



# NEWS

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CONTACT: STEVE CHESSER/JIM SMART  
MTA PRESS RELATIONS  
(213) 244-7056, 244-6347  
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## **MTA BEGINS TUNNELING IN NORTH HOLLYWOOD; WORK BEGINS ON NEXT UNDERGROUND LINK IN METRO RED LINE**

The MTA today began digging one of two twin tunnels that will link the future subway stations at North Hollywood and Universal City, marking another milestone in the creation of the Metro Red Line.

The tunnel excavation began near the site of the North Hollywood Station, at the intersection of Lankershim Boulevard and Weddington Street, where ground was broken on Segment 3 of the Red Line last March. The parallel tunnels will proceed south beneath Lankershim Boulevard for a total distance of 10,541 feet to the site of the Universal City Station.

"This represents another important step in the continuing progress of the Red Line project, and public transportation in Los Angeles County," said Franklin E. White, MTA chief executive officer. "Each time we begin a new link, we're closer to providing a complete and modern transit system that the people of the region will be able to use for decades to come."

The \$65.4 million project has a number of precautionary measures designed to prevent the settlement problems that occurred beneath Hollywood Boulevard. Surveys will be conducted and remote sensor readings will be taken frequently during excavation operations.

"We're using metal struts in the expansion gaps of the tunnel's initial liner segments instead of wood wedges," reported MTA Chief Executive Officer Franklin White. "We're also conducting a thorough survey of all underground utilities in the area, and will maintain an aggressive monitoring program."

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Before tunneling could begin, an excavation shaft 70 feet deep, 300 feet long and 70 feet wide was dug. The first 200-foot-long tunnel digging machine was lowered into the shaft in sections, beginning December 9, followed by the second machine on January 23.

Preparation work began last week on the eastern tunnel when workers began cutting through steel and timber shoring at the southern edge of the shaft. Tunneling will begin on the western tunnel in about four weeks. Work will continue 24 hours a day in three shifts, five to six days a week.

The tunnel project's estimated completion date is February, 1997. It will join a tunnel that will be dug from Universal City south to the Hollywood/Highland Station. The North Hollywood segment of the Red Line is scheduled to open in the fall of 2000.

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