

**American Council of Engineering Companies (ACEC) California
Policy Platform
California High-Speed Rail**

Approved by the Executive Committee on April 9, 2014

Approved by the Board of Directors on April 9, 2014

Issue

Background/History

- In 1982, legislation was passed to study high-speed rail in California.
- In 1993, California created the Intercity High-Speed Rail Commission to conduct studies and to prepare a high-speed rail plan for the state.
- In 1996, the state created the California High Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA), a state agency to oversee design and construction of a statewide high-speed rail system.
- A Programmatic Environmental Impact Report/Statement for the statewide high-speed train project was certified in 2005.

Available Funds – State bond and FRA Federal Funds

- In 2008, California voters approved Proposition 1A – the Safe, Reliable High-Speed Passenger Train Bond Act for the 21st Century – a law that allocated \$9.95 billion to the CHSRA.
- Since then, the federal government has provided funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 and the U.S. Department of Transportation for implementation of the project.

Business Plans/Construction Implementation Phasing Plans

- The CHSRA has prepared business plans every two years since 2008. The plans propose to construct the California high-speed rail network in steps, building outward from the state's Central Valley and progressively connecting to major population centers in the north and south. Specifically, the first three steps (Phase 1) are as follows:
 - Step One (Early Investment, Statewide Benefits): Construct new high-speed track in the Central Valley, upgrade commuter rail and Amtrak service in the system "bookends", and work to close the gap between Los Angeles and Palmdale through the Tehachapi Mountains.
 - Step Two (Initial Operating Segment – IOS): Begin operational service for 220-mph trains and extend high-speed track construction to Modesto in the north and Silvia/Burbank in the south.
 - Step Three (Bay to Basin): Build a new high-speed direct connection between the Central Valley and the Silicon Valley.

Later steps (Phase 2) will complete the high-speed network by extending high-speed tracks from Burbank to Los Angeles Union Station, Anaheim, Sacramento and San Diego.

Policy
ACEC



California supports continuing efforts to create an appropriately designed, properly constructed, and well-maintained high-speed rail system in California.

Rationale

- We support a high-speed rail system in California because:
 - Provide long-distance commuters with a safe, convenient, affordable, and reliable alternative to flying or driving and relief from high gas prices.
 - Reduce traffic congestion on the state's highways.
 - Reduce potential increases in air traffic and the need to expand capacity at the state's airports.
 - Reduce California's dependence on oil.
 - Reduce air pollution and climate change greenhouse gases.
 - Provide for California's growing population with an additional mode of transportation.
 - Enhance economic opportunities statewide through improved connectivity.
 - Create new commercial and industrial hubs along the rail alignment.
- California needs alternative transportation modes to accommodate its diverse growing population.
- This mega project will enhance economic opportunities statewide through project construction, operation, and improved connectivity.
- The California High-Speed Rail Project has substantial positive momentum and it would be a monumental mistake to curtail progress now.
- Adequate funding currently exists to move initial phases of the project forward and a variety of funding mechanisms are possible for full build out of the project in the future.
- All large public works projects take several years to conceive and achieve but provide immense benefits for multiple generations.
- Other potential improvements to California's transportation infrastructure are possible but will take longer to implement and will cost more money to construct and operate.

- High-speed rail is the wave of the future. California (and the US) is already lagging behind the rest of the world in this area.
- Alternative procurement methods such as Design-Build and Public Private Partnerships present new and innovative opportunities for efficient and economical delivery of the project.

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