

Merced to Bakersfield Line: Connecting the Central Valley to California

The electrified high-speed rail line between Merced and Bakersfield is the first building block of the statewide system.

ABOUT THE MERCED TO BAKERSFIELD LINE

This 171-mile line will offer the nation's first true electrified high-speed rail service. Trains will travel in their own, fully grade separated corridor on two tracks at speeds exceeding 200 mph, with stops at five stations in the Central Valley.

WHY MERCED TO BAKERSFIELD?

The Central Valley is home to approximately 6 million residents and is becoming more prominent as the state's third regional economic engine. The Merced to Bakersfield line will travel through this fast-growing region and provide links to Northern and Southern California population and economic centers. The operating line will connect fast growing universities in the Central Valley: UC Merced, Fresno State and CSU Bakersfield.

Building this line will bring significant economic, mobility, climate and air quality benefits to California:

- ▶ **Economic** – In the short term, ongoing construction is projected to produce nearly 200,000 job-years of employment in the Merced to Bakersfield corridor and over \$41 billion in economic activity. In the long-term, it will create direct and indirect jobs that will permanently transform the region;
- ▶ **Mobility** – Faster, safer, more frequent and more reliable passenger rail service and enhanced connections will contribute to significantly higher ridership in the corridor, with 6.6 million projected annual system-wide riders in 2030;
- ▶ **Climate** – Electrified, zero emission trains running on on-site renewable resources will reduce greenhouse gas emissions (CO₂e) approximately to 32,720 metric tons by 2030; and
- ▶ **Air quality** – Central Valley air quality will improve by reducing 183 million annual vehicle miles traveled through higher ridership systemwide and by reducing vehicle emissions and congestion by shifting travel from gas and diesel to electric high-speed trains.





Since construction started on the high-speed rail system, more than 10,000 construction jobs have been created. Most of these jobs have gone to Central Valley residents and men and women from disadvantaged communities.

A CONNECTED REGIONAL NETWORK

The Merced to Bakersfield line represents a major mobility transformation in California by providing the backbone of a connected, integrated and synchronized network detailed by the California Department of Transportation's [State Rail Plan](https://dot.ca.gov/programs/rail-and-mass-transportation/california-state-rail-plan) at dot.ca.gov/programs/rail-and-mass-transportation/california-state-rail-plan.

The Authority is working with its partners on critical planning elements to ensure connectivity to that existing network. This includes:

- ▶ Coordinated rail service schedules with connecting services north of Merced and south of Bakersfield;
- ▶ Infrastructure development at the Merced Station and track connections that will allow Amtrak San Joaquins and the Altamont Corridor Express (ACE) services to terminate at the Merced Station; and
- ▶ A new Merced Station that will feature a new platform that will allow for a cross-platform transfer between San Joaquins trains, ACE and high-speed rail trains.

