



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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New High-Speed Rail Workforce Development Center Planned for City of Selma

Fresno, Calif. – The California High-Speed Rail Authority (Authority) has partnered with the City of Selma to create a workforce development center that will provide pre-apprenticeship classes and hands-on construction industry training for residents up and down the Central Valley who are looking for work on the nation’s first High-Speed Rail project. This center and its programs are aimed at serving veterans, at-risk young adults, minority and low-income populations between the counties of Fresno, Kings, Tulare, Kern, Madera and Merced. The center will open this summer in a time when the state and the nation will look to identify expanded employment opportunities for individuals whose employment has been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

“This new workforce development center is not only a tremendous benefit for the City of Selma, but the entire Central Valley,” said Selma Mayor Louis Franco. “The partnership the City and the Authority have developed to provide pre-apprenticeship training will give residents of Selma and the Central Valley the opportunity to enter into a career pathway that will afford a better quality of life for themselves and their families. As we all deal with the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and global recession, the California High-Speed Rail Workforce Development Center will be a significant asset to our recovery.”

“Through this training center, we can equip the men and women of California to continue building monumental projects like the High-Speed Rail system. This is a step forward, not only for this project, but for our workforce across the state,” said Authority Vice Chair Tom Richards.

“We identified the city of Selma to send a message that we are reaching out to rural communities,” said Authority Board Member Henry Perea. “Selma’s proximity to other cities allows us to bring quality programs to our residents and prepare them for a rewarding career in the construction industry.”

Pre-apprenticeship courses taught by skilled craft persons in the trades will provide students 16 weeks of customized classroom instruction to help fulfill the labor force training needed for the High-Speed Rail project. Hands-on shop training and instructional project work will be provided to students, along with industry specific certifications. Job placement assistance will be provided to all graduating students of the program through coordination with the High-Speed Rail project and its contractors.

Key components of the curriculum will include:

- Orientation to the construction industry
- Surveying and blueprint reading
- Fundamentals of structural steel and ironwork
- Fundamentals of framing, form, foundation work, and cement work
- Basic electrical and wiring work

- Hazardous waste and lead abatement training
- Computer Assisted Drafting (CAD)
- Construction-related physical fitness training and job safety

In coordination with the Federal Railroad Administration, the Authority established the training center in the city of Selma to fulfill the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program as part of its California Environmental Quality Act requirement to address impacts on environmental justice populations and maximize local employment opportunities with the High-Speed Rail project.

In just the first week of April, more than 800 workers were dispatched to 32 active construction sites between Madera and Kern counties. Since the start of construction, more than 3,700 construction workers have been dispatched to work on the High-Speed Rail project. There are now more than 550 certified small businesses also working to build the Central Valley segment.

For more information on pre-apprenticeship training programs visit: <https://www.hsrjobs.com/>