



NEWS

May 11, 1995

CONTACT: STEVE CHESSER/JIM SMART
MTA PRESS RELATIONS
(213) 244-7056, 244-6347
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MTA IS DEVELOPING PLAN TO RESUME TUNNELING IN NORTH HOLLYWOOD

The MTA is developing a plan with its contractor, Obayashi Corporation, to resume tunneling in North Hollywood. The plan calls for modifying the shields of both tunnel machines, and means that mining can begin three to four weeks after the MTA gives final approval to the plan.

Tunneling was halted on April 7 because of the contractor's inability to control the loose, sandy soil encountered at the face of the tunnel. The MTA summoned leading experts in tunnel construction who recommended modifying the shields of the machines by extending the hoods forward a few feet as well as performing other modifications to the machines. Limited grouting also may be used in certain areas where soils require further stabilization.

"Together, these measures are expected to control the face of the tunnel and minimize surface settlement," said John J. Adams, MTA interim executive officer, construction.

The tentative plan calls for the contractor to first modify one machine that has yet to begin tunneling, with the other machine to be retrofitted in place.

Modifications will take longer on the other machine because it has progressed some 200 feet. To safely reach the machine and modify the shield, the contractor will excavate an access shaft down 50 to 60 feet from the surface of Lankershim Boulevard.

(MORE)

TUNNELING RESUMPTION

Page 2

"From the beginning of this project, we have taken a conservative and prudent approach," said Adams. "While the delay we've experienced is disappointing, we're willing to trade a little time in order to do the job right. Our emphasis is on quality."

Precautions for the North Hollywood tunnel are many. Extensive monitoring equipment has been installed to detect settlement, and critical water lines in the vicinity were exposed to observe any leaks that might develop. Personnel from DWP and the Gas Company are on call in the event of any problems with utilities, and steel struts are being installed in the expansion gaps of the tunnel's initial supports.

#