

Media Invited for "Sneak Peek" at Train Testing in Metro Red Line's North Hollywood Extension



LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL: The North Hollywood Metro Red Line Station is destination of media tour.

Editor's Note: The MTA invited local media for a "sneak peek," today, at Metro Red Line train testing on the 6.3-mile tracks between the North Hollywood station and Hollywood/Highland. Much of the route lies some 900 feet beneath the Santa Monica Mountains. Senior Communications Officer Rick Jager prepared the following story.

By RICK JAGER

(Jan. 25) When the MTA's Metro Red Line subway project is completed later this year to North Hollywood, it will be the capstone of a rail rapid transit system crisscrossing Los Angeles County.



This latest construction milestone of testing the subway trains on the North Hollywood segment signals a major accomplishment in the completion of the subway project to North Hollywood. Completion is scheduled for mid-2000 and will expand the Metro Red Line subway to 17.4 miles.

Startup team is busy

MTA's rail startup team has been busy for the past three months testing Metro Red Line systems and trains beneath Lankershim Boulevard as well as some 900 feet below the surface in twin tunnels running through the Santa Monica Mountains to Hollywood and Highland.

In mid-October, 1999, the rail startup crew energized the third rail along the 6.3-mile Metro Rail North Hollywood extension and began testing train cars that will, ultimately, carry thousands of passengers and tourists to and from the San Fernando Valley.

In testing the train, 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.

Safety precautions taken

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 the third rail is de-energized and electrically grounded as a safety precaution to allow other startup-related work to resume. In addition, security on the project has been increased.

By mid-2000, the entire Metro Rail system will span nearly 60 miles, connecting Long Beach, Norwalk, El Segundo, Los Angeles, Hollywood, Universal City and North Hollywood and will offer a wide range of travel opportunities for Southland residents and visitors.

Ridership on the completed Metro Rail system a year after completion and opening of the North Hollywood segment is expected to reach 200,000 boarding passengers each weekday.

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