



Nevada High-Speed Rail Authority

FACT SHEET

WHO: Nevada High-Speed Rail Authority (NHSRA or Authority)

Governor Brian Sandoval appointed five members to the Authority:

- **George Smith**, executive vice president of Bank of America Merrill Lynch (Authority chairman)
- **Fred Dilger**, principal of Black Mountain Research
- **Peter Thomas**, managing partner of Thomas and Mack Company
- **Tina Quigley**, chief executive officer of the Regional Transportation Commission of Southern Nevada (RTC) (**NOTE:** Effective June 30, 2019, Ms. Quigley no longer served on the Authority.)
- **Hualiang (Harry) Teng**, director of railroad, high-speed rail, and transit initiative and associate professor in the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas

WHAT: The Authority is tasked with facilitating the implementation of a high-speed rail system connecting southern California and southern Nevada. This includes selecting a franchisee to construct and operate the system. The Authority will adhere to the following criteria when selecting a franchisee:

- The extent to which environmental studies have been completed;
- Confirmation of the level of private investment;
- A review of the readiness of a potential franchisee to engage in construction of the system; and
- Pending or completed permit applications to implement the system.

WHEN: Authority members were appointed on September 10, 2015, and met during the Authority's first public meeting on September 29, 2015. Following the meeting, a public notice soliciting applications for a franchisee was posted in four locations:

- **Clark County Government Center**, 500 S. Grand Central Parkway, Las Vegas, NV
- **City of Henderson**, 240 S. Water Street, Henderson, NV
- **Regional Justice Center**, 200 Lewis Avenue, Las Vegas, NV
- **Regional Transportation Commission of Southern Nevada**, 600 S. Grand Central Parkway, Las Vegas, NV

The application submission deadline was October 26, 2015. The NHSRA members expected to select a franchisee no later than November 30, 2015. The Authority

selected XpressWest as the franchisee at the NHSRA's November 18, 2015 meeting. Virgin Trains USA acquired XpressWest and the transaction closed in March 2019.

WHERE:

The Authority's meetings will be held at the RTC's administration building at 600 S. Grand Central Parkway, Las Vegas, NV 89106.

WHY:

The statutory purpose of implementing a high-speed rail system is to:

- Provide economic benefits to both southern California and southern Nevada;
- Reduce reliance on gasoline- and diesel-fueled engines and encourage the use of alternative energy sources;
- Reduce congestion and travel delay on Interstate-15;
- Provide a working example of a transportation system that could play an essential role in the development of future commuter and high-speed rail service; and
- Provide quick and convenient transportation service for residents and visitors in southern California and southern Nevada.

The RTC is providing staff support and facilities for the Authority. The RTC is participating in the Nevada High-Speed Rail Authority because it is responsible for transportation planning and encouraging multi-modal transportation options in southern Nevada, including rail.

HOW:

Passed during the 78th legislative session, Senate Bill 457 authorized the governor to develop the Nevada High-Speed Rail Authority, which will select and oversee the franchisee.

The selected franchisee may, with the assistance of the Authority, acquire or gain control of use of land for the system, conduct engineering and other studies related to selection and acquisition of land, and accept funding from a variety of public and private entities.

The selected franchisee must coordinate the implementation with all governmental entities that have jurisdiction over the system, including, without limitation, the relevant counties and the Nevada Department of Transportation.