

OVERVIEW

The Palmdale to Burbank Project Section is part of Phase 1 of the California High-Speed Rail System connecting the Antelope Valley to the San Fernando Valley which will bring high-speed rail service to the urban Los Angeles area with a new modern rail line that dramatically reduces travel time between the Antelope Valley and the Los Angeles Basin.

This project section will connect two key population centers in Los Angeles County with multi-modal transportation hubs at the Palmdale Transportation Center Station and at the Hollywood Burbank Airport Station. These station locations will provide an additional link between the Antelope Valley, the Los Angeles Basin, the State, and the rest of the US through eventual connections to the Burbank Airport and other high-speed trains.

KEY PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

Upon completion, the Palmdale to Burbank Project Section will:

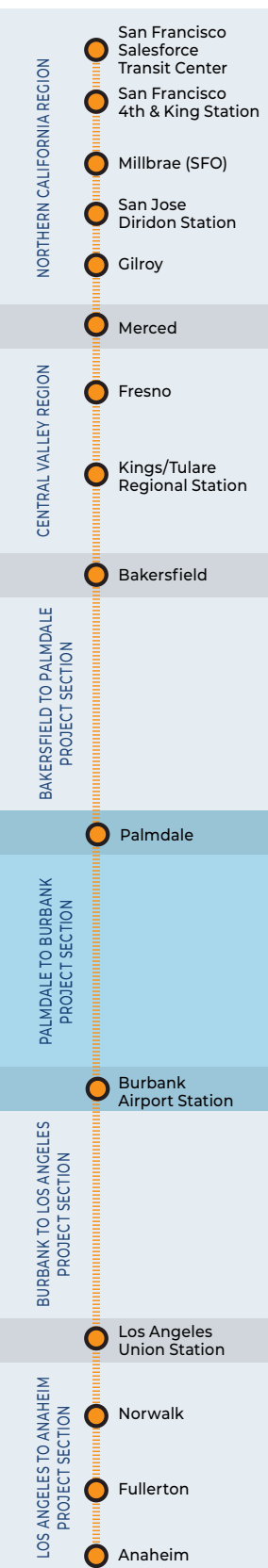
- Provide a new link between Central and Southern California and the statewide transportation network
- Connect the Palmdale Transportation Center Station to the Hollywood Burbank Airport Station with a 15 to 20-minute high-speed rail trip
- Provide new opportunities for economic development and connections to many destinations and transportation options
- Connect high-speed rail to the region via existing and planned Metrolink stations
- Enhance performance and safety while reducing pollution by using next generation signaling technology (Positive Train Control, intrusion barriers and warning system, earthquake early warning, and more)
- Provide connection opportunity in Palmdale for high-speed trains between Las Vegas and Los Angeles

ENVIRONMENTAL PROCESS

In 2001, the California High-Speed Rail Authority (Authority), in cooperation with the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), started a tiered environmental review process for the statewide high-speed rail system per requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The Tier 1 2005 California High-Speed Rail Program Final Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (Statewide Program EIR/EIS) described the program alignment, which included a corridor between Palmdale and Los Angeles.

Today, the Palmdale to Burbank Project Section is moving forward with the development of the Tier 2 Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (Draft EIR/EIS). One function of the EIR/EIS process under CEQA and NEPA is to study the environmental impacts of the Palmdale to Burbank Project Section in the areas of the alignment. The Draft EIR/EIS will provide study results and analysis regarding various environmental impact areas, including traffic, air quality, noise, vibration, aesthetics and more. Another function of the EIR/EIS process is to evaluate different configurations for building the Palmdale to Burbank Project Sections (called build alternatives).

The Draft EIR/EIS for the Palmdale to Burbank Project Section is anticipated for release in Spring 2021 and will include six build alternatives, including the original three alternatives and the three modified alternatives (discussed in more detail below). The Authority will then solicit input by conducting meetings with the public and relevant public entities/agencies, as well as holding an official agency and public comment period. The public will have a minimum of 45 calendar days upon release of the Draft EIR/EIS to review and comment. The public will have access to the Draft EIR/EIS on the Authority's website and printed copies will be available for review at the Authority's Sacramento and Los Angeles offices during open days/hours, subject to coronavirus public health and safety directives. Printed and/or electronic copies of the Draft EIR/EIS will also be available, if circumstances allow, at public information counters (libraries, cities, etc.) throughout the project section during hours the facilities are open. All comments will be accepted and will receive a written response in the Final EIR/EIS.



ENVIRONMENTAL PROCESS

Modified Build Alternatives: SR14A, E1A and E2A

The Authority has worked continuously with public agency and community stakeholders to incorporate refinements to the design that further avoid or minimize potential impacts to existing facilities, land uses, environmental resources, and communities. In consideration of stakeholder input, the Authority has developed modified build alternatives that will be included in the environmental review process. A significant consideration in the development of additional alternatives was the reduction of potential impacts to sensitive aquatic resources south of Palmdale, including Una Lake. Each build alternative has the identical anchor points at the Palmdale Transportation Center Station and at the Hollywood Burbank Airport Station.

The modified build alternatives are referred to as SR14A, E1A and E2A. The prior alternatives of Refined SR14, E1 and E2 are still being included in the environmental review for a total of six build alternatives that will be analyzed in the Draft EIR/EIS.

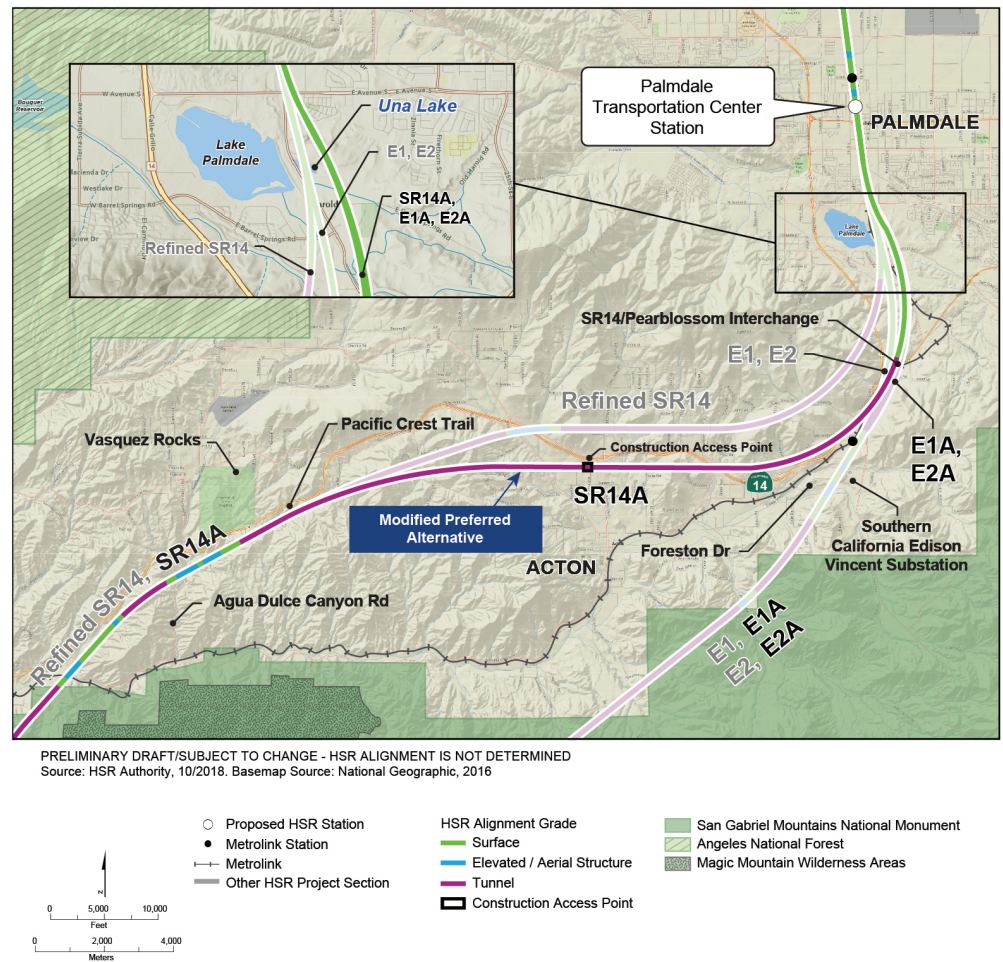
The E1A and E2A build alternatives share the same alignment from Una Lake through Acton. They both enter a short-mined tunnel near the SR14/Pearblossom Interchange, surfacing before the Southern California Edison Vincent substation. After crossing under Foreston Drive, these alternatives tie in to the original E1/E2 alignment and are identical to the E1 and E2 alternatives from this point south to the Hollywood Burbank Airport station.

Modified Preferred Alternative: SR14A

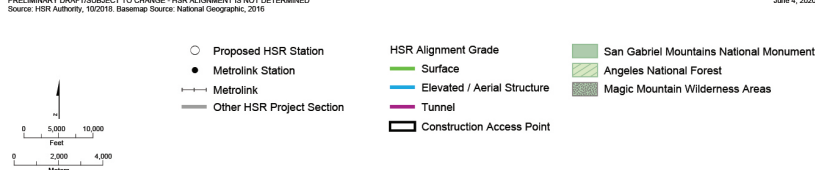
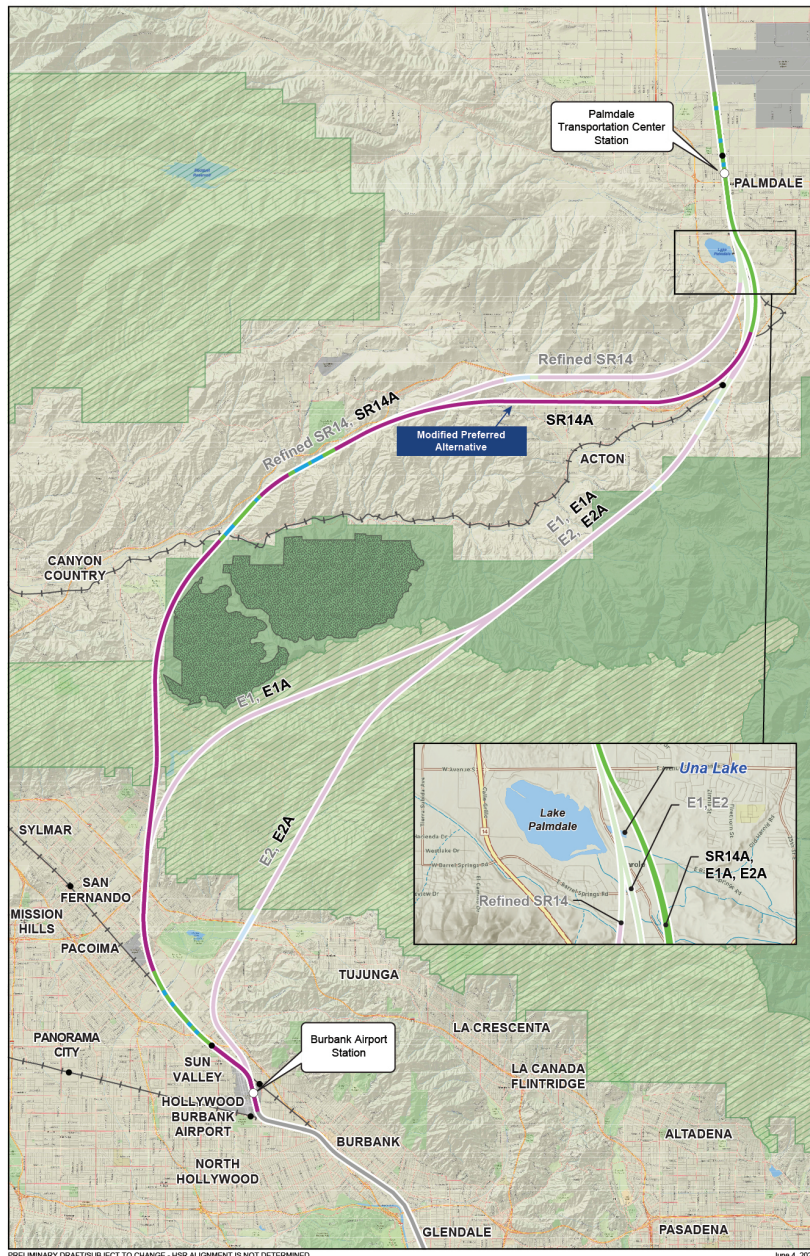
In November 2018, staff presented the Refined SR14 Alternative to the Authority's Board of Directors as the Preferred Alternative (PA) for the Palmdale to Burbank Project Section. In August 2020, the Authority's CEO amended the Preferred Alternative to SR14A and included three modified alternatives into the project description. Per the Authority's CEO recommendation to the Board of Directors in August 2020, the Preferred Alternative is now the SR14A alternative as described above. It is approximately 41 miles long and connects the Palmdale Transportation Center Station and Hollywood Burbank Airport Station. It will use the existing Metrolink right-of-way to the extent possible for approximately three miles in the San Fernando Valley. The PA no longer crosses Una Lake and minimizes impacts to nearby wetlands. As a result, the PA is underground through the community of Acton, the Angeles National Forest (ANF) and the San Gabriel Mountains National Monument (SGMNM).

The SR14A is on the surface (at grade) east of Una Lake and then proceeds into a tunnel near the SR14/Pearblossom Interchange. SR14A is in a tunnel through Acton and resurfaces southwest of Vasquez Rocks, near Agua Dulce Canyon Road. SR14A is also underground where it crosses the Pacific Crest Trail, avoiding impacts to the trail. SR14A ties in to the original Refined SR14 alignment near the Santa Clara River crossing and is identical to the Refined SR14 alternative from this point south to the Hollywood Burbank Airport station.

Modified Build Alternatives and Modified Preferred Alternative



Palmdale to Burbank Alternative Alignments



TIMELINE OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROCESS

November 2018: State's Preferred Alternative (Refined SR14) Presented to the Authority Board

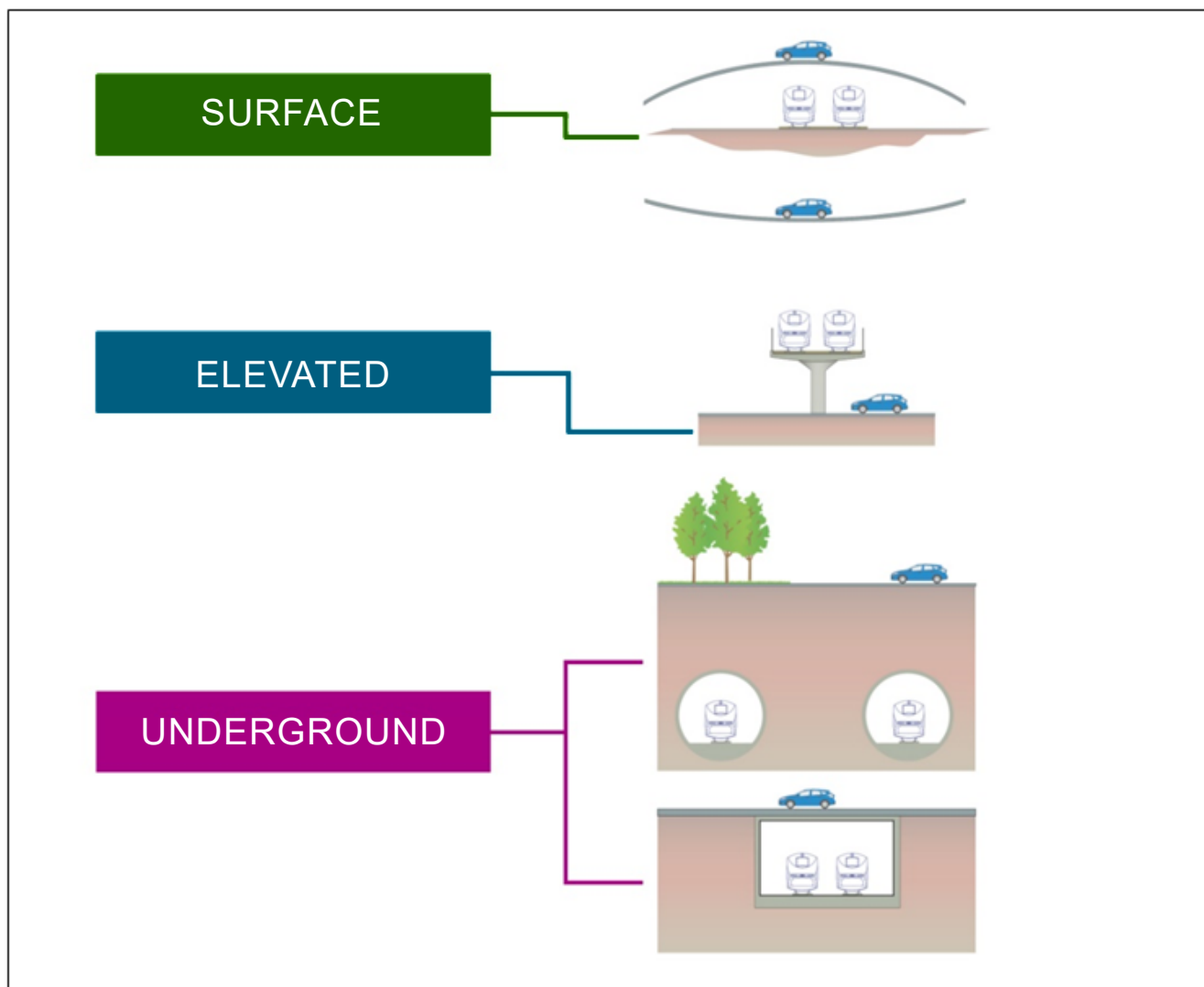
August 2020: Modified Preferred Alternative (SR14A) Presented to the Authority Board

Spring 2021: Release of Draft EIR/EIS, Public & Agency Comment Period & Public Hearings

Comments Addressed & Included in Final EIR/EIS

Spring/Summer 2022: Final EIR/EIS & Project Approvals

Note: The environmental review, consultation, and other actions required by applicable federal environmental laws for this project are being or have been carried out by the State of California pursuant to 23 U.S. Code 327 and a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) dated July 23, 2019, and executed by the Federal Railroad Administration and the State of California. Under that MOU, the Authority is the project's lead agency under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).



ALIGNMENT FEATURES

The Palmdale to Burbank Project Section extends approximately 35 to 41 miles (depending on the alternative) between the proposed Palmdale Transportation Center Station and Hollywood Burbank Airport station. The Palmdale to Burbank Project Section would include surface (at grade), elevated, and underground track sections with varying profiles. The dedicated, grade-separated infrastructure needed to operate high-speed trains has more stringent alignment requirements than those needed for lower-speed trains. Surface tracks would be either at grade or on fill material. Elevated tracks would be on bridge structures. Underground tracks would be in areas with cut slopes and retaining walls or tunnels.

