



NEWS

October 6, 1998

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METRO RED LINE SUBWAY TRAIN TESTING PROCEEDING AS PLANNED; TRAINS WILL BEGIN TESTING BENEATH HOLLYWOOD BOULEVARD IN MID-OCTOBER

MTA's rail startup team for the last four weeks has been testing Metro Red Line trains beneath Vermont Avenue in preparation of the Hollywood segment of the subway project opening to the public in May 1999.

In early September, the rail startup crew energized the third rail of a 7,000 foot section of the Metro Red Line's Vermont/Hollywood Extension between Vermont/Beverly and Vermont/Sunset stations.

This latest construction milestone will include several months of testing of the 4.6-mile leg of the subway project and signals a major milestone in the completion of the Hollywood segment that will operate from the Wilshire/Vermont Station and Hollywood and Vine via Vermont Avenue and Hollywood Boulevard.

"By mid-October, we will move our testing to Hollywood Boulevard and begin testing Metro Red Line trains beneath the boulevard from Hollywood and Vine to the Western Avenue," said Bill McCann, MTA startup program manager. "Its the prelude to eventual revenue service planned for next year and an exciting time for the rail startup crew."

In testing the trains, the third rail is energized to ensure that its capacity to supply the electric current is sufficient to power the Metro Red Line cars down the tracks. In addition, the testing is conducted to make sure that the "third rail shoe" on each rail car is at the proper height to draw current from the rail.

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MTA expects to complete the testing of this first 7,000 foot section of third rail by October 9. Third rail testing will then get underway between the Hollywood/Vine and Hollywood/Western stations, followed by another month of similar testing between the Vermont/Sunset and Hollywood/Western stations.

All testing of the Metro Red Line trains is being conducted between the hours of 3:30 p.m. and 5 a.m. after which time the third rail is de-energized and grounded as a safety precaution to allow other startup related work to resume. In addition, security on the project has been increased.

The opening of the Vermont/Hollywood Extension in May 1999 will expand the Metro Red Line subway to 11.1 miles. The 6.3-mile North Hollywood Extension, which will extend service from the Hollywood/Vine station to Lankershim and Chandler in North Hollywood, is due to open in May 2000.

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