

Work to create transport hub at Central Square to begin soon

Project gets CRZ clearance; eco-restoration of Buckingham Canal to get a boost

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After getting Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) clearance from the Union Ministry of Environment and Forests, work on Central Square is expected to begin soon.

Central Square will come up as a transport hub, at a cost of about ₹400 crore, housing a 21-storey building, bus bays and a three-level underground parking lot that can accommodate nearly 1,000 cars.

The square will link the Chennai Metro with the MRTS, the suburban rail, the Puratchi Thalaivar Dr. MGR Central railway station and bus stations. The idea is to make transportation as seamless as possible, so that a commuter can easily switch from one mode to another. There will be a foot-path and elaborate landscaping work too. The work on



Seamless connect: The square will link the Metro with MRTS, suburban rail, Central railway station and bus stations.

the underground parking lot had begun a while ago.

Planning authorities said the use of railway land for the Central Square project was likely to be restricted. The new plan for the Central Square will be as per provisions of the Common Building Rules, said a civic official.

The CRZ clearance is also expected to promote eco-restoration of the Buckingham Canal near the Central

Square, and speed up the process of giving a makeover to major heritage buildings and the People's Park area, in the vicinity of the Ripon Buildings.

Revamping Victoria Hall

The Chennai Corporation will start work on revamping the Victoria Public Hall next month. At least 5.5 acres of land will be landscaped by the civic body, following the

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handing over of the land by the Chennai Metro Rail Limited (CMRL). "CMRL work on the premises of the Victoria Public Hall is in its final stages. They will hand over the land to the Corporation in one month. We will complete restoration in nine months," said an official.

Work on restoring the Victoria Public Hall started in 2009, and was delayed owing to Metro work in the last 10 years. The Victoria Public Hall will then be used as a town hall for gathering of residents' welfare associations to discuss civic issues.