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Crane unloads rail pieces from delivery trucks. Each rail section weighs 3,088 pounds.



Photos by Jeremy Eichenbaum

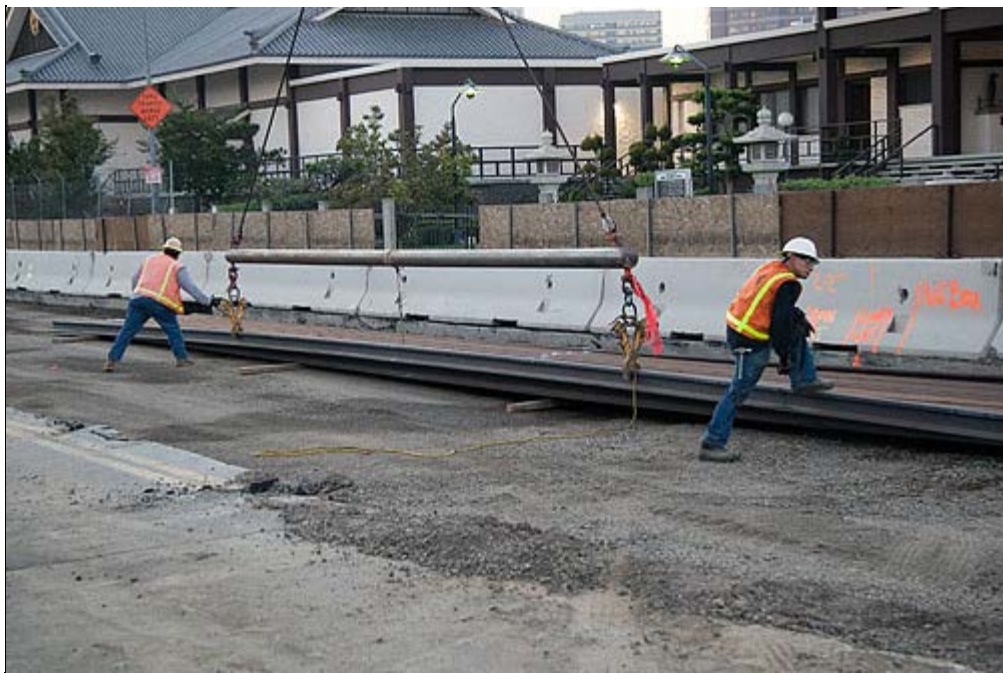
Night Work Brings Tons of Rail to West End of Eastside Extension

- Delivery of 80-foot sections a sign of project's progress

By NED RACINE

(Aug. 31, 2007) Between twilight and first light, tons of rail for the west end of the Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension (MGLEE) project were delivered earlier this month, another sign of the light rail line's progress.

Between 6 p.m. and 6 a.m. on August 7 and 8, 80-foot-long sections of rail were stacked for welding into longer sections. Workers moved the rail during those hours to reduce impact to the traveling public, according to Brian Freund, surface improvements construction manager for Eastside LRT Constructors.



Workers stack 80-foot-long sections of rail before the Koyasan Buddhist Temple on 1st Street. The rail will be installed on a section of the Eastside Extension that runs between Gless and Alameda streets.

The rail will be installed between Gless Street in Boyle Heights and Alameda Street downtown.

A special contractor welds the pieces on site. For welding aficionados, the contractor uses an electric flash butt weld. The length of the final, welded sections depends on where intersections fall. The section between Vignes and Alameda streets, for example, will be 1,400 feet long.

Freund estimates that 70 percent of the light rail has been installed. He anticipates that 80 percent will be installed by the end of 2007.



Depending on where intersections fall, the sections being stacked here will be welded together into longer pieces termed "strings."

Lighter than the rail used for Amtrak and freight trains, “light” rail weighs 155 pounds per yard, meaning the 80-foot lengths delivered on August 7 and 8 weigh 3,088 pounds each.

The six-mile light rail line will feature eight new stations (two underground) and will run between Union Station and Atlantic/Pomona boulevards in East Los Angeles via the Little Tokyo/Arts District and Boyle Heights.

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