

Fact Sheet

Project Name

California High-Speed Rail Project, San Francisco to San Jose Project Section

Project Description

The California High-Speed Rail Authority (Authority) and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) certified a statewide Program Environmental Impact Report (EIR)/Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) (Tier 1) in November 2005 as the first phase of a tiered environmental review process for the proposed California High-Speed Rail (HSR) System. The purpose of the statewide HSR System is to provide a reliable, high-speed, electrified train service that links the major metropolitan areas of the state and delivers predictable and consistent travel times. A further objective is to provide an interface with commercial airports, mass transit, and the highway network and relieve capacity constraints of the existing transportation system as increases in intercity travel demand in California occur, in a manner sensitive to and protective of California's unique natural resources. A second program-level (Tier 1) EIR/EIS was completed in 2008 focusing on the connection between the San Francisco Bay Area (Bay Area) and the Central Valley; the Authority revised this document under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) in 2012. Based on the program EIR/EISs, the Authority selected preferred corridors and station locations to advance for further study.

The Authority has prepared a project-level (Tier 2) EIR/EIS that further examines the San Francisco to San Jose Project Section (Project Section, or project) as part of the larger, 800-mile HSR system planned throughout California. The HSR system would connect the major population centers of Sacramento, the Bay Area, the Central Valley, Los Angeles, the Inland Empire, Orange County, and San Diego. The HSR system would use state-of-the-art, electrically powered, high-speed, steel-wheel-on-steel-rail technology, including contemporary safety, signaling, and automated train control systems, with trains capable of operating at up to 220 miles per hour (mph) in areas with a dedicated track alignment.

The Project Section would provide HSR service from the Salesforce Transit Center (SFTC) in San Francisco to the San Jose Diridon Station. The Project Section would include approximately 43 to 49 miles of blended¹ system infrastructure with Caltrain and up to 6 miles of dedicated HSR infrastructure (depending on the alternative and viaduct option), extending through San Francisco, San Mateo, and Santa Clara Counties. HSR trains would stop at the 4th and King Street Station in San Francisco (an interim station until completion of the Downtown Rail Extension Project), the Millbrae Bay Area Rapid Transit/Caltrain Intermodal Station, and the San Jose Diridon Station. Once the Transbay Joint Powers Authority's Downtown Rail Extension Project extends the electrified Peninsula rail corridor from the 4th and King Street Station to the SFTC, HSR trains would use the track built for the Downtown Rail Extension Project to reach SFTC (the ultimate terminal station in San Francisco). The project would facilitate connectivity to regional and local mass transit services, the San Francisco International Airport and Norman Y. Mineta San Jose International Airport, the Bay Area highway network, and the statewide HSR system.

The project would use existing and in-progress infrastructure improvements developed by Caltrain for its Caltrain Modernization Program, including the electrified Caltrain corridor, and would build additional infrastructure improvements to accommodate HSR service. Design features include track modifications to support higher speeds while maintaining passenger comfort, station and platform modifications, a light maintenance facility (LMF), passing tracks, safety and security improvements for at-grade roadway crossings and at existing Caltrain stations, continuous fencing along the corridor, and communication radio towers. This Final EIR/EIS evaluates two project alternatives—Alternative A and Alternative B—which are similar throughout most of the Project Section, as illustrated on Figure 1. Table 1 shows the design features for the project alternatives.

¹ *Blended* refers to operating the HSR trains with existing intercity and commuter and regional rail trains on common infrastructure.

Table 1 Summary of Design Features for Project Alternatives

Design Features	Project Alternative	
	Alternative A	Alternative B ¹
Length of existing Caltrain track (miles) ²	48.9	48.9
Length of modified track (miles) ²	17.4	19.8/21.6
Length of track modification <1 foot (miles) ²	5.7	4.5/5.3
Length of track modification >1 foot and <3 feet (miles) ¹	2.2	1.9/1.9
Length of track modification > 3 feet (miles) ²	9.5	13.4/14.4
Length of OCS pole relocation (miles) ^{2, 3}	11.7	15.3/16.3
Includes new passing tracks	No	Yes
Maintenance facility	East Brisbane LMF	West Brisbane LMF
Modified stations		
Modifications to HSR stations	4th and King Street, Millbrae, San Jose Diridon	4th and King Street, Millbrae, San Jose Diridon
Modifications to Caltrain stations due to the LMF	Bayshore	Bayshore
Modifications to Caltrain stations due to track shifts	San Bruno, Hayward Park	San Bruno, Santa Clara (Alt B [Scott]), College Park (Alt B [I-880])
Modifications to Caltrain stations to remove hold-out rule	Broadway, College Park	Broadway
Modifications to Caltrain stations due to the passing tracks		Hayward Park, Hillsdale, Belmont, San Carlos (relocated)
Number of modified or new structures ⁴	21	37/37
New structures	2	3/2
Modified structures	7	20/19
Replaced structures	9	8/10
Affected retaining walls	3	6/6
Number of at-grade crossings with safety modifications (e.g., four-quadrant gates, median barriers)	40	38/38
Length of new perimeter fencing (miles)	8.8	13.5/14.4
Communication radio towers	21	23/23

Alt = alternative

HSR = high-speed rail

I- = Interstate

LMF = light maintenance facility

OCS = overhead contact system

¹ Data are presented for Alternative B (Viaduct to I-880) first, followed by Alternative B (Viaduct to Scott Boulevard).² Lengths shown are guideway mileages, rather than the length of the northbound and southbound track.³ OCS pole relocations are assumed for areas with track shifts greater than 1 foot.⁴ Structures include bridges, grade separations such as pedestrian underpasses and overpasses, tunnels, retaining walls, and culverts.



Figure 1 San Francisco to San Jose Project Section

This Final EIR/EIS evaluates the impacts and benefits of the two project alternatives (including stations and an LMF) and the No Project Alternative. The two project alternatives were developed through extensive local and agency involvement, stakeholder meetings, and public and agency comments, and were subjected to a thorough screening process that considered the impacts of the alternatives on the social, natural, and built environment. Mitigation measures are proposed to reduce the severity of potential significant, adverse impacts.

The Authority's Preferred Alternative under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), which serves as the proposed project for CEQA, is Alternative A. The Preferred Alternative would modify approximately 17.4 miles of existing Caltrain track, predominantly within the existing Caltrain right-of-way, build the East Brisbane LMF, modify eight existing stations or platforms to accommodate HSR, and install safety improvements and communication radio towers. No additional passing tracks would be built under Alternative A. The Authority identified this alternative on the basis of a balanced consideration of the environmental information presented in this Final EIR/EIS in the context of Purpose and Need; project objectives; CEQA, NEPA, and Clean Water Act Section 404(b)(1) requirements; Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966 (49 United States Code [U.S.C.] § 303) requirements; local and regional land use plans; community preferences; and cost.

Alternative A would have lower overall impacts on community resources than Alternative B, including fewer residential, commercial, and public facility displacements, although it would have slightly higher noise impacts. Alternative A would have fewer visual quality impacts because it would be at grade and mostly within the existing right-of-way (in contrast to the use of aerial viaducts and passing tracks outside the existing right-of-way under Alternative B), and it would have the least impact on emergency vehicle response times due to temporary road closures. This alternative would also result in lower impacts on key natural environmental factors than Alternative B, such as wetlands that provide high-value habitat for a diverse array of species and habitat for endangered and threatened butterfly species on Icehouse Hill. Alternative A would also result in the lowest impacts from permanent use of Section 4(f) parks and built environment historic resources that are listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The Preferred Alternative is estimated to cost approximately \$5,317 million (in 2021 dollars), which is lower than the cost of Alternative B. The Authority's Board of Directors will consider whether to formally adopt Alternative A or another project alternative as the selected alternative for the project after reviewing this Final EIR/EIS and deciding on certification of this Final EIR/EIS pursuant to CEQA. In the Authority's role as NEPA lead agency, the Authority's Board of Directors will also consider whether to direct the Authority's Chief Executive Officer to issue a Record of Decision selecting the Preferred Alternative or another alternative.

NEPA Lead Agency

The environmental review, consultation, and other actions required by applicable federal environmental laws for this project are being or have been carried out by the State of California pursuant to 23 U.S.C. Section 327 and a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) dated July 23, 2019, and executed by the FRA and the State of California. Pursuant to the MOU, the Authority is the federal lead agency. Prior to the July 23, 2019, MOU, the FRA was the federal lead agency.

Responsible NEPA Official

Brian P. Kelly, Chief Executive Officer
California High-Speed Rail Authority
770 L Street, Suite 620 MS-1
Sacramento, CA 95814

CEQA Lead Agency

The Authority is the lead agency for CEQA compliance.

Responsible CEQA Official

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Document Availability

Visit the Authority website (www.hsr.ca.gov) to view and download the Final EIR/EIS. Copies of the Final EIR/EIS are available for review at the repositories listed in Chapter 10, Distribution List, of this Final EIR/EIS and at the Authority's offices at 770 L Street, Suite 620 MS-1, Sacramento, CA 95814 and 100 Paseo de San Antonio, Suite 300, San Jose, CA 95113 during hours the facilities are open. You may also request a copy of the Final EIR/EIS by calling (800) 435-8670. More details about availability of the Final EIR/EIS and associated technical reports can be found in the Preface of this Final EIR/EIS and in the Notice of Availability at www.hsr.ca.gov.

The San Francisco to San Jose Project Section EIR/EIS is a second-tier EIR/EIS that tiers off of two first-tier program EIR/EIS documents and provides project-level information for decision making on this portion of the HSR system. The Authority and the FRA prepared the 2005 *Final Program Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS) for the Proposed California High-Speed Train System*,² which provided a first-tier analysis of the general effects of implementing the HSR system across two-thirds of the state. The 2008 *Bay Area to Central Valley High-Speed Train Final Program Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS)*³ and the Authority's 2012 *Bay Area to Central Valley High-Speed Train Partially Revised Final Program Environmental Impact Report*⁴ were also first-tier programmatic documents, but they focused on the Bay Area to Central Valley region. The first-tier EIR/EIS documents provided the Authority and the FRA with the environmental analyses necessary to evaluate the overall HSR system and make broad decisions about general HSR alignments and station locations for further study in the second-tier EIR/EISs.

Electronic copies of the Tier 1 documents are available on request by calling the Authority office at (800) 435-8670. The Tier 1 documents may also be reviewed at the Authority's offices at 770 L Street, Suite 620 MS-1, Sacramento, CA 95814 and 100 Paseo de San Antonio, Suite 300, San Jose, CA 95113 during hours the offices are open.

Potential Permits, Approvals, and Consultations

Federal

- **U.S. Army Corps of Engineers**—Clean Water Act of 1972 Section 404 Permit for discharge of dredge or fill materials into waters of the U.S., including wetlands. Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 Section 10 Permit for construction of any structure in or over any navigable water. Permission under Section 14 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 to alter or modify a facility or feature of any federal project levee or federally regulated flood control system.
- **U.S. Department of Transportation/Federal Railroad Administration (acting through the Authority under the July 23, 2019 NEPA Assignment MOU)**—Consultation on and concurrence with constructive use determinations under Section 4(f); general conformity

² California High-Speed Rail Authority (Authority) and Federal Railroad Administration (FRA). 2005. *Final Program Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS) for the Proposed California High-Speed Train System*. August 2005. Sacramento, CA and Washington, DC.

³ California High-Speed Rail Authority (Authority) and Federal Railroad Administration (FRA). 2008. *Final Bay Area to Central Valley High-Speed Train (HST) Program Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS)*. May 2008. Sacramento, CA and Washington, DC.

⁴ California High-Speed Rail Authority (Authority). 2012. *Bay Area to Central Valley High-Speed Train Partially Revised Final Program Environmental Impact Report*. April 2012. Sacramento, CA.

determination under Section 176(c) of the Clean Air Act; and regulatory authority over railroad safety.

- **U.S. Advisory Council on Historic Preservation and the California State Historic Preservation Office**—Section 106 consultation (National Historic Preservation Act of 1966) and memorandum of agreement.
- **U.S. Environmental Protection Agency**—Review of the EIS under Clean Air Act Section 309; review of environmental justice conclusions.
- **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service**—Consultation and biological opinion/incidental take statement pursuant to Section 7 of the federal Endangered Species Act of 1973.
- **National Marine Fisheries Service**—Consultation and biological opinion/incidental take statement pursuant to Section 7 of the federal Endangered Species Act of 1973.
- **Surface Transportation Board**—Authorization to build and operate a new rail line.

State

- **California Department of Fish and Wildlife**—California Department of Fish and Wildlife Section 1602 lake and streambed alteration agreement; incidental take permit under Section 2081 of the California Fish and Game Code.
- **California Department of Transportation**—Encroachment permits.
- **California Public Utilities Commission**—Approval for construction and operation of railroad crossings of public roads and ministerial Notice of Construction or discretionary Permit to Construct associated with network upgrades to Pacific Gas and Electric Company facilities.
- **San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission**—Regionwide, administrative, or major permit.
- **State Water Resources Control Board, San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board**—Section 401 Water Quality Certification under the Clean Water Act of 1972; Construction General Permit (Order No. 2009-0009-DWQ); Industrial General Permit (Order No. 2014-0057-DWQ); California Department of Transportation Statewide Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Permit (Order No. 2012-0011-DWQ); Phase I MS4/Municipal Regional Permit (Order No. R2-2015-0049); Phase II MS4 Permit (Order No. 2013-0001-DWQ); Volatile Organic Compound and Fuel General Permit (Order No. R2-2012-0012); Groundwater General Permit (Order No. R2-2012-0060); Discharges with Low Threat to Water Quality (Order No. R3-2011-0223); Dewatering and Other Low Threat Discharges (Order No. R5-2013-0074); Spill Prevention, Control, and Countermeasure Plan (part of Section 402 process); Stormwater Construction and Operation Permit.
- **State Lands Commission**—Approvals and potential lease from the State Lands Commission for use of lands within the State's Public Trust Easement.

Regional

- **Bay Area Air Quality Management District**—Permits under Rule 201 General Permit Requirements, Rule 403 Fugitive Dust, Rule 442 Architectural Coatings, Rule 902 Asbestos, and Rule 9510 Indirect Source Review.
- **Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board**—Approvals required for modifications of facilities owned and operated by the agency.
- **San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District**—Approvals required for modifications to the Millbrae Station, which is owned by the agency.

Authors and Principal Contributors

Chapter 11, List of Preparers, contains a complete list of the persons involved in preparation of the Final EIR/EIS.

Public Release of Final EIR/EIS

June 10, 2022

Subsequent Steps

Following issuance of this Final EIR/EIS, the Authority's Board of Directors will hold a board meeting to consider whether to certify the Final EIR/EIS and approve the Preferred Alternative pursuant to CEQA. In the Authority's role as NEPA lead agency, the Authority's Board of Directors will also consider whether to direct the Authority's Chief Executive Officer to issue a Record of Decision for the San Francisco to San Jose Project Section selecting the Preferred Alternative or another alternative.