

# railwatch

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*America welcomed a new political world in November by electing as President Barack Obama while at the same time voters in California cleared the way for a new era in high-speed rail. They agreed to a £6billion plan to fund a high-speed rail network for the state.*

*A high-speed rail authority has already been established and it expects the 220mph railway to generate an annual surplus of £739million. The spine of the 800-mile network will be from San Francisco to Los Angeles.*

*It is hoped the railway will be increasingly useful to individuals as petrol prices rise but it will also be crucial in improving the filthy air conditions that Californians – and many people in Britain too – have been condemned to live with. It will reduce the need for highly polluting airline flights and hopefully break the bond between government and the poisonous policies of the road lobby. Planners are also looking to the railway to stimulate a stagnant economy.*

*More high speed rail: Page 3*