



SAN JOSE TO MERCED PROJECT SECTION

FACT SHEET

OVERVIEW

High-speed rail offers an unprecedented opportunity to modernize California's transportation system and tie together the state's economies.

The high-speed rail system will help California manage pressing issues with climate change, traffic, airport congestion, and energy dependency. The San Jose to Merced Project Section plays a critical role in connecting the Bay Area and the Central Valley.

The San Jose to Merced Project Section overlaps with the San Francisco to San Jose Project Section starting just north of San Jose Diridon Station. The alignments under consideration pass through the cities of San Jose, Morgan Hill, and Gilroy and continue east where the alignment alternatives converge as one single alternative through the Pacheco Pass all the way to the San Joaquin Valley.

At Carlucci Road, the project section passes through the Central Valley Wye, the junction for the high-speed rail system connecting trains traveling between San Jose and Fresno, San Jose and Merced, and Merced and Fresno.



San Jose Diridon Station will serve as the intermodal connecting point between high-speed rail and Caltrain, VTA, and other transit services in downtown San Jose.

Photo: Diridon Integrated Station Concept Plan

Stay Involved

1. Receive email updates: hsr.ca.gov/contact
2. Visit the Authority's website: hsr.ca.gov
3. Visit MeetHSRNorCal.org for resources
4. Questions? Call us at **800-455-8166** or email san.jose_merced@hsr.ca.gov.

Environmental Clearance and Project Approval Process

The California High-Speed Rail Authority's (Authority) Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS) evaluates the impacts and benefits of high-speed rail between **San Jose and the Central Valley**, and describes approaches to avoid, minimize, or mitigate project effects.

The Draft EIR/EIS, circulated for public review in 2020, presents the analysis of four project alternatives and a no-build option. The alternatives were developed over the last decade through extensive local community and agency involvement, stakeholder meetings, and public input. Additionally, the Authority published a Revised/Supplemental Draft EIR/EIS in 2021 to evaluate new background information, methodology, impact analysis, and mitigation measures related to how the Authority will address impacts to mountain lions, monarch butterflies, and other wildlife species.

The Final EIR/EIS will be prepared by the Authority as the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) lead agency and as the lead agency under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for the high-speed rail project pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 327. The Final EIR/EIS will be available for the public to view in the first quarter of 2022, in accordance with CEQA and NEPA requirements.

Approximately 30 days after the Final EIR/EIS is released for public viewing, the Authority Board of Directors will consider whether to certify the document and approve the project as required by CEQA and NEPA. This will complete the environmental review process and allows the project to move toward construction.



San Jose Diridon Station

Merced

DIRIDON APPROACH SUBSECTION
Scott Blvd to W Alma Ave

Short Viaduct to I-880 (Alternative 1)

Long Viaduct to Scott Blvd (Alternatives 2 and 3)

Blended At-Grade (Alternative 4)

MONTEREY CORRIDOR SUBSECTION
W Alma Ave to Bernal Way

Viaduct (Alternatives 1 and 3)

Dedicated At-Grade (Alternative 2)

Blended At-Grade (Alternative 4)

MORGAN HILL-GILROY SUBSECTION
Bernal Way to SR 152

Viaduct to Downtown Gilroy (Alternative 1)

Embankment to Downtown Gilroy (Alternative 2)

Viaduct & Embankment to East Gilroy (Alternative 3)

Blended At-Grade (Alternative 4)

PACHECO PASS SUBSECTION
SR 152 to I-5

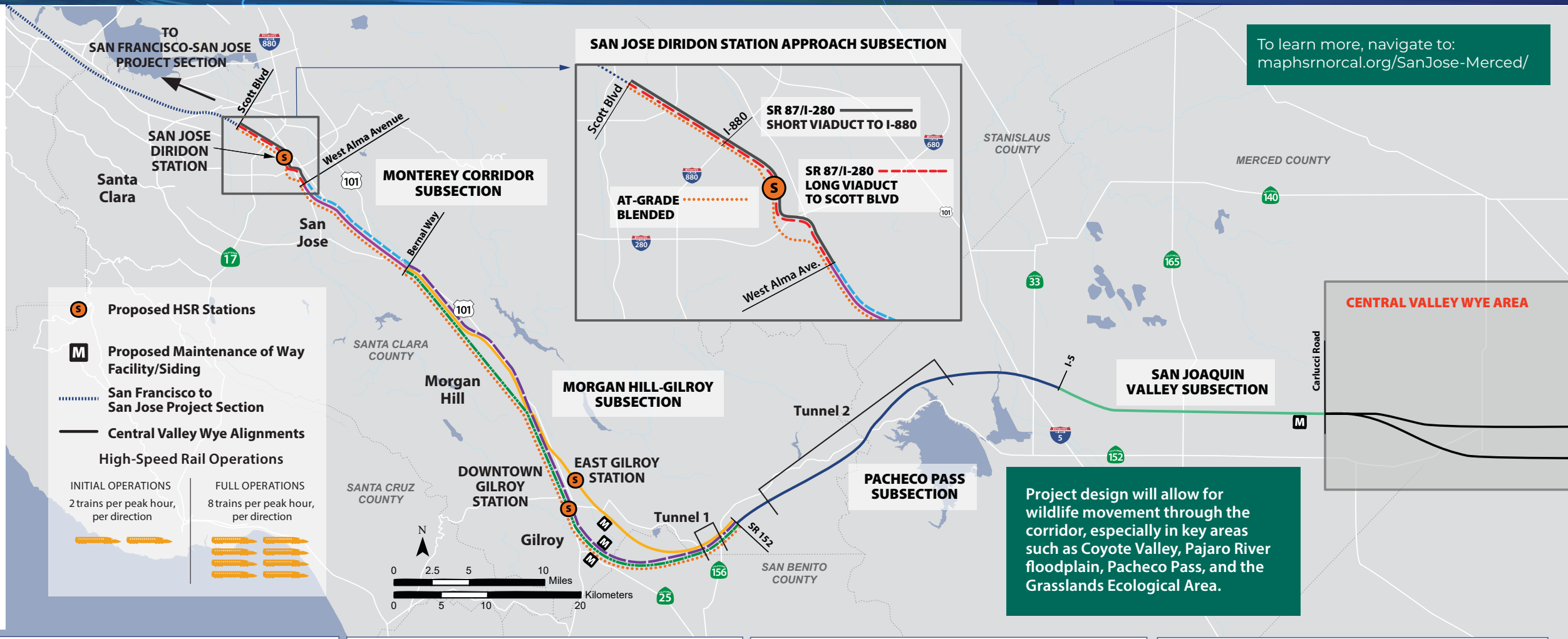
Two tunnels through the Pacheco Pass (Alternatives 1-4)

SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY SUBSECTION
I-5 to Carlucci Rd

Embankment or viaduct adjacent to Henry Miller Rd (Alternatives 1-4)

CENTRAL VALLEY WYE AREA

The Central Valley Wye Area is being analyzed and evaluated as a supplement to the Merced to Fresno Project Section Final EIR/EIS.



Alternative 1

- Blended, at-grade alignment between Scott Boulevard and I-880.
- Dedicated, fully grade-separated alignment from I-880 to Carlucci Road.
- Extensive use of viaduct structures.
- Bypasses downtown Morgan Hill.
- Downtown Gilroy Station.
- Minimizes changes to roadway network and adjacent land uses.

Alternative 2

- Dedicated, fully grade-separated alignment.
- Extensive use of viaduct and embankment structures.
- Located between the existing Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) corridor and Monterey Road.
- Downtown Gilroy Station.
- Highest number of property displacements (using private or public land for rail).

Alternative 3

- Dedicated, fully grade-separated alignment.
- Extensive use of viaduct structures.
- Bypasses downtown Morgan Hill.
- East Gilroy Station.
- The same as Alternative 1 from the Monterey Corridor Subsection to Church Avenue in San Martin.
- Minimizes use of UPRR right-of-way.

Alternative 4

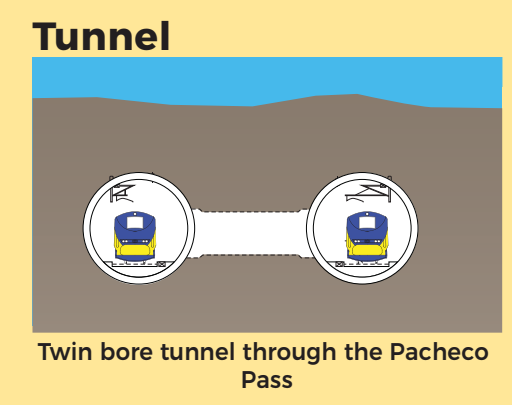
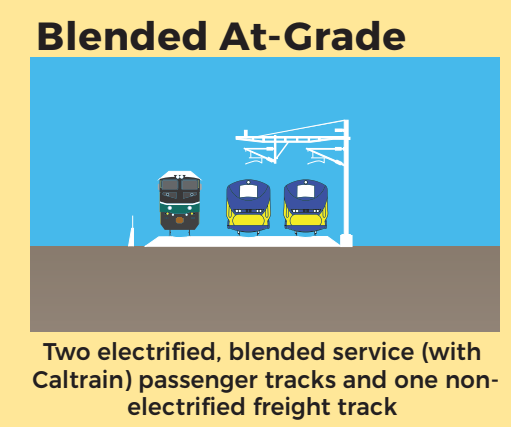
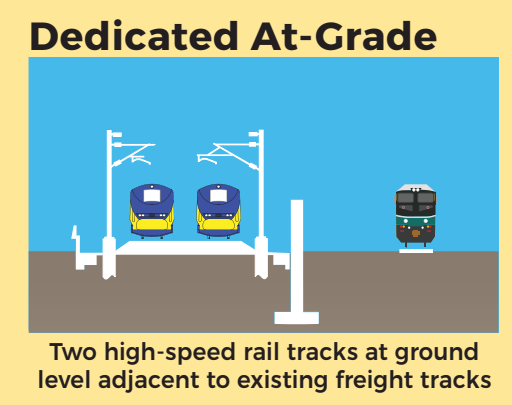
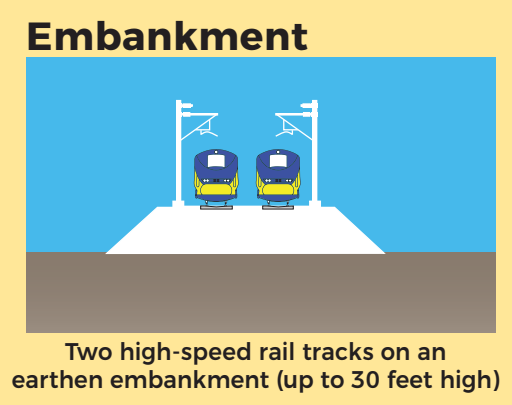
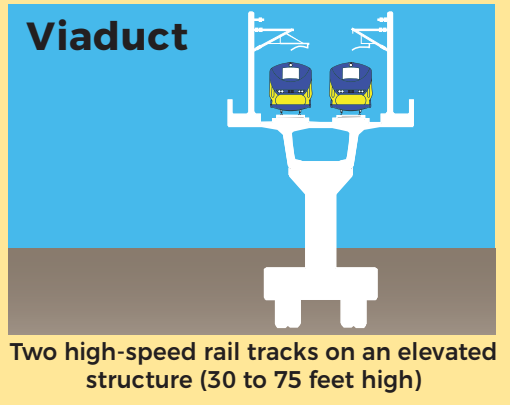
- Identified as the Preferred Alternative by the Authority Board of Directors.
- Blended, at-grade alignment predominantly within the existing Caltrain and UPRR rights-of-way between Scott Boulevard and Gilroy.
- Minimizes property displacements and limits natural resource impacts.
- Downtown Gilroy Station.
- Sets stage for extending electrified Caltrain service to Southern Santa Clara County.

Pacheco Pass and San Joaquin Valley Subsections

- All alternatives have the same alignment east of Gilroy (starting near Casa de Fruta).
- A 13.5-mile long tunnel through Pacheco Pass.
- Viaducts over California Aqueduct, Delta Mendota Canal, I-5, major watercourses, and through the Grasslands Ecological Area.
- Predominantly on embankment along the south side of Henry Miller Road to Carlucci Road.

TYPICAL SECTIONS

These drawings illustrate the various high-speed rail track profiles.



Acronyms, Abbreviations, and Key Terms



CALIFORNIA
High-Speed Rail Authority

At-grade. An alignment at ground level.

Aerial. An alignment with tracks raised in the air (e.g., on a bridge or viaduct).

Authority. California High-Speed Rail Authority: State agency responsible for planning, designing, building, and operating the first high-speed rail system in the US.

Bay Area to Central Valley Program EIR/EIS. This Program EIR/EIS, concluded between 2008 and 2012, identified the corridor to connect high-speed rail service along the San Francisco peninsula with the Central Valley corridor identified by the Statewide Program EIR/EIS.

Blended. A rail system shared between two or more operators (e.g., high-speed rail and Caltrain).

CEQA. California Environmental Quality Act: A California law that requires state and local agencies to identify the significant environmental impacts of their actions and to avoid or mitigate those impacts, if feasible.

Dedicated. Track infrastructure used exclusively by high-speed trains.

EIR. Environmental Impact Report: A document required by CEQA for certain actions that may result in significant impacts; it describes the environmental impacts of, and proposed mitigation for a proposed project.

EIS. Environmental Impact Statement: A document required by NEPA for certain actions that significantly affect the quality of the human environment; it describes the environmental effects of a proposed action.

EJ. Environmental Justice: Fair treatment of people of all races, cultures, and incomes with respect to the development, adoption, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.

Embankment. An earthen structure that raises tracks above the ground.

Environmental document. A combined EIR/EIS document.

FRA. Federal Railroad Administration: Federal agency that regulates passenger and freight rail travel in the US.

GEA. Grasslands Ecological Area: An extensive complex of wetlands and agricultural lands that provide internationally recognized habitat for resident and migratory waterfowl, dairies, pasture and orchard crops, hunting and other recreation.

Grade-separated. High-speed rail track profile that is vertically separated from roadway or highway crossings to enable independent operation.

NEPA. National Environmental Policy Act: A Federal law that requires Federal agencies to assess the environmental effects of their proposed actions prior to making decisions. 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. 327 and a Memorandum of Understanding dated July 23, 2019 and executed by the Federal Railroad Administration and the State of California.

NOA. Notice of Availability: Announcement that a draft environmental document is available for viewing.

NOD. Notice of Determination: The final step in the CEQA environmental process.

NOI. Notice of Intent: A formal announcement of intent to prepare an EIS; the first step of the NEPA process.

NOP. Notice of Preparation: A document stating that an EIR will be prepared for a particular project; the first step in the CEQA process.

Preferred Alternative. The alternative identified by the Authority to best balance the tradeoffs between potential environmental or community impacts and high-speed system performance and cost factors on an end-to-end basis.

Recirculated Document. The Revised/ Supplemental Draft EIR/EIS.

ROD. Record of Decision: The final step in the NEPA environmental process.

ROW. Right-of-Way: Land reserved for use by railroads.

Statewide Program EIR/EIS. Final Program EIR/EIS for the Proposed California High-Speed Train System: This document, released in 2005, identified a high-speed train system as the preferred alternative for meeting future intercity travel needs and cleared the way for further analysis of alignment and station locations.

Trench. An excavation that lowers the tracks below ground level.

Viaduct. An alignment profile that uses bridge-like structures to raise high-speed rail tracks above the ground.

