

Next level Mumbai: Direct access to Metro stns

ATEEQ SHAIKH / Mumbai

In a first, six underground stations along the Colaba-Bandra-SEEPZ Metro have been identified for direct subway access to private properties.

The 33.5km Aqua Line will have 27 stations – 26 underground and one at the ground level. Six underground stations – Marol Naka, BKC, Dharavi, Dadar, Worli and Science Museum – will have eight direct access points that will considerably reduce the distance between the stations and designated properties.

While the road access to these stations would have been 480 metres,



underground access without traffic would only be 300 metres. The subways will also have temperature control systems for special experience.

In the coming weeks, the Mumbai Metro Rail Corporation Limited (MMRCL) would initiate studies to determine

engineering feasibility and cost implications. A rough estimate pegs the cost of the proposed six-metre subway at about Rs20 lakh per running metre if built 8-10 metres underground.

The MMRCL had invited Expression of Interest (EoI) in November 2019 to test interest from private properties along the Metro alignment. Thereafter, eight properties were shortlisted. The Metro authority is likely to invite yet another round of EoI in the next few weeks.

To recover costs, the MMRCL will charge private properties a one-time fee of Rs2 crore.

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metropolitan subway line, of which 290km is underground.

The Aqua line is aimed at decongesting Mumbai's roads and reducing passenger load on the traditional suburban locals.

When ready, it will have a revised cost of Rs33,406 crore. As per the project schedule, the first phase between Aarey Milk Colony and Bandra Kurla Complex will commence operations in December 2023 and will be available from July 2024 to travel up to Cuffe Parade.

Direct access to Metro...

The operation and maintenance costs will be completely borne by the property owner with exclusive rights to the subway. To widen the scope of recovery, retail activities may be permitted, with private players owning the rights to advertisement spaces, kiosks, and security and concierge services. During emergencies and disasters, the MMRCL will have the right to permit Metro passengers to use these private subways for evacuation.

The idea took shape after MMRCL officials visited Seoul to study subway systems prior to the Covid-19 pandemic. The South Korean capital has around 327km of