of four tunnel segments being dug by contractor Shea/Kiewit/Kenny that eventually will connect the future Hollywood/Highland and Wilshire/Vermont stations, as well as four stations in between that will serve Vermont and Hollywood boulevards -- a total distance of about 4.6 miles.

"The completion of this tunnel marks a significant milestone for the hundreds of workers involved in the construction of the Red Line subway tunnels," said Richard Alatorre, MTA's Board chairman and a Los Angeles city councilman. "We now have a physical underground connection between Hollywood and Wilshire boulevards. The work these men and women are doing is important to the future benefit of everyone in our region."

(MORE)

TUNNEL BREAKTHROUGH

Page 2

"The contractor deployed four tunneling machines, each weighing about 200 tons, from an entry point located near Barnsdall Park in Hollywood," said Franklin White, MTA's chief executive officer. "Two of the machines are excavating twin tunnels westward toward the Hollywood/Vine station. The other two have moved south toward Wilshire/Vermont, with one of them breaking through to the station this morning."

The intersection of the western branch of the Red Line at the Wilshire/Vermont station requires a different tunnel configuration. To allow for curves and changes in direction, one tunnel will be built on top of the other, instead of the traditional side-by-side configuration. The segment completed Thursday is the bottom tunnel.

"The breakthrough was achieved after 2.7 miles of digging 70 feet below Vermont Avenue," said Edward McSpedon, president and CEO of the Rail Construction Corporation. "Each tunneling machine is capable of moving ahead about 100 feet during an average day of work, removing about 1,400 cubic yards of dirt in the process."

Work on the \$163.5 million contract began in July, 1992. Tunneling activities began in June of 1993, and excavation is about 60 percent complete. The excavation of the remaining three tunnel segments is expected to be completed by this fall.

#