



**MEDIA ALERT   MEDIA ALERT   MEDIA ALERT   MEDIA ALERT**

**Public Input Sought at March 18, 19, 24, 25, and 26 Scoping Meetings in Merced, Madera, Visalia, Fresno and Bakersfield on Proposed California High-Speed Train System**

- WHAT:** The California High-Speed Rail Authority is holding scoping meetings in Merced, Madera, Visalia, Fresno and Bakersfield to support the project environmental review process for the Merced to Bakersfield section of the high-speed train (HST) system. Scoping meetings are open house format. People can drop by at any time to get information, ask questions and provide input. Team members will be available throughout the session to respond to questions, and a variety of maps and exhibits will be available for review.
- WHEN & WHERE:**
- Merced**  
March 18, 3:00-7:00 p.m.  
Merced Community Senior Center  
755 W. 15<sup>th</sup> Street  
*(Joint scoping meeting with the San Jose to Merced Section)*
- Madera**  
March 19, 3:00-7:00 p.m.  
Madera County Fairgrounds  
1850 W. Cleveland Ave.
- Visalia**  
March 24, 3:00-7:00 p.m.  
Visalia Convention Center  
303 E. Acequia Ave.
- Fresno**  
March 25, 3:00-7:00 p.m.  
Fresno Convention Center (Exhibit Hall)  
848 M St.
- Bakersfield**  
March 26, 3:00-7:00 p.m.  
Rabobank Theater  
1001 Truxtun Ave.
- WHY:** A project Environmental Impact Report/Statement (EIR/EIS) is being prepared to assess the technical studies, impact analysis and mitigation measures described in the Final Statewide Program EIR/EIS completed in August 2005 and in the Bay Area to Central Valley program EIR/EIS (approved in July 2008), and provide the more detailed level of analysis required before construction can begin. Planned scoping meetings along the proposed corridor will give members of the public and public agencies an opportunity to learn more about the project, ask questions and provide input.
- ABOUT THE MERCED TO BAKERSFIELD SECTION:** The California High-Speed Rail Authority (Authority) and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) completed a Final Statewide Program EIR/EIS in August 2005 as the first-phase of a tiered environmental review process for the proposed California HST system. The Authority and the FRA completed a second program EIR/EIS in July 2008 to identify a preferred alignment for the Bay Area to Central Valley section of the HST system. The Bay Area to Central Valley HST Program EIR/EIS identified a preferred alternative through the Pacheco Pass with San Francisco and San Jose termini, as well as preferred corridor alignments and station location options. The alignment selected with the second program EIR/EIS uses the Union Pacific (UPRR) railroad corridor through the portion of the Central Valley studied (just

north of Madera to just south of Stockton). The Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) is the preferred alignment from Madera to Bakersfield, as selected with the Statewide Program EIR/EIS. Tiering from the two program EIR/EISs, the Authority and the FRA will prepare a project EIR/EIS for the Merced to Bakersfield section of the HST. Stations are proposed in Merced, Fresno, and Bakersfield with a potential station in the Visalia/Hanford/Tulare region to be evaluated.

**BACKGROUND:**

The California High-Speed Rail Authority is responsible for building the proposed high-speed train service that would cover 800 miles and reach speeds up to 220 m.p.h. With the passage of Proposition 1A in the November 2008 ballot, California voters approved funding for the nation's first high-speed train system. By linking major cities in California with a new transportation option, a high-speed train system would increase mobility while cutting air pollution and reducing the greenhouse gas emissions that cause global warming. For more information, visit [www.cahighspeedrail.ca.gov](http://www.cahighspeedrail.ca.gov).

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