

## **Notice of Preparation of an Environmental Impact Report and Scoping Meetings for the Valley Rail Sacramento Extension Project**

**What:** The San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission (SJRRRC) and San Joaquin Joint Powers Authority (SJJPA) intend to jointly prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) consistent with requirements under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The purpose of the EIR is to evaluate the environmental issues associated with the proposed improvements included in the Valley Rail Sacramento Extension Project (Project). SJRRRC will serve as the lead agency under CEQA for the EIR.

The purpose of this notice is to notify agencies, organizations, and individuals that SJRRRC and SJJPA plan to prepare the EIR and to request input on the scope of the environmental analysis to be performed and the alternatives to be considered. SJRRRC invites comments on the scope and context of the environmental information from all relevant public agencies that are germane to each agency's statutory responsibilities regarding the Project. We are also requesting interested individuals' or organizations' views on the scope of the environmental document. The Project would include the implementation of new passenger rail service from the existing Stockton Downtown/Altamont Corridor Express (ACE) Station in Stockton, north to the North Natomas area of Sacramento. The Project would include the addition of both Amtrak® San Joaquins<sup>SM</sup> trains and ACE® trains along the Sacramento Subdivision serving six proposed stations.

The Project includes the potential implementation of two new roundtrip San Joaquins operating on the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) Sacramento, Fresno, and Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway (BNSF) Stockton Subdivisions, as well as an extension of existing ACE service to the proposed Natomas Station. The Project also includes service between the proposed Natomas Station to the Ceres ACE Station included in the ACE Extension Lathrop to Ceres/Merced project.

Improvements necessary for implementation of the Project will be analyzed at a project level of detail in the EIR based on preliminary engineering. Six new stations would be constructed in the following locations: Lodi, south Sacramento (to be named the "Elk Grove" station), Sacramento City College, Midtown, Old North Sacramento, and Natomas (with a shuttle connection to and from the Sacramento International Airport). A new Maintenance and Layover Facility would also be constructed in the vicinity of the proposed Natomas/Sacramento Airport Station.

In addition, track curve reconstruction would occur at four locations along the proposed alignment; upgrades to existing passing siding track would occur at six locations; new passing siding tracks at two locations; and new crossover track would be constructed in one location. Track improvements would take place within the existing railroad right-of-way.

The CEQA Notice of Preparation (NOP) provides a more detailed description of the project and can be viewed online at [www.acerail.com/valley\\_rail](http://www.acerail.com/valley_rail).

**Potential Environmental Effects:** The lead agency has initially determined that the following topics will be included for evaluation in the EIR: Aesthetics, Agricultural Resources, Air Quality, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Energy, Geology and Soils, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Hazardous Materials, Hydrology and Water Quality, Land Use and Planning, Noise and Vibration, Population and Housing, Public Services, Recreation, Transportation and Traffic, and Utilities and Service Systems. The EIR will consider both temporary construction-period and permanent impacts. The EIR will also include a cumulative impact analysis of the impacts of the project in combination with other planned railway projects, transportation improvements, and land use plans and projects in the various cities along the project corridor. SJRRC and SJJPA are seeking comments from agencies, stakeholders, and the public regarding the environmental effects and potential alternatives to be analyzed in the EIR.

**Scoping Meetings:** Public scoping meetings will be held for the Project at the following locations:

Monday, September 30, 2019 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.  
Hutchins Street Square Community Center, Thomas Theatre Gallery  
125 South Hutchins Street  
Lodi, CA 95240

Tuesday, October 1, 2019 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.  
Stanford Settlement Neighborhood Center  
450 West El Camino Avenue  
Sacramento, CA 95833

Wednesday, October 2, 2019 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.  
Coloma Community Center, Grass Valley Room  
4623 T Street  
Sacramento, CA 95819

The scoping meetings will provide an opportunity for the lead agency to provide further details on the Project and to give interested agencies, organizations, and individuals an opportunity to comment on the scope and content of the EIR.

**Scoping Comments:** Written responses and comments on the scope of the Valley Rail Sacramento Extension Project will be accepted until 6:00 PM on Monday, October 14, 2019. Comments may be sent via email to [ace.sacramentoextension@gmail.com](mailto:ace.sacramentoextension@gmail.com), or via mail to:

San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission  
Attn: Valley Rail Sacramento Extension NOP  
949 E. Channel Street  
Stockton, CA 95202

Please include "Valley Rail Sacramento Extension NOP" in the subject heading for emailed comments.