

Bitsevsky Metro Station Gets Mayor's Approval

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Mayor Sergei Sobyenin has approved plans to build a metro line under Bitsevsky Park in southern Moscow, despite protests by environmentalists and residents groups alarmed about the impact on the capital's second-largest nature reserve.

Sobyenin signed a decree authorizing construction of above-ground buildings related to "the operation of the metro line" in Bitsevsky Forest, Interfax reported at the end of last week.

Previously, construction was only allowed for buildings to be used by the park itself.

The decision follows protests by local residents and environmentalists who fear that the metro line will open the way to wider development in the park.

City Hall is planning a new line to connect the orange-line station Novoyasyenevskaya (formerly Bitsevsky Park) with Bulvar Dmitriya Donskogo, a stop on the gray line just south

of the Moscow Ring Road.

The new line will run diagonally northwest to southeast under a section of Bitsevsky Park. It will also include a completely new station, dubbed Lesoparkovaya, in the middle of the forest where the Moscow Ring Road bisects it. The line is scheduled to open in 2013.

At the end of January, Greenpeace Russia and the World Wildlife Fund wrote to prosecutors calling for an investigation because work was going ahead before completion of a state environmental review required by law for such projects.

Anton Kulbachevsky, head of City Hall's natural resources and environmental protection department, denied that the project would have an adverse impact on the park Friday.

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