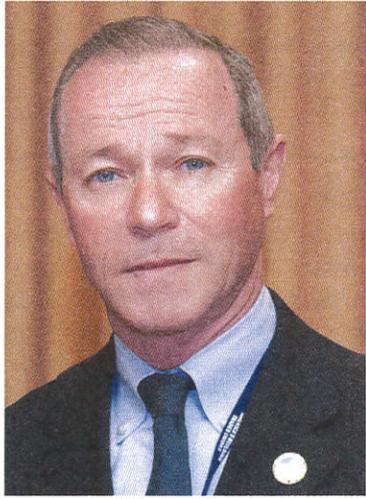


# HIGH SPEED RAIL: CALIFORNIA'S INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT WILL CHANGE THE NATION



**BY ROBBIE HUNTER**  
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California's high speed rail project, which will profoundly change not only our state but the entire nation, is now aggressively under construction, with tangible, visual accomplishments.

The California High Speed Rail Authority reports that one year after it began, construction is in full swing in the counties of Fresno, Merced and Madera, which will be near the geographic center of the system, with work at seven active sites, and more to come in the near future.

In Bakersfield in Kern County, High Speed Rail Authority contractors have established a construction site headquarters and are gather-



Building Trades workers at a concrete pour for the Fresno River Viaduct. Construction started in June 2015 and is expected to finish this summer.

ing material and equipment with construction to begin within the next four months.

This is real. It is being built. It is moving forward. Project bids on construction are under previous cost estimates. High speed rail is coming to California. You can view pictures of the new structures and ongoing construction by visiting BuildHSR.com.

Here are the most recent updates on the construction:

- A long section of the Fresno River Viaduct in Madera County is now freestanding and concrete continues to be poured on the bridge deck.

- More than 40 girders have been placed and work is under way on the deck at the Tuolumne Bridge in downtown Fresno.

- Major progress has been made on the State Route 99 realignment project in central Fresno.

- The rebar cages for nine columns are now in place at the Cedar Viaduct in south Fresno.

- With foundations completed, crews are in the process of pouring concrete for columns at the 250-foot long stretch from north of Avenue 13 to south of Avenue 15 for the bridge at Cottonwood Creek in Madera County.

- Foundation work has started at the San Joaquin River Viaduct in north Fresno.

- Foundation work has been completed on sections of the Fresno Trench project in Fresno.

Of course, that work is being performed by the best-trained, most highly skilled streamlined work force in the world, California Building Trades workers, under a Project Labor Agreement. It is work of the highest possible quality, and will serve Californians well for generations to come.

In the near future, construction will spread north to the San Francisco Bay Area, simultaneously south to Los Angeles and eventually to Sacramento and San Diego. There are even further plans to connect to Las Vegas.

High speed rail will profoundly transform California by modernizing our methods of traveling around and across it; removing the need to sit through jam-packed highway traffic snarls and the necessity of enduring the seemingly endless delays at our overcrowded airports.

For instance, today, a family in Los Angeles paying a visit to Yosemite National Park must spend the better part of a day in their car before finally reaching their destination. But when high speed rail is there to zoom them up to Fresno, they will then quickly board a bus for a ride into the park, making the complete trip in just over two and a half hours. That will make a huge difference in how Californians, as well as tourists, move around our state.

Simply put, California cannot afford not to do this. Our transportation system is already overtaxed and our population will reach 50 mil-

lion by mid-century. High speed rail is the only viable means of making sure our transportation infrastructure can meet our growing demand. Continuing to build more and more freeways and airports would be more expensive, more environmentally damaging and less efficient. Ultimately, the cost of doing nothing would far exceed the cost of modernizing our rail system.

Other developed nations are using high speed rail with tremendous results. We have learned from places like Spain, France, China and Japan that high speed rail is the most efficient and preferred mode of transportation between population centers 100 to 500 miles apart. That is precisely the corridor California's high speed rail will serve. California and high speed rail are made for each other.

**CONSTRUCTION WILL BEGIN IN BAKERSFIELD WITHIN FOUR MONTHS.**

The California Building Trades and our affiliated unions and workers have been enthusiastic backers of high speed rail from the beginning. We helped pass the 2008 ballot measure to authorize the bond issue and then worked tirelessly with Governor Jerry Brown and the Legislature to get the funding authorized.

The major progress we are seeing today is the result. And soon all Californians will enjoy a far more efficient transportation system, and the higher quality of life that it will create.

To the naysayers that say it shouldn't be done, we say that this great infrastructure project will transform California and this nation, as have the Golden Gate Bridge, the California Viaduct, the Hoover Dam and the Interstate Highway system, all of which were built by the workers of the California Building Trades, and stand as monuments of infrastructure that have served the citizens of California, in some cases for a century or more.

All these monumental projects were criticized as too expensive and not needed. History has proved these critics wrong. Our children and grandchildren will be thankful that Governor Brown persevered and our workers built the first high speed rail in the nation.

## HAPPY LABOR DAY

To All Our Building Trades Brothers and Sisters!

### IBEW Local 441

Richard Samaniego, Business Manager  
Members, Officers & Staff

