

THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF STANISLAUS  
ACTION AGENDA SUMMARY

DEPT: Chief Executive Office

BOARD AGENDA # B-4

Urgent  Routine

AGENDA DATE February 2, 2010

CEO Concurs with Recommendation YES  NO   
(Information Attached)

4/5 Vote Required YES  NO

SUBJECT:

Approval of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) by and between the Regions of Merced and Sacramento Counties for the Purpose of Creating a Working Group to Collaborate with the California High Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA) to assist in Planning and Development for Improved Passenger Rail Transportation between the Regions

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Approval of Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) by and between the Regions of Merced and Sacramento Counties for the Purpose of Creating a Working Group to Collaborate with the California High Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA) to assist in Planning and Development for Improved Passenger Rail Transportation between the Regions
2. Authorize the Chairman of the Board to sign the Memorandum of Understanding by and between the Planning Authorities for the Regions of Merced and Sacramento Counties on behalf of the Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors

FISCAL IMPACT:

At this time, there is no fiscal commitment associated with entering into this working group Memorandum of Understanding. The purpose of the MOU is to continue and expand cooperation among the regional partners. It is understood that the development of the Corridor may have local implications which will need to be resolved at the local level. The parties to the MOU agree, however, that these local discussions and resolutions will be rolled up into the working group discussions in order to achieve a smooth corridor transition between the jurisdictions.

BOARD ACTION AS FOLLOWS:

No. 2010-062

On motion of Supervisor Chiesa, Seconded by Supervisor Monteith

and approved by the following vote,

Ayes: Supervisors: O'Brien, Chiesa, Monteith, DeMartini, and Chairman Grover

Noes: Supervisors: None

Excused or Absent: Supervisors: None

Abstaining: Supervisor: None

1)  Approved as recommended

2)  Denied

3)  Approved as amended

4)  Other:

MOTION:



ATTEST: CHRISTINE FERRARO TALLMAN, Clerk

File No.

Approval of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) by and between the Regions of Merced and Sacramento Counties for the Purpose of Creating a Working Group to Collaborate with the California High Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA) to assist in Planning and Development for Improved Passenger Rail Transportation between the Regions  
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## **DISCUSSION:**

In early 2007, the San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission (SJRRC) convened a group of local and regional agencies from the Counties of Merced, Stanislaus, San Joaquin and Sacramento to study the feasibility of commuter rail service between the regions. All representatives acknowledged the worsening highway congestion along I-5 and SR-99 and the need for alternatives. All expressed concern over the population and travel demand projections for and between the Central Valley communities. In particular, they noted that commuters will increasingly be seeking alternatives which allow them to make more productive use of their commute time, avoid the stress of driving and comply with anticipated restrictions due to carbon emissions legislation.

Throughout the course of the study, the collateral benefits of commuter rail and rail stations were discussed, including serving as catalysts for more dense and mixed land-uses close to transportation options; creating a more progressive and environmentally conscious image of the communities; linking numerous college and university campuses, helping to attract new businesses and acknowledging the crucial role of connecting services. As a result, there was a strong interest in focusing on the Union Pacific/SR-99 Corridor due to the proximity of the alignment to the majority of the Downtowns.

In late summer 2008, the working group put the planning effort on hold during the last push for the High Speed Rail Bond Initiative, so as to avoid any confusion between the two issues. After the passage of the Bond, the working group waited until the California High Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA) process was underway to determine the potential impacts and opportunities related to the commuter rail study effort.

In May of 2009, the San Joaquin Rail Commission entered into an MOU with CHSRA to partner on the development of the Altamont Regional Corridor and the Merced to Sacramento High Speed Rail (HSR) Corridor. Through this relationship, the Rail Commission recommended that the Merced to Sacramento working group become a partner in the development of the Merced to Sacramento Corridor which could be shared to include both HSR and commuter services. The CHSRA has embraced this concept and the joint planning effort is now underway through the environmental scoping process.

To create a unified voice and show active involvement and readiness in moving the Corridor forward, the working group desires an MOU to formalize this working relationship.

At this time, the parties to the MOU consist of local and regional jurisdictions. However, as the service planning progresses, there will likely be future agreements with the

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CHSRA which will include more detail on the responsibilities for the Corridor implementation.

### Memorandum of Understanding

The attached Memorandum of Understanding between the agencies as listed shares the goal of improving and increasing passenger rail service interconnecting their communities and the regions.

The MOU outlines the following agreed upon general planning principles:

- The shared objective is dedicated passenger trackage for High Speed Rail and regional rail service, between Merced and Sacramento, including segments which may provide early independent utility;
- The Merced to Sacramento Corridor will be connected with the Altamont Regional Corridor, all intercity rail services and local and regional transit networks in order to leverage the investment in the corridor.
- Ultimately, high speed rail segments in the region will be fully grade separated, electrified, and suitable for operation of the high speed train sets which will be used in all portions of the statewide system;
- Improvements may be phased so that in the near term, Central Valley regional rail service can be initiated using readily available train sets;
- Consideration for high speed rail station locations include local support and development strategies, access to other transit connections, regional service markets, interregional service markets and the statutory schedule requirement between Los Angeles and Sacramento.

The parties to this MOU all agree that the purpose of this MOU is to continue and expand cooperation among the participants. Each agency partner agrees to provide leadership and support for the Corridor planning and development process within their respective communities and across jurisdictional boundaries.

Finally, this MOU is intended to be a first step in a process or series of agreements – each of which is expected to be more specific as planning work progresses forward and becomes more focused. All or any portion of the MOU may be modified to accommodate the needs of the participant parties as planning work progresses.

### **POLICY ISSUES:**

The Board should determine whether approval to commit to a Memorandum of Understanding for the purpose of creating a working group to collaborate with the California High Speed Rail Authority is consistent with the stated Board priority of promoting infrastructure development, facilitating a strong local economy for Stanislaus County and the region, and promoting regional partnerships and collaboration.

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**STAFFING ISSUES:**

The Chief Executive Office, Economic Development Unit, County Public Works, and the Stanislaus Council of Governments (StanCOG) will continue to participate in the working group process, along with elected officials.

**CONTACT PERSON:**

Keith D. Boggs, Deputy Executive Officer. Telephone: (209) 525-6333

**ATTACHMENT**

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) by and between jurisdictions in the Merced to Sacramento region.



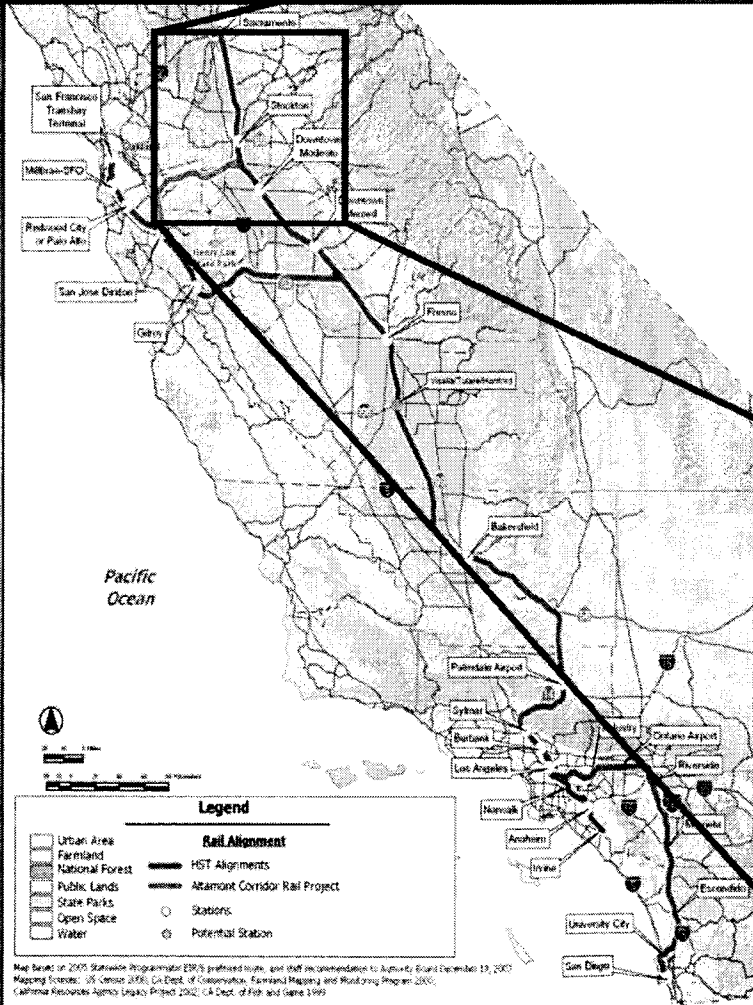
**CALIFORNIA  
HIGH-SPEED RAIL  
AUTHORITY**

# Merced-to-Sacramento Section

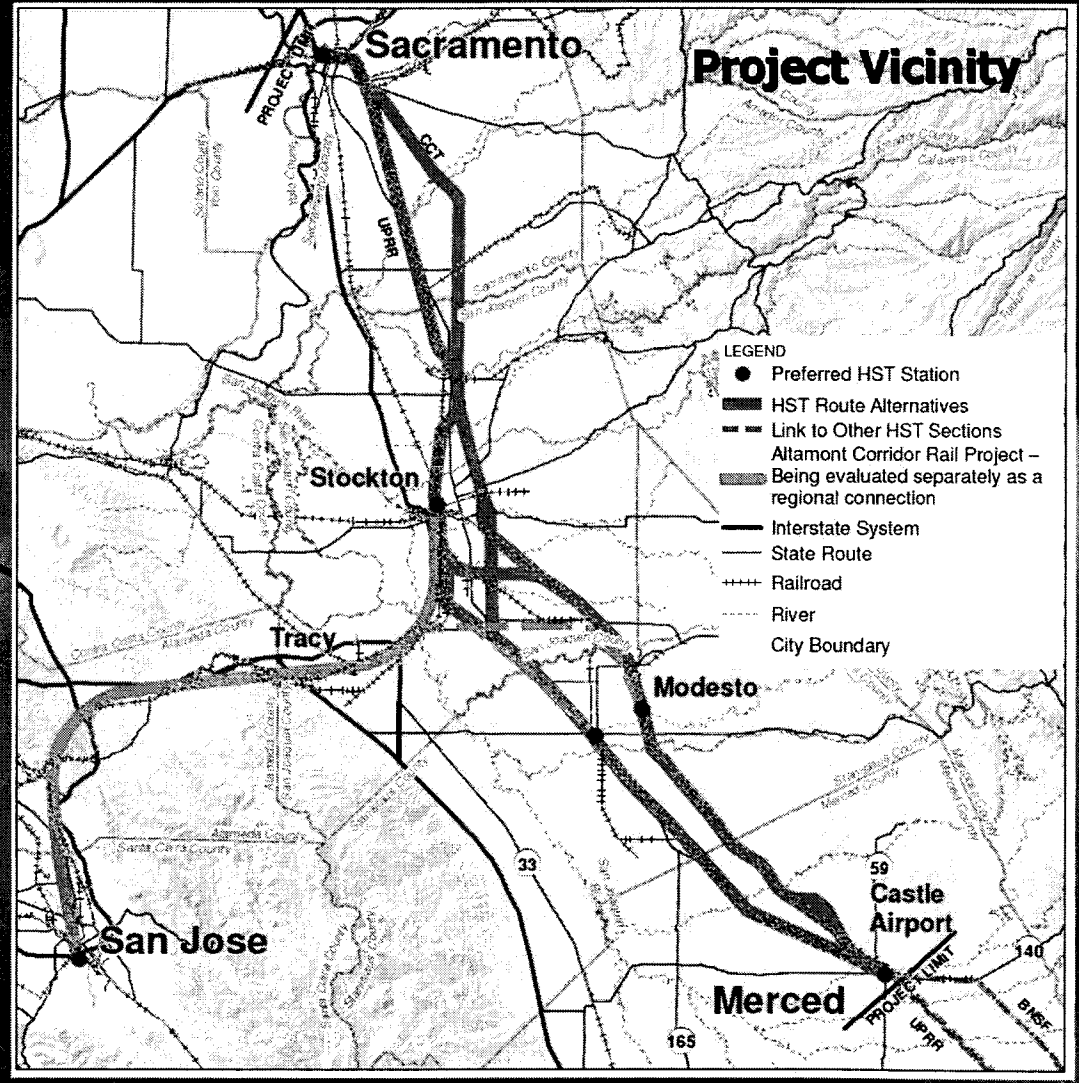


**U.S. Department  
of Transportation  
Federal Railroad  
Administration**

## Statewide System



## Project Vicinity



**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU)  
BY AND BETWEEN**

COUNTY OF MERCED  
CITY OF MERCED  
MERCED COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS  
COUNTY OF STANISLAUS  
CITY OF MODESTO, CITY OF TURLOCK  
STANISLAUS COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS  
SAN JOAQUIN REGIONAL RAIL COMMISSION  
SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY  
CITY OF STOCKTON, CITY OF LODI AND CITY OF MANTECA  
SAN JOAQUIN REGIONAL TRANSIT DISTRICT  
SAN JOAQUIN COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS  
COUNTY OF SACRAMENTO  
CITY OF SACRAMENTO, CITY OF ELK GROVE AND CITY OF GALT  
SACRAMENTO REGIONAL TRANSIT  
SACRAMENTO AREA COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

**FOR THE PURPOSE OF CREATING A WORKING GROUP  
TO COLLABORATE WITH THE CALIFORNIA HIGH SPEED RAIL AUTHORITY  
TO PLAN AND DEVELOP IMPROVED PASSENGER RAIL TRANSPORTATION  
BETWEEN THE REGIONS OF MERCED AND SACRAMENTO**

**WHEREAS**, the agencies listed above (herein referred to as the "Parties") share the goal of improving and increasing passenger rail service interconnecting their communities and the regions, and;

**WHEREAS**, the Parties have been working together since February 2007 on a planning study to determine the feasibility of commuter rail service between Merced and Sacramento, and;

**WHEREAS**, California voters approved Proposition 1A, the Safe, Reliable High Speed Passenger Train Bond Act on November 4, 2008, requiring that the California High Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA) prepare a plan and design for the high speed rail (HSR) system, conduct environmental studies, obtain necessary permits, and undertake the construction and operation of a high-speed passenger train network in California, and;

**WHEREAS**, included in the CHSRA work is planning for HSR service between Merced and Sacramento and a complementary and connecting service between the Central Valley and the Bay Area along the Altamont Corridor, with CHSRA acting as a lead agency in preparing project level environmental impact reports (EIR) for each corridor, and;

**WHEREAS**, it is in the best interest of the Parties and CHSRA to coordinate the desires for high speed rail and for regional rail service into one planning effort, and to the extent possible, identify one ultimate Corridor with layered services, and;

**WHEREAS**, CHSRA has agreed to incorporate the regional services concept into the overall planning and environmental process in order to streamline and coordinate the service development, provided there is an active and committed regional partner,

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Parties agree to engage in a planning process with CHSRA, recognizing local, regional and statewide needs for regional and high speed rail service in a shared service Corridor, identified conceptually on the attached Merced to Sacramento Section Map, and further agree as follows:

1. The parties agree to continue to work cooperatively throughout the preparation of the CHSRA technical studies and the project level EIRs/EISs in the region, and other directly related planning and project development activities.
2. The parties agree to the following general planning principles:
  - a. The shared objective is dedicated passenger trackage for HSR and regional rail service, between Merced and Sacramento, including segments which may provide early independent utility.
  - b. The Merced to Sacramento Corridor will be connected with the Altamont Regional Corridor, Intercity rail services and local and regional transit networks in order to leverage the investment in the corridor. The intention of the planning work is to create seamless connections for the traveler and utilize other transportation services for the broadest coverage.
  - c. Ultimately, high speed rail segments in the region will be fully grade separated, electrified, and suitable for operation of the high speed trainsets which will be used in all portions of the statewide system, and will require that regional service utilize compatible, lightweight trainsets.
  - d. Improvements may be phased so that in the near term, Central Valley regional rail service can be initiated using readily available trainsets.
  - e. Consideration for high speed rail station locations include local support and development strategies, access to other transit connections, regional service markets, interregional service markets and the statutory schedule requirement between Los Angeles and Sacramento.
3. The parties agree that the purpose of this MOU is to continue and expand cooperation among the parties. It is understood that the development of the Corridor may have local implications which will need to be resolved at the local level. The Parties agree, however, that these local discussions and resolutions will be rolled up into the Working Group discussions in order to achieve a smooth Corridor and service transition between the jurisdictions.
4. Each Party agrees to provide leadership and support for the Corridor planning and development process within their respective communities and across jurisdictional boundaries. This may include, but not be limited to, speaking at public meetings, advocating for state and federal funding, executing letters of support, participating in

media events, encouraging public awareness and public involvement in the planning process and participating in conflict resolution strategies in the event of project impediments.

5. This MOU is intended to be the first in a series of agreements, each of which is expected to be more specific as planning work progresses and becomes more focused. In addition, this MOU itself is not intended to remain unchanged, but may evolve in the future as the parties confront various problems. All or portions of the MOU may be modified to accommodate the needs of the Parties as planning work progresses, either through direct amendment of this MOU or through supplemental memoranda, as deemed appropriate by the parties.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that this MOU has been approved by the Parties with an effective date of March 1, 2010. This MOU is in effect and shall continue in effect until and unless terminated by all Parties through mutual written agreement. Any Party may withdraw from the MOU upon 20 days' written notice delivered to the remaining Parties.

The Parties have executed this MOU by their signatures on the following page.



\_\_\_\_\_  
Chair, Merced County Board of Supervisors

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Mayor, City Of Merced

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Chair, Merced County Association of Governments

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Mayor, City of Modesto

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Mayor, City of Turlock

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Chair, Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors

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Chair, Stanislaus Council Of Governments

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Chair, San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors

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Chair, San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission

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Mayor, City Of Manteca

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Mayor, City Of Stockton

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Mayor, City of Lodi

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Chair, San Joaquin Regional Transit District

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Chair, San Joaquin Council of Governments

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Mayor, City of Galt

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Mayor, City of Elk Grove

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Mayor, City of Sacramento

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Chair, Sacramento Regional Transit

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Chair, Sacramento Board of Supervisors

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Chair, Sacramento Area Council Of Governments

## Statewide System

