

By Correspondent Jeff Keay

Canyon is cut below street for Toronto subway line

At the bottom of a man-made canyon that cuts beneath Sheppard Avenue, west of Yonge St. in Metropolitan Toronto's City of North York, the first major structures of the new Sheppard subway line are taking shape.

The view from the surface is typical of many municipal improvements; pylons and New Jersey barriers divert traffic around and over timber road decking, heavy equipment rumbles from point to point, dump trucks line up for loads while trying not to block access to local businesses.

Known as the west tailtrack, the 750 m "tail end" of the 6.4 km, \$945 million Sheppard subway is about halfway through its 36 month construction schedule, with substantial completion still on target for June 1997. Main contractor for the job is Mississauga-based PCL Constructors Eastern Ltd.

Much of the preliminary work involved utility and service relocations to clear the way for piling and excavation shoring. Auguring and placement of nearly 600 I beam soldier piles was completed in December by subcontractor Deep Foundations Contractors Inc. using 80 ton piling rigs which leapfrogged from one location to the next for maximum logistical efficiency. At the same time, an extensive dewatering system was installed by Atlas Corporation after geotechnical evaluations (by Golder Consultants) indicated two major aquifers running through the glacial sand, gravel and clay underneath Sheppard Avenue; this required nearly as many eductor wells as piles.

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Above: TTC personnel ensure businesses are informed about mid-road activity.

Left: Excavation is deepened below North York's Sheppard Ave for 750 m long trailtrack.

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ending in a 6 m wide single track box at its westernmost point near Welbeck Rd. Eventually, a curved section of track will form the connection between the east-west Sheppard line and the existing north south Yonge line. Because the Sheppard line will sit above the Yonge line, the connection must also rise to join the tailtrack structure, threading a precise path around the proposed foundations of a future office building at the southwest corner of Yonge St. and Sheppard Ave.

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