

## **Toyota Place Announces VRRRM Program**

By Toyota Place

In the Sacramento Bee, Friday, November 26, 2010

GARDEN GROVE, Calif., Nov. 26, 2010 -- /PRNewswire/ -- Toyota Place announces the launch of Vehicle Repair, Retirement and Replacement for Motorists program sponsored by the Foundation for California Community Colleges. From a \$20 million funding grant, the state program will be launched with an aim of improving air quality.

The fight to reduce air pollution caused by vehicles has been an ongoing battle throughout the years. Now, the possibility for cleaner air has become more prevalent as the Foundation for California Community Colleges has raised enough money to launch a program aimed at improving California's air quality.

Their program is called the VRRRM program, which stands for Vehicle Repair, Retirement, and Replacement for Motorists program. This will bring clean air and fuel efficiency benefits to California by repairing, retiring, and replacing 17,000 polluting cars and removing more than 850 tons of pollutants from California's airways over the next three years. Several government agencies have worked together in developing the VRRRM program including the California Bureau of Automotive Repair, California Air Resources Board, South Coast Air Quality Management District and the [San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District](#). Toyota Place will be one of the first commercial locations promoting the clean air initiative and will be offering a cash incentive for participants.

"This is a significant step forward for California's air quality," said Paul Lanning, Ed.D., President and CEO of the Foundation for California Community Colleges. "This program represents a collaboration of multiple agencies involved in California's air quality management. It will infuse much-needed funds back into the state's economy while tapping into the educational and training resources of the California Community Colleges, the largest system of higher education in the world."

Through the year 2013, VRRRM (pronounced "vroom") will provide incentives for motorists to repair, retire or replace their high-emitting vehicles, thereby reducing overall vehicle emissions. Toyota Place will use VRRRM to supplement already-existing programs to add momentum to the fight for cleaner air. In addition, the program will involve student assistants at more than 30 different college sites who will aid with outreach to local communities through weekend events held on campuses.

## **Board asked to OK start of construction on rail**

By Charles Doud

Madera Tribune, Friday, November 26, 2010

The California High-Speed Rail Authority board will be asked next week to approve construction of the first portion of the planned 700-plus-mile system - starting in south Madera County and ending in Corcoran, Kings County.

Terms of a federal grant require the project to be built in the Central Valley.

Authority officials on Wednesday said in a news conference that the first leg of the system, some 65 miles long, would start (or end, depending on direction) about three miles south of Madera, where the hamlet of Borden used to be, between Avenues 11 and 12.

It then would bridge the San Joaquin River, then roll through Fresno on elevated towers reaching as high as 60 feet, after which it would follow the Burlington Northern track south to Wildflower, where it would veer east, according to a map provided by the authority staff.

## **Madera-Corcoran route recommended for rail**

Written by Business Journal staff

The Business journal, Wednesday, 24 November 2010

The California High-Speed Rail Authority announced a recommendation on how to invest an initial \$4.3 billion dedicated to the state's proposed 800-mile high-speed rail route.

The recommendation, which will be decided upon by the Authority's Board of Directors on Dec. 2, calls for 65 miles of track starting near Madera with new stations in Downtown Fresno and another east of Hanford.

With nearly \$3 billion in federal money matched by state funds, the initial section would stretch south near Corcoran using \$4.15 of funds currently set aside for the project. If necessary, additional track would connect to existing rail lines of Burlington North Santa Fe as per a federal "independent utility" requirement so that Amtrak can link with the high-speed track to boost its capacity.

Draft environmental documents for the project will be circulated beginning in January while the federal government requires construction to ensue no later than September 2012.

The Authority estimates that the \$4.3 billion investment will be able to create up to 80,000 jobs from construction and related duties while also expressing its commitment in supporting more solar energy projects, which will be relied upon to power the train.

Even with the first section built, no trains would run on the track until metropolitan areas like San Francisco and Los Angeles are factored in to the rail system to justify operations.

"We're not in the business of building a short piece of track. We're in the business of building from the Bay to L.A. and only then will we have true high speed rail," said the Authority's Deputy Executive Director Jeff Barker.

[Bakersfield Californian Editorial, Thursday, Nov, 25, 2010:](#)

### **Staff makes the wrong call on initial bullet-train route**

Somebody needs to better explain how California High-Speed Rail is best served by an initial test track that links Madera to Corcoran, as was recommended Wednesday by the agency's staff.

If, as we've been told, the first bullet-train connection is supposed to represent a functionally independent segment of the project -- that is, useful in the long term to a significant number of Californians even if the ambitious system never comes fully to fruition -- the staff recommendation misses the mark badly.

A Bakersfield-to-Fresno link would connect the two largest cities in the Central Valley, thereby creating the greatest possible ridership potential at this early stage of development. It would create an important transportation option in Bakersfield, where [the nation's worst air pollution](#) lingers, and, along the many miles where it would parallel heavily traveled freeways, it would create an ongoing, visual reminder of the progress -- an underappreciated consideration.

Instead, the HSR staff would first link Corcoran, home of Corcoran State Prison, and Madera. That ought to sound great to the prison guards who commute daily from Fresno, but it won't do much to achieve the Central Valley cohesiveness that regional leaders have long sought.

The final decision comes Dec. 2. We hope the governing board changes course.