



REC Support for the California High Speed Rail Authority

In a letter dated [January 14, 2022](#), the Rail Electrification Council (REC) expressed support for the California High Speed Rail Authority's (CHSRA) electrification project in the Central Valley. The CHSRA is responsible for planning, building, and operating the nation's first high-speed rail system. The project will fundamentally transform transportation mobility in the state, spur economic growth, create a cleaner environment, preserve agricultural lands and natural habitats, and create thousands of jobs. Construction currently spans 119 miles across the Madera, Fresno, Kings, Tulare, and Kern Counties in the Central Valley.

The REC acknowledges that electrification is already considered the best energy source for high-density urban and commuter rail services in its letter of support. The letter referenced the REC's Whitepaper on [The Value of Rail Electrification](#), which identifies the challenges associated with rail electrification, its benefits, and a path to achieving them. The Council commended CHSRA's vision and foresight. The project will have a dedicated right of way without grade crossings (both road and other rail lines) to allow passenger trains to run at high speeds safely.

There are many viable options for rail electrification, each dependent upon a clear business case with an analysis of its costs and benefits, its financing and regulation, and its impacted stakeholders. The CHSRA has done this by choosing the overhead contact system electrification method for this project.



Photo courtesy of Railway Age