

Benefits of High Speed Rail to Freight

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Improved and New Infrastructure

- In 2006, maintenance spending on railways exceeded \$10B.
- New (shared) infrastructure reduces maintenance costs
- Rail freight is concerned with reliability (not speed)
- Upgrades (e.g. double-tracking) improve reliability

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Capacity Enhancement

- Unlike traditional passenger service, HSR has no negative impacts on rail freight
- Positive impacts include
 - Improved signalization
 - Higher frequency
 - Higher speeds

Continued

Capacity Enhancement (continued)

- For freight rail lines operating at capacity, benefits of HSR are equivalent to a 10% increase in demand
- For lines operating below capacity, benefits include reliability and potential future benefits

Secondary Benefits

- For ports: relieve pressure of backlog at terminals, container volumes can increase
- For drayage: Shorter haul times and additional business
- For shippers: over medium and long distance, reduced cost as shift from trucks to rail

Additional Benefits

- Air quality: Shift from truck to rail reduces emissions
- Passenger rail: Improved perception and relationship with railroad companies, may open new capacity for commuter rail service

Determining Return on Investment

1. What is the practical capacity of existing rail lines?
2. What is the existing and forecasted demand?
3. How much will HSR improvements affect performance and reliability?
4. What would be the new practical capacity (# of new trains)?
5. What would be the increased business for ports and drayage companies?
6. How large would the diversion from truck to rail be that would produce air quality and shipper benefits?

Summary of HSR Benefits to Freight

- Expanded capacity and improved infrastructure
- Improved frequency and speed
- Higher benefits for freight lines operating near capacity
- Secondary benefits to ports, shippers and drayage companies