



## California High-Speed Rail

### BRIEFING: November 20, 2025, Board Meeting Agenda Item #3

**TO:** Chairman Richards and Board Members

**FROM:** Emily Morrison, Chief of Contracting

**DATE:** November 20, 2025

**RE:** Consider approving the issuance of the Request for Proposals for the Track and Systems Construction Contract

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#### **Summary**

Staff recommends that the Board approve the issuance of the Request for Proposals (RFP) for the Track and Systems Construction Contract. Staff will return to the Board for approval to award the Track and Systems Construction Contract (TSCC).

The Authority intends to procure a Contractor to provide construction services for the track and overhead contact system (OCS) on the 171-mile Early Operating Segment of the California High-Speed Rail System, and design and construction services for high-speed rail systems, including traction power, train control, and communications systems.

The work will be delivered using a hybrid delivery model that incorporates managing cost, schedule and risk, partnering, collaboration, motivation for innovation, and progressive project development.

The Contractor will work collaboratively with the Authority and the Authority's Track/OCS Design Services consultant, stakeholders, and other interfacing contractors to deliver the work.

The scope of work will proceed under the contract through multiple separate Packages, which will each have a separate cost, whether lump sum (LS), Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP), or other. Each Package will be authorized through a Notice to Proceed (NTP) and an amendment to the Contract that incorporates Package specific details and scope of work.

Staff anticipate releasing the RFP in November 2025, following Board approval of this item. Staff plans to return to the Board seeking approval to award the contract in June 2026 and anticipate executing the contract and issuing NTP 1 shortly thereafter.

#### **Background**

The Authority is granted in statute the power to enter into contracts with private and public entities for the design, construction, and operation of high-speed rail trains, pursuant to California Public Utilities Code section 185034 and 185036. Track and systems are critical elements of the high-speed rail system. The 2025 Project

update Report lists track and systems construction as a priority to get the 171-mile Merced to Bakersfield Early Operating Segment (EOS) operational between 2030 and 2033.

The Board approved the award of a Design Services for Track and Overhead Contact Systems (OCS) contract to the SYSTRA|TYP SA Joint Venture in its June 26, 2024, meeting. The Board also authorized the purchase of certain commoditized materials directly from suppliers at its August 25, 2025, meeting. This includes the purchase of rail, concrete ties, OCS poles, OCS system components, fiber optic cable, and ballast that will be utilized by the TSCC Contractor for construction of the high-speed rail system.

### **Prior Board Action**

This item is consistent with the scope, budget, and schedule approval of the overall Program Baseline and Budget approved by the Board in August 2025 (Agenda Item 2 Budget Update and Approval of Budget, establishing a new Program Baseline and Budget of \$36.75 billion).

### **Discussion**

Authority staff seek approval to release the RFP for the TSCC. The attached Term Sheet contains a summary of the major material terms and conditions for the TSCC, including scope, payment, and commercial terms and conditions.

The TSCC scope of work includes:

The Contractor will be responsible for the following Work under the Contract for the 119-mile First Construction Section:

- Construction Work for track, overhead contact system (OCS), and related civil works;
- Fresno County railhead development;
- Design and construction for high-speed rail systems, including traction power, train control, and communications systems;
- Systems integration;
- Safety certification; and
- Testing and commissioning of the high-speed rail system.

Contractor will also be responsible for the following Work under the Contract;

- Design, construction, testing, and commissioning of track, OCS, traction power, train control and communications systems for the Merced Extension; and
- Design, construction, testing, and commissioning for track, OCS, traction power, train control and communications systems for the Bakersfield Extension.

The TSCC will also contain several options that may be exercised at the Authority's discretion. Pricing for any option(s) exercised would be developed using the GMP process and an NTP would be issued prior to the start of any work. Options include:

- Design and/or construction of the Maintenance of Way, Operations Control Center, Trainset Certification Facility, or other facilities to the extent it is not included in the scope referenced above; and/or
- Maintenance of high-speed rail systems assets after testing and commissioning and/or systems certification.
- Construction, testing, and commissioning for track, OCS, traction power, train control and communications systems for the High-Desert Corridor.

### *Procurement Approach:*

The TSCC Contractor will be selected through a best-value approach based on team qualifications, technical proposal elements, and the price proposal. Proposals will include pricing for civil, track, and OCS portions of the construction work. Pricing for the design and construction of the high-speed rail systems, including traction power, train control, telecommunications, and SCADA systems will be based on negotiated work packages with open book pricing.

Evaluations of Technical Proposals will be based on the following criteria:

- Understanding of the TSCC Contract and Delivery Approach
- Proposer Team, Organization, and Management Approach
- Major Participants Past Experience
- Key Personnel Past Experience
- Traction Power, Train Control and Communication Systems Approach
- Risk Management and Integration Approach
- Operations and Maintenance Phase Benefits
- Small Business Participation

Evaluation of the Price Proposals will be based on the following criteria:

- Bid Tabulation Prices for TSCC Construction for the 119-mile First Construction Section will include unit prices for construction so rates can be evaluated separately and without duplication of other price elements.
- Lump Sum Price for the 119-mile First Construction Segment (NTP 2-4)
- Lump Sum Price for Systems Preliminary Design for the 119-mile First Construction Section
- Lump Sum Price for Track and OCS Non-Recurring Costs
- Not-to-Exceed Prices for Other Preconstruction Services and Key Personnel Labor Rates

Selection of the systems OEM will occur after award of the contract and will be based on a competitive procurement process administered by the Contractor and supported and overseen by the Authority.

### Procurement Schedule

The anticipated schedule for this procurement is below, subject to Board approval to release the RFP. This schedule is planned to allow construction to begin before the end of 2026.

|   |                  |
|---|------------------|
| RFP Issued                                  | November 2025    |
| Industry Forum                              | January 2026     |
| Proposals Due                               | Early April 2026 |
| Notice of Proposed Award                    | Late April 2026  |
| Presentation to Board (Contract Award)      | June 2026        |
| Anticipated Contract Award and NTP 1 Issued | July 2026        |

This schedule may be revised based on developments during the procurement, as needed.

### **Budget and Fiscal Impact**

The Authority anticipates the TSCC scope of work not-to-exceed \$3.5 billion for the 171-mile Early Operating Segment. Funding for this contract was planned for and authorized in the Program Baseline and Budget.

## **Recommendations**

Staff is requesting Board approval to release the RFP for the Track and Systems Construction Contract and authorize staff to develop and finalize the procurement and contractual documents for the TSCC. Staff will return to the Board for approval to award the Track and Systems Construction Contract.

If not approved, this will jeopardize the Authority's ability to meet its schedule outlined in the Supplemental Project Update Report to begin laying track by the end of 2026.

## **Attachments**

- RFP for TSCC PowerPoint Presentation
- Draft Board Resolution #HSRA 25-10 Approval of the Term Sheet Request for Proposals for the Track & Systems Construction Contract and Approval to Advertise the RFP
- Draft Term Sheet for TSCC