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Orange Line Construction Halted, Crews are Laid Off

(Aug. 5, 2004) With construction on the Metro Orange Line temporarily suspended by court order, the contractor has halted all construction work and has laid off its craft workers.

The California Court of Appeal ordered all construction work on the \$330 million project halted on Monday, and ordered Metro to complete its Environmental Impact Report by studying the feasibility of the Metro Rapid system as an alternative to the transitway.

On Tuesday, the court issued a clarification of its order that permits Metro and its contractor, Shimmick-Obayashi, to take "interim actions...to protect the public from safety risk and hazards."

Project Manager Roger Dames reports that while construction has been totally shut down, a directive has been issued to the contractor to continue to maintain pedestrian and traffic control and to eliminate any public hazards along the alignment.

Of primary concern are 11 intersections, which are in a partial state of reconstruction. Two are completely closed to traffic, while nine others are partially closed.

Metro attorneys plan to file papers with the Court of Appeal, Monday, asking for permission to continue construction while the Metro Rapid study continues – a process that could take a number of months.

At its July meeting, the Board of Directors also voted to appeal the Court of Appeal's rulings to the California Supreme Court.