



California High-Speed Rail **BRIEFING: March 4, 2026, Agenda Item #5**

TO: Board Chair Richards and Board Members
FROM: Soon-Sik Lee, Chief of Planning and Engineering
DATE: March 4, 2026
RE: 2025 Sustainability Report

Summary

This document highlights the sustainability metrics of the California High-Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA) program, as indicated in the 2025 Sustainability Report.

Background

HSR POLI-1007 Sustainability Policy (first adopted by the Board in April 2016 as HSR POLI-PLAN-03), states that the Authority will produce a sustainability report every year.

The Authority published its first report, covering calendar year 2015, in December 2016. The 2025 Sustainability Report is the tenth published report, focusing on the activities that occurred during the 2024 calendar year, and progress to date on key commitments. The Authority continues to meet its commitment to transparency by providing stakeholders with quantitative and qualitative data on progress against key commitments and other significant topics for disclosing the sustainability of the high-speed rail (HSR) system.

Prior Board Action

Consistent with prior practice, staff provided an update of the annual Sustainability Report (last such report was presented in September 2024).

Discussion

The Sustainability Policy states: “The California High-Speed Rail Authority (Authority) will deliver a sustainable high-speed rail system for California that serves as a model for sustainable rail infrastructure. The Authority has developed and will continue to implement Sustainability practices that inform and affect the planning, siting, designing, construction, mitigation, operation, and maintenance of the high-speed rail system.” Annual reporting offers a periodic snapshot of the effectiveness of the Authority’s implementation actions across the program. The report provides consistent measurement of indicators that provide the Authority with reliable data to inform the refinement of contract requirements, policy, and organization activities. The report also illustrates where corrective action is necessary to achieve success. Our approach to sustainability reflects our organization and our mission to deliver a complex mega project as well as the critical interests of stakeholders.

The HSR system serves as the backbone of all-electric, zero-emission interregional travel and is integral to reducing road and air miles travelled in California. The system contributes to California achieving its goals of a carbon-neutral transportation system by 2035 and a carbon-neutral economy by 2045. The Authority also focuses on delivering extensive additional co-benefits and encourages these co-benefits through progressive procurement. These benefits and co-benefits include:

- Estimated over 500,000 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent emissions avoided annually through high-speed rail operation (assuming full capacity, SF-Gilroy-Palmdale-Victorville Scenario)
- Over 4,600 acres of habitat restored and preserved;
- 630,000 pounds of criteria air pollutants avoided through the use of clean construction vehicles to date;
- Over 340,000 metric tons, or 95%, of construction waste diverted from landfills since construction began in 2015;

The following highlights from the 2025 Sustainability report illustrate the specific progress in 2024 under each element of the sustainability framework.

Legal Approval

This is an informational item, Legal has reviewed and signed off on this item.

Budget and Fiscal Impact

This is an informational item on the Authority's 2025 Sustainability Report, and by itself, does not have a budget or fiscal impact.

Recommendations

This is an informational item.

Attachments

2025 Sustainability Report