

2016 - The year of light rail big build

Major construction will ramp up on Sydney's CBD and South East Light Rail project, with three new CBD construction zones to begin in the next three months, and greater activity in the two construction zones already underway in the city centre following the completion of vital utility investigations.

Minister for Transport and Infrastructure Andrew Constance and CBD Coordinator General Marg Prendergast announced the start dates for those zones today, as well as an update to the project's construction schedule, keeping businesses and residents informed on when to expect building work near them.

"We have now significantly progressed vital utility investigations along George Street, which has helped refine the detailed design for the project, including determining the exact track location and where the most complex work will need to be done," Mr Constance said.

"With that greater knowledge, contractor ALTRAC Light Rail has been able to refine the dates for some zones to ensure work is carried out most efficiently and effectively while minimising intrusion."

Dates to note for the CBD are:

Zone	Location	Starts
2	George St (between Alfred and Grosvenor sts) Sydney CBD	March 2016
3	George St (between Bridge and Margaret sts) Sydney CBD	April 2016
4	George St (between Hunter and King sts) Sydney CBD	July 2016
7	George St (between Park and Bathurst sts) Sydney CBD	April 2016

CBD Coordinator General Marg Prendergast praised crews for the enormous effort in preparing George Street for this major project. "A massive amount of what we achieved on George Street last year was in identifying and commencing the relocation or modification of underground utilities and we cannot thank Ausgrid enough, for the work it has done to get building on track," Ms Prendergast said.

"We are working very hard to release areas of George Street back to residents, workers and businesses before Christmas 2016 and we will seek to minimise impacts in any zones that are occupied in the lead up to Christmas. "Of course George Street between King and Park streets will be a fantastic pedestrian mall with major construction complete before Christmas – giving Sydney its first taste of what we are creating.

"A minor change we have made is that contractors will enter Zone 4 – George Street between Hunter and King Streets – in July rather than April. The work will not take any longer, it will simply run from July 2016 to July 2017 rather than April to April. "Between Grosvenor and Hunter streets, we are entering about two weeks earlier than we initially advised, while up on Chalmers Street, outside Central, construction has been brought forward several months.

"As each zone's start date approaches, we will ensure businesses, residents and the broader community have all the information they need to make sure they can still get around the local area. "Those who were around town over the holidays would have

seen we got some work done in the northern part of the Sydney CBD that reduces the future construction needs in those zones 2 and 3, allowing us to now be more flexible,” Ms Prendergast said.

Major construction is due to for completion by mid-2018, followed by system and vehicle commissioning before light rail vehicles begin carrying customers along the new line early in 2019. “As we move through the next two-and-a-half years of construction, contractors will continue to refine work schedules, with some zones expected to start major construction earlier and some later than first earmarked, depending on construction requirements,” Ms Prendergast said.

Currently there are about 90 separate construction projects – both private and government – taking place in the CBD. Residents and business along the route will continue to be notified well in advance of major construction.