



PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY/NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

California High-Speed Rail Project – San Jose to Merced Project Section

DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT/ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

The California High-Speed Rail Authority (Authority) announces the availability of the Draft Environmental Impact Report/ Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS) for the San Jose to Merced Project Section of the California High-Speed Rail Project. The Draft EIR/EIS has been prepared and is being made available pursuant to both the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

The San Jose to Merced Project Section Draft EIR/EIS and associated documents will be available to the public on April 24, 2020.

The San Jose to Merced Project Section Draft EIR/EIS is available online in PDF at the Authority website (www.hsr.ca.gov) or you can request an electronic copy by calling 800-455-8166.

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. Code 327 and a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) dated July 23, 2019, and executed by the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) and the State of California. Under that MOU, the Authority is the project's lead agency under NEPA. Prior to the July 23, 2019 MOU, the FRA was the federal lead agency.

PROPOSED PROJECT AND LOCATION

A Statewide Program (Tier 1) EIR/EIS was completed in November 2005 as the first phase of a tiered environmental review process for the proposed California High-Speed Rail (HSR) System planned to provide a reliable high-speed electric-powered rail system that links the major metropolitan areas of the state and that delivers predictable and consistent travel times. A further objective is to provide an interface with commercial airports, mass transit, and the highway network and to relieve capacity constraints of the existing transportation system as intercity travel demand in California increases, 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 Bay Area and Central Valley; the Authority revised this document under CEQA and completed it 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 Jose to Merced Project Section. The approximately 145-mile Project Section would provide HSR service between Diridon Station in downtown San Jose and a station in downtown Merced, with a Gilroy station either in downtown Gilroy or east of Gilroy. The Project Section would allow trains in the San Francisco Bay Area to transition

smoothly via the Central Valley Wye to and from the Central Valley portion of the HSR system that runs north to Merced and south to Fresno and Southern California. The Project Section comprises three project extents:

- From Scott Boulevard in Santa Clara to Carlucci Road in Merced County, at the western terminus of the Central Valley Wye (the project)
- The Central Valley Wye beginning at Carlucci Road in Merced County, connecting the east-west portion of HSR from the Bay Area to the Central Valley with the north-south portion from Merced to Fresno
- The northernmost portion of the Merced to Fresno Project Section, from the northern limit of the Central Valley Wye (Ranch Road) to the Merced Station

The extent of the Project Section between Carlucci Road and Merced has been analyzed in the Merced to Fresno Section Final EIR/EIS and the Merced to Fresno Section: Central Valley Wye Draft Supplemental EIR/EIS (Figure 1). The Authority has prepared this Draft EIR/EIS at the project level (Tier 2) to examine the extent of the Project Section from Scott Boulevard north of San Jose Diridon Station to Carlucci Road in Merced County (Figure 1). This is referred to as the San Jose to Central Valley Wye Project Extent (project or project extent). The project extent is located in Santa Clara, San Benito and Merced Counties in or near the cities of Santa Clara, San Jose, Morgan Hill, Gilroy, and Los Banos.

The approximately 90-mile project extent comprises mostly dedicated HSR system infrastructure, HSR station locations at San Jose Diridon and Gilroy, a maintenance of way facility (MOWF) either south or southeast of Gilroy, and a maintenance of way siding (MOWS) west of Turner Island Road in the Central Valley. HSR stations at San Jose Diridon and Gilroy provide links with regional and local mass transit services as well as connectivity to the Santa Clara County and Central Valley highway network.

This Draft EIR/EIS evaluates the impacts and benefits of a no project Alternative and four end-to-end project alternatives (Alternatives 1 to 4), including stations. The Authority's Preferred Alternative under NEPA, which serves as the proposed project for CEQA, is Alternative 4. It includes two stations (San Jose Diridon and Downtown Gilroy), an MOWF, an MOWS, two tunnels, and traction power facilities.

ANTICIPATED IMPACTS

Significant pre-mitigation environmental effects resulting from the project alternatives are anticipated in the following resource areas: transportation (construction and operations impacts); air quality and greenhouse gases (construction impacts); noise and vibration (construction and operations impacts); public utilities and energy (construction impacts); biological and aquatic resources (construction and operations impacts); hydrology and water resources (construction impacts); hazardous materials and wastes (construction impacts); safety and security (construction and operations impacts); station planning, land use, and development (construction impacts); agricultural lands (construction impacts); parks, recreation, and open space (construction and operations impacts); aesthetics and visual resources (construction impacts) and cultural resources (construction impacts).

HAZARDOUS WASTE SITES

Some of the facilities included in the project alternatives would be located on or near sites or facilities on hazardous materials/contaminated site lists enumerated under Section 65962.5 of the California Government Code (Cortese List).

PUBLIC REVIEW PERIOD

The Authority is making this Draft EIR/EIS available in accordance with CEQA and NEPA for a minimum 45-day review and comment period. During the comment period, written comments may be submitted in the following ways:

- By mail to Attn: San Jose to Merced Project Section: Draft EIR/EIS, 100 Paseo de San Antonio, Suite 300, San Jose, CA 95113
- Through the Authority's website (www.hsr.ca.gov)

- By email to san.jose_merced@hsr.ca.gov with the subject line “Draft EIR/EIS Comment”
- The comment period is from April 24, 2020, to June 8, 2020. Comments must be received electronically or postmarked on or before June 8, 2020.

The Authority will prepare a Final EIR/EIS, which will include responses to comments received during the comment period.

COMMUNITY OPEN HOUSES AND PUBLIC HEARING

COVID-19 UPDATE

Due to public health and safety requirements concerning the coronavirus, the community open house(s) and/or the public hearing for the Draft EIR/EIS may need to occur as online and/or teleconference meetings only. Please check the Authority website (www.hsr.ca.gov) for more information, including up-to-date information on the planned hearing and open houses.

The Authority invites you to participate in the community open houses and the public hearing that have been scheduled. The public hearing will provide an opportunity for the public to submit verbal comments on the Draft EIR/EIS. Written comments may also be submitted at the open houses and the hearing. Habrá intérpretes de español en las reuniones. 會議上備有中文口譯員。 Thông dịch viên tiếng Việt sẽ có mặt tại các cuộc họp. The meeting facilities are accessible for persons with disabilities. All requests for reasonable accommodations and language services must be submitted 72 hours in advance of the scheduled meeting date. Please contact the public outreach team at (800) 455-8166 or call the California Relay Service at 711. Below is a list of open houses and hearing dates and times, and locations (if held in person*):

Community Open Houses

San Jose*: May 11, 4:00–7:00 p.m.— San Jose City Hall, Rotunda, 200 E. Santa Clara Street, San Jose, CA 95113

Gilroy*: May 14, 4:00–7:00 p.m.—Veterans Memorial Hall, 74 W. 6th Street, Gilroy, CA 95020

Los Banos*: May 18, 4:00–7:00 p.m.—Los Banos Community Center, 645 7th Street, Los Banos, CA 93635

Public Hearing

San Jose*: May 27, 3:00–8:00 p.m.—Santa Clara County Government Center, Board of Supervisors Chambers, 70 W. Hedding Street, San Jose, CA 95110

COPIES OF THE DRAFT EIR/EIS

Visit the Authority website (www.hsr.ca.gov), where you may download the Draft EIR/EIS. You may also request an electronic copy of the Draft EIR/EIS by calling (800) 455-8166.

Printed and/or electronic copies of the Draft EIR/EIS and electronic copies of associated technical reports will be available at the following locations, during hours the facilities are open (open days/hours may be reduced for compliance with coronavirus public health and safety directives):

- Santa Clara—2635 Homestead Road, Santa Clara, CA 95051 (Central Park Library)
- San Jose—150 E. San Fernando Street, San Jose, CA 95112 (Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Library)
- Gilroy—350 W. 6th Street, Gilroy, CA 95020 (Gilroy Library)
- Los Banos—1312 7th Street, Los Banos, CA 93635 (Los Banos Branch Library)
- Merced—2100 O Street, Merced, CA 95340 (Merced County Library) and 2222 M Street, Merced, CA 95340 (Merced County Clerk)

- Morgan Hill—660 W. Main Avenue, Morgan Hill, CA 95037 (Morgan Hill Library)
17575 Peak Avenue, Morgan Hill, CA, 95037 (Morgan Hill City Hall, Development Services Department)
- San Benito—440 5th Street #206, Hollister, CA 95023 (San Benito County Recorder).

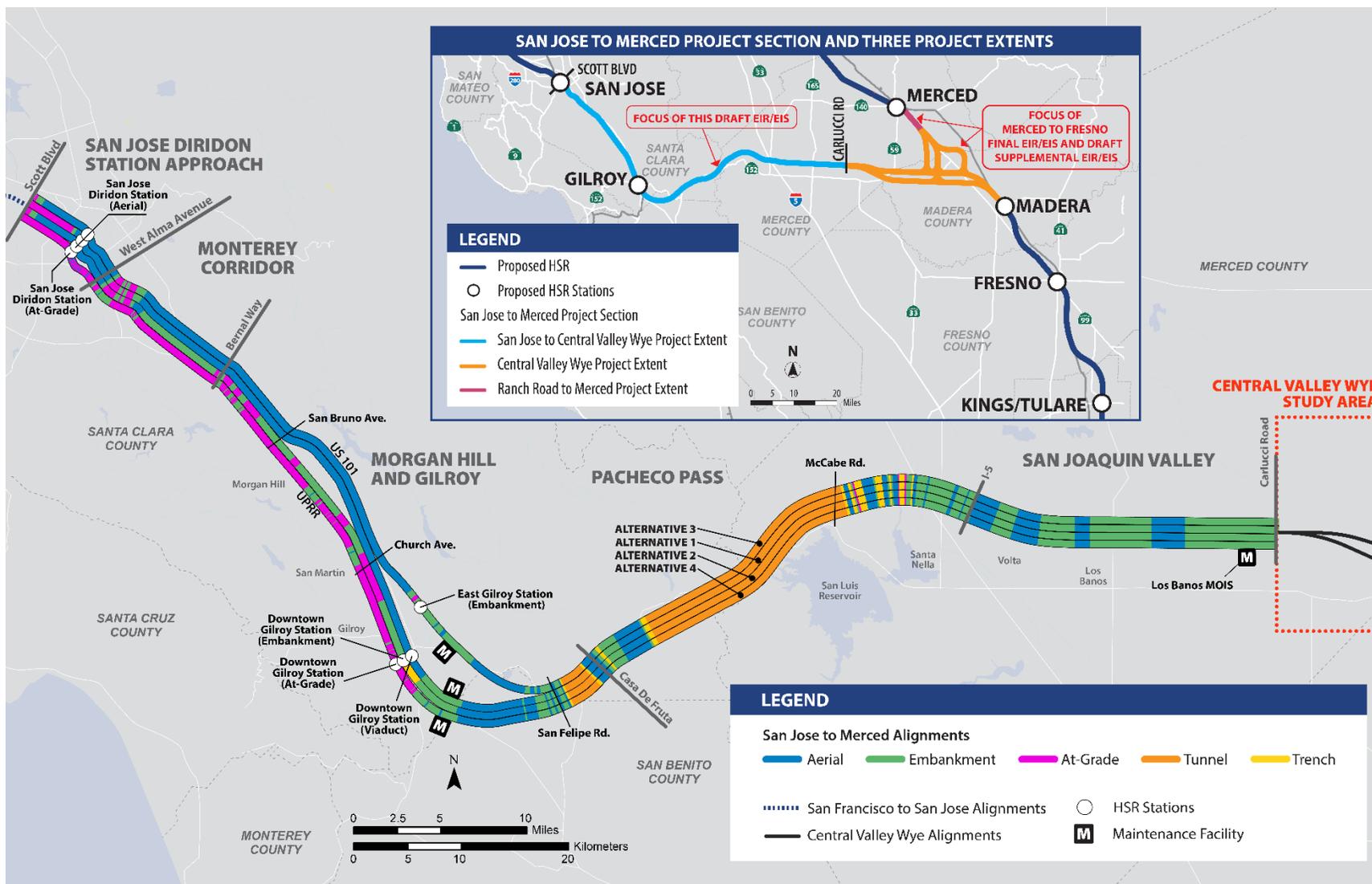
Printed and/or electronic copies of the Draft EIR/EIS and electronic copies of associated technical reports are also available for review during business hours at the Authority's Northern California Regional Office at 100 Paseo de San Antonio, Suite 300, San Jose, CA 95113 and the Authority's Headquarters at 770 L Street, Suite 620 MS-1, Sacramento, CA.

Electronic copies of the Tier 1 documents are available on request by calling the Authority office at (800) 455-8166. The Tier 1 documents may also be reviewed at the Authority's offices during business hours at 770 L Street, Suite 620 MS-1, Sacramento, CA 95814 and 100 Paseo de San Antonio, Suite 300, San Jose, CA 95113.

Electronic copies of the Merced to Fresno Final EIR/EIS and the Merced to Fresno Central Valley Wye Draft Supplemental EIR/EIS are available on request to the Authority by calling (800) 455-8166. The Merced to Fresno Central Valley Wye Draft Supplemental EIR/EIS is also available on the Authority website at www.hsr.ca.gov. These documents are not currently part of the public review and comment process; however, they are available for review and reference and can also be viewed during business hours at 770 L Street, Suite 620 MS-1, Sacramento, CA 95814 and 100 Paseo de San Antonio, Suite 300, San Jose, CA 95113.

Authority offices may have reduced open days/hours, as required by coronavirus public health and safety directives. Please consult www.hsr.ca.gov for up-to-date information.

The Authority does not discriminate on the basis of disability and, upon request, will provide reasonable accommodation to ensure equal access to its programs, services, and activities.



Source: Authority 2019

MARCH 2020

Figure 1 San Jose to Central Valley Wye Project Extent (Project) and Alternatives with Vertical Profile