

RESOLUTION #HSRA 18-17

Fresno to Bakersfield Section High-Speed Rail Project:

Adoption of CEQA Findings of Fact and Statement of Overriding Considerations

Adoption of Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program

Approval of an Alignment and Station Location (from Poplar Avenue in Shafter to and including F Street Station in Bakersfield)

Whereas, the Authority has certified the California High-Speed Rail Final Supplemental EIR for the Fresno to Bakersfield Project Section in Resolution #HSRA 18-16, and hereby incorporates by reference the defined terms and statements contained in that Resolution;

Whereas, the Final Supplemental EIR certified by #HSRA Resolution 18-16 evaluates construction and operations impacts of that part of the high-speed rail system between Poplar Avenue in Kern County and Oswell Street in Bakersfield that includes a high-speed rail station at F Street in Bakersfield (“F Street Station”);

Whereas, the Final Supplemental EIR certified by Resolution #HSRA 18-16 identifies a “Preferred Alternative” between just north of Poplar Avenue in Kern County and Oswell Street in Bakersfield known as the F-B LGA, which is generally depicted on the map attached hereto as Exhibit “AA”;

Whereas, the Authority has identified an implementation priority for delivering a Silicon Valley to Central Valley high-speed rail line that will extend to a Bakersfield high-speed rail station as part of the initial part of the system to be constructed and operated;

Whereas, the decisions on an alignment from Poplar Avenue south and into a Bakersfield station represent a critical step toward achieving a Silicon Valley to Central Valley line; and,

Whereas, consistent with such implementation priority, the Authority recognizes the benefits of approving at this time only the portion of the Preferred Alternative identified in the Final Supplemental EIR from just north of Poplar Avenue in Kern County up to and including the F Street Station (specifically, to the intersection of 34th Street and L Street in Bakersfield), reserving for the subsequent environmental document associated with the Bakersfield to Palmdale Section of the high-speed rail project to further evaluate the decision on an alignment to the south and east of the F Street Station and to Palmdale.

Therefore, it is resolved:

Section 1. Adoption of CEQA Findings of Fact, Statement of Overriding Considerations and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program.

- (a) As the decision-making body for the high-speed rail system, the Authority has reviewed and considered the information contained in the California High-Speed Rail Final Supplemental EIR for

the Fresno to Bakersfield Section and in the CEQA Findings of Fact attached hereto as Exhibit “A” and supporting documentation. The Authority has also considered the Final (2014) EIR/EIS as revised by the Final Supplemental EIR. The Authority determines that the CEQA Findings of Fact document identifies the significant environmental impacts and mitigation measures associated with the portion of the Preferred Alternative to and including the F Street Station. The Authority further finds that the CEQA Findings of Fact have been completed in compliance with CEQA and the State CEQA Guidelines. The Authority hereby approves and adopts the CEQA Findings of Fact attached hereto as Exhibit “A”.

- (b) The Authority hereby finds that the Statement of Overriding Considerations was completed in accordance with Public Resources Code section 21081 and State CEQA Guidelines section 15093, subdivision (a), which states that CEQA requires the decision-making agency to balance, as applicable, the economic, legal, social, technological, or other benefits of a proposed project against its unavoidable environmental impacts when determining whether to approve the project. The Statement of Overriding Considerations is included in the Findings of Fact attached hereto as Exhibit “A” and sets forth significant environmental effects that are found to be unavoidable, but are acceptable due to the overriding considerations associated with and benefits expected to result from implementing the portion of the Preferred Alternative to and including the F Street Station as part of the Fresno to Bakersfield Section, as well as from implementing the portion of the Preferred Alternative to and including the F Street Station as part of the statewide high-speed rail system. The Authority hereby approves and adopts the Statement of Overriding Considerations included in the Findings of Fact attached hereto as Exhibit “A”.
- (c) Pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21081.6, and State CEQA Guidelines section 15091, subdivision (d), the Authority hereby adopts the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) attached hereto as Exhibit “B”, which ensures that required mitigation is implemented as the portion of the Preferred Alternative to and including the F Street Station is implemented.

Section 2. Approval of the portion of the Preferred Alternative from Poplar Avenue to and including the F Street Station.

Based on and in consideration of all of the foregoing, the Authority hereby approves all high-speed rail facilities (except any Heavy Maintenance Facility, decision regarding which is reserved to the future) described in the Final Supplemental EIR associated with the portion of the Preferred Alternative between just north of Poplar Avenue in Kern County up to and including the F Street Station, as generally depicted on the map attached hereto as Exhibit “AA” and as described in more detail in the Final Supplemental EIR (incorporated herein), along with the avoidance and minimization measures which have been incorporated into the project and the mitigation measures described in the Findings of Fact attached hereto as Exhibit A and reflected in the MMRP attached hereto as Exhibit B, and which MMRP shall be a condition of the approved project. In so approving, the Authority acknowledges that this approval supersedes that portion of the Authority’s prior approval set forth in Resolution 14-10 from just north of Poplar Avenue in Kern County extending south to 7th Standard Road.

Section 3. Next Steps.

The Authority hereby directs staff as follows:

- a. To promptly file a CEQA Notice of Determination with the State Clearinghouse.
- b. To continue to collaborate with the FRA in the preparation of a Final Supplemental EIS and Supplemental Record of Decision for the project in compliance with NEPA.
- c. To incorporate the geographic area to the south and east of the F Street Station into the Bakersfield to Palmdale Project Section environmental document for further analysis and decision making in conjunction with that document.
- d. To continue to work in partnership with the City of Bakersfield, the City of Shafter, Kern County, and other regional stakeholders as the Fresno to Bakersfield Section of the high-speed rail project is implemented.

Vote: 5 – 0

Yes: Camacho; Curtin; Miller; Richard; Richards

No: N/A

Absent: Lowenthal; Rossi; Schenk

Date: 10/16/18

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