



Notice of Preparation

FROM: Stefan Galvez-Abadia
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SUBJECT: Notice of Preparation of a Project-Level Environmental Impact Report for the Central Valley Heavy Maintenance Facility Project

The California High-Speed Rail Authority (Authority), as the lead agency for the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) process for the proposed California High-Speed Rail (HSR) System, is issuing this Notice of Preparation (NOP) for preparing an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Central Valley Heavy Maintenance Facility (HMF) Project. The Authority also intends to separately publish a Notice of Intent (NOI) for initiating public scoping under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) as needed for preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The project-level document will tier from the program environmental document that was prepared for the statewide HSR system in 2005 and will assess the effects of the HMF in more detail than the first-tier environmental document.

This NOP initiates the project-level CEQA process and the preparation of an EIR for the Central Valley HMF Project. The Authority is issuing this NOP to solicit public and agency input on the development of the scope of the EIR and to advise the public that outreach activities will be conducted by the Authority and its representatives in the preparation of the CEQA and NEPA documents.

Pursuant to U.S. Code (U.S.C.) Title 23 Section 327, under the NEPA Assignment Memorandum of Understanding between the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) and the State of California, amended July 22, 2024, the Authority is the federal lead agency for environmental reviews and approvals for all Authority Phase 1 and Phase 2 California HSR System projects, including ancillary facilities, such as the proposed Central Valley HMF Project. In this role, the Authority is the project sponsor and the lead federal agency for complying with NEPA and other federal laws for the California HSR System, including the Central Valley HMF Project. The FRA will publish an NOI in the *Federal Register*, announcing the intention to initiate the federal environmental review process for the Central Valley HMF Project.

The Authority and the FRA completed a *Final Program EIR/EIS for the Proposed California High-Speed Train System* (Statewide Program EIR/EIS) in 2005 as the first phase of a tiered environmental review process for the proposed California HSR System. The Statewide Program EIR/EIS established the purpose and need for the HSR system, analyzed an HSR alternative, and compared it with a No Project/No Action Alternative and a modal alternative that involved expanding airports, freeways, and conventional rail to meet the State's future transportation needs. The Authority certified the Statewide Program EIR under CEQA and approved the proposed HSR system, and the FRA issued a Record of Decision under NEPA for the Statewide Program EIS. The Authority and FRA made the following first-tier programmatic decisions: selected the HSR alternative for intercity passenger travel in California between the major metropolitan centers of Sacramento and the San Francisco Bay Area in the north, through the Central Valley, and the cities of Los Angeles and San Diego in the south; selected very high-speed, electrified steel-wheel-on-steel-rail technology; selected certain general alignment corridors and general station locations to be studied in more detail in second-tier environmental documents; and adopted programmatic mitigation strategies and design practices.

PROJECT BACKGROUND: The Central Valley HMF Project EIR will be a second-tier environmental document for evaluating an essential operational component of the future system. It is tiered from and incorporates by reference the Statewide Program EIR/EIS in accordance with State of California CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations Tit. 14, 15168[b] and [d]). Tiering ensures that the Central Valley HMF Project EIR builds upon all previous work prepared for and incorporated in the Statewide Program EIR/EIS. This EIR will also build on previous evaluation of 11 potential HMF sites, 9 of which were evaluated in the 2012 Merced to Fresno Project Section Final EIR/EIS and the 2014 Fresno to Bakersfield Project Section Final EIR/EIS, and 2 additional potential HMF sites that the City of Merced identified within its sphere of influence after the Authority Board's approval of the Merced to Fresno Project Section and the Fresno to Bakersfield Project Section in 2012 and 2014, respectively. A preferred site for the Central Valley HMF was not identified in either the Merced to Fresno or the Fresno to Bakersfield Project Section EIR/EIS documents and was deferred to a future environmental document. The Authority is now initiating preparation of this project-level EIR for the Central Valley HMF Project (proposed project) at the Fresno site location and will include an evaluation of feasible alternatives.

To develop a reasonable range of potentially feasible alternatives to the Central Valley HMF Project, the Authority prepared the *Central Valley Heavy Maintenance Facility Site Selection Report* (Authority 2026a) and the *Central Valley Heavy Maintenance Facility – Incorporation of Revised Designs at the Fresno and Hanford Site Alternatives into the Site Selection Report* (Authority 2026b) (herein referred to as Site Selection Reports), which include a screening analysis of the previously mentioned 11 potential HMF sites (the 9 sites identified in the prior environmental documents and the 2 additional sites subsequently identified by the City of Merced) to determine a reasonable range of HMF sites to be carried forward for further evaluation in the Central Valley HMF Project EIR. Figure 1 shows the potential sites evaluated in the Site Selection Reports and the two sites that will be carried forward for evaluation in the Draft EIR. Based on the Site Selection Reports' evaluation, the Authority determined the Fresno and Hanford site locations for the Central Valley HMF provide a reasonable range of potentially feasible site alternatives to be carried forward for further analysis in the EIR, with the Fresno site location as the proposed project. As part of the upcoming scoping process, other sites, variations, and considerations may be identified for further evaluation in the EIR. Figure 2 shows a conceptual site layout.

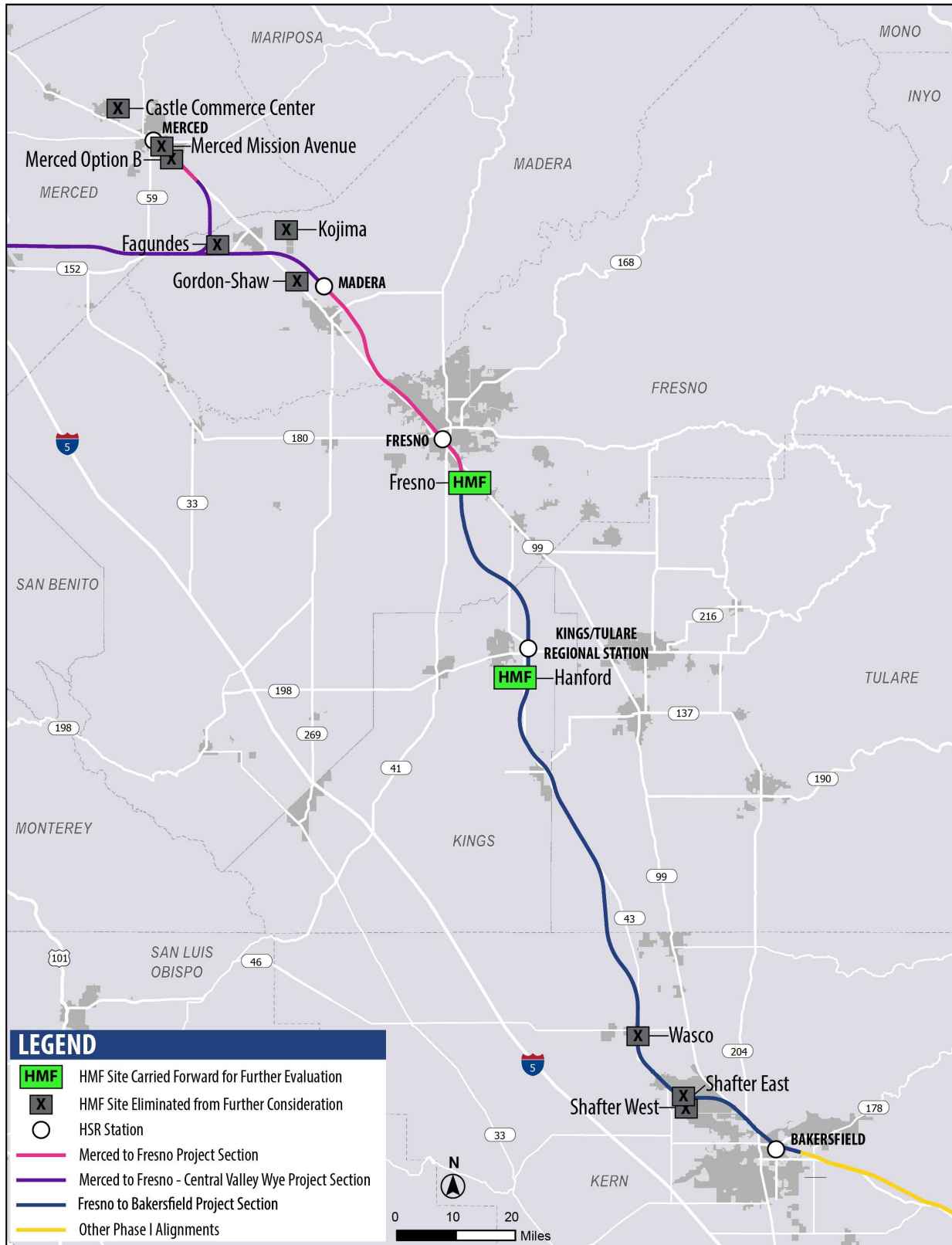


Figure 1 Sites Evaluated in the Site Selection Report

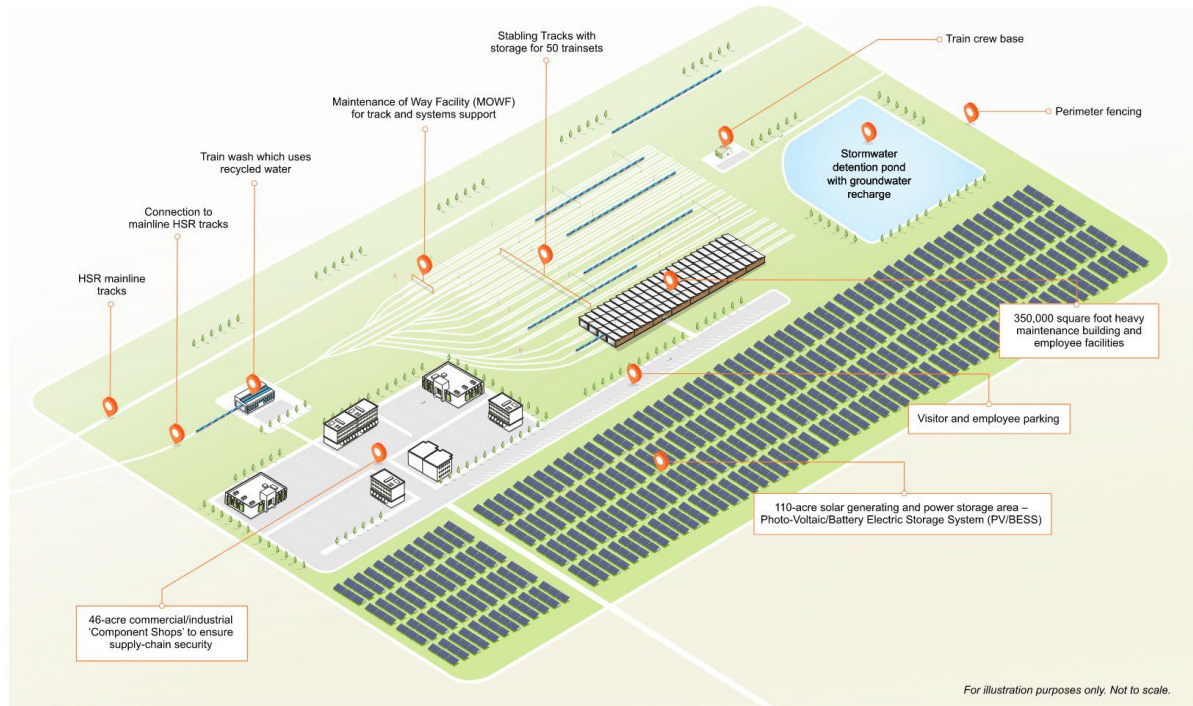


Figure 2 Conceptual Site Layout

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The Authority proposes to construct and operate an HMF to support the full range of Phase 1 (San Francisco – Los Angeles/Anaheim) HSR operation and maintenance activities, including crewing, servicing, heavy repairs, and storage of trains, while also providing accommodations for staff and operations management.

Key components of both HMF alternatives include:

- Two independent points of access to the HSR mainline.
- Stabling tracks to provide designated parking areas for trainsets that are not in active service.
- Servicing platforms to support regular interior cleaning and to prepare trains for service, crew platforms and support structures, exterior cleaning, and support structures.
- Vehicle maintenance shops to include support for regular ongoing light and heavy maintenance of trainsets, low-speed dynamic testing, static testing, and switching, coupling, uncoupling, and lifting of train cars. The vehicle maintenance shops would also include a wheel reprofiling track support shops and offices and areas for storage of materials and equipment.
- A component shop campus to support long-term operational resilience of the Phase 1 HSR system and domestic supply-chain security for HSR critical parts, components, and specialist services.
- A solar array and battery energy storage system consisting of solar panels mounted on racks that would generate and store energy to support the HMF operations.
- Additional areas, such as parking lots (employee and visitor), access roads (including improvements to the adjacent roadway network), stormwater detention ponds, utilities, fences, and other facilities, that could include, but would not be limited to, cart storage facilities, crew transfer buildings, a cleaning crew building, a waste facility for waste products awaiting off-site disposal, a substation, and an emergency generator.

The preparation of this Central Valley HMF Project EIR will involve development of preliminary engineering designs and assessment of environmental effects associated with the construction, operation, and maintenance of the proposed project.

The Central Valley HMF Project EIR will examine a range of HMF alternative sites, as well as a No Project Alternative. This project-level EIR will describe site-specific environmental impacts, identify specific mitigation measures to address those impacts, and incorporate design practices to avoid and minimize potentially significant environmental impacts. The Authority will assess the site characteristics, size, nature, and timing of proposed site-specific projects to determine whether impacts can be avoided or mitigated. The EIR will identify and evaluate the impacts from construction, operation, and maintenance of the HMF. Information and documents regarding this HSR environmental review process will be available through the Authority's website: hsr.ca.gov/CVHMF-environmental-documents.

DATES: Written comments on the scope of the Central Valley HMF Project EIR should be provided to the Authority starting August 14, 2026, and must be received by the Authority on or before September 14, 2026, as noted below. Public scoping meetings are scheduled on August 25–27, 2026, with further information provided below. Comments may also be provided orally or in writing at the scoping meetings.

ADDRESSES: Written comments on the scope should be sent to Stefan Galvez-Abadia, Director of Environmental Services, ATTN: Central Valley HMF Scoping Comment, California High-Speed Rail Authority, 770 L Street, Suite 620, Sacramento, CA 95814, or via email with subject line "Central Valley HMF Scoping Comment" to HMF@hsr.ca.gov.

Comments may also be submitted online through the project webpage at hsr.ca.gov/CVHMF-environmental-documents.

Oral comments or questions may be provided by calling (559) 248-1060.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Stefan Galvez-Abadia at the above-noted address.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION: The Authority was established in 1996 and is authorized and directed by statute to undertake the planning for the development of a proposed statewide HSR network that is fully coordinated with other public transportation services. The Authority adopted a Business Plan in June 2000 that reviewed the economic feasibility of an 800-mile-long HSR system capable of speeds in excess of 200 miles per hour on a mostly dedicated, fully grade-separated, state-of-the-art track. The Authority has released several updated Business Plans since June 2000, with the latest version adopted in June 2026. As discussed in the June 2026 Business Plan, the Authority is currently considering identifying public/private partners to support Central Valley projects.

Project Objectives: The goal of the Authority is to plan, build, and operate an HSR system coordinated with California's existing transportation network, particularly intercity rail and bus lines, commuter rail lines, urban rail lines, highways, and airports. In accordance with Section 15124 of the *State CEQA Guidelines*, the Authority has adopted the following objectives for the proposed Central Valley HMF:

- Support Phase 1 of the California HSR System.
- Ensure capacity for servicing and storing the Phase 1 HSR trainset fleet.
- Configure the HMF to maximize operational efficiency and minimize adverse effects on the revenue service plan.
- Minimize overall operation and maintenance costs.
- Maximize use of existing HSR rights-of-way and transportation corridors.
- Minimize conflicts with existing freight rail services.
- Maximize regional connectivity and accessibility by situating the HMF with direct access to major roads.
- Locate the HMF proximate to a regional population center and skilled workforce.

- Ensure long-term operational resilience of the Phase 1 HSR system, as well as domestic supply chain security for HSR critical parts, components, and specialized services, in a component shop campus.
- Integrate on-site renewable energy generation and storage.
- Minimize or avoid impacts on environmental and community resources.
- Ensure constructability and minimize implementation risk.

Alternatives: The Central Valley HMF Project EIR will consider a No Project Alternative, the Central Valley HMF at the Fresno site location, and an alternative site location at Hanford (Figure 3 and Figure 4).

No Project Alternative: The No Project Alternative represents the conditions at the potential HMF sites as they existed in 2026 and as they would exist based on programmed and funded improvements for the sites through 2040, taking into account the following sources of information: the State Transportation Improvement Program, regional transportation plans for all modes of travel, and city and county plans.

HMF Site Locations:

- **Fresno HMF (Proposed Project):** The Fresno HMF would be south of the approved Fresno HSR Station on a site in unincorporated Fresno County. As shown in Figure 3, the Fresno HMF, with the exception of the solar array and battery energy storage system, would be bordered by E Malaga Avenue to the north, the HSR mainline and BNSF Railway mainline to the east, the Washington Colony Canal to the south, and S Cedar Avenue to the west. The solar array and battery energy storage system would be bounded by E Malaga Avenue to the north, S Cedar Avenue to the east, and S Orange Avenue to the west, and would be adjacent to rural single-family residential uses and agricultural land to the south along E American Avenue.
- **Hanford HMF:** The Hanford HMF would be south of the approved Kings-Tulare HSR Station on a site in unincorporated Kings County. As shown in Figure 4, the site is bordered by Houston Avenue to the north, the HSR mainline to the east, Idaho Avenue to the south, and agricultural land to the west.

Probable Environmental Effects: The purpose of the EIR process is to explore, in a public setting, the effects of a proposed project on the physical, human, and natural environment. The Authority will evaluate the potential environmental, social, and economic impacts of the construction and operation of the proposed Central Valley HMF. Probable environmental effects include impacts on agricultural farmlands, air quality, biological and aquatic resources, cultural resources, and noise and vibration impacts. Other impact areas to be addressed include, but are not limited to, transportation; greenhouse gas emissions and global climate change; public utilities and energy; hydrology and water resources; geology, soils, seismicity, and paleontological resources; hazardous materials and wastes; land use and development; parks, recreation, and open space; aesthetics and visual quality; and regional growth. Measures to avoid, minimize, and mitigate adverse impacts will be identified and evaluated.

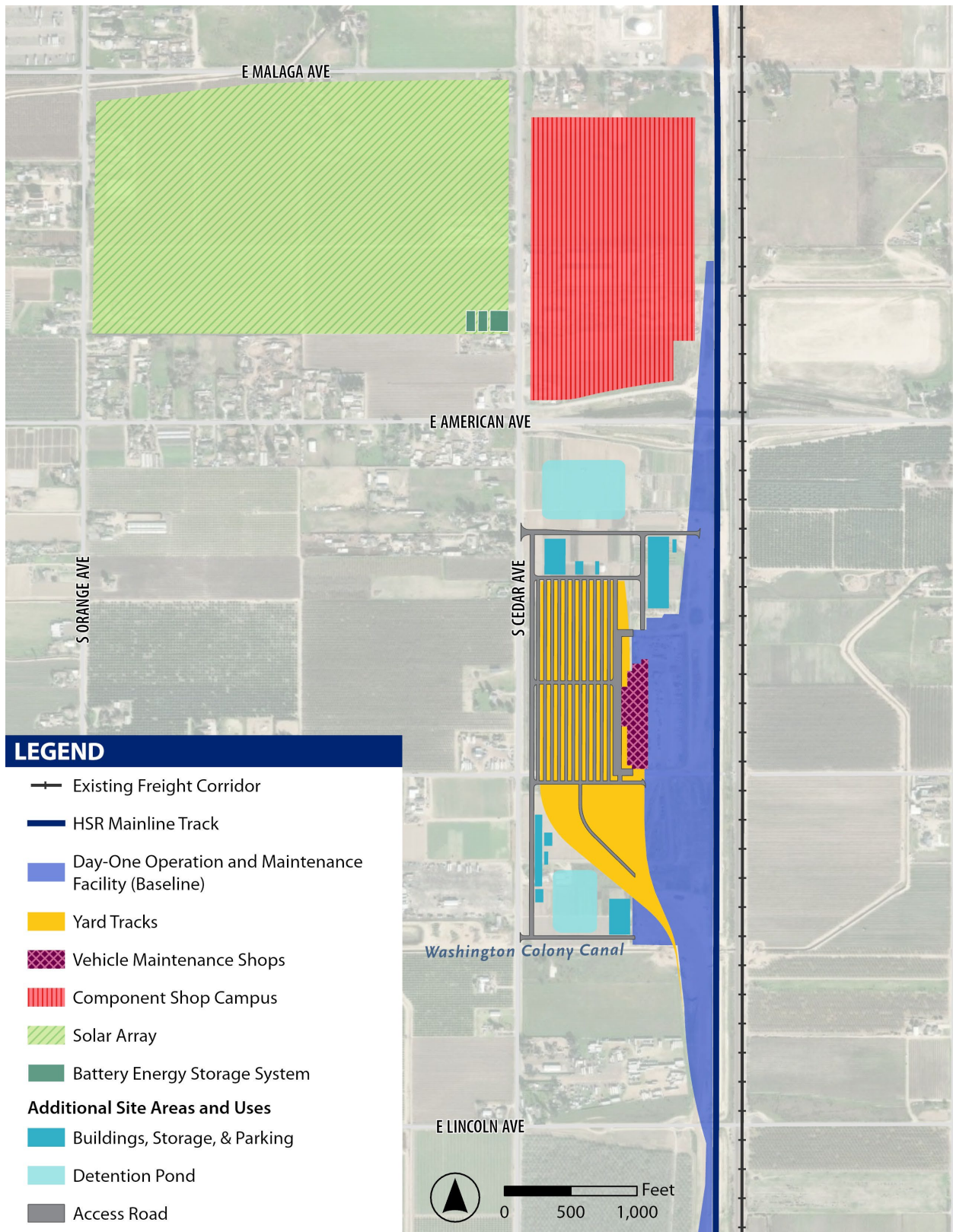


Figure 3 Fresno HMF Site

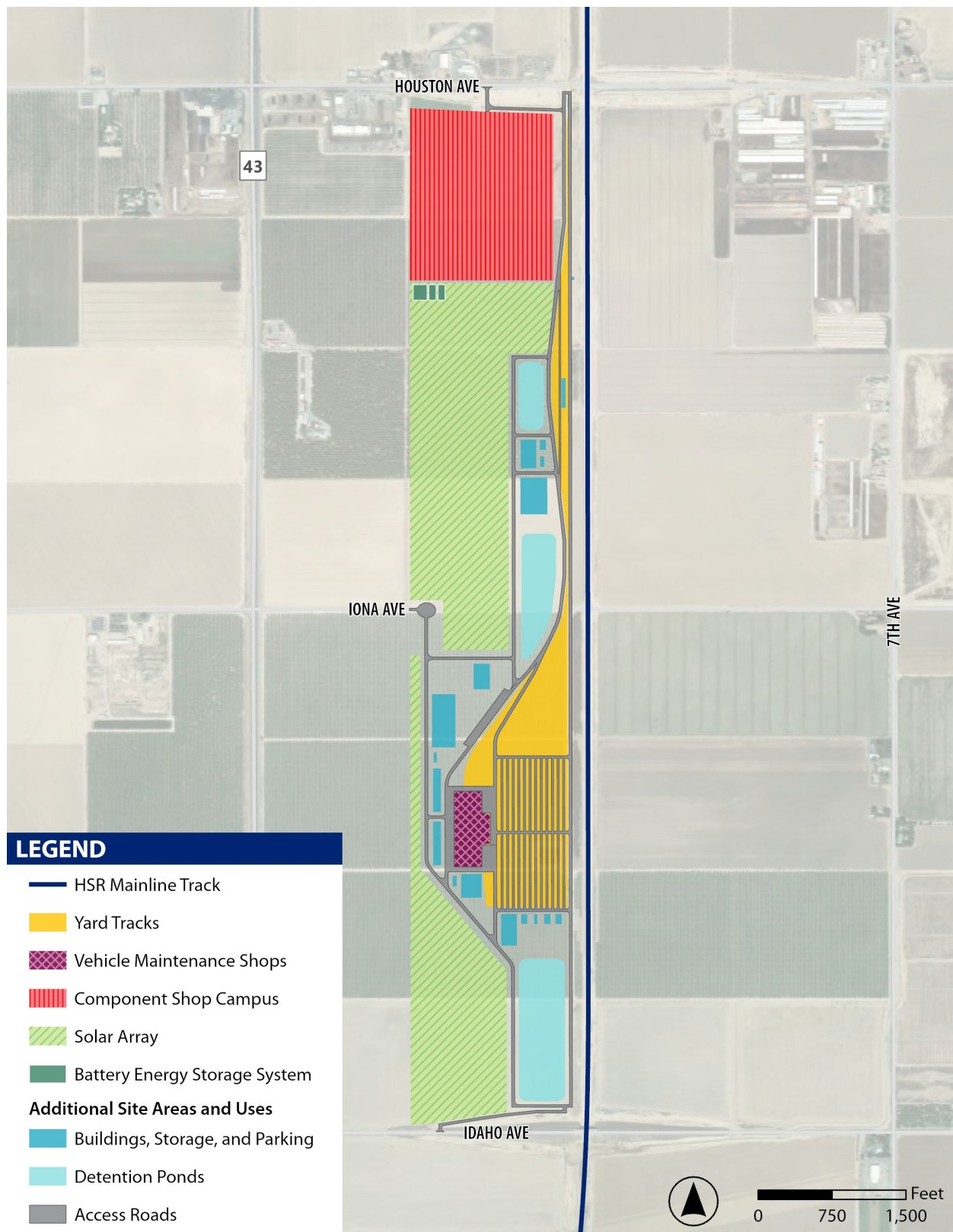


Figure 4 Hanford HMF Site

Scoping and Comments: The Authority encourages broad participation in the EIR process during scoping and review of the resulting environmental documents. The Authority is issuing this NOP to solicit public and agency input into the development of the scope of the EIR for the Central Valley HMF Project and to advise the public that the Authority will consider the public and agency input it receives in the preparation of the environmental document. Comments and suggestions on the scope elements described in this NOP are invited from all interested agencies, Native American Tribes, and the public to ensure the full range of issues related to the Central Valley HMF (proposed project) and a reasonable range of alternatives are addressed. In particular, the Authority is interested in determining whether there are areas of environmental concern where there might be potential for impacts identifiable at a project level. In response to this NOP, public agencies with jurisdiction are requested to advise the Authority of the applicable permit and environmental review requirements of each agency, as well as the scope and content of the environmental information that is germane to the agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project. Public scoping meetings have been scheduled as an important component of the scoping process for the state environmental review. The scoping meetings described in this NOP will also be advertised locally and included in additional public notification. Scoping meetings are scheduled as follows:

- **Scoping Meeting #1 (In-Person): Tuesday, August 25, 2026, 5:00 p.m.–6:00 p.m.**
California High-Speed Rail Authority – Central Valley Regional Office
1111 H Street
Fresno, CA 93721
- **Scoping Meeting #2 (In-Person): Wednesday, August 26, 2026, 5:00 p.m.–6:00 p.m.**
Hanford Civic Auditorium
400 North Douty Street
Hanford, CA 93230
- **Scoping Meeting #3 (Virtual): Thursday, August 27, 2026, 5:00 p.m.–6:00 p.m.**
Register for the meeting at: hsr.ca.gov/CVHMF-environmental-documents

Public agencies are requested to send their responses to this NOP to the Authority at the **earliest possible date but not later than 5:00 p.m. on September 14, 2026.**

Please send your response and direct any comments or questions regarding this project to Stefan Galvez-Abadia of the California High-Speed Rail Authority at the address shown above.

Date: 11/08/2026

Signature: *Stefan Galvez*

260811 HSR CV HMF - NOP_FINAL

Final Audit Report

2026-08-12

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