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California bullet train wants to haul some economic stimulus money

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- **Says it will seek up to \$2 Billion**
- **Could be used for a Central Valley project**

California's proposed high-speed rail system – the bullet train – could use as much a \$2 billion of the federal economic stimulus package signed into law Tuesday by President Barack Obama, says Quentin Kopp, chairman of the California High-Speed Rail Authority, which is charged with building the bullet train route in the state.

"The Department of Transportation will be issuing guidelines for how competitive grants will be awarded within 120 days. The California High-Speed Rail Authority has outlined for our Congressional leaders how it can utilize at least \$2 billion of the allocation by the Sept. 30, 2012 deadline and will continue to prepare and refine its official application over the next several months as guidelines are known," Mr. Kopp says.

Those initial projects could include right-of-way purchase and construction grading of a heavy maintenance facility in the Central Valley, he says. No specific location was mentioned.

Other specific projects for which funding can be applied in California by the September 2012 timeline outlined in the legislation include:

- Grade separations, which prevent auto or pedestrian cross traffic on the high-speed train line, in the Los Angeles to Anaheim corridor
- Street and pedestrian crossing construction in San Bruno in the Bay Area
- Two storage "layover" facilities in the Bay Area and Los Angeles basin, respectively
- Design and procurement for the electrification of the system from San Jose to San Francisco, including train controls, and commuter vehicles

"All of these projects will advance the California high-speed rail construction schedule and will have a significantly beneficial effect on California's economy throughout construction and permanently thereafter," Mr. Kopp says.

He claims they will create "hundreds of thousands" of new jobs for Californians.

If built as currently envisioned, the high-speed train service would cover 800 miles at speeds over 220 MPH. Voters approved Proposition 1A on the November 2008 ballot for the initial funding of what will be America's first high-speed train system.

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Artist's conception of bullet train pulling into the Fresno station sometime in the future. (CHSRA illustration)