

Phase-1 extension of metro rail to 'go green'

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THE Chennai Metro Rail phase-1 extension corridor in North Chennai is slated to get a green makeover, as the CMRL is set to rope in horticulture and landscape specialists, who would decorate the medians. The stretch is likely to be thrown open by January. Officials said that tenders have been floated and are in the pre-bidding stages. The maintenance period would be for two years. "Plants such as ficus, palm cycas are being considered. Light-loving and shade-loving plant species are being proposed too," officials said.

Sources said that sand in the medians would be mixed with vermicompost, husk and coco peat for better plant health. The phase-1 metro rail corridor runs for 9 km, with 6.6 km in elevation and 2.4 km underground, across

eight stations. Officials said that once tenders are finalised, it would be the contractor's responsibility to ensure the availability of adequate water at their own cost for the next two years.

"Based on how this goes, we may expand this plan in other medians as well," officials added, saying that in future, the idea of setting up vertical gardens would also be explored. Meanwhile, as the construction is nearing completion, most of the encroachments along the corridor are removed by the corporation. Earlier, so many unclaimed vehicles were being parked along the CMRL corridor for months, encroaching the space on the already narrow Tiruvottiyur High Road, above which the metro runs. CMRL officials said most of such vehicles were removed and roads relaid in certain stretches.