



NEWS

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MTA COMPLETES TUNNEL EXCAVATION IN NORTH HOLLYWOOD

The MTA today announced that its Metro Rail contractors have finished the excavation of twin tunnels from North Hollywood to Universal City.

The parallel tunnels, which begin beneath Lankershim and Chandler boulevards, connect to the site of the Universal City station which is now under construction. The tunnels are 10,541 feet long.

"We're proud to announce the tunnels were completed with zero lost-time accidents, which is an exemplary record," said Stan Phernambucq, MTA Executive Officer for rail construction. "This was a difficult tunneling operation because contractors had to successfully negotiate challenging soil conditions under Lankershim and pass beneath the Los Angeles River channel."

Mining of the twin tunnels began in February of 1995, but proceeded slowly due to soil conditions which included sand mixed with large rocks and cobbles. Contractors injected additional grouting as a precautionary measure to stabilize the soil to prevent subsidence and to allow them to proceed safely.

San Francisco-based Obayashi Corporation conducted the excavation.

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"We learned some valuable lessons from the North Hollywood tunneling effort, and we will apply them to the subway's eastern extension," said MTA Chief Executive Officer Joe Drew. The MTA's CEO, in response to North Hollywood residents' concerns, spearheaded a construction impact response program that ensured quick resolution of problems for those affected by the construction activities.

The eastern tunnel was completed on July 18; the western tunnel was finished on July 23. The tunnel liners now will be installed in the tunnels.

The 6.3 mile Red Line extension will have three stations at Hollywood/Highland, Universal City and North Hollywood. The North Hollywood segment of the Red Line is scheduled to open for passenger service in 2001. The entire Red Line will be 23.4 miles with 22 stations when complete.

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