

# CMRL uses Phase-1 lessons to design passenger flow, amenities in Phase-2

## Sleek Interchange Stations With Easy Switch Of Mode Of Transport In The Offing

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For metro-rail users, commute in the project's phase-2 will be a breeze as compared to phase-1. At least 26 metro stations to be built in the 118.9km phase-2 project will help passengers seamlessly switch between different modes of transport such as MRTS, suburban trains and MTC buses to travel across the city and suburbs.

Besides looking compact and sleek, these interchange stations have been designed based on future projections of passenger flow as well as lessons learnt from phase-1 projects. Construction for a portion of phase-2, estimated to cost ₹61,843crore, will begin later this year. The three corridors in the project is expected to be ready by 2026.

### FUTURISTIC PLAN

Based on feedback from commuters in phase-1, Chennai Metro Rail Limited (CMRL) has planned several facilities to give passengers a hassle-free commute through interchange stations. "We have planned exclusive pedestrian subways, pathways, foot overbridge or skywalks for passengers to have easy access to different modes of transport," an official said.

While in corridor-3, commuters will have 11 interchange stations to connect to reach any stations in the route between Madhavaram and the IT hub on OMR or opt for another mode of transport. For instance, a passenger from Madhavaram heading to Airport can disembark at Chetpet and walk across an exclusive pathway to access Chetpet suburban station to board a train to Airport. In the same corridor, stations like Aynavaram and

Adyar depot will give quick access to MTC bus depots nearby, while at KMC, a pedestrian subway may link the existing Kilpauk metro station in phase-1 with the phase-2 underground station.

Five interchange stations, linking corridor-4 and 5, will give commuters access to far flung localities like Madhavaram or Medavakkam to core city areas like Nandanam or T Nagar.

A commuter heading from Kovilambakkam or Madipakkam could switch between two metro stations at Alandur and board a train to Nandanam or switch corridors at Porur junction to reach Panagal Park.

Based on lessons learnt from phase-1, CMRL has tweaked the size of the stations in phase-2 to match their projected ridership for the next 30 years instead of building a one-size-fits-all type of stations like they did in phase-1. As a result of these changes, the overall project cost has come down apart from lesser construction time.

"While planning for an interchange, it's critical for CMRL to reduce the interchange time for people, given that sufficient infrastructure is provided for comfortable access to public transport and other modes. Long interchanges add to total commute time and makes public transport highly uncomfortable for people," said Sivashubraman Jayaraman of the Institute for Transport and Development Policy.

### THUMBS UP TO PASSENGERS

A look at what facilities CMRL will have in interchange stations for passengers



**FOR PEDESTRIANS!**  
Pathways, skywalks, subways, foot overbridge

**VEHICLE PARKING!**  
Parking slots will be linked to stations through pedestrian subways

**TRAFFIC DISPERSAL!**  
Continuous footpath, bus stops, pick-up and drop-off areas, traffic signage, parking near entry/exit

Illustration: Shinod Akkaraparambil

## Commuters rue missing trains at Central, Alandur

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Office-goers rushing to work during morning peak hours end up missing metro trains due to the long distances between two corridors in large interchange stations.

At stations like Central and Alandur where two corridors of phase-1 connect, commuters have barely four minutes left after alighting on one platform to board the next train in another corridor. "Every day, when I get off a train at Central, it's announced that the next train to LIC will arrive in four minutes. I end up running to that platform as fast as I can, but still I have missed it so many times because it is impossible to switch between corridors at Central due to the sheer size," said R Rajendran, who travels from Thirumangalam of corridor 2 to LIC metro in corridor 1 daily.

CMRL currently operates trains every seven minutes during peak hours and every 10 minutes in non-peak hours. This includes inter-corridor service from Central to airport via Koyambedu.

The underground Central station has island platforms with two corridors built one above the other, requiring passengers to climb up to take the stairs, elevators or escalators. At the elevated Alandur station, passengers have to reach the street level to switch from one corridor to another. For instance, a passenger taking a train from Koyambedu to Nandanam via Alandur will have to walk downstairs or take an escalator to the street level, walk to the other side and climb to a platform to board a train to Nandanam.

"I run from one end to the other as there is only four minutes from the time you get down at Alandur and walk to take the train to Nandanam," said S Nithya, a regular commuter. CMRL officials said they are discussing measures to give ample time for passengers to switch corridors. "We operate trains at 3.5 minutes frequency during peak hours. We are discussing how to accommodate more time for passengers at interchanges," an official said.

### ON THE TABLE



### PHASE-2

Total distance | **118.9km**

No. of stations | **128**

**CORRIDOR 3 | Madhavaram to Siruseri SIPCOT (45.8km)**

**CORRIDOR 4 | Lighthouse to Poomalallee (26.1km)**

**CORRIDOR 5 | Madhavaram to Sholinganalur (47.0km)**

Interchange stations | **26**

Underground interchange stations | **14**

Average of interchange stations | **150X21.4m (underground)**

**140X21.95m (Elevated)**

Maximum size | **190X44.6m**

### LESSONS FROM PHASE-1

- Interchange stations like Central and Alandur, due to their big size, make operation and maintenance a challenge
- Commuters find it difficult to shift between corridors in these two stations, and end up missing a train
- At Alandur, commuters shifting between corridors have to walk down to the street level and climb again to reach the next corridor
- It is an arduous walk between Central metro and Central railway station for passengers with luggage



Map not to scale