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Orange Line Contractor Rehiring Workers; Metro Files Appeal

(Aug. 27, 2004) The contractor building the Metro Orange Line has begun rehiring workers as a first step toward remobilizing construction on the cross-valley transitway.

Metro Construction Chief Rick Thorpe notified Shimmick/Obayashi, Thursday, that an Aug. 2 court-ordered stay of construction had been lifted and work could resume. The firm had laid off its workers and supervisors when construction stopped.

The contractor's first priority will be to complete 11 intersections left unfinished when work was halted.

Priority will be given to intersections, such as those near Pierce College and at Woodman Avenue and Oxnard Street, where motorists and businesses have been most impacted.

Metro files appeal

Meanwhile, Metro attorneys filed an appeal with the California Supreme Court, Thursday afternoon, seeking relief from an earlier Court of Appeal order. That order requires the agency to revise its Environmental Impact Report (EIR) by adding a study of the Metro Rapid system as a possible alternative to the transitway.

The appeals court's order and temporary stay came in response to lawsuit filed by COST, a local group opposed to the Metro Orange Line.

According to press reports, COST attorneys were expected back in court, Friday, to seek a temporary restraining order against further construction. But, the day's filing deadline passed without action by COST.

Metro has launched a study of the Metro Rapid alternative, as required by the court. That study could take as long as nine months.

The Metro Rapid alternative was not included in the original EIR because it was still an unproven pilot project when the document was being written and reviewed.

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