



## New player enters race for rail line to Las Vegas

[Associated Press](#)

2010-06-07 10:38:08



LAS VEGAS (AP) • There's a new competitor in the race to create a high-speed rail line connecting Las Vegas and Southern California.

Genesis High Speed Rail America LLC is proposing the "Desert Lightning" — a high-speed route between Las Vegas and Southern California. Unlike other routes, Genesis' plan also calls for an intersecting line from Phoenix, linking the three major southwest metropolitan areas with one high-speed rail line.

The proposal calls for a T-shaped route. It would run south from Las Vegas parallel to the Colorado River and U.S. 95, just east of Mojave National Preserve. It would then intersect with an east-west line near Interstate 10, the freeway between Los Angeles and Phoenix.

The group is seeking federal funding to help study whether proven European technology or proven Japanese technology would be a better fit.

"I've ridden on both of the trains," Genesis chairman Duane Wilder said. "I can't say which one is better than the other and part of it could depend on the terrain, so the exact route also would be studied."

Wilder said about \$35 million would cover the study's cost. If Desert Lightning succeeds in getting the study money, it would still take years to get the environmental permits and engineering completed.

Wilder said once a study is completed, investors would help fund what could be a \$35 billion to \$40 billion project.

At least two other groups are trying to get their own high-speed proposals beyond the planning stages. And two new companies have been recently touting party trains that would use existing low-speed lines to shuttle people from downtown Los Angeles to Las Vegas on trains loaded with entertainment options.

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