

A star is worn (but help's on the way)

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Groucho's star is among 180 near the Hollywood/Highland Red Line station that will likely be getting some work done.

Groucho Marx is cracking up. Burt Lancaster looks ready for some rehab. And as for Kermit the Frog—well, let's just say his current situation is something you wouldn't wish on a reptile.

We're talking, of course, about stars on the [Hollywood Walk of Fame](#), where years of damage and deterioration have taken a heavy toll. Now, some of the Walk's most visible stars are ready for their touch-up.

Metro's Board of Directors recently voted to spend \$1.5 million to fix up the stars and their surroundings outside the Hollywood/Highland Red Line station as part of a cost-sharing agreement with the Hollywood Historic Trust, which will carry out the work. Other funding for the \$4.1 million project is coming from the City of Los Angeles' Community Redevelopment Agency, the Hollywood Chamber of Commerce, the Hollywood Historic Trust and private donors.

"The Walk of Fame...has been showing its age for some time," according to a [report](#) to Metro's Executive Management and Audit Committee. "Over the past 50 years, the condition of the sidewalks has become unsightly and potentially dangerous."

A major focus of the work will be the north side of Hollywood Boulevard between Highland Avenue and Orange Drive.

The fix-up operation, expected to begin this fall, comes after research into [how best to resolve long-standing problems](#) along the [famed pink-and-black terrazzo Walk](#). The review included assigning a [letter grade](#) to the condition of each of the Walk's nearly 2,400 stars—from A to F. The Los Angeles City Council earlier this year adopted [new specifications](#) on how the work should be conducted.

Among the 180 star panels likely to be restored or replaced are those honoring Groucho, Burt Lancaster and Kermit (all of which were graded “C”) along with stars in even worse shape (“D” or “F”) paying homage to Peter Frampton, Jackie Chan, Tony Curtis and Harriet Nelson.

“The overall condition of the Walk along this portion is in poor condition. There are multiple areas where the terrazzo layer is completely missing,” the Metro report said.

The work will focus not just on replacing the stars themselves but also on shoring up or replacing damaged sidewalks, curb ramps and driveways.

People walking to and from the Hollywood and Highland Red Line station should expect some pedestrian detours once the work gets underway; it’s expected to take from three to five months.

More than 10 million people a year visit the Walk, which runs along Hollywood Boulevard from Gower Street to La Brea Avenue and on Vine Street from Yucca Street to Sunset Boulevard. Their numbers are likely to increase now that a new [Cirque du Soleil](#) production has taken up residence at the Kodak Theater, the Metro report said.

Previous repairs on the Walk of Fame near Hollywood and Vine were funded by the developer of the W Hotel Hollywood, which opened earlier this year. And individual star panels and areas of the Walk have been repaired one by one over the years, said Jeffrey C. Briggs, a Hollywood Historic Trust board member who also serves as the organization’s legal counsel.

But the upcoming renovation will be the first large-scale effort since the new city guidelines were enacted.

“Metro’s contribution is extremely important and is critical to the overall long-term maintenance of the Walk of Fame, which is the No. 1 tourist destination in Southern California,” Briggs said.

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