



Report: Improving rail service between Central Valley and Bay Area could create thousands of jobs

- *Most would be in construction*
- *But hundreds of on-gong jobs also would be created*

If a long-discussed plan to improve passenger rail service between the Central Valley and the Bay Area ever gets to the “shovel” stages, tens of thousands of new construction jobs would be created, according to a report made to the Tri-Valley – San Joaquin Valley Regional Rail Authority Board.

The so-called “Valley Link” project’s construction phase would create 22,000 jobs with worker income of \$1.35 billion, says the analysis prepared by PGH Wong Engineering Inc. using a tool created by the American Public Transportation Association.

The analysis also predicts that:

- The construction phase would also generate \$3.5 billion in local business sales;
- When operational, Valley Link would support 400 jobs per year with labor income of over \$19 million per year, and,
- Valley Link would also generate \$69 million in business sales annually.

Currently, the Central Valley is connected to Silicon Valley by the Altamont Commuter Express rail system between downtown Stockton and downtown San Jose. Although using modern diesel locomotives and passenger cars, the trains creak along over a right of way owned by Union Pacific and ordinally built in the 1800s. The passenger trains also must give way to slow-moving freight trains.

“I am very pleased by the results of this analysis of the economic impact of Valley Link. This project will not only get our vital workforce to their jobs once complete but will also add 22,000 jobs to boost the economy during the construction phase,” says Alameda County Supervisor and Regional Rail Authority Chairman Scott Haggerty.

Tracy City Council member and Regional Rail Authority vice chairman Veronica Vargas says the improved rail corridor would provide nearly 30,000 rides a day to commuters “eager to have relief from congestion on the I-580. And, in a time of economic stress with the COVID-19

pandemic, Valley Link can provide a significant job stimulus in the region.”

The first phase of the proposed Valley Link rail service would cover 42 miles connecting the existing Dublin/Pleasanton BART station to the proposed ACE North Lathrop station. A second phase would extend service from the North Lathrop station to the ACE and Amtrak Stockton station. Trains would be scheduled to allow for convenient transfers to BART. The first Valley Link trains could be placed in service as early as 2027.