

CMRL plans to slash private land for phase 2 by up to 25%

We Will Do It By Making Changes To The Design, Says CMRL MD

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Pankaj Kumar Bansal, managing director, CMRL, taking a look at a photo exhibition at Vadapalani metro station on Wednesday

Chennai: In what could come as a relief for residents living along metro rail's phase-2 alignment, CMRL is planning to cut down on private property to be acquired for the 107.55km segment by up to 25%. CMRL will tweak the design to build smaller stations and install systems in a compact way to reduce the space required. Tenders for construction will be floated in mid-2019.

"In phase-2, we will cut down on land acquisition by one-third or one-fourth. It is a very ambitious plan but we will do it by making changes to the design. There will be no change in the alignment," said Pankaj Kumar Bansal, managing director, CMRL, on the sidelines of the valedictory function

of a photo exhibition at Vadapalani metro station. "In phase-1 extension, we planned to acquire 90,000sqm of private land but brought it down to 40,000sqm by shifting systems in the stations and reducing the width and length of stations," he said.

CMRL has identified 10.55 lakhsqm of government and private property for the construction of a 50km line along corridors 3 and 5. Notices have been issued to 800 property owners.

"There are a lot of private properties in Purasaiwalkam, Doveton and

Perumbur. We are working on a plan to minimize acquisition, though it may lead to higher construction costs," Bansal said.

CMRL began preliminary work for phase-2, including detailed design of the alignment, land acquisition and soil test, simultaneously as it wanted to reduce the area to be acquired, the MD said, adding, "We did not do this in phase-1."

CMRL may open the remaining portion of phase-1, including the line on Anna Salai, by the end of the year. Trial runs with metro trains from Washermenpet to AG-DMS are expected to begin by the end of September.

The MD said two more entry points at Central Metro and a pedestrian subway will be opened by the year-end. Electrification of the Anna Salai line will be completed by mid-September. "By this week, we will complete electrification at Washermenpet, High Court and Mannadi stations," he said.

CMRL is facing a hitch in finalising signalling systems for phase-1 extension in North Chennai, which is expected to be ready by March 2020.