



CALIFORNIA High-Speed Rail Authority

California High-Speed Rail **BRIEFING: May 1, 2025 Board Meeting** **Agenda Item #3**

TO: Chairman Richards and Board Members

FROM: Benjamin Lichty, Principal Transportation Planner, Planning and Sustainability Branch

DATE: May 1, 2025

RE: Consider approving the issuance of a Solicitation of Construction Bids for a Design-Bid-Build Procurement for the Fresno Station Early Works Project

Summary

The Authority has prepared an early works package at the Fresno station defined as the Fresno Station Early Works Project (Project). This Project comprises the groundbreaking for the Fresno High-Speed Rail Station. Completing the early works package is the foundational element for the building block approach to HSR project delivery for station implementation, which provides the Authority with assets that constitute portions of the final station including electric vehicle (EV) charging for a range of modes, parking, a renovated historic facility available for station functions and program delivery staff, fire and life safety improvements, site access, utility relocations and connections, and a public space that creates economic activity.

The Project early works solicitation for bids will be for a construction package including the following major elements including both sides of the Fresno Station, Chinatown along G Street and Downtown along H Street:

- Renovating the historic depot,
- Completing utility relocations and connections, demolition, and station multimodal parking and EV charging at the Downtown H Street station entrance, and
- Completing utility relocations and connections, demolition, and station multimodal parking and EV charging at the Chinatown G Street station entrance.

These scopes of work are funded by both federal grant (The Federal State Partnership [FSP] and Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity [RAISE]) and state matching funds.

Design is ongoing and has matured for the next steps of permitting and final plans, specifications, and estimates. Following the completion of permitted 100% Plans, Specifications, and Estimates (PS&E) Package, staff are prepared to issue a solicitation for competitive bids and work toward issuance of initial Notice to Proceed (NTP) by December 31, 2025, with construction to be complete in 2028. The Project is estimated at \$58,090,000.

Background

Stations have been included in the business model for the high-speed rail system since its inception. Stations are the access points for customers to the high-speed rail system. Requirements as to number and provisions for stations are specified in the Streets and Highways Code [Division 3, Chapter 20, 2704.09]. The Federal Grant Agreement (California High-Speed Train Program ARRA Grant) also includes the provision that the Authority should treat stations “as a new city gateway – consider the station’s form and spaces, both primary and secondary (backside, underside); the station’s place-making effects and iconic and readily identifiable design.”

The California High-Speed Rail Authority was awarded \$20 million from the (RAISE) program for the California High-Speed Rail Fresno Station Historic Depot Renovation and Plaza Activation Project. The total RAISE budget is \$33.2 million and includes matching funds of \$13.2 million from the Authority’s Non-Federal funds. The Project will restore a nationally registered historic passenger rail depot building, create a functioning park and plaza for early site activation efforts in anticipation of the future California High-Speed Rail station. The efforts will also integrate critical zero-emissions vehicle infrastructure into historically disadvantaged communities. The Project will enhance underused and neglected spaces within the future Fresno high-speed rail station at the depot and adjacent to the Chinatown historic district. It includes seismic and accessibility upgrades along with site enhancements to create more equitable, resilient, and active city spaces. In addition to building improvements, additional amenities will include transit and vehicle electric charging in a robust mobility hub; solar power generation capacity; bicycle and scooter parking; restored tree canopy and new shade structures; improved stormwater management; park and plaza space for public activities; lease space opportunities; and improved fencing and perimeter security.

This work is a critical first step to prepare the site for passenger rail service. Improvements will provide functional station components as well as community venue space and activate both sides of the broad station site prior to initiating high-speed rail passenger service on the Merced to Bakersfield segment later this decade.

Scope items as described in the corresponding grant agreements:

The RAISE 2023 portion of the Fresno Station Early Works Project includes Task 3: Construction of the following elements.

- Subtask 3.1: Historic Depot Renovations, (Fresno Station: Future Station Facilities and support functions);
- Subtask 3.2 Plaza Development and Activation (Fresno Station Entrance: Downtown Entrance); and
- Subtask 3.3: Chinatown Mobility Hub (Fresno Station Entrance; Chinatown Entrance)

Fresno Station Early Works Project includes Task 6: Fresno Station elements, funded by the FSP grant, including Subtask 6.2: Construction.

These scope elements are packaged together to sequence work logically and to assemble a construction package that enables optimal coordination with a single contractor, to accomplish efficient schedule delivery milestones.

This item requests the Board approve a solicitation of bids for construction for a contractor to perform the work necessary to construct the Project. The designs necessary for the Project scope of work are being completed by existing Authority consultants and a 100% PS&E Package will be provided to the bidders as part of the Project contract procurement consistent with the California Public Contract Code.

Prior Board Action

On April 27, 2022, the Board approved the issuance of a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for design services for the Central Valley stations to procure an architectural and engineering (A&E) design services contract valued up to \$35.3 million on or after September 2022, through Resolution #HSRA 21-07.

Both the 2020 Business Plan and 2022 Business Plan state that advancing design on the Central Valley Stations is a key activity to advancing toward electrified high-speed rail passenger service by the end of the decade. The 2020 Business Plan was adopted by the Authority Board of Directors on Thursday, March 25, 2021, and submitted to the state legislature on Monday, April 12, 2021. This proposed station procurement is consistent with the 2020 Business Plan priority of expanding the 119-mile segment in the Central Valley to develop 171 miles of electrified high-speed rail service by advancing design of the four stations. The 2022 Business Plan includes the same priority and notes: “Advancing station designs will clarify a number of issues with local stakeholders including station site boundaries and station access projects across all modes—bikes, pedestrian and transit.”

On October 19, 2022 the Board authorized staff to enter into negotiations with the F+P / Arup JV.

On February 29, 2024 staff provided an informational update to the Board on the progress of the four central valley station designs, prior to the start of Schematic Design.

Discussion

The Fresno Station Early Works Project provide critical elements of the future station. They have also been carefully planned and scoped keeping in mind key feedback from extensive stakeholder consultation. Their success as station elements is as much a part of their functional design as it is their capacity to provide relief to the surrounding neighborhoods. The plaza provides access to the station as well as space for community events. The Mobility Hub with EV charging is a value to the community as well as the station.

The Historic Depot is a treasured and notable space within Fresno. It is a foundational space for Fresno, originally built in the 1880s. Chinatown is the primary entrance to the future Fresno high-speed rail station. It has experienced extreme conditions of poverty, crime, and disinvestment for decades and lacks public amenities. In addition, air quality due to proximity to SR-99 and freight corridor diesel trains has created significant negative conditions. The Project will provide not only functional ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) compliant facilities for the station, but also resilience through solar photovoltaic investments. The Project also helps to reactivate areas that have not been accessible due to HSR construction for over a decade.

Stations are a critical element of the high-speed rail system, enabling passenger access to the system. The Authority has long-established performance criteria for the passenger stations, including that they be: universally accessible and seamlessly integrate a range of transportation modes (including buses, bicycles, pedestrian pathways, other rail systems, and automobiles).

The Authority determined a DBB delivery method for this contract. The DBB method was selected because it provides the Authority with a process and tools to directly manage design quality and certainty, cost control, stakeholder relationships, and mitigate cost uncertainty. The underlying design contracts that are generating the designs for this construction contract also anticipated that the work would utilize DBB.

The Fresno Station Early Works creates a foundation for the implementation of the Fresno High-Speed Rail Station.

Authority staff will develop and finalize the procurement and contractual documents prior to beginning the Project bid solicitation process and make any agreeable non-substantive modifications thereto during the procurement process (including the issuance of addenda). A high-level exemplar of key terms that will inform the final construction contract, among others, are attached to this Memorandum.

Legal Approval

The Project procurement process for DBB will seek to award a construction contract to the lowest qualified bidder for the Project scope of work consistent with the California Public Contract Code. Subsequent to Board approval to proceed with the procurement, the Legal Office will review and approve the construction Agreement ensuring that it is compliant with all applicable state and federal laws, regulations, and policies. The Legal Office will also support the Capital Procurement Branch to ensure that the solicitation and contractor award process is compliant with the California Public Contract Code. Approval is contingent upon the Chief Financial Officer verifying availability of the necessary funding for the Agreement.

Budget and Fiscal Impact

This request is to issue a construction contract for the Project as described above with a not-to-exceed amount of \$58,090,000.

The funding for this request is supported by federal funds from the FSP and RAISE grants awarded and obligated to the Authority. State matching funds will come from the Authority's Cap and Trade funds. The Program Baseline scope and budget for this work was authorized by the Board in January 2024 (Agenda Item #2).

The following table reflects a summarized display of the funding sources by amount and by match requirement:

Request	Funding Description	Funding Source(s)	Amount	Match % Requirement
Fresno Historic Depot Renovation and Fresno Station Early Works Package	Federal - FSP Grant	Federal FSP Grant	\$ 20,711,434	80%
	State - FSP State Match	Cap and Trade	\$ 5,177,859	20%
	Federal - RAISE Historic Depot Grant	Federal RAISE Grant	\$ 19,397,590	60%
	State - RAISE Historic Depot State Match	Cap and Trade	\$ 12,802,410	40%
	Federal		\$ 40,109,024	
	State		\$ 17,980,269	
Total		\$ 58,089,293		

REVIEWER INFORMATION		SIGNATURE
Reviewer Name and Title: Jamey Matalka Chief Financial Officer	Signature verifying budget analysis: Original signed on 4/24/25	
Reviewer Name and Title: Tom Fellenz Chief Counsel	Signature verifying legal analysis: Original signed on 4/23/25	

Recommendations

Staff is recommending Board approval to: (1) solicit competitive bids for construction for the Project, (2) authorize the CEO, or designee of the CEO, to execute a construction contract with the lowest qualified bidder for a not-to-exceed dollar value of \$58,090,000 (staff will return to the Board if the lowest responsible bid exceeds 10% of the contract value), and (3) authorize staff to develop and finalize the procurement and contractual documents prior to beginning the Project bid process and make any necessary non-substantive modifications thereto during the procurement process.

Attachments

- Fresno Station Early Works with RAISE 2023 Board Presentation, May 2025.
- High-level exemplar of key contract terms