



NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DECKS NOW STACKED IN FAVOR OF MERCHANTS ALONG VERMONT AVE./HOLLYWOOD BLVD. CORRIDOR OF METRO RED LINE SUBWAY

Plastic surgeons to the stars will envy the major facelift Vermont Avenue and Hollywood Boulevard is about to receive from the MTA.

The "Road to Street Wellsville," which follows the path of the 4.5-mile extension of the Metro Red Line subway, **begins at 8:30 p.m. Friday night** near the Vermont Avenue and Santa Monica Boulevard subway station, one of five stations scheduled to open in December 1998.

"The MTA is going to start removing hundreds of concrete deck mats that have served as temporary streets during the construction of the five stations," said Interim MTA CEO Linda Bohlinger. "When we're done the thoroughfare will look better than it did before construction began."

The three-weekend operation will affect an area from Burns Avenue to Santa Monica Boulevard and will be closed until 6 a.m. Monday, June 2.

Mat removal, also referred to as decking, is scheduled for the same times June 13-16 and June 27-30. Afterward, the street will receive a fresh coat of asphalt. Later on, installation of curbs, gutters and sidewalk widening will commence without causing further street closures (some lanes may be shut off during utility work). Mats will first be removed between Burns and Lockwood avenues.

"Merchants, who have endured 2-1/2 years of various inconveniences, view the removal of these mats as a milestone, the start of a return to normalcy," said MTA Project Manager Stephen Polechronis.

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"Though a portion of the avenue will be closed on three separate weekends, the public will still have access to these businesses by means of alternate routes," Polechronis added.

Mats also are tentatively scheduled to be removed, in August, from streets paralleling stations at Vermont Avenue/ Beverly Boulevard and Hollywood Boulevard/Western Avenue; Hollywood Boulevard/Vine Avenue in September; and Vermont Avenue and Sunset Boulevard by late fall.

From 8:30 p.m. Friday night until 6 a.m., Monday, northbound traffic on Vermont Avenue will be diverted to Virgil Avenue. Additionally, signs on the Hollywood Freeway will advise motorists of the detour.

Construction work beneath Vermont Avenue now focuses on preparing the tunnels and stations for installation of permanent rail.

By the year 2005, ridership on the Metro Red Line, which by that time will extend to North Hollywood and East Los Angeles, will average 297,000 passengers a day.

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