

# CALIFORNIA HIGH-SPEED TRAIN

Project Environmental Impact Report /  
Environmental Impact Statement

## Community Impact Assessment

Merced to Fresno Section  
Project EIR/EIS

April 2012





**CALIFORNIA HIGH-SPEED TRAIN PROJECT EIR/EIS**

---

TECHNICAL REPORT

Merced to Fresno Section  
**Community Impact Assessment**

*Prepared by:*

**AECOM  
CH2M HILL**

April 2012

California High-Speed Rail Authority and Federal Railroad Administration. 2012. *Merced to Fresno Section Community Impact Assessment, California High-Speed Train Final Project EIR/EIS*. Sacramento, CA, and Washington, DC. Prepared by AECOM and CH2M HILL. April 2012.

# Table of Contents

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>1-1</b>
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Project Description .....</b>	<b>2-1</b>
2.1	No Project Alternative .....	2-1
2.2	High-Speed Train Alternatives .....	2-1
2.2.1	UPRR/SR 99 Alternative.....	2-1
2.2.2	BNSF Alternative .....	2-5
2.2.3	Hybrid Alternative (Preferred Alternative) .....	2-7
2.2.4	Heavy Maintenance Facility Alternatives .....	2-8
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Methods for Evaluating Impacts .....</b>	<b>3-1</b>
3.1	Socioeconomics, Communities, and Environmental Justice Data Collection and Analysis .....	3-1
3.1.1	Disruption or Severance of Community Interactions or Division of Established Communities .....	3-1
3.1.2	Displacement of Local Residents or Businesses .....	3-1
3.1.3	Economic Impacts.....	3-2
3.1.4	Economic Effects on Agriculture .....	3-2
3.1.5	Environmental Justice.....	3-2
3.2	Methods for Evaluating Effects under NEPA .....	3-4
3.3	CEQA Significance Criteria .....	3-5
3.4	Study Area for Analysis .....	3-6
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Regulatory Framework .....</b>	<b>4-1</b>
4.1	Federal .....	4-1
4.2	State.....	4-2
4.3	Local.....	4-2
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Environmental Justice Outreach.....</b>	<b>5-1</b>
5.1	Public Outreach Activities .....	5-1
5.2	Results of the Public Outreach .....	5-3
5.2.1	Public and Agency Scoping Meetings .....	5-3
5.2.2	Draft Merced to Fresno Section EIR/EIS .....	5-3
5.3	Targeted Outreach.....	5-4
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Existing Conditions .....</b>	<b>6-1</b>
6.1	Population Characteristics.....	6-1
6.1.1	Regional Population Characteristics .....	6-1
6.1.2	Demographic Characteristics.....	6-1
6.1.3	HST Alternative Demographic Characteristics .....	6-8
6.2	Housing Setting .....	6-10
6.3	Economic Setting .....	6-13
6.3.1	Employment Trends .....	6-13
6.3.2	Labor Force Characteristics.....	6-15
6.3.3	Major Employers .....	6-17
6.3.4	Tax Revenues.....	6-17
6.3.5	Agricultural Economic Setting .....	6-20
6.4	Communities and Neighborhoods.....	6-23
6.4.1	UPRR/SR 99 Alternative Community Setting.....	6-25
6.4.2	BNSF Alternative Community Setting .....	6-34
6.4.3	Hybrid Alternative Community Setting .....	6-35
6.4.4	Heavy Maintenance Facility.....	6-36
6.5	Environmental Justice .....	6-36
6.5.1	UPRR/SR 99 Alternative.....	6-39
6.5.2	BNSF Alternative .....	6-42
6.5.3	Hybrid Alternative .....	6-42
6.5.4	Heavy Maintenance Facility.....	6-42



**7.0 Impact Analysis .....7-1**

7.1 Environmental Consequences .....7-1

7.2 Overview.....7-1

7.3 No Project Alternative .....7-2

7.3.1 Disruption or Severance of Community Interactions or Division  
of Established Communities .....7-2

7.3.2 Economic Impacts.....7-3

7.3.3 Environmental Effects Disproportionately Borne by a Minority  
or Low-Income Population .....7-3

7.4 High-Speed Train Alternatives .....7-3

7.4.1 Construction Period Impacts .....7-3

7.4.2 Project Impacts.....7-14

7.5 Mitigation Measures .....7-43

7.5.1 Construction Period .....7-44

7.5.2 Project .....7-45

7.6 NEPA Impacts Summary.....7-47

7.6.1 Construction .....7-47

7.6.2 Project .....7-48

7.7 CEQA Significance Conclusions .....7-50

**8.0 References .....8-1**

**9.0 Preparer Qualifications .....9-1**

**Appendices**

- A Environmental Justice
- B Community Facilities
- C Relocation Information

**Tables**

4-1 Local Plans and Policies .....4-3

5-1 Public Involvement Activities and Outreach to Minority and Low-Income  
Populations.....5-2

6-1 Regional Existing and Projected Populations .....6-1

6-2 Age Characteristics in 2010.....6-2

6-3 Race and Ethnic Characteristics by Percent in 2010.....6-3

6-4 Trends in Racial and Ethnic Characteristics .....6-3

6-5 Demographic Characteristics – Households in 2010 .....6-4

6-6 Trends in Demographic Characteristics – Households .....6-5

6-7 Household Income and Poverty Status in 2010 .....6-6

6-8 Trends in Household Income and Poverty.....6-7

6-9 Disability Characteristics in 2000 .....6-8

6-10 2010 Housing Stock Inventory .....6-10

6-11 Trends in Housing Stock Inventory.....6-11

6-12 Summary of Residential Properties for Sale by City and County in 2010.....6-12

6-13 Merced MSA Employment by Industry .....6-13



6-14	Madera–Chowchilla MSA Employment by Industry.....	6-14
6-15	Fresno MSA Employment by Industry .....	6-15
6-16	Labor Force Characteristics – Counties in Study Area .....	6-15
6-17	Labor Force Characteristics – Cities in Study Area .....	6-16
6-18	General Fund Revenues – Merced, Madera, and Fresno Counties .....	6-18
6-19	General Fund Revenues – Cities of Merced, Chowchilla, Madera, and Fresno .....	6-19
6-20	Characteristics of Farm Holdings in Merced and Madera Counties in 1997 and 2007 .....	6-21
6-21	Agricultural Production in Merced and Madera Counties in 2009.....	6-21
6-22	Contributions of Farming to Income and Employment in Merced and Madera Counties in 2000 and 2008 .....	6-22
6-23	Facilities within Study Area .....	6-24
6-24	Communities Affected by Alternative .....	6-25
6-25	Minority and Low-Income Population.....	6-37
6-26	Elementary Schools – Percent of Minority Students and Percent of Students Receiving Free or Reduced-Price Lunches in 2008–2009.....	6-38
7-1	Annual Local Project Expenditures and Sales Tax Revenues during Construction .....	7-8
7-2	Contribution of Sales Tax Revenues during Construction .....	7-8
7-3	Sales Tax Revenues during Construction of the UPRR/SR 99 Alternative .....	7-9
7-4	Sales Tax Revenues during Construction of the BNSF Alternative .....	7-9
7-5	Sales Tax Revenues during Construction of the Hybrid Alternative .....	7-9
7-6	Sales Tax Revenues during Construction of the HST Stations.....	7-10
7-7	Sales Tax Revenues during Construction of the Castle Commerce Center HMF.....	7-10
7-8	Sales Tax Revenues during Construction of the Generic HMF .....	7-10
7-9	Contribution of Sales Tax Revenues during Construction of the UPRR/SR 99 Alternative.....	7-11
7-10	Contribution of Sales Tax Revenues during Construction of the BNSF Alternative .....	7-11
7-11	Contribution of Sales Tax Revenues during Construction of the Hybrid Alternative .....	7-11
7-12	Contribution of Sales Tax Revenues during Construction of the HST Stations.....	7-12
7-13	Contribution of Sales Tax Revenues during Construction of the Castle Commerce Center HMF .....	7-12
7-14	Contribution of Sales Tax Revenues during Construction of the Generic HMF .....	7-12
7-15	Resource Impacts Potentially Affecting Community Character and Cohesion – Impacts Common to All HST Alternatives.....	7-16
7-16	Potential Impacts on Community Cohesion, Neighborhoods, and Community Resources during Operation – Proposed HMF Sites.....	7-21
7-17	Range of Residential and Business Displacements .....	7-23
7-18	Residential and Business Displacements under the UPRR/SR 99 Alternative .....	7-24
7-19	Residential and Business Displacements under the BNSF Alternative .....	7-25



---

7-20	Residential and Business Displacements under the Hybrid Alternative.....	7-27
7-21	Annual Sales Tax Revenues during Operation .....	7-31
7-22	Contribution of Sales Tax Revenues during Operation .....	7-32
7-23	Property Tax Revenues during Operation.....	7-33
7-24	Regional Projected and Induced Employment .....	7-35
7-25	Impacts Common to All Alternatives.....	7-38
7-26	Summary of Significant Social Impacts and Mitigation Measures .....	7-50

**Figures**

1-1	California HST System .....	1-3
2-1	Merced to Fresno Section HST Alternatives.....	2-2
2-2a and b	Ave 24 Wye and Chowchilla Design Options .....	2-4
6-1	Cities and Communities within the Study Area .....	6-27
6-2	City of Fresno – Community and Specific Plan Areas .....	6-32
6-3	Downtown Merced Station – Areas with Zero Population .....	6-40
6-4	Downtown Fresno Station – Areas with Zero Population .....	6-41



## List of Abbreviated Terms

ACS	American Community Survey
Authority	California High-Speed Rail Authority
Bay Area	San Francisco Bay Area
Bay Area to Central Valley Program EIR/EIS	<i>Bay Area to Central Valley High-Speed Train (HST) Final Program Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS)</i>
CAC	County Agricultural Commissioner
Caltrans	California Department of Transportation
CBOE	California Board of Equalization
CDOE	California Department of Education
CDOF	California Department of Finance
CEDD	California Employment Development Department
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act of 1970
CIA	community impact assessment
EIR/EIS	environmental impact report/environmental impact statement
FRA	Federal Railroad Administration
FY	fiscal year
HHS	U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
HMF	heavy maintenance facility
HST	high-speed train
mph	miles per hour
MSA	Metropolitan Statistical Area
NAACP	National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
NCES	National Center for Education Statistics
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act of 1969
O&M	operation and maintenance
Project EIR/EIS	<i>Merced to Fresno Section Project Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement</i>
RTP	regional transportation plan
SR	State Route
TOD	transit-oriented development
Statewide Program EIR/EIS	<i>Final Program Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS) for the Proposed California High-Speed Train (HST) System</i>
Uniform Relocation Act	Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970
USDA	U.S. Department of Agriculture



# 1.0 Introduction

The California High-Speed Train (HST) System, as shown in Figure 1-1, would provide intercity service on more than 800 miles of guideway in California. The HST System would connect the major population centers of Sacramento, the San Francisco Bay Area (Bay Area), the Central Valley, Los Angeles, the Inland Empire, Orange County, and San Diego. The HST System would be a state-of-the-art, electrically powered, high-speed, steel-wheel-on-steel-rail technology. It will include contemporary safety, signaling, and automated train-control systems. The HSTs will be capable of operating at speeds of up to 220 miles per hour (mph) over a proposed fully grade-separated, dedicated guideway.

Two phases of the California HST System are planned. Phase 1 will connect San Francisco to Los Angeles/Anaheim via the Pacheco Pass and the Central Valley. An expected express trip time between San Francisco and Los Angeles is mandated to be 2 hours and 40 minutes or less. (Phase 1 would be built in stages dependent on funding availability.) Phase 2 will connect the Sacramento to the rest of the Central Valley, and will extend the system from Los Angeles to San Diego.

### Definition of HST System

The system that includes the HST guideway, structures, stations, traction substations, maintenance facilities, and train vehicles that travel at 220 mph.

The California HST System will be planned, designed, constructed, and operated under the direction of the California High-Speed Rail Authority (Authority), a state governing board formed in 1996. The Authority's statutory mandate is to develop a high-speed rail system that is coordinated with the state's existing transportation network, which includes intercity rail and bus lines, regional commuter rail lines, urban rail and bus transit lines, highways, and airports. The Merced to Fresno HST Section is a critical Phase 1 link connecting the Bay Area HST sections to the northern and southern portions of the system.

The Council on Environmental Quality provides for National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) decision-making through a phased process. This process is referred to as *tiered* decision-making. This phased decision-making process provides for a broad level programmatic decision to inform more specific decisions using a tiered approach. A first tier programmatic environmental impact statement (EIS) addresses one large project with one overall purpose and need that would be too extensive to analyze in a traditional project EIS. The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) also encourages tiering and also provides for first-tier and second-tier EIRs.

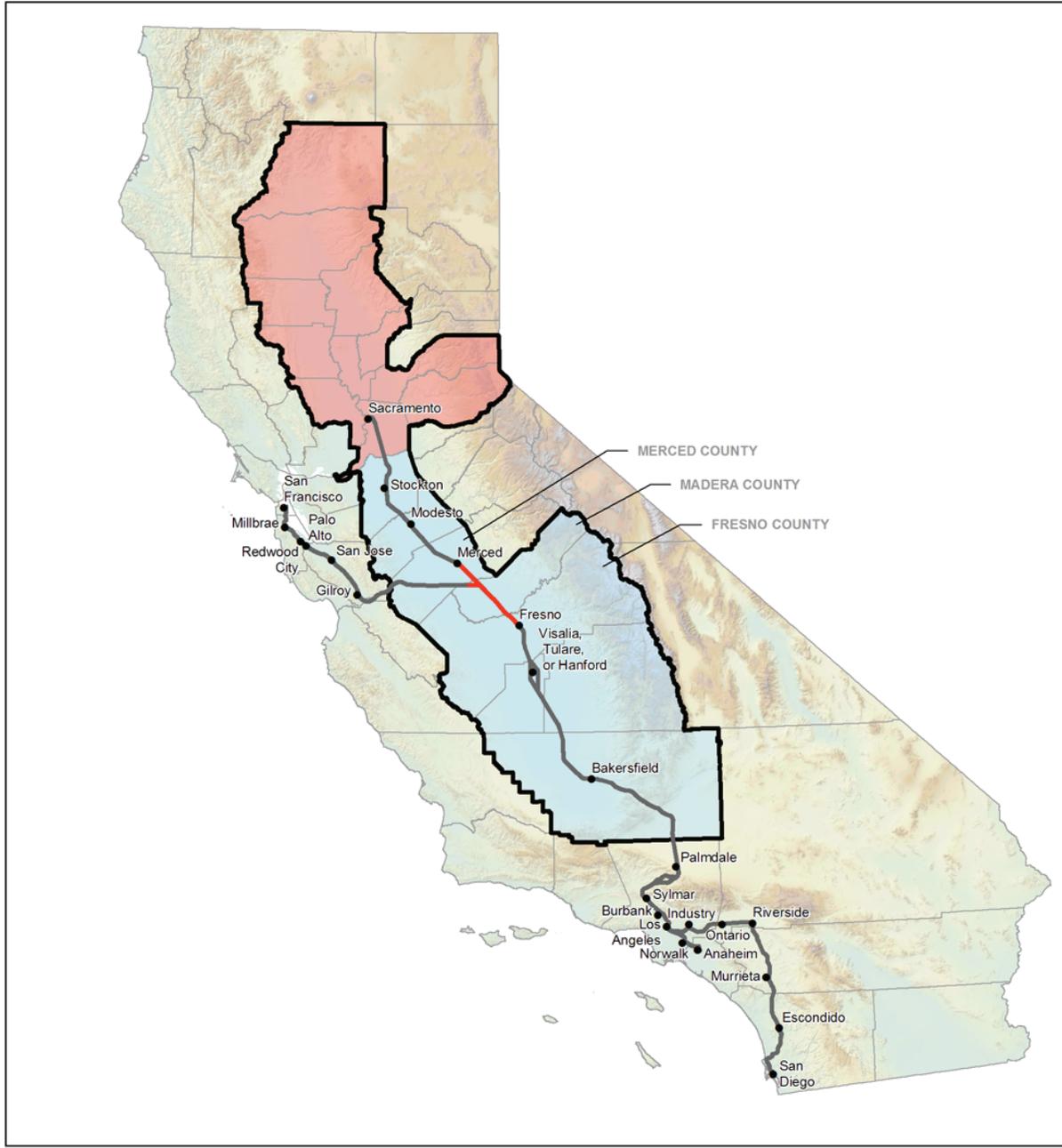
The Merced to Fresno Section Project Environmental Impact Report/ Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS) is a second-tier EIR/EIS that builds upon and further refines work completed earlier as part of the two first-tier program EIR/EIS documents. The 2005 *Final Program EIR/EIS for the Proposed California High-Speed Train System* (Statewide Program EIR/EIS) provided a first-tier analysis of the general effects of implementing the HST System across two-thirds of the state. The *Final Bay Area to Central Valley HST Program Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS)* (Authority and Federal Railroad Administration [FRA] 2008), and the *Bay Area to Central Valley HST Revised Final EIR* (Authority 2010) were also first-tier and programmatic documents but focused on the Bay Area to Central Valley region. As a result of CEQA litigation, the Authority rescinded its 2008 programmatic decision, prepared a Revised Final Program EIR, and made a new decision on the Bay Area to Central Valley route in 2010. A second legal challenge resulted in the Authority preparing a Partially Revised Final Program EIR. The Authority is expected to rescind its 2010 decisions and make a new set of decisions for the Bay Area to Central Valley connection prior to considering the Merced to Fresno HST Final Project EIR/EIS. The Authority's rescission of the 2008 and 2010 programmatic decisions does not invalidate FRA's federal decisions on the 2005 and 2008 Program EIR/EISs.

First-tier EIR/EIS documents provided the Authority and FRA with the environmental analysis necessary for evaluation of the overall HST System and for making broad decisions about general HST alignments and station locations for further study in second-tier EIR/EISs. These documents are available on the Authority's website: [www.cahighspeedrail.ca.gov](http://www.cahighspeedrail.ca.gov). This technical report has been prepared to support the Merced to Fresno Section Project EIR/EIS process, which analyzes the environmental impacts and

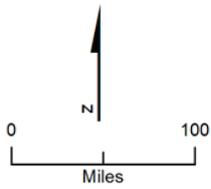
benefits of implementing the HST in the more geographically limited area between Merced and Fresno and is based on more detailed project planning and engineering. The analysis therefore incorporates the earlier decisions and program EIR/EISs, and it provides more site-specific and detailed analysis.

This technical report has been prepared in support of the Project EIR/EIS (Authority and FRA 2012a) for the Merced to Fresno Section of the California HST System. It presents results of the community impact assessment (CIA) for the Merced to Fresno Section. This report addresses social, economic, and environmental justice impacts in the project study area. The findings of the CIA will be incorporated into the Project EIR/EIS, as required to meet National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) and California Environmental Quality Act of 1970 (CEQA) standards.

This technical report is divided into seven sections following this introduction. Section 2, Project Description, provides a description of the project in the Merced to Fresno Section. Section 3, Methods for Evaluating Impacts, describes the methods used to determine and evaluate impacts. Section 4, Regulatory Framework, identifies the federal, state, and local laws, guidance, and policies relevant to this project; and Section 5, Environmental Justice Outreach, describes environmental justice outreach. Section 6, Existing Conditions, describes the existing conditions in the study area, and Section 7, Impact Analysis, describes potential impacts, mitigation measures, and potential levels of significance after implementation of mitigation measures. Appendix A provides detailed information about environmental justice, Appendix B identifies community facilities, and Appendix C provides relocation information in the study area.



MF\_EIS\_Sect01\_02 Oct 20, 2010



- Merced to Fresno Section
- Statewide HST System
- Potential Station
- Counties Commonly Associated with the Central Valley
- Sacramento Valley
- San Joaquin Valley

**Figure 1-1**  
 California HST System



## 2.0 Project Description

The purpose of the Merced to Fresno Section of the HST project is to implement the California HST System between Merced and Fresno, providing the public with electric-powered high-speed rail service that provides predictable and consistent travel times between major urban centers and connectivity to airports, mass transit systems, and the highway network in the south San Joaquin Valley, and to connect the northern and southern portions of the HST System. The approximately 65-mile-long corridor between Merced and Fresno is an essential part of the statewide HST System. The Merced to Fresno Section is the location where the HST would intersect and connect with the Bay Area and Sacramento branches of the HST System; it would provide a potential location for the heavy maintenance facility (HMF) where the HSTs would be assembled and maintained, as well as a test track for the trains; it would also provide Merced and Fresno access to a new transportation mode and would contribute to increased mobility throughout California.

### 2.1 No Project Alternative

The No Project Alternative refers to the projected growth planned for the region through the 2035 time horizon without the HST project and serves as a basis of comparison for environmental analysis of the HST build alternatives. The No Project Alternative includes planned improvements to the highway, aviation, conventional passenger rail, and freight rail systems in the Merced to Fresno project area. There are many environmental impacts that would result under the No Project Alternative.

### 2.2 High-Speed Train Alternatives

As shown in Figure 2-1, there are three HST alignment alternatives proposed for the Merced to Fresno Section of the HST System: the UPRR/SR 99 Alternative, which would primarily parallel the UPRR railway; the BNSF Alternative, which would parallel the BNSF railway for a portion of the distance between Merced and Fresno; and the Hybrid Alternative, which combines features of the UPRR/SR 99 and BNSF alternatives. In addition, there is an HST station proposed for both the City of Merced and the City of Fresno, there is a wye connection west to the Bay Area, and there are five potential sites for a proposed HMF.

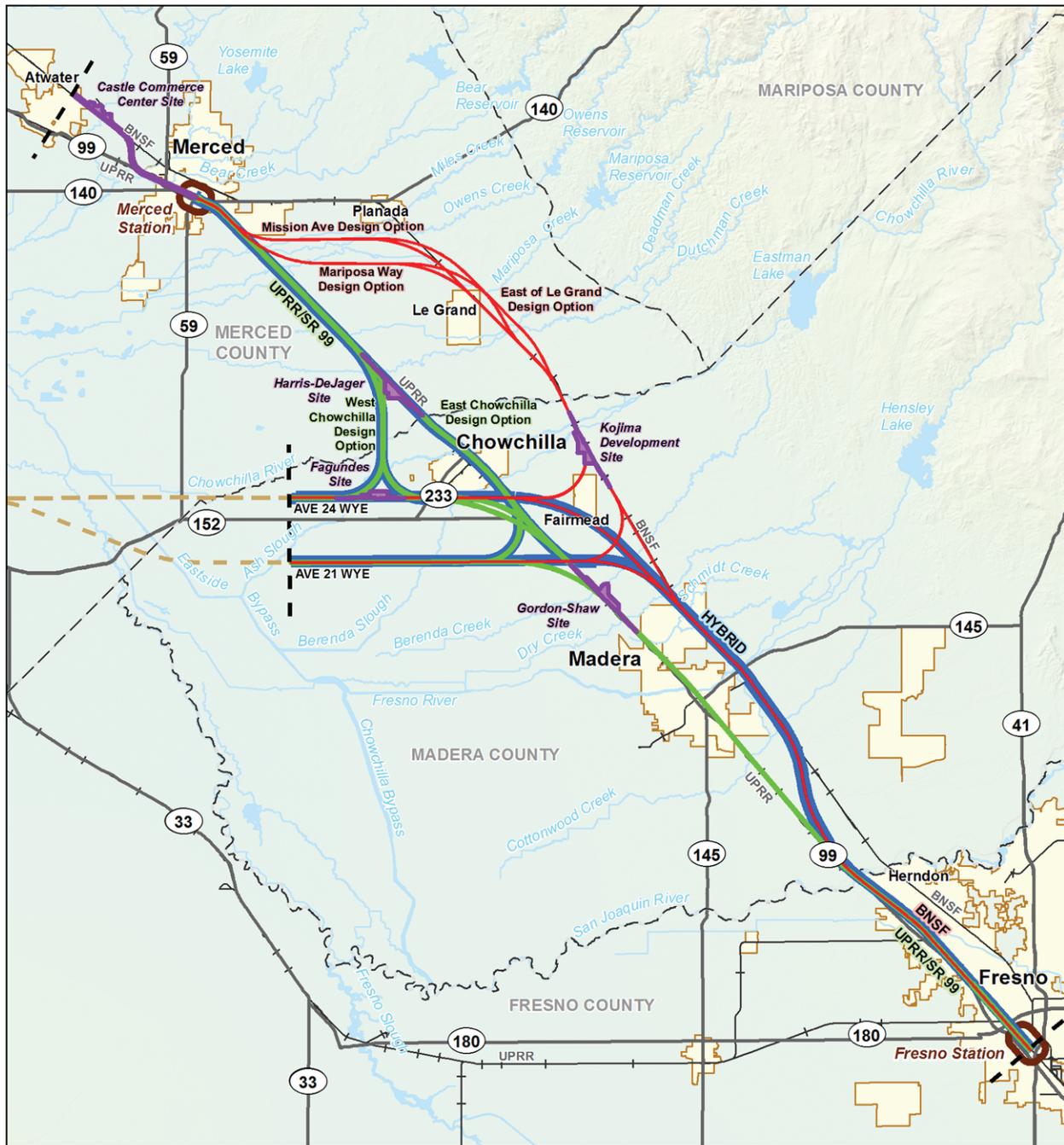
The Authority and FRA have identified the Hybrid Alternative as their preferred alternative for the north-south alignment between Merced and Fresno. The Hybrid Alternative would connect to San Jose to the west along one of three wye design options. The San Jose to Merced Section Project EIR/EIS will fully evaluate the east-west alignment alternatives and wye configurations, including the Ave 24 Wye, the Ave 21 Wye, and another wye design option, the SR 152 Wye, which has not been reviewed in this document. A decision regarding the preferred east-west alignment, including the preferred wye design option, will take place after circulation of the San Jose to Merced Section Project EIR/EIS; that decision will finalize the alignment and profile of the Hybrid Alternative. In addition, the Authority and FRA have identified the Mariposa Street Station Alternative as their preferred alternative for an HST station in Downtown Fresno.

#### 2.2.1 UPRR/SR 99 Alternative

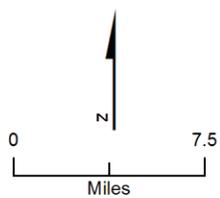
This section describes the UPRR/SR 99 Alternative, including the Chowchilla design options, wyes, and HST stations.

##### 2.2.1.1 North-South Alignment

The north-south alignment of the UPRR/SR 99 Alternative would begin at the HST station in Downtown Merced, located on the west side of the UPRR right-of-way. South of the station and leaving Downtown



MF\_EIS\_PD\_26 Aug 01, 2011



- BNSF Alternative
- UPRR/SR 99 Alternative
- Hybrid Alternative
- Project Limit
- Connection to Other Section
- Station Study Area
- Potential Heavy Maintenance Facility
- City Limit
- County Boundary
- Railroad
- State / US Highway

**Figure 2-1**  
 Merced to Fresno Section  
 HST Alternatives

Merced, the alternative would be at-grade and cross under SR 99. Approaching the City of Chowchilla, the UPRR/SR 99 Alternative has two design options: the East Chowchilla design option, which would pass Chowchilla on the east side of town, and the West Chowchilla design option, which would pass Chowchilla 3 to 4 miles west of the city before turning back to rejoin the UPRR/SR 99 transportation corridor. These design options would take the following routes:

- **East Chowchilla design option:** This design option would transition from the west side of the UPRR/SR 99 corridor to an elevated structure as it crosses the UPRR railway and N Chowchilla Boulevard just north of Avenue 27, continuing on an elevated structure away from the UPRR corridor along the west side of and parallel to SR 99 to cross Berenda Slough. Toward the south side of Chowchilla, this design option would cross over SR 99 north of the SR 99/SR 152 interchange near Avenue 23½ south of Chowchilla. Continuing south on the east side of SR 99 and the UPRR corridor, this design option would remain elevated for 7.1 miles through the communities of Fairmead and Berenda until reaching the Dry Creek Crossing. The East Chowchilla design option connects to the HST sections to the west via either the Ave 24 or Ave 21 wyes (described below).
- **West Chowchilla design option:** This design option would travel due south from Sandy Mush Road north of Chowchilla, following the west side of Road 11¾. The alignment would turn southeast toward the UPRR/SR 99 corridor south of Chowchilla. The West Chowchilla design option would cross over the UPRR and SR 99 east of the Fairmead city limits to again parallel the UPRR/SR 99 corridor. The West Chowchilla design option would result in a net decrease of approximately 13 miles of track for the HST System compared to the East Chowchilla design option and would remain outside the limits of the City of Chowchilla. The West Chowchilla design option connects to the HST sections to the west via the Ave 24 Wye, but not the Ave 21 Wye.

The UPRR/SR 99 Alternative would continue toward Madera along the east side of the UPRR south of Dry Creek and remain on an elevated profile for 8.9 miles through Madera. After crossing over Cottonwood Creek and Avenue 12, the HST alignment would transition to an at-grade profile and continue to be at-grade until north of the San Joaquin River. After the San Joaquin River crossing, the HST alignment would require realignment (a mostly westward shift) of Golden State Boulevard and of a portion of SR 99 to create right-of-way adjacent to the UPRR railroad that would not preclude future expansion of these roadways. After crossing the San Joaquin River, the alternative would rise over the UPRR railway on an elevated guideway, supported by straddle bents, before crossing over the existing Herndon Avenue and again descending into an at-grade profile and continuing west of and parallel to the UPRR right-of-way. After elevating to cross the UPRR railway on the southern bank of the San Joaquin River, south of Herndon Avenue, the alternative would transition from an elevated to an at-grade profile. Traveling south from Golden State Boulevard at-grade, the alternative would cross under the reconstructed Ashlan Avenue and Clinton Avenue overhead structures. Advancing south from Clinton Avenue between Clinton Avenue and Belmont Avenue, the HST guideway would run at-grade adjacent to the western boundary of the UPRR right-of-way and then enter the HST station in Downtown Fresno. The HST guideway would descend in a retained-cut to pass under the San Joaquin Valley Railroad spur line and SR 180, transition back to at-grade before Stanislaus Street, and continue to be at-grade into the station. As part of a station design option, Tulare Street would become either an overpass or undercrossing at the station.

### **Ave 24 Wye**

The Ave 24 Wye design option would travel along the south side of eastbound Avenue 24 toward the UPRR/SR 99 Alternative and would begin diverging onto two sets of tracks west of Road 11 and west of the City of Chowchilla. Under the East Chowchilla design option, the northbound set of tracks would travel northeast across Road 12, joining the UPRR/SR 99 north-south alignment on the west side of the UPRR right-of-way just north of Sandy Mush Road. Under the West Chowchilla design option, the northbound set of tracks would travel northeast across Road 12 and would join the UPRR/SR 99 north-south alignment just south of Avenue 26. The southbound HST guideway would continue east along Avenue 24, turning south near SR 233 southeast of Chowchilla, crossing SR 99 and the UPRR railway to connect to the UPRR/SR 99 Alternative north-south alignment on the east side of the UPRR near Avenue 21½. Under the West Chowchilla design option, the southbound tracks would turn south near Road 16

south of Chowchilla, crossing SR 99 and the UPRR to connect to the UPRR/SR 99 north-south alignment on the east side of the UPRR adjacent to the city limits of Fairmead.

Figure 2-2a shows the wye alignment for the East Chowchilla design option and Figure 2-2b shows the alignment for the West Chowchilla design option. Together, the figures illustrate the difference in the wye triangle formation for each design option connection. The north-south alignment of the West Chowchilla design option between Merced and Fresno diverges along Avenue 24 onto Road 12, on the north branch of the wye, allowing the HST alternative to avoid traveling through Chowchilla and to avoid constraining the city within the wye triangle.

**Ave 21 Wye**

The Ave 21 Wye would travel along the north side of Avenue 21. Just west of Road 16, the HST tracks would diverge north and south to connect to the UPRR/SR 99 Alternative, with the north leg of the wye joining the north-south alignment at Avenue 23½ and the south leg at Avenue 19½.

**2.2.1.2 HST Stations**

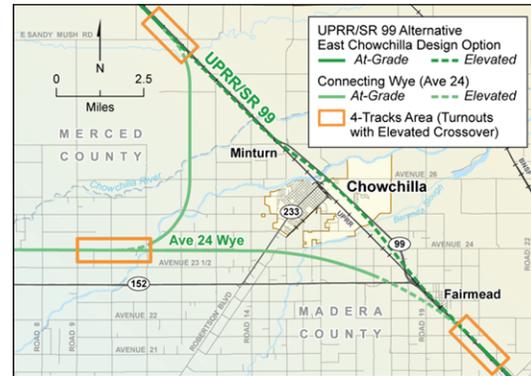
The Downtown Merced and Downtown Fresno station areas would each occupy several blocks, to include station plazas, drop-offs, a multimodal transit center, and parking structures. The areas would include the station platform and associated building and access structure, as well as lengths of platform tracks to accommodate local and express service at the stations. As currently proposed, both the Downtown Merced and Downtown Fresno stations would be at-grade, including all trackway and platforms, passenger services and concessions, and back-of-house functions.

**Downtown Merced Station**

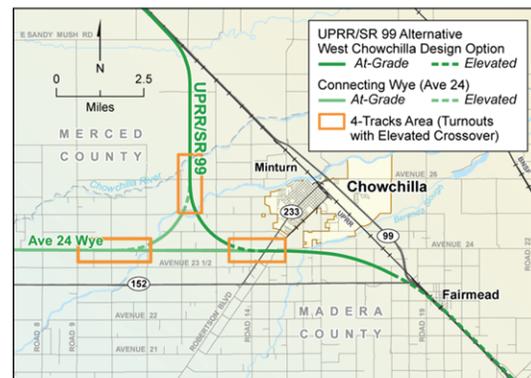
The Downtown Merced Station would be between Martin Luther King Jr. Way to the northwest and G Street to the southeast. The station would be accessible from both sides of the UPRR, but the primary station house would front 16th Street. The major access points from SR 99 include V Street, R Street, Martin Luther King Jr. Way, and G Street. Primary access to the parking facility would be from West 15th Street and West 14th Street, just one block east of SR 99. The closest access to the parking facility from the SR 99 freeway would be R Street, which has a full interchange with the freeway. The site proposal includes a parking structure that would have the potential for up to 6 levels with a capacity of approximately 2,250 cars and an approximate height of 50 feet.

**Downtown Fresno Station Alternatives**

There are two station alternatives under consideration in Fresno: the Mariposa Street Station Alternative and the Kern Street Station Alternative. The Authority and FRA have identified Mariposa Street Station as their preferred alternative.



(a) Ave 24 Wye with the East Chowchilla Design Option



(b) Ave 24 Wye with the West Chowchilla Design Option

**Figure 2-2a and b**  
 Ave 24 Wye and Chowchilla Design Options

### Mariposa Street Station Alternative (Preferred Alternative)

The Mariposa Street Station Alternative is located in Downtown Fresno, less than 0.5 mile east of SR 99. The station would be centered on Mariposa Street and bordered by Fresno Street on the north, Tulare Street on the south, H Street on the east, and G Street on the west. The station building would be approximately 75,000 square feet, with a maximum height of approximately 60 feet. The two-level station would be at-grade, with passenger access provided both east and west of the HST guideway and the UPRR tracks, which would run parallel with one another adjacent to the station. Entrances would be located at both G and H Streets. The eastern entrance would be at the intersection of H Street and Mariposa Street, with platform access provided via the pedestrian overcrossing. The main western entrance would be located at G Street and Mariposa Street.

The majority of station facilities would be located east of the UPRR tracks. The station and associated facilities would occupy approximately 18.5 acres, including 13 acres dedicated to the station, bus transit center, surface parking lots, and kiss-and-ride accommodations. A new intermodal facility would be included in the station footprint on the parcel bordered by Fresno Street to the north, Mariposa Street to the south, Broadway Street to the east, and H Street to the west. The site proposal includes the potential for up to 3 parking structures occupying a total of 5.5 acres. Two of the three potential parking structures would each sit on 2 acres, and each would have a capacity of approximately 1,500 cars. The third parking structure would have a slightly smaller footprint (1.5 acres), with 5 levels and a capacity of approximately 1,100 cars. Surface parking lots would provide approximately 300 additional parking spaces.

### Kern Street Station Alternative

The Kern Street Station Alternative for the HST station would also be in Downtown Fresno and would be centered on Kern Street between Tulare Street and Inyo Street. This station would include the same components and acreage as the Mariposa Street Station Alternative, but the station would not encroach on the historic Southern Pacific Railroad depot just north of Tulare Street and would not require relocation of existing Greyhound facilities. Two of the 3 potential parking structures would each sit on 2 acres and each would have a capacity of approximately 1,500 cars. The third structure would have a slightly smaller footprint (1.5 acres) and a capacity of approximately 1,100 cars. Like the Mariposa Street Station Alternative, the majority of station facilities under the Kern Street Station Alternative would be east of the HST tracks.

## **2.2.2 BNSF Alternative**

This section describes the BNSF Alternative, including the Le Grand design options and wyes. It does not include a discussion of the HST stations, because the station descriptions are identical for each of the three HST alignment alternatives.

### **2.2.2.1 North-South Alignment**

The north-south alignment of the BNSF Alternative would begin at the proposed Downtown Merced Station. This alternative would remain at-grade through Merced and would cross under SR 99 at the south end of the city. Just south of the interchange at SR 99 and E Childs Avenue, the BNSF Alternative would cross over SR 99 and UPRR as it begins to curve to the east, crossing over the E Mission Avenue interchange. It would then travel east to the vicinity of Le Grand, where it would turn south and travel adjacent to the BNSF tracks.

To minimize impacts on the natural environment and the community of Le Grand, the project design includes four design options:

- **Mission Ave design option:** This design option would turn east to travel along the north side of Mission Avenue at Le Grand and then would elevate through Le Grand adjacent to and along the west side of the BNSF corridor.

- **Mission Ave East of Le Grand design option:** This design option would vary from the Mission Ave design option by traveling approximately 1 mile farther east before turning southeast to cross Santa Fe Avenue and the BNSF tracks south of Mission Avenue. The HST alignment would parallel the BNSF for a half-mile to the east, avoiding the urban limits of Le Grand. This design option would cross Santa Fe Avenue and the BNSF railroad again approximately one-half mile north of Marguerite Road and would continue adjacent to the west side of the BNSF corridor.
- **Mariposa Way design option:** This design option would travel 1 mile farther than the Mission Ave design option before crossing SR 99 near Vassar Road and turning east toward Le Grand along the south side of Mariposa Way. East of Simonson Road, the HST alignment would turn to the southeast. Just prior to Savana Road in Le Grand, the HST alignment would transition from at-grade to elevated to pass through Le Grand on a 1.7-mile-long guideway adjacent to and along the west side of the BNSF corridor.
- **Mariposa Way East of Le Grand design option:** This design option would vary from the Mariposa Way design option by traveling approximately 1 mile farther east before turning southeast to cross Santa Fe Avenue and the BNSF tracks less than one-half mile south of Mariposa Way. The HST alignment would parallel the BNSF to the east of the railway for a half-mile, avoiding the urban limits of Le Grand. This design option would cross Santa Fe Avenue and the BNSF again approximately a half-mile north of Marguerite Road and would continue adjacent to the west side of the BNSF corridor.

Continuing southeast along the west side of BNSF, the BNSF Alternative would begin to curve just before Plainsburg Road through a predominantly rural and agricultural area. One mile south of Le Grand, the HST alignment would cross Deadman and Dutchman creeks. The alignment would deviate from the BNSF corridor just southeast of S White Rock Road, where it would remain at-grade for another 7 miles, except at the bridge crossings, and would continue on the west side of the BNSF corridor through the community of Sharon. The HST alignment would continue at-grade through the community of Kismet until crossing at Dry Creek. The BNSF Alternative would then continue at-grade through agricultural areas along the west side of the BNSF corridor through the community of Madera Acres north of the City of Madera; in the vicinity of Madera Acres, the HST Project would provide a grade separation of Road 26 and Road 28, which would cross over both the existing BNSF tracks and the new HST guideway. South of Avenue 15 east of Madera, the alignment would transition toward the UPRR corridor, following the east side of the UPRR corridor near Avenue 9 south of Madera, then continuing along nearly the same route as the UPRR/SR 99 Alternative over the San Joaquin River to enter the community of Herndon. After crossing the San Joaquin River, the alignment would be the same as for the UPRR/SR 99 Alternative

#### 2.2.2.2 Wye Design Options

The Ave 24 Wye and the Ave 21 Wye would be the same as described for the UPRR/SR 99 Alternative (East Chowchilla design option), except as noted below.

##### **Ave 24 Wye**

As with the UPRR/SR 99 Alternative, the Ave 24 Wye would follow along the south side of Avenue 24 and would begin diverging into two sets of tracks (i.e., four tracks) beginning west of Road 17. Two tracks would travel north near Road 20½, where they would join the north-south alignment of the BNSF Alternative on the west side of the BNSF corridor near Avenue 26½. The two southbound tracks would join the BNSF Alternative on the west side of the BNSF corridor south of Avenue 21.

##### **Ave 21 Wye**

As with the UPRR/SR 99 Alternative, the Ave 21 Wye would travel along the north side of Avenue 21. Two tracks would diverge, turning north and south to connect to the north-south alignment of the BNSF Alternative just west of Road 21. The north leg of the wye would join the north-south alignment just south of Avenue 24 and the south leg would join the north-south alignment just east of Frontage Road/Road 26 north of the community of Madera Acres.

## 2.2.3 Hybrid Alternative (Preferred Alternative)

This section describes the Hybrid Alternative, which generally follows the alignment of the UPRR/SR 99 Alternative in the north and the BNSF Alternative in the south. It does not include a discussion of the HST stations because the station descriptions are identical for each of the three HST alternatives. The Authority and FRA have identified the Hybrid Alternative as their preferred alternative.

### 2.2.3.1 North-South Alignment

From north to south, generally, the Hybrid Alternative would follow the UPRR/SR 99 alignment with either the West Chowchilla design option with the Ave 24 Wye or the East Chowchilla design option with the Ave 21 Wye. Approaching the Chowchilla city limits, the Hybrid Alternative would follow one of two options:

- In conjunction with the Ave 24 Wye, the HST alignment would veer due south from Sandy Mush Road along a curve and would continue at-grade for 4 miles parallel to and on the west side of Road 11¾. The Hybrid Alternative would then curve to a corridor on the south side of Avenue 24 and would travel parallel for the next 4.3 miles. Along this curve, the southbound HST track would become an elevated structure for approximately 9,000 feet to cross over the Ave 24 Wye connection tracks and Ash Slough, while the northbound HST track would remain at-grade. Continuing east on the south side of Avenue 24, the HST alignment would become identical to the Ave 24 Wye connection for the BNSF Alternative and would follow the alignment of the BNSF Alternative until Madera.
- In conjunction with the Ave 21 Wye connection, the HST alignment would transition from the west side of UPRR and SR 99 to an elevated structure as it crosses the UPRR and N Chowchilla Boulevard just north of Avenue 27, continuing on an elevated structure along the west side of and parallel to SR 99 away from the UPRR corridor while it crosses Berenda Slough. Toward the south side of Chowchilla, the alignment (with the Ave 21 Wye) would cross over SR 99 north of the SR 99/SR 152 interchange near Avenue 23½ south of Chowchilla. It would continue to follow along the east side of SR 99 until reaching Avenue 21, where it would curve east and run parallel to Avenue 21, briefly. The alignment would then follow a path similar to the Ave 21 Wye connection for the BNSF Alternative, but with a tighter 220 mph curve. The alternative would then follow the BNSF Alternative alignment until Madera.

Through Madera and until reaching the San Joaquin River, the Hybrid Alternative is the same as the BNSF Alternative. Once crossing the San Joaquin River, the alignment of the Hybrid Alternative becomes the same as for the UPRR/SR 99 Alternative, including the westward realignments of Golden State Boulevard and SR 99.

### 2.2.3.2 Wye Design Options

The wye connections for the Hybrid Alternative follow Avenue 24 and Avenue 21, similar to those of the UPRR/SR 99 and BNSF alternatives.

#### **Ave 24 Wye**

The Ave 24 Wye is the same as the combination of the UPRR/SR 99 Alternative with the West Chowchilla design option, and the Ave 24 Wye for the BNSF Alternative.

#### **Ave 21 Wye**

The Ave 21 Wye is similar to the combination of the UPRR/SR 99 Alternative with the Ave 21 Wye on the northbound leg and the BNSF Alternative with the Ave 21 Wye on the southbound leg. However, the south leg under the Hybrid Alternative would follow a tighter, 220 mph curve than the BNSF Alternative, which follows a 250 mph curve.

## 2.2.4 Heavy Maintenance Facility Alternatives

The Authority is studying five HMF sites (see Figure 2-1) within the Merced to Fresno Section, one of which may be selected. (The sponsor of the Harris-DeJager site withdrew its proposal from the Authority's consideration of potential HMF sites [Kopshever 2011]. However, to remain consistent with previous analysis and provide a basis of comparison among the HMFs, evaluation of the site continues in this document.)

- **Castle Commerce Center HMF site** – A 370-acre site located 6 miles northwest of Merced, at the former Castle Air Force Base in northern unincorporated Merced County. It is adjacent to and on the east side of the BNSF mainline, 1.75 miles south of the UPRR mainline, off of Santa Fe Drive and Shuttle Road, 2.75 miles from the existing SR 99 interchange. The Castle Commerce Center HMF would be accessible by all HST alternatives.
- **Harris-DeJager HMF site (withdrawn from consideration)** – A 401-acre site located north of Chowchilla adjacent to and on the west side of the UPRR corridor, along S Vista Road and near the SR 99 interchange under construction. The Harris-DeJager HMF would be accessible by the UPRR/SR 99 and Hybrid alternatives if coming from the Ave 21 Wye and the UPRR/SR 99 Alternative with the East Chowchilla design option and the Ave 24 Wye.
- **Fagundes HMF site** – A 231-acre site, located 3 miles southwest of Chowchilla on the north side of SR 152, between Road 11 and Road 12. This HMF would be accessible by all HST alternatives with the Ave 24 Wye.
- **Gordon-Shaw HMF site** – A 364-acre site adjacent to and on the east side of the UPRR corridor, extending from north of Berenda Boulevard to Avenue 19. The Gordon-Shaw HMF would be accessible from the UPRR/SR 99 Alternative.
- **Kojima Development HMF site** – A 392-acre site on the west side of the BNSF corridor east of Chowchilla, located along Santa Fe Drive and Robertson Boulevard (Avenue 26). The Kojima Development HMF would be accessible by the BNSF Alternative with the Ave 21 Wye.

## **3.0 Methods for Evaluating Impacts**

### **3.1 Socioeconomics, Communities, and Environmental Justice Data Collection and Analysis**

#### **3.1.1 Disruption or Severance of Community Interactions or Division of Established Communities**

The *Environmental Handbook Volume 4: Community Impacts Assessment* (Caltrans 1997) provides guidance for this community impact assessment (CIA). The handbook defines community cohesion as “the degree to which residents have a ‘sense of belonging’ to their neighborhood. Cohesion refers to the degree of interaction among the individuals, groups, and institutions that make up the community.” Community cohesion takes into consideration access and linkages, community facilities, and local businesses in the surrounding area that provide opportunities for residents to gather and interact.

The analysis considered the following key neighborhood and community issues: residential relocations; changes in neighborhood quality; barriers to social interaction in the analysis of potential impacts of the HST project on neighborhoods, community cohesion, and community facilities; impacts on community facilities; and impacts on public services, safety and security. Community facilities for the analysis include schools (public and private), religious institutions, parks and recreation facilities, government facilities (e.g., courthouses, city halls, post offices, and libraries), cemeteries, fire stations, police stations, hospitals, and social institutions (e.g., community centers, senior facilities, and food banks), and cultural locations (e.g., entertainment venues and museums). Much of the basis for the discussion of the evaluation of impacts in this section comes from analyses documented in other sections of the Project EIR/EIS (Authority and FRA 2012a), as listed in Section 1.0. Impacts on these resources do not automatically constitute an adverse impact on neighborhood cohesion; rather, these impacts are evaluated collectively with mitigation measures regarding their impact on neighborhood cohesion.

Project benefits were considered on a regional scale, whereas potentially adverse impacts associated with the project were evaluated at the community or neighborhood level. While benefits are typically regional in nature, the construction and operation impacts would be more localized in specific communities. Alternatives were considered in relation to the existing physical boundaries of communities and the locations of community facilities and services.

Potential impacts on community facilities were assessed by (1) conducting an inventory of all facilities within 0.5 mile of the proposed alignments and within 0.5 mile of the proposed HST stations and maintenance and operations facility sites and (2) identifying facilities that would be directly or indirectly affected by the project. Direct impacts involve physical acquisition, displacement, or relocation of a community facility; indirect impacts involve changes to pedestrian or vehicular access.

The analysis also included a review of the potential residential displacements to determine the potential for impacts related to school district funding. Because school district funding is dependent on student attendance, any negative changes caused by displacements and relocations outside of the school district could result in negative impacts.

#### **3.1.2 Displacement of Local Residents or Businesses**

The analysis used geographic information system (GIS) data layers, including construction footprint, county-provided parcel boundaries, and aerial photographs to identify parcels within the construction footprint. Data and information from county sources (e.g., land use designations) were often incomplete; in these cases, analysts used field observations, aerial photographs, and mapping programs to obtain supplemental information. Analysts determined whether the acquisition of parcels within the construction footprint would be full or partial and the potential number of displaced structures.

Analysts used data regarding the average household size within the relocation study area to estimate the number of residential occupants. To estimate the number of employees for each business, analysts considered the size of the building (using aerial photographs) and the type of business occupying the building (using assessor records and field research). Commercial displacements were estimated using a conversion for the average number of employees per square foot of structure by business type (such as office, warehouse) from the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) Employment Density Study, as well as professional judgment regarding business space utilization and operation (SCAG 2001). Average rates used for the determination of the number of displaced employees were for full-time equivalent (FTE) employees.

### 3.1.3 Economic Impacts

The Federal Highway Administration Technical Advisory T-6640.8A, Section V, provides guidance for addressing economic impacts. The project economic impacts analysis was conducted based on current 15%-level design cost estimates developed in 2011. Operation and maintenance (O&M) costs include activities to operate a safe, well-maintained system, including staff and supplies to conduct these activities. O&M costs are estimates based on daily HST miles, operation speed, travel times, station configuration, maintenance and storage facilities, and assumed operating frequencies. The analysis evaluated the changes in sales tax revenues by using local sales tax rates and local project-related expenditures during construction and operation. New revenues and existing sales tax revenues were compared to estimate project impacts. Impacts on property tax revenues in urban areas assumed a property tax rate of 1.0%. Because Proposition 13 limited property tax rate to 1.0% plus the rate necessary to fund local voter-approved bonded indebtedness (California Board of Equalization [CBOE] 2009), and because every parcel that has been identified for either partial or full acquisition is likely to have a different voter-approved indebtedness, the conservative estimate of 1.0% property tax was assumed and applied to the total property value of all properties that the project is likely to acquire. Information is also provided on the potential for impacts on school district funding. In addition, economic data were not available for geographic areas smaller than cities, resulting in a regional analysis of economic impacts. Impacts on employment and regional economic vitality are discussed in Section 3.18, Regional Growth. Section 3.18, Regional Growth, also provides information on the methodology used to determine construction and operation employment.

### 3.1.4 Economic Effects on Agriculture

In the case of acquired agricultural land, the loss in property tax revenues was based on property values, the applicable tax rate (which considers whether the property is enrolled in the Williamson Act agricultural land preservation program), and whether partial acquisition of the property will render the existing farming enterprise inoperable and thus remove it from agricultural production. Because property taxes are collected and disbursed at the county level, the property tax revenues lost within each jurisdiction (Merced, Madera, Fresno counties) are compared to the existing property tax revenues in that jurisdiction. The calculation of permanent conversion of farmland was quantified using GIS and information from agencies and organizations on the types of farmland, grazing land, and protected agricultural lands. Once the information was quantified, a parcel-by-parcel analysis was conducted to identify those parcels severed by the project and those too small or physically constrained and to convert those to a non-agricultural uses. For additional information on the methodology implemented to determine the actual loss of agricultural land, refer to Section 3.14, Agricultural Lands of the EIR/EIS.

### 3.1.5 Environmental Justice

The presence of low-income and minority populations is typically determined by an evaluation of U.S. Census Bureau data. The analysis included 2010 Census data, U.S. American Community Survey (ACS)<sup>1</sup> 2006–2010 data, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) data (NCES 2010), school

<sup>1</sup> The ACS is an ongoing U.S. Census Bureau survey sent to a sample of the population. Data are collected at the city and county level. 2006-2010 ACS data were used to determine low-income populations since 2010 Census data on low-income populations were not available at the time of analysis.



enrollment data, comments received during public involvement efforts, specific environmental justice outreach efforts, and a site visit of the study area in November 2009 to supplement information from the U.S. Census Bureau. The analysis evaluated elementary school data because the attendance boundaries associated with the schools more closely parallel the study area boundaries than middle or high school attendance boundaries. All public schools in California collect information on race and ethnicity of students and the percentage of students who are eligible for reduced and free lunches. The reduced and free lunch data provide information on the number of low-income students, because eligibility depends on family income level. Elementary schools were selected based on the attendance boundary overlap with the study area. Data were not analyzed when only a small part of a school's attendance boundary area intersected the study area.

### 3.1.5.1 Environmental Justice Definitions

For this analysis, minority populations and low-income populations are any readily identifiable group of minority or low-income persons who live in nearby and, if circumstances warrant, geographically dispersed/transient persons (such as migrant workers or Native Americans) who are similarly affected by a proposed U.S. Department of Transportation program, policy, or activity.

The term *minority* is defined as follows:

- Black or African American – A person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa.
- American Indian or Alaska Native – A person having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America) and who maintain tribal affiliation or community attachment.
- Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander – A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands. It includes people who indicate their race as Native Hawaiian, Guamanian or Chamorro, Samoan, or Other Pacific Islander.
- Asian – A person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, the Indian subcontinent, or the Pacific Island. Includes Asian Indian, Chinese, Filipino, Korean, Japanese, Vietnamese, and Other Asian.
- Hispanic or Latino – Considered an ethnicity, not a race. Hispanic and Latino persons may be of any race. All people who identify themselves as Hispanic are considered a minority, independent of their race. Those in this category have indicated that they are Mexican, Puerto Rican, or Cuban, along with those who indicate they are other Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino.

Low-income is defined as income that is below the poverty threshold established by the U.S. Census Bureau for the year 2010. U.S. Census Bureau poverty thresholds vary by the size of the family unit, the number of related children under age 18, and the number of persons over the age of 65. For a four-person household with two related children, the poverty threshold is \$22,130 (year 2010 dollars). The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) provides poverty guidelines for to determine eligibility for federal programs. For the poverty analysis, HHS recommends using U.S. Census Bureau poverty thresholds. No California-specific poverty guidelines or thresholds exist. Generally, California has a high cost of living, and the cost of living is highest in Southern California and the Bay Area. The lower cost of living in the Central Valley is a major factor for the high growth rate in the Central Valley.

HHS periodically updates the federal poverty guideline in the *Federal Register*. In 2009, the HHS poverty guideline applicable to California was \$22,050 for a four-person household. Each additional person in a household increases the threshold by an additional \$3,740. Households below the applicable threshold meet the minimum eligibility requirements for income-based programs and are considered low-income households.

### 3.1.5.2 Environmental Justice Analysis

Analysis of census data is based on census block groups. A minority or low-income population is defined for purposes of this environmental justice analysis as a census block group population that meets either or both of the following criteria:

- The census block group contains 50% or more minority persons or 25% or more low-income persons.
- The percentage of minority or low-income persons in any census block group is more than 10% greater than the average for the three counties in the study area (Merced, Madera, and Fresno counties), which is 76% for minority and 31% for low-income persons.

Census block groups that meet either of these criteria are considered minority and low-income population areas, and are hereafter referred to as “communities of concern.” The lower of the two thresholds is the one applied during analysis to determine communities of concern, which in this case is Criterion 1.

The reference community for the analysis was the three counties within the study area (Merced, Madera, and Fresno). The reference community is defined as those areas where the benefits of the HST project would occur. The adverse impacts would occur in the areas adjacent to the HST alternatives within the defined study area.

To determine the presence of adverse impacts in census block groups with communities of concern and whether those impacts would be disproportionately high and adverse on those communities of concern, the analysis included a review of the data and impact analyses in the other resource topics analyzed as part of the Project EIR/EIS. Supporting technical reports address the following topics:

- Transportation impact analysis.
- Air quality and global climate change.
- Noise and vibration.
- Aesthetic and visual quality.

The analysis also considered outcomes from the public involvement process that has been conducted. The analysis used the following to determine whether communities of concern would experience disproportionately high and adverse effects:

- Impacts would be predominantly borne by communities of concern, or
- Communities of concern would bear the impact, and the impact would be considerably more severe or greater in magnitude than the adverse impact on by the general population.

In addition, the analysis considered if the project implements measures to avoid or minimize disproportionately high and adverse impacts and whether project benefits would affect the communities of concern. The analysis also considered outcomes from the public involvement process.

## 3.2 Methods for Evaluating Effects under NEPA

Pursuant to NEPA regulations (40 CFR 1500-1508), project effects are evaluated based on the criteria of context and intensity. Context means the affected environment in which a proposed project occurs. Intensity refers to the severity of the effect, which is examined in terms of the type, quality, and sensitivity of the resource involved, location and extent of the effect, duration of the effect (short- or long-term), and other considerations. Beneficial effects are identified and described. When there is no measurable effect, an impact is found not to occur. The intensity of adverse effects is the degree or magnitude of a potential adverse effect, described as negligible, moderate, or substantial. Context and intensity are considered together when determining whether an impact is significant under NEPA. Thus, it is possible that a significant adverse effect may still exist when the intensity of the impact is determined

to be negligible or even if the impact is beneficial. For socioeconomics, communities, and environmental justice, the terms are defined as follows:

- Impacts with *negligible* intensity are defined as social or economic impacts, including permanent loss of revenues and those related to the other environmental elements (i.e., air quality, noise, and transportation), that would be measurable but not perceptible.
- Impacts with *moderate* intensity are defined as those social and economic impacts that would not create barriers to access, divide neighborhoods or result in disruptions to community interaction, or result in physical deterioration and would not negatively affect the overall quality of life. Impacts with moderate intensity would also result in some economic effects, including temporary decrease in property values, temporary loss of revenues, and property acquisitions and relocations. Impacts would be localized and any impacts would not result in disproportionately high and adverse impacts on minority and low-income populations.
- Impacts with *substantial* intensity occur when an alternative results in one or more of the following social and economic impacts: physical division of an established neighborhood; physical deterioration and/or reduction of property values; removal of access to community facilities; relocation of specialized businesses; relocation of a large number of residences that would negatively affect the community; negative economic effects due to a reduction in tax or employment in the cities and counties; or disproportionately high and adverse impacts on minority and low-income populations.

### 3.3 CEQA Significance Criteria

Pursuant to CEQA guidelines, the project would have a significant impact if it would result in any of the following:

- Physically divide an established community.
- Displace substantial amounts of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.
- Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.
- Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities or the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for any public services including fire protection, police protection, schools, parks, or other public facilities.

The project's social and economic effects are not treated as significant effects on the physical environment under CEQA. However, the potential for the project to create social or economic effects is considered in determining the level of significance of the project's physical changes to communities and in the discussion of whether social or economic effects create secondary adverse physical impacts on the environment.

This report discusses project effects on the agricultural economy of the study area. In accordance with Section 15064(e) of the CEQA guidelines, "economic and social changes resulting from a project shall not be treated as significant effects on the environment." Therefore, no CEQA significance criteria are provided for economic impacts. CEQA addresses the conversion of agricultural land to nonagricultural uses.

### 3.4 Study Area for Analysis

For the population and household characteristics, including low-income and minority populations, census block group data were collected for the area within a 0.5-mile radius of the centerline of the HST alignments. Because of the sparse population in rural portions of the study area, census block groups in these locations often extend for miles beyond the study area. Because the majority of the residents live close to urban areas, census block groups with limited population in the study area boundaries were not included in the demographic analysis. This more accurately reflects the demographics within the study area boundaries. This was accomplished by reviewing aerial photographs to determine the presence of residential buildings within the study area and by conducting site visits in November 2009 and April 2010. For community facilities, the study area is the area within a 0.5 mile radius of the centerline of the track alignment and within a 0.5-mile radius of the HST stations. The analysis also considered population and household characteristics for the surrounding region, including the cities of Atwater, Merced, Le Grand, Chowchilla, Madera, and Fresno and the counties of Merced, Madera, and Fresno.

For property impacts and acquisitions, the analyst used the construction footprint to determine the number of required acquisitions and displacements for required relocation. The construction footprint is the total area that would be disturbed during construction including the right-of-way for the project components and portions of parcels beyond the necessary right-of-way that would be acquired because they are too small to sustain current use without modifications.

The economic setting for the Merced to Fresno Section is discussed in Section 6.3 and included a regional-level analysis because economic data are not available for the smaller geographic areas within the study area.

## 4.0 Regulatory Framework

This section provides information on the federal, state, and local regulations that are applicable to the CIA.

### 4.1 Federal

#### **Title VI of the Civil Rights Act [42 U.S.C. Section 2000(d) et seq.]**

Prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex, or disability in programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance.

#### **Executive Order 12898**

EO 12898, known as the Federal Environmental Justice Policy, requires federal agencies to address, to the greatest extent practicable and permitted by law, the potential disproportionately high, adverse human health and environmental impacts of their programs, policies, and activities on minority and low-income populations. Federal agency responsibilities under this EO also apply to Native American programs. The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) Order 5610.2 was issued in 1997 to comply with EO 12898. The policy of the DOT Order is to promote the principles of environmental justice in all DOT programs, which includes the FRA. The DOT Order defines environmental justice to mean an adverse impact that is predominantly borne by a minority population and/or a low-income population, or that would be suffered by the minority population and/or low-income population, and that is appreciably more severe or greater in magnitude than would be suffered by the non-minority population and/or non-low-income population (DOT Order 5610.2, Appendix Definitions, sub. [g]).

#### **Executive Order 13166**

Requires each federal agency to ensure that recipients of federal financial assistance provide meaningful access to their programs and activities by Limited English Proficiency applicants and beneficiaries.

#### **Executive Order 13045**

EO 13045 requires federal agencies to minimize environmental health and safety risks to children, and to prioritize the identification and assessment of environmental health and safety risks that may have a disproportionate impact on children.

#### **U.S. Department of Transportation Order 5610.2**

Establishes the process that the Office of the Secretary and each Operating Administration within the U.S. Department of Transportation will use to incorporate environmental justice principles (as embodied in the Executive Order 12898) into existing programs, policies, and activities.

#### **Americans with Disabilities Act [42 U.S.C. Sections 12101 to 12213]**

Prohibits, under certain circumstances, discrimination based on disability.

#### **Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act [42 U.S.C. Chapter 61]**

The Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act, as amended (Uniform Relocation Act), ensures that persons displaced as a result of a federal action or by an undertaking involving federal funds are treated fairly, consistently, and equitably. This helps to ensure persons will not suffer disproportionate injuries as a result of projects designed for the benefit of the public as a whole.

## 4.2 State

### **California Government Code Section 65040.12(e)**

Government Code Section 65040.12(e) defines environmental justice as “the fair treatment of people of all races, cultures, and incomes with respect to the development, adoption, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.”

### **California Relocation Act [Government Code Section 7260 et seq.]**

In parallel with the federal law, the California Relocation Assistance Act ensures that persons displaced as a result of a federal action receive assistance and benefits to displaced persons as a result of projects undertaken by state and local agencies that do not involve federal funds.

## 4.3 Local

General plans for Merced, Madera, and Fresno counties and the cities of Merced, Chowchilla, Madera, and Fresno contain numerous goals, objectives, and policies related to socioeconomic. The relevant general plan elements include land use, transportation and circulation, housing, open space and conservation, community facilities and services, and economic development. These elements address the following issues:

- Land use elements focus on land use goals and policies that enhance the quality of life by preserving community character and minimizing conflicts between incompatible land uses. The general plans reflect the various issues involved in city and county planning. City general plans focus on urban character and community design, and county plans focus on agricultural land and rural residential growth.
- Transportation and circulation elements include policies related to non-motorized transportation. General plan objectives include pedestrian and bicycle transportation in the community design and layout to promote alternatives to automobile travel.
- Housing elements encourage a range of housing types and prices to meet the diverse needs of residents and provide adequate housing assistance to very low to moderate income households and those with special housing needs.
- Open space and conservation elements focus on preserving open space and agricultural resources; city elements focus more on community character, scenic resources, and open space in developed areas. Policies protect these lands to maintain the economy, scenic beauty, visual identity, and recreational needs of the community.
- Community facilities and services elements focus on providing services for residents. Policies address the need to promote growth in areas where adequate public service infrastructure exists and where adequate police, fire, medical, and other services can be promptly provided.
- Economic development elements focus on increasing job growth and encouraging new development within the urban area. Economic development elements also focus on the long-term preservation of agricultural land.

Table 4-1 lists the plans that were reviewed to determine the goals and policies that were considered for the project.



**Table 4-1**  
 Local Plans and Policies

<b>Jurisdiction</b>	<b>Plan</b>
Multijurisdictional	San Joaquin Valley Blueprint Planning Process (2010)
Merced County	University Community Plan (December 2004)
	Merced County Year 2000 General Plan (December 1990)
City of Atwater	City of Atwater General Plan (July 2000)
City of Merced	2007 Downtown Strategy (December, 2007a)
	South Merced Community Plan (November 2007b)
	Prosper Merced Economic Development Strategy (December 2006)
	City of Merced Vision 2015 General Plan (April 1997)
	City of Merced Vision 2030 General Plan (2012)
Madera County	Madera County General Plan (October 1995)
	Draft Fairmead Colony Area Plan (May 2011)
City of Chowchilla	City of Chowchilla General Plan 2011)
City of Madera	City of Madera General Plan (2009)
Fresno County	Fresno County General Plan (2000)
City of Fresno	City of Fresno General Plan (2002)
	West Area Community Plan (2002)
	Highway City Neighborhood Specific Plan (1998)
	Fulton/Lowell Specific Plan (1996)
	Tower District Specific Plan (1991)
	Central Area Community Plan (1989)
	Bullard Community Plan (1988)
	Edison Community Plan (1977)
	Fresno High/Roeding Community Plan (1977)
	City of Fresno Fulton Corridor Specific Plan (Draft 2011)
	City of Fresno Downtown Neighborhoods Community Plan (Draft 2011)



## 5.0 Environmental Justice Outreach

Executive Order 12898 requires that federal agencies ensure effective public participation and access to information. Consequently, a key component of compliance with Executive Order 12898 is outreach to potentially affected minority and low-income populations to address issues that otherwise may not be apparent. This section provides information on all of the outreach and activities that have occurred to date and the groups contacted for their input.

All of the populated areas near the alignment alternatives contain environmental justice populations. Therefore, public outreach efforts, including ongoing and future, in the communities affected by the project include outreach to environmental justice populations. The Authority has and will continue to conduct specific outreach efforts to 16 environmental justice-related community groups and organizations. Refer to the *Environmental Justice Outreach Plan* (Authority and FRA 2010a), the *Public Participation Plan* (Authority and FRA 2009a), and the Tribal Coordination Plan (Authority and FRA 2009b) for additional information on outreach that has been and will be conducted. The *Merced to Fresno Section Environmental Justice Outreach Plan* (Authority and FRA 2010b) identifies outreach efforts to communities of concern for the purpose of understanding where they are present and how they may be potentially be affected by the project. The Tribal Coordination Plan identifies the tribes that are a community of concern, whose tribal lands and cultural sites would be potentially affected by the project. All of the outreach effects have been designed to include communities of concern because almost the entire study area is Spanish speaking or low-income.

### 5.1 Public Outreach Activities

NEPA and CEQA require public involvement throughout the development of projects. The public involvement process starts in the scoping phase. The public was invited to scoping meetings in March 2009 to identify topics the study should address. Additional public information meetings were held prior to publication of the EIR/EIS to discuss study progress. After distribution of the Draft EIR/EIS for public review, the Authority held public hearings to allow members of the community and concerned stakeholders to provide comments and public testimony on the environmental review. Various meeting formats, such as open house, formal presentation, and question and comment sessions, to present information and provide opportunities for input by participants, were used during the public meetings. The public meetings were during 4-hour windows, typically held from 3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. or from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., to allow people working more than one job and in-between work shifts the opportunity to attend. Comments received during the public meetings frequently included concerns about impacts on agriculture, impacts on community resources, and the desire for alignment changes. The Authority considered all comments received and provided responses in this EIR/EIS.

Table 5-1 summarizes the Environmental Justice Outreach Plan outreach activities to low-income and minority populations at key project milestones. In addition to specific environmental justice outreach efforts, the following general outreach efforts during project scoping engaged environmental justice communities:

- Public involvement and outreach included informational materials, such as fact sheets; information and scoping meetings, including town hall meetings; public and agency scoping meetings; meetings with individuals and groups; presentations; and briefings.
- Agency involvement included agency scoping meetings, interagency working group meetings, and other agency consultations.



**Table 5-1**  
 Public Involvement Activities and Outreach to Minority and Low-Income Populations

<b>Project Milestone</b>	<b>General Timeframe</b>	<b>Outreach Activity</b>	<b>Description</b>
Alternatives Analysis	September – November 2009	Direct contact	Contact low-income and minority interest groups to provide project updates, ask about how to reach populations, and gather suggestions for other groups to contact.
Alternatives Analysis Results	November 2009	Public meeting to discuss alternatives to be evaluated in the Project EIR/EIS and the next steps	Provide meeting notices to low-income and minority interest groups, advertisements in Spanish-language newspapers, meeting notices in low-income and minority-service community facilities, additional information in Spanish, and Spanish-language interpreters at the meetings.  Summarize the analysis in Spanish at the meeting and online.
EIR/EIS Public Hearings and Comment Period	Summer 2011	Public hearings	Provide meeting notices to low-income and minority interest groups, advertisements in Spanish-language newspapers, meeting notices in low-income and minority-service community facilities, additional information in Spanish, and Spanish-language (and Lao and/or Hmong, if required) interpreters at the meetings.  The Project EIR/EIS was distributed to various facilities that serve low income and minority populations. These facilities include the Galilee Missionary Baptist Church, El Centro Center (the executive summary will be provided in Spanish), and Lao Family Community Inc.  Outreach Team attended the Merced and Madera Flea Markets to provide general information and information on the environmental review process to those communities. Information will be available in Spanish and English. Team members also plan to meet with the Lao Family Community Inc., and Latinas Unidas, and the local NAACP chapters to give a presentation on the project and provide basic information.  Establish a telephone hotline with interpreter services to receive EIR/EIS comments, and provide information on the hotline regarding all Spanish-language materials.
Preferred Alternative	Summer/Fall 2011	Public meeting to discuss the preferred alternative and next steps	Provide meeting notices to low-income and minority interest groups, advertisements in Spanish-language newspapers, meeting notices in low-income and minority-service community facilities, additional information in Spanish, and Spanish-language (and Lao and/or Hmong, if required) interpreters at the meetings.

Project Milestone	General Timeframe	Outreach Activity	Description
			Summarize the Project EIR/EIS in Spanish at the meeting and online.
NAACP = National Association for the Advancement of Colored People			

In addition to the outreach already performed, there will be additional outreach activities at the project milestones identified in Table 5-1. There have been four public meetings and small community meetings in Le Grand and Fairmead to date. Postcards were mailed in English and Spanish to advertise the meetings, and comment cards provided at the meetings were printed in both languages. Spanish interpreters were available at all four meetings. Because many Fairmead residents do not receive the newspaper, the Outreach Team distributed flyers in the community to advertise the meeting. All meeting materials provided contact information for those with special needs, allowing them to make necessary arrangements. In addition, the Outreach Team contacted several ethnic and minority organizations, including the Laotian community and chapters of the NAACP, to inform them of the project and obtain assistance in notifying others of meetings and project milestones. A meeting and presentation were provided at the Lao Family Community Inc., in Merced. Additional outreach activities will occur prior to the release of the Project EIR/EIS.

## 5.2 Results of the Public Outreach

### 5.2.1 Public and Agency Scoping Meetings

Two hundred and seventy-nine people attended the three public and agency scoping meetings (one each in the cities of Merced, Madera, and Fresno) between March 18 and March 26, 2009. In addition to the formal scoping meetings, there were other presentations, briefings, and workshops during the scoping process. During these meetings, several comments were made by the general public and because the study area is composed largely of communities of concern (see Section 6.5), the comments from the public reflect their concerns as well. Environmental issues mentioned in scoping comments included the following:

- Location of HST stations and alignment.
- Location of the HMF.
- Displacement of people.
- Air quality, congestion, and economic benefits.
- Economic growth.
- Connections to local transit.
- Benefits and impacts on local businesses.
- General support for the project.
- Employment opportunities.
- Agricultural impacts.
- Property acquisition.
- Noise impacts.
- Potential devaluation of property.
- Use of domestic labor and products for construction.

### 5.2.2 Draft Merced to Fresno Section EIR/EIS

During the comment period, there were 857 comment submittals on the Merced to Fresno Section Draft EIR/EIS. The comments covered a wide range of issues and represented viewpoints from government agencies, organizations, business groups, businesses, residents, and property owners.

Most expressed support of or opposition to the project or its alternatives. Of the 857 submittals, approximately 103 generally supported and 127 were generally opposed to the project. Most comments

came from individuals in the general public living, working, or with property interests in the project study area. About a fourth of the comments concerned the UPRR/SR 99 Alternative. Few preferred the BNSF Alternative; most comments on the BNSF Alternative expressed opposition to this alternative. Only a few comments mentioned the Hybrid Alternative by name.

All of the populated areas near the alignment alternatives contain environmental justice populations. Therefore, public outreach efforts in the communities affected by the project included outreach to environmental justice populations. The Authority also conducted specific outreach efforts to 16 environmental justice-related community groups and organizations. Among comments received from the general public, effects on agricultural and private property were the most common concerns. Also, comments expressed concern over the project cost estimates, funding availability (including whether any money should be spent on this type of project in light of state and federal budget deficits), and the accuracy of the ridership projections. Other common issues related to safety at stations, station access limitations for vehicles and pedestrians, and connectivity to ultimate destinations upon arriving at HST stations. Other common environmental concerns included noise and vibration, ecosystem effects, neighborhoods, and construction effects.

### 5.3 Targeted Outreach

Specific environmental justice outreach efforts during the public comment period will include providing meeting notices to environmental justice interest groups, advertisements in Spanish-language newspapers, posting meeting notices (in English and in Spanish) at community facilities serving low-income and minority populations, providing a telephone number to call for information in Spanish, and providing Spanish interpreters at public hearings and meetings. In addition, interpreters for the Lao/Hmong community will be at the public hearings; a copy of the document and the executive summary in Hmong will be provided to Lao Family Community Inc. All meeting materials provide contact information for people with special needs, allowing them to make arrangements. A summary of the Project EIR/EIS will be provided in Spanish at the meetings and online at the Authority's web site. A telephone hotline with interpreter services will be established to receive comments, and information for using the hotline will be provided in all Spanish-language materials.

To engage minority and low-income groups in the environmental analysis, the Outreach Team will undertake additional specific activities referenced in Table 5-1 at key project milestones. In addition, the Outreach Team will conduct telephone outreach directly to the environmental justice interest groups, which will include translation services as required for Spanish. During these telephone conversations, the Outreach Team will provide a project update, inquire about effective methods to reach potentially affected populations these groups serve, and solicit suggestions for other groups to contact.

The Environmental Justice Coordination Plan provides information regarding the following groups to engage during outreach efforts:

- California Coalition for Rural Housing.
- Community Action Partnership of Madera County.
- Merced County Hispanic Chamber of Commerce.
- Healthy House WMC (Merced).
- Latinas Unidas (Madera).
- Lao Family Community Inc. (Merced).
- Merced Lao Family Center.
- Madera Hispanic Chamber of Commerce.
- Madera Housing Authority.
- Madera County Workforce Assistance Center.
- Merced County Community Action Agency.
- Self-Help Enterprises.
- NAACP, Merced Chapter.
- Golden Valley Health Centers.
- Alliance for Community Research and Development (Merced).

- Habitat for Humanity.
- Central Valley Coalition of Affordable Housing.
- Merced County Farm Bureau.
- Valley Land Alliance.
- Merced Asthma Coalition.
- San Joaquin et al (Community Group).



## 6.0 Existing Conditions

This section describes current conditions in the HST alternative study areas and provides the basis for the analysis.

### 6.1 Population Characteristics

Population and demographic characteristics provide information about the region’s social context. This section discusses age, household, and disability characteristics to identify special relocation needs and the availability of replacement housing. Race and income information identify communities of concern.

#### 6.1.1 Regional Population Characteristics

Table 6-1 provides information on the existing and projected growth for Merced, Madera, and Fresno counties and the state of California based on data from the California Department of Finance. These counties have grown at a faster rate than the state, and they are anticipated to grow at a higher average annual rate than California over the next 25 years. The population in Fresno County is projected to increase by 59.3%, with Merced County increasing by 80.1% and Madera County increasing 103.9%. A main reason for this growth is the overflow of people from urban coastal areas seeking affordable housing near major metropolitan areas.

**Table 6-1**  
 Regional Existing and Projected Populations

Area	2000	2010	2035	Change in Population 2010–2035 (%)	Average Annual Growth Rate (2010–2035) (%)
Merced County	210,554	258,495	465,500	80.1	3.2
Madera County	123,109	153,655	313,250	103.9	4.2
Fresno County	799,407	953,761	1,519,325	59.3	2.4
California	33,873,086	38,648,090	51,747,374	33.9	1.4

Source: California Department of Finance (CDOF) (2010a,b).

#### 6.1.2 Demographic Characteristics

This section provides information on the demographic characteristics for the three HST alternative study areas and the counties and cities in the study areas. As illustrated in Table 6-2, the age characteristics were very similar between all the geographic areas in 2010. The biggest differences occurred in the City of Chowchilla, which had the lowest percentage of population under 19 (21.4%) and the highest median age (34.7 years).

**Table 6-2**  
 Age Characteristics in 2010

Area	Total Population	Percent of Population		Median Age
		Under 19	Over 65	
<b>HST Alternatives</b>				
UPRR/SR 99	113,562	36.5	7.7	29.4
BNSF	80,509	36.1	7.5	30.0
Hybrid	84,268	35.9	7.8	30.4
<b>Counties and Cities</b>				
<b>Merced County</b>	255,793	35.6	9.4	29.6
Atwater	28,168	35.5	10.4	30.0
Merced	78,958	35.7	8.8	28.1
Le Grand	1,659	36.6	9.8	31.5
<b>Madera County</b>	150,865	31.6	11.4	33.0
Fairmead	1,447	38.7	7.3	29.0
Chowchilla	18,720	21.4	7.0	34.7
Madera	61,460	38.6	7.6	26.6
<b>Fresno County</b>	930,450	33.3	10.0	30.6
Fresno	494,665	33.9	9.3	29.3
Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2010).				

The minority population characteristics within the study area for the year 2010 are presented in Table 6-3. The majority of the population in all areas either identify themselves as White or Hispanic. The U.S. Census Bureau considers the Hispanic population as an ethnic group, not a racial group. Hispanics may be of any race. Section 3.1.5.1, Environmental Justice Definitions, provides definitions for minority populations. The information presented on race and ethnicity in Table 6-3 is based on information provided by respondents to the 2010 Census who identified themselves as either Hispanic or Latino or not Hispanic or Latino. There were differences in all of the areas in 2010, but the majority of the population is either White or Hispanic. The City of Madera and the unincorporated community of Le Grand are the most diverse, with over 83% of the population considered a minority in those two areas. Within the three counties, the Hispanic population comprised about 53% of the total population; the Caucasian Non-Hispanic population represented about 32% of the population. The UPRR/SR 99 Alternative study area had the largest Hispanic population of the HST alternatives; however, the study area of all of the HST alternatives had a Hispanic population of over 50%. The unincorporated community of Le Grand within the BNSF Alternative study area contained the greatest concentration of Hispanic population in the counties and cities (about 82%). The cities of Merced and Fresno, where the HST stations are located, had higher percentages of Asian population, and therefore all three HST alternatives have similar percentages of Asian population. Additionally, the City of Chowchilla had the highest percentage of African American population.

**Table 6-3**  
 Race and Ethnic Characteristics by Percent in 2010

Area	Race Characteristics (%)						Ethnic Characteristics (%)
	White	African American	Native American	Asian	Native Hawaiian	Other	Hispanic
<b>HST Alternatives</b>							
UPRR/SR 99	24.0	6.3	0.7	7.1	0.1	0.2	59.7
BNSF	25.5	9.5	0.8	8.2	0.1	0.7	53.4
Hybrid	26.8	7.6	0.7	8.7	0.1	0.2	53.9
<b>Counties and Cities</b>							
<b>Merced County</b>	31.9	3.4	0.4	7.1	0.2	2.0	54.9
Atwater	35.8	3.9	0.5	4.8	0.2	2.3	52.6
Merced	30.0	5.7	0.5	11.5	0.2	2.6	49.6
Le Grand	15.4	0.7	0.2	1.0	0.1	0.8	81.8
<b>Madera County</b>	38.0	3.3	1.2	1.7	0.1	2.0	53.7
Fairmead	22.8	5.7	1.0	0.5	0	2.1	68.0
Chowchilla	42.1	12.3	1.3	2.0	0.2	4.2	37.8
Madera	16.9	2.7	0.5	2.0	0.1	1.1	76.7
<b>Fresno County</b>	32.7	4.8	0.6	9.3	0.1	2.0	50.3
Fresno	30.0	7.7	0.6	12.3	0.1	2.3	46.9

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2010).

Table 6-4 illustrates the changes in racial characteristics for non-white (minority) and ethnic Hispanic populations compared to the 2000 Census. In all areas, the racial characteristics have increased, and the percentage of the Hispanic or Latino population has also increased.

**Table 6-4**  
 Trends in Racial and Ethnic Characteristics

Area	Non-White Characteristics			Hispanic or Latino		
	2000 (%)	2010 (%)	Percent Change	2000 (%)	2010 (%)	Percent Change
<b>Merced County</b>	59.4	68.1	8.7	45.3	54.9	9.6
Atwater	55.7	64.2	8.5	41.5	52.6	11.1
Merced	62.2	70.0	7.8	41.4	49.6	8.2

Area	Non-White Characteristics			Hispanic or Latino		
	2000 (%)	2010 (%)	Percent Change	2000 (%)	2010 (%)	Percent Change
Le Grand	81.3	84.6	3.3	78.8	81.8	3.0
<b>Madera County</b>	53.4	62.0	8.6	44.3	53.7	9.4
Fairmead	N/A	77.2	N/A	N/A	68.0	N/A
Chowchilla	44.9	57.9	13.0	28.4	37.8	9.4
Madera	74.9	83.1	8.2	67.8	76.7	8.9
<b>Fresno County</b>	60.3	67.3	7.0	44.0	50.3	6.3
Fresno	62.7	70.0	7.3	39.9	46.9	7.0

Note: ACS 2006-2010 data not available for the study area block groups.  
 Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2000b; 2010).  
 N/A = Not available.

Table 6-5 provides information on average household size and the types of households in 2010. All households had a similar size (more than three people per household) in 2010 and were primarily family households consisting of married couples. Only the cities of Merced and Fresno and Fresno County contained households where the percentage of married couples was below 50%. These areas also contained the highest percentage of people living alone.

**Table 6-5**  
 Demographic Characteristics – Households in 2010

Area	Households		Family Households (%)			Householder Living Alone
	Total	Average Size	All	Married Couple	Female Head	
<b>HST Alternatives</b>						
UPRR/SR 99	32,187	3.5	76.5	48.1	19.8	18.1
BNSF	22,815	3.4	76.5	47.6	20.2	18.2
Hybrid	23,797	3.4	75.8	47.3	20.2	18.8
<b>Counties and Cities</b>						
<b>Merced County</b>	75,642	3.32	77.7	54.0	15.8	17.4
Atwater	8,838	3.18	77.2	52.0	17.6	18.3
Merced	24,899	3.13	71.6	44.0	19.8	21.5
Le Grand	458	3.62	85.4	63.3	16.2	12.9
<b>Madera County</b>	43,317	3.28	78.7	58.2	13.3	16.7
Fairmead	360	4.02	81.9	60.0	15.3	13.6
Chowchilla	3,673	3.08	75.6	52.6	16.0	19.6
Madera	15,938	3.82	80.9	53.5	18.3	14.9

Area	Households		Family Households (%)			Householder Living Alone
	Total	Average Size	All	Married Couple	Female Head	
<b>Fresno County</b>	289391	3.15	74.1	49.9	16.9	19.8
Fresno	158,349	3.07	70.4	43.8	19.3	22.1

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2010).

Table 6-6 provides information on the changes in household characteristics compared to the 2000 Census. According to these data, the average household size increased in all areas except for Le Grand; the percentage of married-couple households decreased in all areas; the percentage of female households increased in all areas except Le Grand; and the percentage of households living alone decreased in all areas except Atwater, Le Grand, and Madera County.

**Table 6-6**  
 Trends in Demographic Characteristics – Households

Area	Average Household Size		Married-Couple Households		Female Households		Living Alone	
	2000	2010	2000	2010	2000	2010	2000	2010
<b>Merced County</b>	3.25	3.32	57.8	54.0	14.1	15.8	17.7	17.4
Atwater	3.15	3.18	55.9	52.0	16.3	17.6	17.6	18.3
Merced	3.06	3.13	47.2	44.0	18.2	19.8	22.6	21.5
Le Grand	3.8	3.62	66.7	63.3	16.8	16.2	8.9	12.9
<b>Madera County</b>	3.18	3.28	60.9	58.2	12.2	13.3	16.5	16.7
Fairmead	N/A	4.02	N/A	60.0	N/A	15.3	N/A	13.6
Chowchilla	2.9	3.08	55.3	52.6	13.2	16.0	21.9	19.6
Madera	3.57	3.82	53.7	53.5	17.5	18.3	16.8	14.9
<b>Fresno County</b>	3.09	3.15	52.5	49.9	15.2	16.9	20.6	19.8
Fresno	2.99	3.07	46.1	43.8	17.6	19.3	23.3	22.1

Note: ACS 2006-2010 data not available for the study area block groups.  
 Sources: Census block group data from U.S. Census Bureau (2000a, 2010a,b)  
 N/A = Not available.

Based on the 2010 Census data, the percentage of individuals living below the poverty level ranged from 15.2% to 35.4% (refer to Table 6-7). The HST alternatives study areas all have similar concentrations of population below the poverty level, and the concentration is higher than in most of the cities and counties in the study area. Compared to the cities and counties, all of the HST alternatives study areas also have lower median household income, and a greater percentage of households with no vehicle in 2010. Households that do not have a vehicle are likely to be transit-dependent and have lower incomes.

**Table 6-7**  
 Household Income and Poverty Status in 2010

Area	Median Household Income (2006-2010\$)	Poverty Level 2006-2010 <sup>a</sup> (%)
<b>HST Alternatives</b>		
UPRR/SR 99	\$38,560 <sup>b</sup>	26.3
BNSF	\$38,741 <sup>b</sup>	26.3
Hybrid	\$38,420 <sup>b</sup>	26.0
<b>Counties and Cities</b>		
<b>Merced County</b>		
Merced County	\$43,844	21.8
Atwater	\$42,226	23.4
Merced	\$36,269	26.2
Le Grand	\$35,694	22.8
<b>Madera County</b>		
Fairmead	\$31,900	35.4
Chowchilla	\$39,902	18.4
Madera Acres	\$62,609	15.2
Madera	\$40,889	25.7
<b>Fresno County</b>		
Fresno	\$43,124	24.9
<sup>a</sup> ACS 2006–2010 data available at the census tract level <sup>b</sup> Average Median Income for the study area. Sources: Census block group data from U.S. Census Bureau (2000a, 2010a,b). N/A = Not available.		

The area with the highest concentration of low-income populations is the unincorporated community of Fairmead. Table 6-8 provides information on the trends in income and the poverty level since the 2000 Census (based on the ACS 2006–2010 data). Overall, the median household income in all geographic areas has increased by approximately 30%, except in the cities of Atwater, Merced, and Le Grand, where the increase ranged from 9.7 to 16.8%. Although the median household income increased in Atwater, there was an increase in the percentage of individuals below the poverty level.

**Table 6-8**  
 Trends in Household Income and Poverty

Area	Median Household Income			Population below Poverty Level	
	2000 (\$)	2010 (\$)	Percent Increase	2000 (%)	2010 (%)
<b>Merced County</b>	35,532	\$43,844	23.4	21.7	21.8
Atwater	37,344	\$42,226	16.8	18.7	23.4
Merced	30,429	\$36,269	14.2	27.9	26.2
Le Grand	28,894	\$35,694	9.7	23.2	22.8
<b>Madera County</b>	36,286	\$46,039	29.0	21.4	19.3
Fairmead	N/A	\$31,900	N/A	N/A	35.4
Chowchilla	30,729	\$39,902	28.7	19.2	18.4
Madera Acres	N/A	\$62,609	N/A	N/A	15.2
Madera	31,033	\$40,889	32.1	32.5	25.7
<b>Fresno County</b>	34,725	\$46,430	33.1	22.9	22.5
Fresno	32,236	\$43,124	33.5	26.2	24.9

<sup>a</sup> ACS 2006–2010 data available at the census tract level  
<sup>b</sup> Average Median Income for the study area.  
 Sources: Census block group data from U.S. Census Bureau (2000a, 2010a,b).  
 N/A = Not available.

Table 6-9 provides population data for people with disabilities in 2000. Disability information is not available for either the 2010 Census or the 2006-2010 ACS data for the study area. Currently the only disability data available are for those areas with populations of 65,000 or greater. A disability is considered a long-term condition that includes sensory (vision or hearing), physical (difficulty walking or climbing stairs), or mental (cognitive tasks such as learning, remembering, or concentrating) conditions. In addition, the disability population is based on those who are not institutionalized. Institutions consist primarily of nursing homes, prisons, jails, mental hospitals, and juvenile correctional facilities (U.S. Census Bureau 2010). Individuals can identify themselves as having more than one type of disability; therefore, there is a potential that these individuals could be counted more than once, increasing the overall percentage of the population with a disability. The percentage of the population with a disability was similar in all the geographic areas in 2000.

**Table 6-9**  
 Disability Characteristics in 2000

Area	Total Population 5+ Years	Percent of Population with a Disability		
		Ages 5 to 20	Ages 21 to 64	Ages 65 and over
<b>HST Alternatives</b>				
UPRR/SR 99	39,861	2.6	16.6	4.0
BNSF	38,527	2.9	15.3	4.4
Hybrid	42,786	2.7	8.2	4.4
<b>Counties and Cities</b>				
<b>Merced County</b>	191,078	2.7	13.7	4.5
Atwater	20,822	2.9	13.8	4.3
Merced	57,382	2.9	14.7	4.5
Le Grand	1,583	4.5	15.0	5.0
<b>Madera County</b>	106,024	2.2	15.1	5.3
Chowchilla	6,952	1.7	14.0	5.3
Madera	38,498	2.6	15.8	4.5
<b>Fresno County</b>	721,037	2.6	13.8	4.9
Fresno	384,166	2.8	14.5	4.8
Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2000a).				

### 6.1.3 HST Alternative Demographic Characteristics

The following sections summarize population characteristics associated with the HST alternative study areas, including the proposed sites for the HMF. The year 2010 demographic characteristics for those living within the study areas for the three HST alternatives, including the wyes and design options, are similar because all of the alignments travel through the cities of Merced and Fresno.

#### 6.1.3.1 UPRR/SR 99 Alternative

According to 2010 Census data, the total population of all census block groups within or intersecting the 0.5-mile radius of the proposed UPRR/SR 99 Alternative alignment (including the wyes and design options) was 127,758 (U.S. Census Bureau 2010a). Excluding the census block groups with limited populations, the population was 113,562, with the majority of the population located within the cities of Merced, Chowchilla, Madera, and Fresno. Overall, the age, household, and disability characteristics of the UPRR/SR 99 Alternative study area are similar to those of the cities and counties in the region. Of the total population, about 34.5% are under the age of 18.

The UPRR/SR 99 Alternative study area contains the highest percentage of minority population compared to the BNSF and Hybrid alternatives, with the Hispanic population being the highest (59.7%). The UPRR/SR 99 Alternative study area also contains a higher percentage of minority populations and of Hispanic populations, than all of the surrounding cities and counties except Le Grand, Fairmead, and the

City of Madera. In addition, the UPRR/SR 99 Alternative study area contains a greater concentration of Asian population (7.1%) with the exception of the cities of Merced and Fresno.

The UPRR/SR 99 Alternative study area had higher percentages of low-income populations than the other cities and counties in the region except for the unincorporated community of Fairmead. The percentage of the population that is considered low-income and the median household income are similar in the study areas of all three alternatives. In 2000, the UPRR/SR 99 study area had a greater percentage of households with no vehicle than the region. Households that do not have a vehicle are likely to be transit-dependent and have lower incomes.

### **6.1.3.2 BNSF Alternative**

According to 2010 Census data, the total population of all census block groups that are within or intersect the 0.5-mile radius of the proposed BNSF Alternative alignment was 105,350 (U.S. Census Bureau 2010). Excluding the census block groups with limited populations in the study area, the population was 80,509. Overall, the age, household, and disability characteristics of the BNSF Alternative study area are similar to those of the cities and counties in the region. Of the total population about 34.3% are under the age of 18.

The BNSF Alternative study area contains lower percentages of minority populations than the UPRR/SR 99 Alternative study area, but greater than the Hybrid Alternative study area. The BNSF Alternative study area contained a higher percentage of minorities (74.5%), including a higher percentage of Hispanic populations, than the cities and counties in the region with the exception of Le Grand, Fairmead, the City of Madera, and Merced County (higher than the study area for concentrations of Hispanic populations only). In addition, the BNSF Alternative study area contains a greater concentration of Asians (8.2%) than all other areas, except the cities of Merced and Fresno.

Compared to the region, the BNSF Alternative study area generally has a lower median household income. The percentage of the population below the poverty level is higher than any cities and counties in the region, except for Fairmead and the City of Merced. The percentage of the population that is considered low-income and the median household income are similar in the study areas of all three alternatives.

### **6.1.3.3 Hybrid Alternative**

According to 2010 Census data, the total population of all the census block groups that are within or intersect the 0.5-mile radius of the proposed Hybrid Alternative alignment was 102,184 (U.S. Census Bureau 2010a). Excluding the census block groups with limited populations in the study area, the population was 84,268. Similar to the UPRR/SR 99 Alternative and BNSF Alternative study areas, the Hybrid Alternative study area age, household, and disability characteristics are similar to those of the region. Of the total population, about 34.2% are under the age of 18.

The Hybrid Alternative study area contains the lowest percentage of minority populations. It also contains a higher percentage of minorities (73.2%), including a higher percentage of Hispanic populations, than the cities and counties in the region, with the exception of Le Grand, Fairmead, and the City of Madera. In addition, the Hybrid Alternative study area contains a greater concentration of Asians (8.7%) than the study areas for the other alternatives and all other areas in the region, except the cities of Fresno and Merced.

Compared to the region, the Hybrid Alternative study area generally has a lower median household income. The percentage of the population below the poverty level is higher than in any cities and counties in the region, except for Fairmead and the City of Merced. The percentage of the population that is considered low-income and the median household income are similar in the study areas of all three alternatives.

**6.1.3.4 Heavy Maintenance Facility**

Of the five proposed sites for the HMF, four sites (Harris-DeJager, Fagundes, Gordon-Shaw, and Kojima Development) are in areas with agricultural land uses and sparse populations. In these areas, the census block groups are very large and extend for miles beyond the location of the proposed HMF; demographic data would not be a good indicator because there is no population within the properties proposed for the HMF, and the area surrounding the sites is sparsely populated.

The Castle Commerce Center HMF site, which is adjacent to the City of Atwater in Merced County, would connect to the Downtown Merced Station via a guideway that would be located close to residences, including the unincorporated community of Franklin-Beachwood in Merced County. According to 2010 Census data, the population was 14,783 for those census block groups associated with the Castle Commerce Center HMF; demographic data were similar for the UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, and Hybrid alternative study areas.

**6.2 Housing Setting**

Table 6-10 shows that single-family housing accounted for more than two-thirds of the housing units in the region. Of the three counties, Madera County had the highest proportion of single-family residential units (81%); Fresno County had the lowest (70%). In 2010, vacancy rates for single-family and multifamily housing units ranged between 4.3% in the City of Madera to 14.1% in unincorporated Madera County (CDOF 2010a). Since 2000, the housing stock inventory has increased in the percentage of single-family residences and decreased in multifamily housing units and mobile homes (see Table 6-11). According to research performed in 2010 in Merced and Madera counties and the City of Fresno, approximately 3,800 single-family homes were available for sale, with prices ranging from \$25,000 to \$6,500,000 (National Association of Realtors 2010) (refer to Table 6-12).

**Table 6-10**  
 2010 Housing Stock Inventory

Area	Single Family	Multifamily	Mobile Homes	Total Housing Units	Vacancy Rate (%)
<b>Merced County</b>					
<b>Merced County</b>	65,810	13,634	5,815	85,259	6.7
Atwater	7,203	1,822	507	9,532	10.7
Merced	19,141	8,255	710	28,106	5.6
Unincorporated	23,257	1,486	4,111	28,854	8.2
<b>Madera County</b>					
<b>Madera County</b>	40,520	5,524	3,761	49,805	10.1
Chowchilla	3,252	675	36	3,963	5.5
Madera	12,446	3,821	379	16,646	4.3
Unincorporated	24,822	1,028	3,346	29,196	14.1

Area	Single Family	Multifamily	Mobile Homes	Total Housing Units	Vacancy Rate (%)
<b>Fresno County</b>					
<b>Fresno County</b>	220,957	79,667	14,134	314,758	6.4
Fresno	109,668	57,443	3,923	171,034	6.0
Unincorporated	49,912	3,311	7,463	60,686	10.7
<b>State of California</b>	8,747,293	4,247,635	596,938	13,591,866	5.9
Source: CDOF (2010a).					

**Table 6-11**  
 Trends in Housing Stock Inventory

	2000	Percent	2010	Percent
<b>Merced County</b>				
Single Family	50,538	73.9	65,810	77.2
Multifamily	12,586	18.4	13,634	16.0
Mobile Homes	5,249	7.7	5,815	6.8
<b>Total Housing Units</b>	<b>68,373</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>85,259</b>	<b>100.00</b>
Vacancy Rate (%)	6.7		6.7	
<b>Madera County</b>				
Single Family	32,212	79.8	40,520	81.4
Multifamily	4,798	11.9	5,524	11.1
Mobile Homes	3,377	8.4	3,761	7.5
<b>Total Housing Units</b>	<b>40,387</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>49,805</b>	<b>100.00</b>
Vacancy Rate (%)	10.5		10.1	
<b>Fresno County</b>				
Single Family	185,433	68.5	220,957	70.2
Multifamily	71,992	26.6	79,667	25.3
Mobile Homes	13,342	4.9	14,134	4.5
<b>Total Housing Units</b>	<b>270,767</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>314,758</b>	<b>100.00</b>
Vacancy Rate (%)	6.6		6.4	

	2000	Percent	2010	Percent
<b>State of California</b>				
Single Family	8,720,779	64.5	8,747,293	64.4
Multifamily	4,213,013	31.1	4,247,635	31.2
Mobile Homes	596,927	4.4	596,938	4.4
<b>Total Housing Units</b>	<b>13,530,719</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>13,591,866</b>	<b>100.00</b>
Vacancy Rate (%)	5.8		5.9	
Source: CDOF (2010a).				

**Table 6-12**  
 Summary of Residential Properties for Sale by City and County in 2010

City/County	Number of Single-Family Homes	Number of Condos/ Townhomes/ Row Homes/ Co-ops	Price Range (\$)	Number of Dwellings 1,200 Square Feet or More	Number of Dwellings with Three Bedrooms or More
City of Atwater	179	1	29,900 – 775,000	151	164
City of Merced	471	10	35,000 – 995,000	382	430
City of Chowchilla	108	1	39,900 – 1,695,000	83	99
City of Madera	376	3	49,900 – 2,059,000	322	362
City of Fresno	1,670	110	25,000 – 3,700,000	1,480	1,501
Merced County	1,232	11	33,660 – 1,269,000	1,006	1,126
Madera County	991	10	37,740 – 6,500,000	874	888
Source: National Association of Realtors (2010).					

According to the 2005–2009 ACS data, about half of the total housing units within each of the three counties are owner-occupied and half are renter-occupied. About a third of the housing units are one- or two-bedroom units, and almost 60% are three- or four-bedroom units. Vacancy rates for the rental units are higher than for the owner-occupied units, except for in Madera County where vacancy rates are slightly higher for owner-occupied units. Of the occupied units paying rent, Merced County had more units (15.9%) paying the lowest rent category (\$0 to \$499 a month) than Fresno County (14.5%) or Madera County (13.4%). The majority of the renters in occupied housing units in the three counties paid between \$500 and \$999 a month. The median monthly rent is \$783, \$814, and \$801 in Merced, Madera, and Fresno counties, respectively. Most of the housing units are more than 30 years old: 56.6% of the

housing units in Fresno County, 46.3% of housing units in Madera County, and 51.1% of housing units in Merced County were built before 1980.

For the cities of Merced and Fresno, the data show that renters occupy more housing units than owners. Similar to the county data, the rental vacancy rates were higher than the homeowner vacancy rates in all the cities except Madera. More than half of the housing units are three- or four-bedroom units, and approximately a third are one- or two-bedroom units. A majority of the occupied rental housing units pay monthly rents of \$500 to \$999, and approximately 13% pay monthly rents under \$500. For the City of Fresno, the rental vacancy rate was 4.1%, and the homeowner vacancy rate was 3.3%. More than half of the housing units are three- or four-bedroom units, and a third are one- to two-bedroom units. The median rent in Merced is \$769, in Madera it is \$788, and in Fresno it is \$820. More than half of the housing units in the three cities are older units (built prior to 1980).

### 6.3 Economic Setting

Merced, Madera, and Fresno counties include some of the most agriculturally productive areas in the world, and farming is a primary economic factor in the regional economy. In 2009, these counties ranked 1st (Fresno County), 5th (Merced County), and 14th (Madera County) in total agricultural production value in California. Cumulatively, these counties accounted for about \$8.6 billion (25%) of the total agricultural revenue generated statewide in 2009 (\$34.8 billion) (California Department of Food and Agriculture 2011). Although agriculture still plays a large role in the regional economy, there has been a shift toward the services sector of the economy. The real estate boom of the mid-2000s created new construction jobs that resulted in increased retail sales and increased sales tax and property tax revenues (Cowan 2005).

Most of the businesses that are likely to be affected by the project are within the alignment rights-of-way and the HST station areas. These businesses are predominantly auto dealerships, restaurants, gas stations, and businesses that serve the surrounding agricultural community. In rural areas, the alignments go through agricultural lands currently being used to farm different types of crops.

Most economic data sources describe the linkages between various sectors of the economy only at the county level, although some sources provide economic data for cities, such as tax revenues.

#### 6.3.1 Employment Trends

The nationwide economic recession that began in 2007 has resulted in a substantial number of the region’s businesses either laying off workers or not hiring new workers to fill positions. As a result, unemployment rates increased for most of the state – particularly in the study area. Table 6-13 shows the current and projected employment by industry for the Merced Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), which corresponds to Merced County. Between 2000 and 2008, total employment by industry increased by 4,900 jobs, or about 8%, but in 2010 total employment had decreased by 2,800 jobs compared to 2008. Compared to 2008, job losses have occurred in most of the industries; the only increase occurred in government. The highest contributing industries to employment in Merced County have been agriculture, services, and government, which continue to account for more than half of the jobs within the Merced MSA.

**Table 6-13**  
 Merced MSA Employment by Industry

Industry	2000	2008	2010	Projected 2016
Agriculture	11,600	11,000	10,500	11,800
Mining, Logging, and Construction	2,100	2,400	1,600	3,000
Manufacturing	10,400	9,300	8,200	9,600

Industry	2000	2008	2010	Projected 2016
Trade	8,400	9,400	9,200	9,800
Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities	1,700	2,300	2,300	2,400
Information	1,400	1,200	1,200	1,300
Financial Activities	1,700	1,800	1,600	1,800
Services	14,400	15,900	15,400	17,300
Government (federal, state, and local)	12,200	15,500	15,900	16,900
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>63,900</b>	<b>68,800</b>	<b>66,000</b>	<b>82,900</b>

Source: California Employment Development Department (CEDD) (2010a; 2010b).

Table 6-14 shows the current and projected employment by industry for the Madera-Chowchilla MSA, which corresponds to Madera County. Between 2000 and 2008, total employment by industry increased by 6,900 jobs, or about 17%, but also decreased in 2010 by 2,600 jobs compared to 2008. The greatest contributions to employment were from the agriculture, government, and services. These same sectors are projected to continue to account for more than half of the jobs within the Madera-Chowchilla MSA.

**Table 6-14**  
 Madera-Chowchilla MSA Employment by Industry

Industry	2000	2008	2010	Projected 2018
Agriculture	11,900	10,300	10,300	10,100
Mining, Logging, and Construction <sup>a</sup>	1,500	1,900	1,100	1,900
Manufacturing	2,900	3,300	2,800	3,400
Trade	3,600	4,300	4,000	4,900
Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities	600	900	900	1,000
Information	600	500	400	500
Financial Activities	700	800	700	800
Services	9,900	12,300	12,000	13,700
Government	7,600	11,000	10,600	11,500
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>39,200</b>	<b>45,300</b>	<b>42,700</b>	<b>47,800</b>

<sup>a</sup> For the projected data, this sector is called Natural Resources, Mining & Construction.  
 Source: CEDD (2010a; 2010b).

Table 6-15 shows the current and projected employment by industry for the Fresno MSA, which corresponds to Fresno County. Between 2000 and 2008, total employment by industry increased by 25,700 jobs, or about 8%. Similar to the other counties in the study area, jobs decreased in 2009 compared to 2008. Between 2008 and 2010, 25,300 jobs were lost, with the largest decrease in

construction. The greatest contributions to employment were from government, agriculture, and services. These same sectors are projected to continue to account for more than half of the jobs within the Fresno MSA.

**Table 6-15**  
 Fresno MSA Employment by Industry

Industry	2000	2008	2010	Projected 2018
Agriculture	55,600	48,900	47,100	47,600
Mining, Logging, and Construction <sup>a, b</sup>	15,500	18,000	12,100	18,700
Manufacturing	27,600	27,100	24,900	27,600
Trade	43,900	48,300	44,200	50,900
Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities	9,100	11,000	10,700	12,300
Information	5,000	4,700	3,600	5,300
Financial Activities	13,400	14,800	13,300	15,800
Services	91,100	109,400	103,800	119,000
Government	65,100	70,000	67,200	71,900
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>326,200</b>	<b>352,200</b>	<b>326,900</b>	<b>369,100</b>

<sup>a</sup> Data combined for the mining and logging sector and the construction sector. These are listed separately for the county.  
<sup>b</sup> For the projected data, this sector is called Natural Resources, Mining, and Construction.  
 Source: CEDD (2010a; 2010b).

### 6.3.2 Labor Force Characteristics

Unemployment in the project counties has increased during the past year because of the economic recession. Table 6-16 shows annual civilian labor force and unemployment rates in 2000, 2008, and 2010 for Fresno, Madera, and Merced counties and the State of California. Unemployment rates in these counties are higher than the state rate.

**Table 6-16**  
 Labor Force Characteristics – Counties in Study Area

Labor	2000	2008	2010
<b>Merced County</b>			
Civilian Labor Force	90,300	102,700	107,300
Employed	81,600	89,800	87,000
Unemployed	8,700	12,900	20,300
Unemployment Rate (%)	9.6	12.5	18.9

<b>Labor</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2010</b>
<b>Madera County</b>			
Civilian Labor Force	54,900	65,400	66,900
Employed	50,100	59,300	56,500
Unemployed	4,800	6,100	10,400
Unemployment Rate (%)	8.7	9.4	15.6
<b>Fresno County</b>			
Civilian Labor Force	388,300	432,000	438,400
Employed	347,900	386,900	364,700
Unemployed	40,400	45,200	73,700
Unemployment Rate (%)	10.4	10.5	16.8
<b>State of California</b>			
Civilian Labor Force	16,857,600	18,251,600	18,391,800
Employed	16,024,300	16,938,300	17,067,600
Unemployed	833,200	1,313,200	1,324,200
Unemployment Rate (%)	4.9	7.2	7.2
Source: CEDD (2010c).			

Unemployment within the study areas of the cities has increased because of the economic recession. Table 6-17 shows annual civilian labor force and unemployment rates in 2000, 2008, and 2010 for the cities of Merced, Chowchilla, Madera, and Fresno. Unemployment rates in the cities of Chowchilla and Madera are higher than the county rates. The unemployment rates are similar for the cities of Fresno and Merced compared to the county rates.

**Table 6-17**  
 Labor Force Characteristics – Cities in Study Area

<b>Labor</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2010</b>
<b>Merced</b>			
Civilian Labor Force	26,700	30,400	31,800
Employed	24,200	26,600	25,900
Unemployed	2,500	3,800	5,900
Unemployment Rate (%)	9.5	12.4	18.7
<b>Chowchilla</b>			
Civilian Labor Force	3,400	4,100	4,300
Employed	3,100	3,700	3,500
Unemployed	300	400	800

<b>Labor</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2010</b>
Unemployment Rate (%)	9.9	10.8	17.7
<b>Madera</b>			
Civilian Labor Force	19,200	23,000	24,200
Employed	16,800	19,900	18,900
Unemployed	2,400	3,100	5,300
Unemployment Rate (%)	12.5	13.4	21.7
<b>Fresno</b>			
Civilian Labor Force	204,400	227,600	229,200
Employed	184,500	205,300	193,000
Unemployed	19,900	22,300	36,200
Unemployment Rate (%)	9.7	9.8	15.8
Source: CEDD (2010c).			

### 6.3.3 Major Employers

The foundation of Merced’s economy has historically been agribusiness. During the past two decades, Merced has built on this foundation with a growing and diverse economy. Today the City of Merced serves as the county seat and is the hub of a commercial market for the surrounding area. The four top private employers are Cingular, Quebecor, Wal-Mart, and Werner Ladder; together these companies employ about 2,040 people within the city (City of Merced 2009).

The City of Fresno’s top five private sector employers are Community Medical Centers, Kaiser Permanente, Pelco, Saint Agnes Medical Center, and Beverly Health Care; together these companies employ about 14,260 people within the city (City of Fresno 2009).

### 6.3.4 Tax Revenues

The recent real estate boom generated many jobs in construction, fueled retail sales, and generated increased sales and property tax revenues. However, the San Joaquin Valley was one of the hardest hit areas in the nation when the real estate bubble burst in 2007 and the United States entered the biggest economic recession since the Great Depression. Because of the recession, the counties and cities in the study area have had substantial increases in unemployment and foreclosure rates and sharp declines in housing prices and, therefore, property tax revenues (Bertaut 2009).

The increased unemployment rates have resulted in reductions in retail sales, which has led to reduced sales tax revenues for the counties and cities within the study area. The declining housing values and increased foreclosure rates have been responsible for reduced property tax revenues for the counties and the cities within the study area. Funding for California’s public schools (K to 12) comes primarily from the state budget (60%), with local property taxes (23%) and the federal government (10%) as the other significant contributors. Each individual school district’s funding is based on the average number of students attending district schools during the year, typically referred to as the average daily attendance (EdSource 2009). Public schools across California are facing difficult budget issues, and in the 2011–2012 school year K through 12 funding is anticipated to be substantially reduced for the third year in a row. As such, school districts are struggling to hold on to funds they currently receive (EdSource 2011).

Table 6-18 summarizes the general fund revenues including property tax and sales tax revenues for the counties in the study area for the three most recent fiscal years. Each county's property and sales tax revenues declined between fiscal year (FY) 2008/2009 and FY 2009/2010. Merced County and Madera County are both expected to have lower total revenues for FY 2009/2010 compared to FY 2008/2009, and Fresno County is expected to increase by 4.4%. Merced County's property tax revenues are expected to be about 23% lower and sales tax revenues are expected to decrease by less than 1% in FY 2009/2010. In Madera County, property tax revenues are expected to decrease by 13%, and sales tax revenues are expected to decrease by about 24% between FY 2008/2009 and FY 2009/2010. For Fresno County, total tax revenues during the current fiscal year (FY 2009/2010) are expected to decrease driven by the anticipated 19.3% decrease in sales tax revenues and the 6.5% decrease in property tax revenues.

**Table 6-18**  
 General Fund Revenues – Merced, Madera, and Fresno Counties

Source	FY 2007/2008 (\$)	FY 2008/2009 (\$)	FY 2009/2010 (\$)	Percent Change	
				FY 2007/ 2008 to FY 2008/ 2009	FY 2008/ 2009 to FY 2009/ 2010
<b>Merced County</b>					
Tax Revenues	N/A	82,125,737	64,203,243	N/A	-21.8
Property Taxes	N/A	63,497,981	48,785,329	N/A	-23.2
Sales Taxes	N/A	4,402,950	4,400,000	N/A	-0.1
Other Revenues	N/A	402,086,825	400,972,479	N/A	-0.3
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>506,475,447</b>	<b>469,987,756</b>	<b>454,157,808</b>	<b>-7.2</b>	<b>-3.4</b>
<b>Madera County</b>					
Tax Revenues	43,957,701	47,416,500	46,626,500	7.9	-1.7
Property Taxes	34,192,360	35,223,000	30,598,000	3.0	-13.1
Sales Taxes	7,101,631	8,000,000	6,100,000	12.7	-23.8
Other Revenues	118,361,752	125,081,955	128,048,365	5.7	2.4
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>159,655,743</b>	<b>168,304,955</b>	<b>164,746,365</b>	<b>5.4</b>	<b>-2.1</b>
<b>Fresno County</b>					
Tax Revenues	238,127,000	254,452,000	224,468,508	6.9	-11.8
Property Taxes	186,924,000	203,692,000	190,440,875	9.0	-6.5
Sales Taxes	19,162,000	19,942,000	16,093,633	4.1	-19.3
Other Revenues	1,062,873,000	998,537,000	1,069,965,104	-6.1	7.2
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>1,268,959,000</b>	<b>1,222,171,000</b>	<b>1,276,499,612</b>	<b>-3.7</b>	<b>4.4</b>
Notes: FY = fiscal year. N/A = not available. Sources: Merced County (2010), Madera County (2010), Fresno County (2010).					

Table 6-19 summarizes the general fund revenues including property tax and sales tax revenues for the cities and counties in the study area for the three most recent fiscal years. Each city's property and sales tax revenues are anticipated to decrease between FY 2008/2009 and FY 2009/2010. For the City of Fresno, total revenues during the current fiscal year (FY 2009/2010) are expected to decline by about 5%. Total revenues are anticipated to decline by about 17%, about 3%, and about 17%, respectively, for the cities of Madera, Chowchilla, and Merced during FY 2009/2010. During FY 2009/2010, property tax revenues are expected to decrease by 6.7%, 21.7%, 5%, and 15.3%, respectively, in the cities of Fresno, Madera, Chowchilla, and Merced.

**Table 6-19**  
 General Fund Revenues – Cities of Merced, Chowchilla, Madera, and Fresno

Source	FY 2007/2008 (\$)	FY 2008/2009 (\$)	FY 2009/2010 (\$)	Percent Change	
				FY 2007/2008 to FY 2008/2009	FY 2008/2009 to FY 2009/2010
<b>City of Merced</b>					
Tax Revenues	28,751,289	28,790,493	23,786,567	0.1	-17.4
Property Taxes	7,501,212	6,740,000	5,712,038	-10.1	-15.3
Sales Taxes	8,196,705	8,214,000	6,613,000	0.2	-19.5
Other Revenues	16,629,776	16,894,345	14,228,224	1.6	-15.8
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>32,327,693</b>	<b>31,848,345</b>	<b>26,553,262</b>	<b>-1.5</b>	<b>-16.6</b>
<b>City of Chowchilla</b>					
Tax Revenues	2,355,633	2,093,033	1,999,612	-11.1	-4.5
Property Taxes	1,046,048	964,995	916,746	-7.7	-5.0
Sales Taxes	1,164,130	903,439	858,267	-22.4	-5.0
Other Revenues	3,203,188	4,099,600	4,017,608	28.0	-2.0
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>5,558,821</b>	<b>6,192,633</b>	<b>6,017,220</b>	<b>11.4</b>	<b>-2.8</b>
<b>City of Madera</b>					
Tax Revenues	43,957,701	47,416,500	46,626,500		
Property Taxes	8,971,113	9,324,842	8,424,572	3.9	-9.7
Sales Taxes	6,220,938	5,950,355	4,658,832	-4.3	-21.7
Other Revenues	9,773,557	10,214,023	8,202,425	4.5	-19.7
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>24,965,608</b>	<b>25,489,220</b>	<b>21,285,829</b>	<b>2.1</b>	<b>-16.5</b>
<b>City of Fresno</b>					
Tax Revenues	146,409,000	146,634,000	141,414,000	0.2	-3.6
Property Taxes	71,675,000	77,342,000	72,122,000	7.9	-6.7
Sales Taxes	74,734,000	69,292,000	69,292,000	-7.3	0.0

Source	FY 2007/2008 (\$)	FY 2008/2009 (\$)	FY 2009/2010 (\$)	Percent Change	
				FY 2007/ 2008 to FY 2008/ 2009	FY 2008/ 2009 to FY 2009/ 2010
Other Revenues	112,060,000	103,561,000	97,270,000	-7.6	-6.1
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>258,469,000</b>	<b>250,195,000</b>	<b>238,684,000</b>	<b>-3.2</b>	<b>-4.6</b>
Note: FY = fiscal year Sources: Merced County (2010), Madera County (2010), Fresno County (2010).					

### 6.3.4.1 School District Funding

Funding for California’s public schools (K through 12) comes primarily from the state budget (60%), with local property taxes (23%) and the federal government (10%) as the other significant contributors.

Each district has its own particular combination of federal, state, and local sources for funding and the amount varies, but the majority of the school districts funding is received through revenue limits. Each district receives a dollar amount per student, the revenue limit, which is measured by the average daily attendance. Revenue limit is funded by local property taxes and state funds. A percentage of the property taxes generated by real property in each district is assigned to the district, with the difference made up in state funds (mainly consisting of monies from income, sales, corporate, and capital gains taxes). If the district collects more property tax revenue than its entitlement (base revenue limit multiplied by the number of students), the district can retain these excess taxes. The revenue limit can only be increased by state legislation and any increase in property taxes results in the state’s proportion decreasing; however, if the property taxes fill up or exceed the revenue limit and no state aid is required, then the districts can keep the excess property tax revenues. This is also known as basic aid. The federal government also provides funding to the school districts and typically, this categorical funding is distributed to the districts based upon the needs of the children and special programs. School districts can also raise funds for specific purposes (i.e., build new facilities) by issuing bonds which need the approval of two-thirds of local voters or 55% if certain conditions are met.

Public schools across California are facing difficult budget issues, and in the 2011–2012 school year K through 12 funding is anticipated to be substantially reduced for the third year in a row. As such, school districts are struggling to hold onto funds they currently receive (EdSource 2011). The economic recession has affected housing markets in the study area, resulting in a decrease in property values, which has in turn resulted in lower property tax revenues for the counties, negatively affecting school districts. In addition, the recession has resulted in a large number of foreclosures, which have also negatively affected the school districts, as property taxes are not collected on these properties until they are sold. These foreclosures can also result in negative effects on the surrounding properties and negatively affect property values, which can further reduce the property taxes collected. These factors, combined with decreases in state funding, have resulted in budget issues for school districts.

### 6.3.5 Agricultural Economic Setting

The Central Valley is the largest area of agricultural production in California and contains many of the state’s agriculturally most productive counties. As shown in Table 6-20, according to the most recent U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) survey for Merced County (USDA 2009), as of 2006, 2,607 farms occupy more than 1 million acres in Merced County, with an average farm size of 399 acres. In Madera County, 1,708 farms occupy nearly 700,000 acres, with an average farm size of 398 acres. In Fresno County, 6,081 farms occupy over 1.6 million acres, with an average farm size of 269 acres. Farms occupied more land in 2007 than in 1997, and the average farm size increased. The total market value of

farmland nearly tripled in Merced County (179% increase) and more than doubled in Madera County (138% increase). Within Fresno County, the Merced to Fresno Section is primarily within the city limits of Fresno. All of the alternatives would travel through agricultural areas of Merced and Madera counties and would also cross roadways that provide access to the farms. Agriculture in Fresno County is not discussed in the remainder of this section because the alternatives would be within the city limits of Fresno.

The California Department of Conservation conducted a land use and farmland classification survey in conjunction with the Natural Resources Conservation Service as part of the state’s Farm Mapping and Monitoring Program. Table 6-21 shows the distribution of farmland by land use classifications in Merced and Madera counties from the survey.

**Table 6-20**  
 Characteristics of Farm Holdings in Merced and Madera Counties in 1997 and 2007

Characteristics	1997		2007		Percent Change 1997–2007	
	Merced County	Madera County	Merced County	Madera County	Merced County	Madera County
Number of Farms	2,831	1,673	2,607	1,708	-8	2
Farm Acreage	881,696	641,546	1,041,115	679,729	18	6
Average Size of Farm	311	383	399	398	28	4
Estimated Market Value of Land and Holdings (\$M)	2,693	1,935	7,507	4,610	179	138
Average Market Value per Farm (\$M)	1.0	1.2	2.9	2.7	203	133
Average Market Value per Acre	3,149	3,537	7,210	6,783	129	92

Source: USDA (2007; 1997).

Merced and Madera County Agricultural Commissioner (CAC) reports (Madera CAC 2010 and Merced CAC 2010) provide data on the total farm acreage in production, expressed as harvested acres. Overall, agriculture in California is a \$34.8 billion industry; the total value of agricultural production was nearly \$2.4 billion in Merced County and \$1 billion in Madera County in 2009. The commodities with the highest values of production in 2009 were milk in Merced County and fruits and nuts in Madera County, as shown in Table 6-21.

**Table 6-21**  
 Agricultural Production in Merced and Madera Counties in 2009

Commodity	Acres Harvested		Value of Production	
	Merced County	Madera County	Merced County (2009\$)	Madera County (2009\$)
Apiary (bee industry)	NA	NA	23,384,000	20,275,000
Field Crops	974,421	449,450	268,019,000	61,154,000

Commodity	Acres Harvested		Value of Production	
	Merced County	Madera County	Merced County (2009\$)	Madera County (2009\$)
Fruit and Nut Crops	127,289	189,460	388,459,000	552,033,000
Livestock and Poultry Production	NA	NA	581,766,000	99,583,000
Livestock and Poultry Products <sup>a</sup>	NA	NA	1,134,432,000	186,674,000
Nursery Products	1,428	740	38,661,000	26,081,000
Other Agriculture <sup>b</sup>	NA	NA	14,384,000	323,000
Seed Crops	5,626		3,746,000	NA
Vegetable Crops	61,204	4,140	395,809,000	17,345,000
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>2,848,660,000</b>	<b>963,468,000</b>

<sup>a</sup>Includes milk production in both counties.  
<sup>b</sup>Includes aquaculture in Merced County and forest products in Madera County.  
 Note:  
 NA = not applicable.  
 Source: Merced CAC (2010) and Madera CAC (2010).

Table 6-22 shows that farm employment in 2008 made up 16% of total employment and 8.8% of total income in Merced County, and 24% of total employment and 6.9% of total income in Madera County. The number of workers employed by farms decreased in both counties between 2000 and 2008, and the percent of income from farms increased.

**Table 6-22**

Contributions of Farming to Income and Employment in Merced and Madera Counties in 2000 and 2008

Characteristic	2000		2008		Percent Change 2000–2008	
	Merced County	Madera County	Merced County	Madera County	Merced County	Madera County
<b>Income</b>						
Total Personal Income (\$M)	4,240	2,346	6,810	3,914	61	67
Farm Income (\$M)	271	157	600	270	122	72
Income from Farming (%)	6.4	6.7	8.8	6.9	38	3
<b>Employment</b>						
Total Industry Employment	63,900	39,300	68,900	45,800	8	17
Farm Employment	11,600	11,900	11,000	10,900	-5	-8

Characteristic	2000		2008		Percent Change 2000–2008	
	Merced County	Madera County	Merced County	Madera County	Merced County	Madera County
Farm Industry Employment (%)	18	30	16	24	-11	-20
Total Unemployment Rate	9.6	8.7	12.7	9.4	32	8

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce (2010); CEDD (2009a).

## 6.4 Communities and Neighborhoods

The urbanized areas of the cities of Merced, Chowchilla, Madera, and Fresno contain most of the residences and businesses in the region. Unincorporated communities within the urbanized areas, including Le Grand, Fairmead, and Madera Acres, consist primarily of residences and some also have community facilities and businesses. Other, smaller unincorporated communities are composed of a small number of residences; many of these communities were once associated with post office locations that closed over 50 years ago. These smaller communities include Lingard, Athlone, Minturn, Berenda, Notarb, Sharon, and Kismet. The remainder of the region is rural agricultural land, with no clusters of residences and businesses. With the construction of the Southern Pacific Railroad by the Central Pacific Railroad (now Union Pacific) through the San Joaquin Valley in the late 1800s, there was considerable growth in the population and economy in the region. The railroad connected the valley to Sacramento and San Francisco and provided an opportunity for ranchers and farmers to sell their goods to distant markets. The establishment of stations along the railway was a large reason for settlement and development of the cities in the study area. With the development of the stations, the cities of Merced, Madera, and Fresno became county seats and economic and cultural hubs.

Community facilities include schools (public and private), religious institutions, parks and recreation facilities, government facilities (e.g., courthouses, prisons, city halls, post offices, and libraries), cemeteries, fire stations, police stations, hospitals, and social institutions (e.g., community centers, senior facilities, and food banks), and cultural locations (e.g., entertainment venues and museums). The majority of these are in the urban areas, with many near the downtown areas of Merced, Madera, and Fresno. The California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) operates the Valley State Prison for Women (VSPW) and the Central California Women’s Facility (CCWF) east of Chowchilla in Madera County. Each of the facilities is situated on one section of land that is used for buildings and security facilities for the prisons (inside the secure perimeter) and agricultural lands (e.g., almonds) operated for revenue by the California Prison Industry Authority (CALPIA). Inmates participate in farming activities, which afford them meaningful activities as well as income. Table 6-23 provides a summary of the number and types of facilities located in the study areas of the three HST alternatives; religious facilities account for the highest percentage in all alternatives.

**Table 6-23**  
Facilities within Study Area

Location	Number of Facilities								
	Cemetery	Cultural	Government <sup>a</sup>	Medi- cal	Public Services <sup>b</sup>	Religious	Schools	Social <sup>c</sup>	Total
<b>City of Merced</b>									
UPRR/SR 99	1	1	2	1	6	16	10	10	<b>47</b>
BNSF	1	1	2	2	6	16	11	10	<b>49</b>
Hybrid	1	1	3	1	3	14	8	10	<b>41</b>
<b>Le Grand</b>									
UPRR/SR 99	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
BNSF	0	0	2	0	1	1	3	0	<b>7</b>
Hybrid	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
<b>City of Chowchilla</b>									
UPRR/SR 99	0	1	1	0	0	5	2	0	<b>9</b>
BNSF	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	<b>1</b>
Hybrid	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	<b>1</b>
<b>City of Madera</b>									
UPRR/SR 99	1	2	2	1	3	18	8	6	<b>42</b>
BNSF	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	<b>2</b>
Hybrid	1	0	0	0	0	7	6	2	<b>16</b>
<b>City of Fresno</b>									
UPRR/SR 99	0	7	4	1	4	36	17	10	<b>79</b>
BNSF	0	7	4	1	4	36	17	10	<b>79</b>
Hybrid	0	7	4	0	4	36	17	10	<b>79</b>
<b>HST Alternative Totals</b>									
UPRR/SR 99	2	11	9	3	13	75	37	23	<b>176</b>
BNSF	1	8	9	3	11	54	32	17	<b>138</b>
Hybrid	2	8	8	1	7	57	31	19	<b>136</b>
<sup>a</sup> Government services include facilities such as post offices, courthouses, and city halls. <sup>b</sup> Public services include facilities such as police departments, fire departments, and libraries. <sup>c</sup> Social services include facilities such as homeless shelters, community centers, and youth and elderly centers.									

Because the BNSF Alternative alignment does not travel through the cities of Chowchilla or Madera, there are fewer facilities in the associated study area. Fewer facilities exist along the Hybrid Alternative alignment than either of the other HST alternative alignments.

The following sections describe the setting of the communities where the proposed HST alternatives would be located. Table 6-24 provides information on the communities that each alternative would travel through.

**Table 6-24**  
 Communities Affected by Alternative

Alternative	Cities and Communities
UPRR/SR 99 with East Chowchilla Design Option	Merced, Lingard, Athlone, Minturn, Chowchilla, Fairmead, Berenda, Notarb, Madera, Parkwood, Parksdale, Herndon, and Fresno
UPRR/SR 99 with West Chowchilla Design Option	Merced, Lingard, Athlone, Fairmead, Berenda, Notarb, Madera, Parkwood, Parksdale, Herndon, and Fresno
BNSF with Mission Ave or Mariposa Way Design Option	Merced, Le Grand, Sharon, Kismet, Madera Acres, Herndon, and Fresno
BNSF with Mission Ave East of Le Grand or Mariposa Way East of Le Grand Design Option	Merced, Sharon, Kismet, Madera Acres, Herndon, and Fresno
Hybrid Alternative with Ave 24 Wye	Merced, Lingard, Athlone, Kismet, Madera Acres, Herndon, and Fresno
Hybrid Alternative with Ave 21 Wye	Merced, Lingard, Athlone, Minturn, Chowchilla, Fairmead, Kismet, Madera Acres, Herndon, and Fresno
Castle Commerce Center HMF Alternative	Atwater, Franklin-Beachwood, Merced
Gordon-Shaw HMF Site	Berenda
Harris-DeJager, Fagundes, Gordon-Shaw, and Kojima Development HMF Sites	None

### 6.4.1 UPRR/SR 99 Alternative Community Setting

This section describes the community and neighborhood characteristics of the study area, including community cohesion. Community cohesion involves access and linkages, community facilities (e.g., parks, churches, and schools), and local businesses in the surrounding area that provide opportunities for residents to gather and interact. Within the cities of the study area, there is a mixture of residential, commercial, and industrial land uses with several community facilities. The rural unincorporated areas within the study area are primarily related to agricultural land uses with limited residential uses and community facilities.

With the construction of the Southern Pacific Railroad by the Central Pacific Railroad (now Union Pacific) through the San Joaquin Valley in the late 1800s, there was considerable growth in the population and economy in the region. The railroad connected the valley to Sacramento and San Francisco and provided an opportunity for ranchers and farmers to sell their goods to distant markets. The establishment of stations along the railway was a large reason for settlement and development of the cities in the study area. With the development of the stations, the cities of Merced, Madera, and Fresno became county seats and economic and cultural hubs. In the 1910s, SR 99 was constructed to connect the cities in the San Joaquin Valley and the rest of California. SR 99 was constructed parallel to the Central Pacific Railroad, and it went through the cities of Modesto and Fresno. In the 1950s, SR 99 was completed as a four-lane expressway between Sacramento and Los Angeles. The SR 99 corridor serves as the roadway backbone for automobiles and trucks within the study area and is a crucial link in transporting the valley's

agricultural goods to market. Today, 131 of the 274 miles between Bakersfield and Stockton are defined by the Caltrans as "urban" and the remaining 143 miles as "rural."

The study area is primarily adjacent to the transportation corridors of the UPRR and SR 99, as shown in Figure 6-1; the communities within the study areas are shown in Table 6-24. Of the approximate 60-mile alignment, about 40 miles of the study area are in the unincorporated areas of the counties, and 20 miles are within the incorporated cities of Merced, Madera, and Fresno. Within the unincorporated areas of the three counties, there are few residences and few community facilities or services.

The UPRR/SR 99 Alternative north-south alignment begins in the City of Merced. The City of Merced is the economic and cultural hub for the county, where the dairy and agriculture industry are important components of the economy. Much of the growth in Merced has been occurring north of the downtown area, as directed by the city's general plan (City of Merced 1997), because of the agricultural land uses west and east of the city and the airport to the south. As growth has occurred northward, areas of Downtown Merced now include vacant or underused parcels.

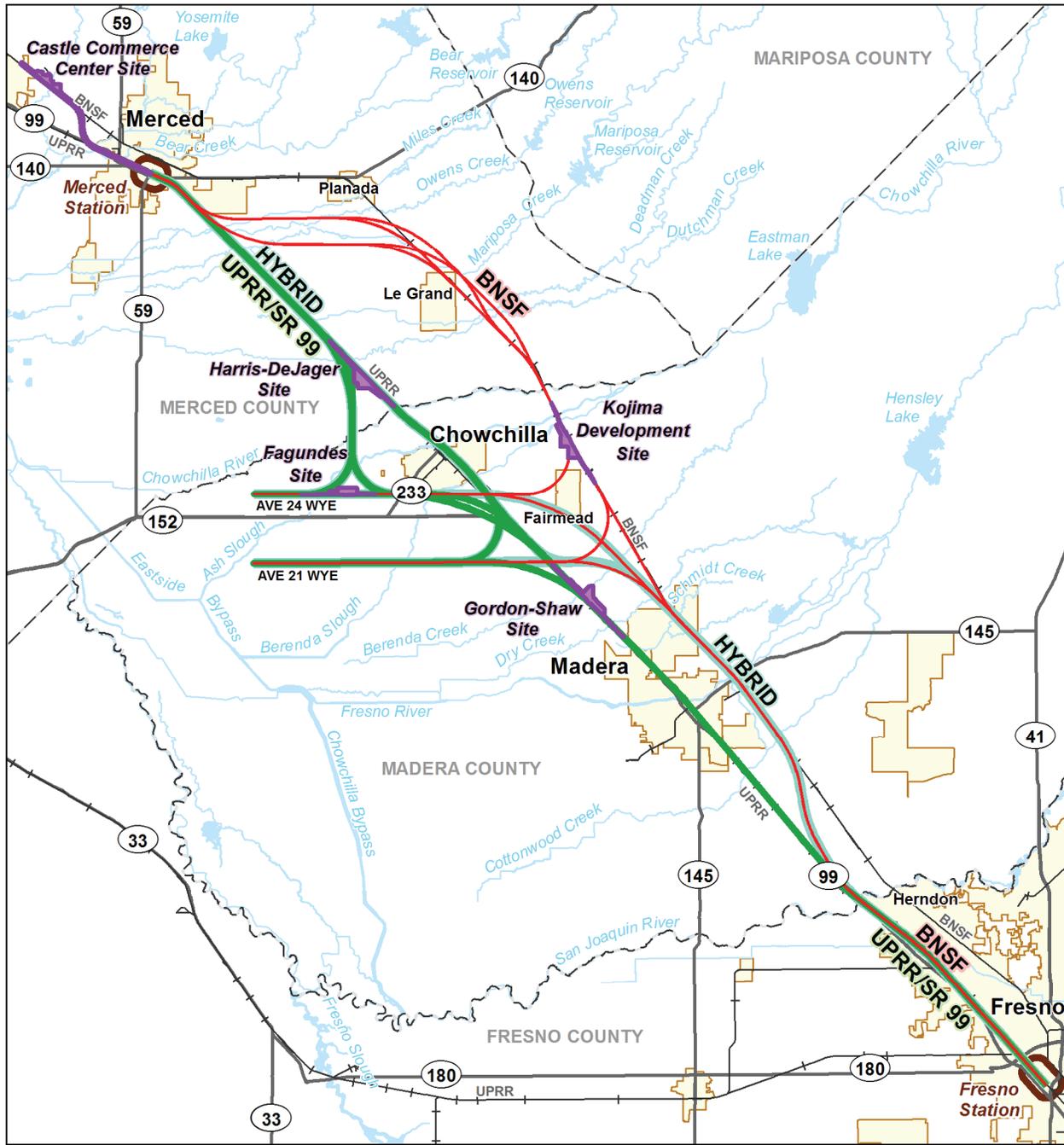
Land uses on both sides of the UPRR and SR 99 corridors are primarily commercial and industrial. There are relatively few residential areas adjacent to the UPRR and SR 99 corridors. Most residential land uses are either outside of the study area boundaries or near the outer edges of the study area boundaries. The corridors form a barrier to access, and neighborhoods on opposite sides of the corridors tend to be isolated from each other. The commercial and industrial land uses act as a buffer between the railway and the residential land uses, forming barriers to interaction along with SR 99, which is adjacent to the UPRR corridor in many locations.

Appendix B, Figures B-1 through B-7 identify community services and facilities in the study area; Appendix B, Table B-1 provides a list of the facilities. Community services and facilities include schools (public and private), religious institutions, parks and recreation, government facilities (e.g., courthouse, city hall, post office, and libraries), cemeteries, fire and police stations, hospitals, social institutions (e.g., community centers, senior facilities, and food banks), and cultural locations (e.g., entertainment and museums). As illustrated in the figures, the facilities are concentrated within the urbanized parts of the study area, with only a few community facilities located in the rural and unincorporated areas.

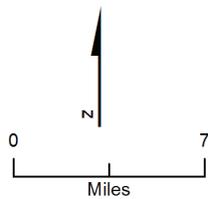
Portions of the study area are within the boundaries of several fire, police, and public school districts. Within the unincorporated areas of the study area, the county provides fire protection and the sheriff's department provides police protection. Cities maintain their own fire and police departments. There are 25 schools in the study area. Public school districts that have attendance boundaries that overlap the study area include the following:

- Atwater Elementary School District.
- Merced City School District.
- Merced Union High School District.
- Plainsburg Union Elementary School District.
- Weaver Union School District.
- Le Grand Union Elementary School District.
- Le Grand Union High School District.
- Chowchilla Elementary School District.
- Chowchilla Union High School District.
- Alview-Dairyland Union School District.
- Madera Unified School District.
- Fresno County Central Unified.
- Fresno Unified School District.

Within the cities of Merced, Madera, and Fresno there are several city and county government facilities, including courthouses and city halls. These facilities are close to the UPRR corridor because the train stations associated with the Southern Pacific Railroad were the focus for historical development in these cities.



MF\_EIS\_SCJ\_08 Jun 03, 2011



- UPRR/SR 99 Alternative
- BNSF Alternative
- Hybrid Alternative
- Station Study Area
- Potential Heavy Maintenance Facility
- City Limit
- County Boundary
- Railroad

**Figure 6-1**  
 Cities and Communities within the Study Area

Because the project is located in primarily rural and unincorporated areas or adjacent to transportation corridors in primarily commercial and industrial parts of the urban areas, there are few parks, recreation areas, or open spaces nearby. Of the 21 facilities in the study area, 9 are located at least 1,250 feet from the alignment. There are several facilities located nearby as well; seven facilities are within 150 feet of the alignment. Nearby facilities are associated with the north-south alignment outside of the downtown areas of Merced and Fresno. Within the study areas of downtown Merced and Fresno, all but one of the park facilities are at least 1,250 feet away from the alignment. This is because the historical uses adjacent to the alignment were associated with industrial and commercial uses, and there are relatively few residential areas nearby.

#### **6.4.1.1 Downtown Merced Station**

Downtown Merced is primarily commercial, with residential neighborhoods beyond. Schools, neighborhood parks, and religious facilities within the residential neighborhoods of Merced provide a sense of community cohesion by allowing residents to gather and interact. A variety of cultural facilities are located in the downtown core, including the Merced Theater, Playhouse Merced, and the Multicultural Arts Center. In addition, there has been a weekly farmers' market for more than 30 years in Downtown Merced. Although the UPRR and SR 99 are both physical barriers to access, there are numerous at-grade crossings of the UPRR and crossings under SR 99 that allow many options for north-to-south travel.

The SR 99 corridor is located in the heart of Merced. Although SR 99 creates a barrier because of the height of the freeway, there are several access points. SR 99 also forms the southern border of the downtown commercial core of Merced, which is also bordered by the BNSF railway to the north, G Street to the east, and V Street to the west. Land uses adjacent to the UPRR corridor are primarily industrial, with commercial uses adjacent to the industrial areas. Automobile-related commercial uses are close to the SR 99 interchanges (e.g., gas stations and fast-food restaurants). On the northern side of the UPRR corridor, there are several city and county government facilities as well as the downtown central business district. This area includes several small retail stores, restaurants, and cultural facilities that attract residents from Merced and the surrounding region.

There is limited residential development within the downtown core. Large residential areas are located at least 1,000 feet from the UPRR corridor to the north and south and are buffered from the railroad corridor by industrial and commercial land uses. These residential areas have tree-lined streets with sidewalks. Within the neighborhoods are schools, neighborhood parks, and religious facilities that provide a sense of community cohesion. Although UPRR and SR 99 are physical barriers to access, there are numerous at-grade crossings of the UPRR and crossings under SR 99, so residents do not have to travel too far out of their way when traveling north to south.

Appendix B, Figure B-5 illustrates the community facilities and services located within the Downtown Merced study area. West of the UPRR corridor are the Merced Senior Community Center and the McCombs Youth Center (operated by Boys & Girls Club of Merced). Both of these are used by residents as places to gather and interact. Directly west of the Merced Senior Community Center is Sierra Meadows, a 100-unit senior residence. Other facilities located in the study area include several churches, food banks, and cultural facilities including the Merced Multicultural Arts Center and the Merced Theatre. There are eight parks or recreation areas within the study area; Bob Hart Square is the closest, approximately 500 feet north of the proposed alignment. The other parks are at least 1,300 feet away. As previously described, residential areas on the outer edges of the study area have several facilities, including the majority of the parks and recreation areas.

The City of Merced is the seat of Merced County. City and County facilities located within the study area include the Merced County Superior Court, the Merced County Sheriff's Office main station and jail, City offices, and the Merced Civic Center. The Merced County Fairgrounds, Mercy Medical Center Merced, and several medical-related offices are located in the southern half of the study area. The closest fire station to the downtown area is Fire Station No. 51 (refer to Appendix B, Figure B-5), and the nearest police stations are the Central Station located in Downtown Merced and the South Station, which serves the area south of SR 99 (refer to Appendix B, Figure B-5).



South of SR 99, there is a residential area with a mixture of single-family and multifamily properties and several rental properties. Many of the properties are in poor condition. The area includes parks and churches (refer to Appendix B, Figure B-5); there are small convenience stores in the residential areas and businesses along the busier arterial roads.

Access and circulation within Downtown Merced is very good. The area is well-connected, providing several linkages for motorized and nonmotorized transportation to other parts of the city and surrounding region. SR 99 is the primary highway in the area, with four interchanges in the study area. SR 140 and SR 59 also provide access to the surrounding area. Within the downtown area, many roadways provide access across the UPRR corridor and SR 99. Most downtown streets include sidewalks, and lighted intersections have pedestrian crosswalks. There are no pedestrian paths or trails within the study area; however, there are several bicycle facilities, including off-street bicycle paths, marked bicycle lanes on roadways, and shared-use routes. The City of Merced also proposed new bicycle paths and bicycle lanes in the study area as part of the *Merced County Regional Bicycle Transportation Plan* (Merced County Association of Governments 2008). For a detailed description of the access, circulation, and transit services in Downtown Merced, see the Transportation Technical Report (Authority and FRA 2012b).

#### **6.4.1.2 Communities in Madera County**

South of Merced and the Downtown Merced Station, the alignment associated with the East Chowchilla design option travels through the unincorporated communities of Athlone and Minturn before entering the City of Chowchilla in Madera County. Madera County was established in 1893, initially because of gold mines and lumber. Today, the economy of Madera County is primarily based on agricultural-related industries. As the proposed alignment enters unincorporated Madera County, the adjacent land uses are agricultural; there are no community facilities or services until the proposed alignment enters Chowchilla, which incorporated in 1923. The growth of the city is attributed to Orlando A. Robertson, who purchased land and divided it into tracts for farmers to purchase. Some of the land was used for the town site. The alignment has been redesigned to be adjacent to SR 99 instead of the UPRR corridor. The UPRR corridor is approximately 1,500 feet to the west of the proposed HST alignment, and Downtown Chowchilla is approximately 2,500 feet to the west. In this area, there are no neighborhoods or community facilities nearby. Land uses consist of auto-related commercial business and industrial uses. Community facilities and services are located to the south, in the downtown core of Chowchilla, which is outside of the study area. To the east of SR 99 is a planned development area for commercial and residential uses. The planned commercial uses will focus on the highway interchange. A planned residential area, The Lakes at Pheasant Run, will be a gated community with a golf course, recreational vehicle park, and clubhouse facilities. The residences will be separated from SR 99 by a large earthen berm. There would be no sense of community cohesion between this planned development and Downtown Chowchilla because the development will be gated and separated from the downtown area by SR 99. The West Chowchilla design option bypasses Chowchilla and passes through agricultural land west of the city. The West Chowchilla design option would also avoid the unincorporated community of Minturn.

The unincorporated community of Fairmead, south of Chowchilla, consists of older single-family residences and a few places for the residents to gather, including a church, elementary school, and a playground. Although there are limited facilities and no local businesses in Fairmead, there is a sense of community cohesion because of the small size of the community.

As the proposed alignment continues southward, it travels through the rural and unincorporated areas of Madera County adjacent to the SR 99 and UPRR transportation corridors and the primarily agricultural-related land uses. There are areas of commercial land uses that focus on automobile traffic at the interchanges along SR 99 as well as the unincorporated communities of Berenda and Notarb. As the proposed alignment nears Madera, there are adjacent areas of commercial and industrial land uses. Before entering the City of Madera, SR 99 curves to the west, away from the UPRR corridor. At this point, the proposed alignment is immediately east of the UPRR corridor. There are no residential land uses until immediately before the proposed alignment enters the City of Madera, where there are a few old single-family residential properties but no established neighborhoods.

Madera was originally a town at the end of a 63-mile-long lumber flume in the late 1800s. The town grew because of the lumber industry and because of the construction of the Southern Pacific Railroad and station. Madera was incorporated in 1907. Today, Madera is still associated with the lumber industry, but agricultural is an important part of the economy. The City of Madera is the county seat and the economic and cultural hub for Madera County, with several community facilities and services in the downtown area. There is a mixture of commercial and residential uses in Downtown Madera; park facilities include Sharon Avenue Linear Park, Rotary Park, and Riverview Park.

As the UPRR/SR 99 Alternative alignment crosses the Fresno River, land uses transition from agriculture to industrial and commercial. Around the commercial and industrial areas in downtown Madera are older single-family residences constructed during the 1940s. These residential areas have tree-lined streets laid out in a grid pattern with sidewalks on both sides. These residential areas include churches and parks and are close to downtown businesses, all of which provide gathering places for residents to interact. These residential neighborhoods would have a strong sense of community cohesion; however, the UPRR corridor was established long before the area was fully developed, and it is a barrier between the western and eastern portions of the city, dividing the downtown area. Although there are several at-grade crossings of the railway, train traffic causes temporary access issues that can affect fire and police response times. In addition to the UPRR corridor, SR 99 is located to the west and creates another barrier to access within Madera. Grade-separated crossings over SR 99 have sidewalks.

As illustrated in Appendix B, Figure B-4, community facilities within Downtown Madera are located on both sides of the proposed alignment, with several city and county government facilities located to the east as well as a park and library. To the east, there are also several churches and service facilities including the Heartland Opportunity Center, the Mexican American Activity Center, and the Frank A. Bergon Senior Center. In addition, the downtown area includes several small businesses, such as beauty salons, banks, and restaurants where residents interact.

As the alignment travels through the City of Madera and into Madera County, there are newer residential subdivisions east of the alignment. These subdivisions are close to the UPRR corridor, with homes approximately 300 feet to the east. Much of the area includes empty lots and homes still for sale because of the downturn in the housing market; these are situated on cul-de-sacs that reduce connectivity. Because of the limited community facilities, there is not a strong sense of community cohesion. B South of Madera, the unincorporated community of Parksdale lies to the east of the UPRR corridor and the unincorporated community of Parkwood lies to the west of the SR 99 corridor. Continuing south, there are industrial and commercial uses that transition to agricultural uses, with only a few residences within the study area.

### **6.4.1.3 Fresno**

Crossing the San Joaquin River, the alignment enters Fresno County and the City of Fresno. As the city grew outward and mostly northward, development occurred on both sides of the UPRR corridor, and community areas were established. Outside of Downtown Fresno, community areas are bounded by the railroad corridor, and UPRR and SR 99 are physical barriers to access. However, several crossings, including grade-separated crossings with sidewalks, maintain connections between the western and eastern parts of the study area. Fresno County was organized in 1856; the present boundaries of the county were established in 1903. Similar to Merced, the construction of canals and irrigation promoted the development of agricultural-related industries. Today, Fresno County is one of the largest agricultural trade centers in the United States. In 2007, Fresno County was the number one agricultural county in the nation, with over 5 billion dollars in agricultural value (California Department of Food and Agriculture 2009).

The City of Fresno, established in 1872 and incorporated in 1897, originated as people settled in what is now the downtown area because of flooding in Millertown, on the banks of the San Joaquin River. The construction of the Southern Pacific Railroad in 1872 was an impetus for the development of the City of Fresno. Because of its history in facilitating growth in the agricultural industry and the establishment of Fresno, the Southern Pacific Railroad Depot is one of Fresno's most significant historical and architectural

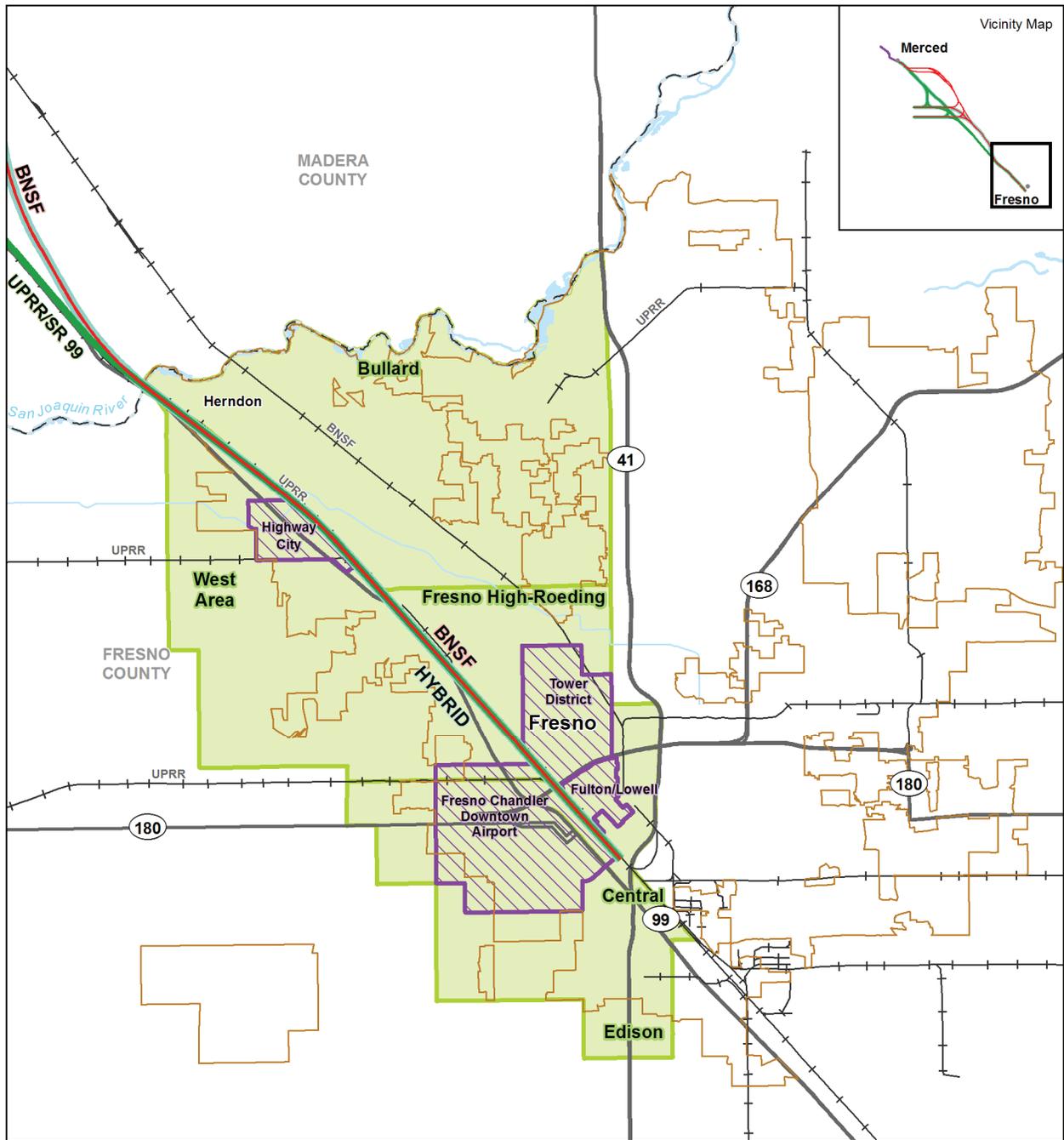
landmarks. The *Merced to Fresno Section Historic Architecture Survey Report* (AECOM 2011) provides a detailed description of the depot.

Fresno is the largest city in the San Joaquin Valley and the fifth largest city in California. Fresno is a hub for commerce, industry, education, health care, and government in northern San Joaquin Valley. Fresno is also the economic hub of the Central San Joaquin Valley, with many support industries for the agricultural industry in Fresno County. Downtown Fresno is a draw for residents of the city and county because of the government offices and cultural facilities located there. Growth in Fresno has been occurring north of the downtown area, towards the San Joaquin River. As growth has occurred northward, parcels within the downtown area have become vacant or underutilized. There are two major communities in Downtown Fresno: the Central Area Community and the Edison Community.

The study area to the west of SR 99 is within unincorporated Fresno County for approximately 2 miles. The area is primarily vacant or associated with commercial-land uses. Within the city limits of Fresno, the proposed alignment follows the UPRR corridor. In this portion of the study area, SR 99 is located west of the UPRR corridor. As the city grew outward and mostly northward, development occurred on both sides of the UPRR corridor and community areas were established. As with the other cities in the study area, the railroad was the impetus for the initial growth. Outside of Downtown Fresno, community areas are bounded by the railway corridor, and both the railroad corridor and SR 99 are physical barriers to access. However, there are several crossings, including grade-separated crossings with sidewalks that connect the western and eastern parts of the study area.

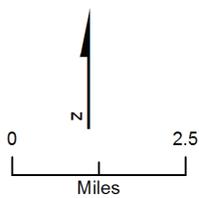
The City of Fresno is divided into nine community areas, with smaller neighborhoods within these community areas. Of the nine community areas, five are within or adjacent to the study area. These community areas include Bullard, West Area, Fresno High-Roeding, Edison, and Central Area, as shown in Figure 6-2. Of these five, three are associated with the alignment and two are associated with the Downtown Fresno Station. The following community and specific plan areas are within the study area:

- The Bullard Community is bounded by the San Joaquin River to the north and the UPRR corridor to the west, and it includes the unincorporated community of Herndon within its boundaries. Residential neighborhoods separated from the rail corridor by vacant land zoned as industrial are newer and contain cul-de-sacs with sidewalks on one side of the street. Schools are the only facilities where the residents can gather and interact in the Bullard Community. These factors contribute to lower community cohesion.
- The West Area Community is bounded on the east by the UPRR corridor and SR 99, and it includes the Highway City Neighborhood (refer to Figure 6-2). Community cohesion in this area is limited because much of the area comprises places where people work. However, Roeding Regional Park, a 159-acre regional park that includes the Fresno Chaffee Zoo, is located here and provides residents an opportunity to gather and interact. The Highway City Neighborhood, which is bounded by SR 99, the UPRR corridor, and Shaw Avenue, is an older neighborhood with a mixture of residential, commercial, and industrial land uses. There is a limited sense of community cohesion because land uses are principally commercial and industrial, buffering the residential areas outside of the study area.
- The Fresno High-Roeding Community also includes the Tower District Neighborhood (refer to Figure 6-2). The northern section is mainly industrial land use, including the UPRR rail yard. There is no community cohesion. In the southern section, the study area includes mainly single-family residences that are older and on small lots. Many of the streets are lined with mature trees and have sidewalks; the larger arterial roadways have commercial areas, with a number of older motels (Fresno Motor Lodge, Storyland Inn, Flamingo Inn, Paradise Inn Motel, Sands Motel, Relax Inn, Holiday Motel, Town House Motel, and Fresno Motel) located along Golden State Boulevard. There are few community facilities in the study area; however, there are opportunities for gathering outside of the study area, including religious facilities and public school open space. Roeding Regional Park is located west of the community and provides numerous opportunities for residents to interact. The Tower District Neighborhood includes six historical districts that primarily contain residential buildings



Source: City of Fresno (2011).

MF\_EIS\_SCJ\_07 Jul 13, 2011



- UPRR/SR 99 Alternative
- BNSF Alternative
- Hybrid Alternative
- - - County Boundary
- +— Railroad
- City Limit
- ▭ Community Plan Area Boundary
- ▨ Specific Plan Boundary

**Figure 6-2**  
 City of Fresno – Community and Specific Plan Areas

of historical significance because of their architectural style. Facilities, including businesses that serve area residences, are located along the arterial roadways and create a strong sense of community cohesion.

### **Downtown Fresno Station**

The Downtown Fresno Station would be located in the Central Area Community, which is generally bounded by SR 180 to the north, SR 41 to the south and east, and SR 99 to the west. The Central Community Area is primarily associated with commercial and industrial land uses, including Downtown Fresno east of the UPRR corridor, which attracts people to the area during business hours for employment, shopping, business, and entertainment. The area provides a sense of community cohesion. Several properties are vacant in Downtown Fresno. There are three neighborhoods in the Central Area Community:

- The Chinatown neighborhood was established in 1885 and was the central hub of Fresno for many years. Today, the neighborhood boundaries are SR 99 to the west, the UPRR corridor to the east, Fresno Street to the north, and Ventura Street to the south. The construction of SR 99 in the 1950s resulted in the destruction of much of the neighborhood. Recently, the city has been engaged in downtown revitalization efforts, creating a specific plan to regulate development and preserve its past, including the Chinatown Historic District (City of Fresno 2010a). The neighborhood is one of the most ethnically diverse in the City of Fresno. The neighborhood includes a mixture of commercial- and industrial-related land uses and several historical buildings that are listed on the local register of historic properties. The Merced to Fresno Section Historic Architectural Survey Report (AECOM 2011) provides a detailed description of the historical resources located within this portion of the study area. Several restaurants, shops, and ethnic grocery stores in the neighborhood foster a sense of community cohesion. The neighborhood holds an annual Chinese New Year Parade, which also promotes a sense of community cohesion
- The Fulton neighborhood is located south of Divisadero Street. The neighborhood is associated with commercial and industrial land uses. The neighborhood also includes the Cultural Arts District and several county government facilities. The Cultural Arts District is bounded by H Street to the west, Tuolumne Street to the south, and Divisadero Street to the north and east. The district is home to cultural facilities including the Fresno Metropolitan Museum, the Arte Américas, and the African American Historical and Cultural Museum. In recent years, new housing has been developed in the district. Although there are limited residential areas in the neighborhood, the community facilities, services, and amenities provide numerous opportunities for residents to gather and interact, which encourages a good sense of community cohesion.

The Lowell neighborhood is primarily a residential neighborhood, bounded by Divisadero Street to the north, SR 180 to the south, and the UPRR corridor to the west. The area consists of old, primarily single-family homes. The streets in the neighborhood have sidewalks, and many roadways are lined by trees. There are several religious facilities, restaurants, and community facilities where residents can gather and interact, promoting a sense of community cohesion. Fulton Mall and the Armenian Town neighborhood are within the Central Area Community. Fulton Mall is a six-block-long pedestrian walkway that extends from Tuolumne Street to Inyo Street in the central business district. The mall was part of a major urban renewal project in 1964. The mall attracts residents from around the region. There are numerous shops, services, office spaces, and open space in the mall, and there is a farmers market every Wednesday and Friday. Fulton Mall is the location of the annual Cinco de Mayo Festival.

Development of the Community Regional Medical Center, an acute care facility that includes a teaching hospital, resulted in the removal of much of the Armenian Town neighborhood. Over the years, several buildings in the neighborhood were demolished and replaced by government facilities, parking lots, and new buildings. Today, what remains of the neighborhood is centered on Ventura Street and includes the Holy Trinity Armenian Apostolic Church, the Armenian Community Center, and several Armenian restaurants. These are major gathering places, especially for ethnic Armenians. Armenian immigrants first came to the area in the early 1900s because of the Armenian genocide in their native land (Downtown

Fresno Association 2010). The soils in this area were similar to those in Armenia and many immigrants became fruit and nut farmers.

The Edison Community is west of SR 99 and is the location of Fresno's original population, which settled around Central Pacific Railroad depot. Industrial and commercial land uses are located along the UPRR corridor, and there is limited residential development within the Downtown Fresno study area. The majority of the residential development is to the west, in the Edison Community and the Lowell neighborhood. In the residential neighborhoods of the Edison Community, homes tend to be old, and several community facilities including churches, parks, and public schools provide opportunities for gathering and interacting. The small-scale commercial developments located along the busier roadways serve residents in the area. These resources are all indicators of a strong sense of community cohesion in the area.

### **Downtown Fresno Access and Circulation**

Access and circulation in Downtown Fresno is good, with several routes for motorized and nonmotorized transportation that connect to other parts of the city and the surrounding region. SR 99 is the main north-south highway, and two interchanges provide access to downtown. SR 180 is to the north and SR 41 is to the south, providing connections in all directions to the surrounding region. The downtown roadway network follows a grid pattern. The railroad's early influence is still evident; several roads are parallel to the UPRR corridor and do not travel north-south like many of the other roadways in the city. Several roadways provide access across the UPRR corridor and SR 99. The majority of the crossings over the UPRR corridor are at-grade, resulting in blocked access when trains travel through the area. The SR 99 crossings are all grade-separated to minimize barriers to access.

The majority of the streets, including those that cross SR 99, have sidewalks and lighted intersections where pedestrians can cross. There are no pedestrian paths or trails within the study area. Although the major roadways are appropriate for bike lanes (City of Fresno 2002b), there are limited bicycle facilities in the study area. Portions of B Street, C Street, and H Street have marked bicycle lanes.

The City of Fresno recently updated their Bicycle, Trails, and Pedestrian Master Plan (City of Fresno 2010b), which identifies several new bicycle lanes on a majority of roadways in the study area as well as a bicycle path along H Street (City of Fresno 2010b).

Bus service in the Downtown Fresno study area includes local, regional, and national services. Fresno Area Express provides local bus service including the Fresno Trolley on 18 routes throughout Fresno. The Downtown Transit Mall, located at Courthouse Park, is serviced by nine of the Fresno routes. Many of the roadways in the study area have transit stops. Several transit routes provide access across UPRR and SR 99 and provide linkages between the different parts of the study area. In addition to the regular bus service, Fresno Area Express provides paratransit service through their Handy Ride buses, which serve people with disabilities. Handy Ride buses operate during the same hours and on the same days as the Fresno Area Express buses.

Greyhound Bus Lines provides regional and national bus service through the station located at 1033 H Street. The company provides 24-hour service on several routes to areas in the region including other cities in the study area, throughout California, and the United States.

#### **6.4.1.4 Ave 24 Wye and Ave 21 Wye**

The Ave 24 and Ave 21 wyes are located within rural unincorporated Madera County, in agricultural areas. There are no community facilities or neighborhoods and few residences in these areas.

### **6.4.2 BNSF Alternative Community Setting**

Information on community and neighborhood characteristics for Downtown Merced and Downtown Fresno and the Ave 24 and Ave 21 wyes are the same as those described under the UPRR/SR 99 Alternative. Because much of the study area for the BNSF Alternative is located in rural and



unincorporated areas of Merced and Madera counties (refer to Figure 6-1) where agricultural land uses predominate, there are few residences and community services for much of the BNSF Alternative study area. The following sections describe the characteristics specific to the BNSF Alternative.

After leaving the City of Merced, the proposed north-south alignment for the BNSF Alternative curves to the east to connect to the BNSF corridor via one of four design options: (1) Mission Ave, (2) Mission Ave East of Le Grand, (3) Mariposa Way, or (4) Mariposa Way East of Le Grand, as shown in Figure 6-1 and described in Section 2, Project Description.

#### **6.4.2.1 Merced County Design Options**

All of the Merced County design options would occur within the same community setting. There are few residences and no community facilities or services in the study area outside of the unincorporated community of Le Grand. Le Grand is a small farming community with an area of approximately 3.6 square miles. The residential areas primarily comprise smaller single-family homes and affordable housing developments. Many of the streets have sidewalks and gathering places for the residents, including parks, open spaces at schools, and small retail establishments. The Mission Ave and Mariposa Way design options parallel the BNSF corridor through Le Grand, bisecting a portion of the community. The area to the west of the BNSF corridor contains community facilities, the majority of the residential land uses, and the majority of the businesses in Le Grand.

The Mission Avenue East Le Grand and Mariposa Way East of Le Grand design options are similar to the Mission Ave and Mariposa Way design options except that the proposed alignments bypass Le Grand by traveling to the east through agricultural land rather than paralleling the BNSF through Le Grand.

#### **6.4.2.2 South of Le Grand**

South of Le Grand, the alignment passes through agricultural land in Merced and Madera counties. In Madera County, the proposed alignment passes the unincorporated community of Sharon, where there are a few single-family residences close to the BNSF corridor. The agricultural uses change to residential as the proposed alignment travels through Madera Acres, an unincorporated community east of Madera. Madera Acres consists primarily of single-family residences and is divided by the BNSF corridor.

South of Madera Acres, there are a few single-family residential areas adjacent to the BNSF corridor. The proposed alignment curves to the west about 7 miles north of the Madera-Fresno county line and joins the UPRR corridor north of the county line. From this point to the site of the Downtown Fresno Station, the community and neighborhood information is the same as described under the UPRR/SR 99 Alternative.

#### **6.4.3 Hybrid Alternative Community Setting**

From the site of the Downtown Merced Station to north of Chowchilla, community and neighborhood characteristics are the same as those described under the UPRR/SR 99 Alternative. The Hybrid Alternative with the Ave 24 Wye is the same as the UPRR/SR 99 Alternative with the West Chowchilla design option. This alignment then travels east along the Ave 24 Wye through agricultural land and joins the BNSF corridor. From that point (north of Madera Acres) south to the site of the Downtown Fresno Station, community and neighborhood characteristics are the same as those described for the BNSF Alternative. The Hybrid Alternative with the Ave 21 Wye is the same as the UPRR/SR 99 Alternative with the East Chowchilla design option, and this alignment travels east along the Ave 21 Wye and joins the BNSF corridor, similar to the Hybrid Alternative with the Ave 24 Wye.

## 6.4.4 Heavy Maintenance Facility

### 6.4.4.1 Castle Commerce Center HMF Site (UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, and Hybrid Alternatives)

Figure 6-1 shows the location of the proposed Castle Commerce Center HMF site on the former Castle Air Force Base. Castle Air Force Base was established in 1941 and was active until its closure in 1995. The base promoted development and growth in Atwater. Located within unincorporated Merced County, the base area is now known as the Castle Commerce Center, a 552-acre business park that includes the Castle International Airport. The airport is operated by the Merced County Department of Commerce, Aviation, and Economic Development. Land uses adjacent to the proposed site include agriculture to the east, Castle Airport to the north, Castle Commerce Center to the west, and the BNSF corridor to the south. The guideway between the HMF and Downtown Merced Station would pass through the unincorporated community of Franklin-Beachwood in Merced County. There are eight community facilities within the study area, including four schools, and one cultural, one religious, one medical, and one public service facility.

The Atwater portion of the proposed alignment is adjacent to the transportation corridors of the BNSF railway and Santa Fe Drive. Atwater originated as an agricultural settlement in the late 1800s. Within Atwater, there is a residential development to the west of the alignment that includes the Castle Mobile Home Park, multifamily developments, and a single-family residential area consisting of older ranch-style homes. Within the mobile home park, the homes are older and the roadways are narrow and without sidewalks; there is an outdoor swimming pool where residents can interact. The other residential areas have sidewalks on both sides of the streets and tend homes to be located on cul-de-sacs, which can minimize interaction. Veterans Park and Castle Youth Center are located within the study area and provide opportunities for residents to gather and interact. The limited facilities in this area and the cul-de-sacs do not indicate a strong sense of community cohesion.

The guideway would be located in unincorporated Merced County and primarily in areas with no development. There are residential land uses (including the Merced Mobile Estates mobile home park), a community facility, and areas associated with agricultural and commercial land uses along the guideway. The community facility is the Joe Stefani Elementary School, which provides opportunities for area residents to gather and interact. The limited facilities near the guideway and the lack of sidewalks along the roadways that connect the residential areas on either side of the guideway do not indicate a strong sense of community cohesion in the area.

### 6.4.4.2 Harris-DeJager, Fagundes, Gordon-Shaw (UPRR/SR 99 and Hybrid alternatives), and Kojima Development (BNSF Alternative) HMF Sites

The proposed Harris-DeJager, Fagundes, Gordon-Shaw, and Kojima Development HMF sites are located in areas where the land uses are primarily agricultural. There are no residential properties, community facilities, or services close to these proposed sites; therefore, no communities of concern exist in these areas and no impacts on communities of concern are anticipated.

## 6.5 Environmental Justice

All HST alternatives predominantly pass through areas where communities of concern exceed the threshold identified in Section 3.1.5.1 (i.e., the census block group contains 50% or more minority persons, 25% or more low-income persons, or the percentage of minority or low-income persons in any census block group is more than 10% greater than the average of the three-county study area [which is 68% for minorities and 32% for low-income persons]). For the UPRR/SR 99 Alternative, of the 58 census block groups within the study area, 3 do not exceed at least 1 of the 2 thresholds. For the BNSF Alternative, all of the 42 census block groups in the study area exceed at least 1 of the thresholds, and for the Hybrid Alternative of the 43 census block groups in the study area there are only 2 that do not exceed the thresholds. All other affected census block groups exceed one or both of the thresholds identified. Appendix A, Environmental Justice, provides additional information on the census block groups



within 0.5 mile of the three HST alternatives. Three potential HMF sites are located in census block groups that do not have high percentages of communities of concern. Outside of the cities and towns, the HST alternatives pass through predominantly rural agricultural areas and potentially could affect agricultural workers and other transient communities that are not likely to be included in census data or other data.

Demographic data for this region likely undercount the migrant agricultural workers, because some are undocumented workers. This should be considered in identifying communities of concern. Migrant workers are predominantly low-income and minority populations and are defined as farm workers whose employment requires travel, preventing them from returning to a permanent residence every day. According to the Congressional Research Service (2009), nationwide, 70% of farmworkers are foreign born, 60% of farmworkers have lower-income levels, and the proportion of unauthorized farmworkers has increased (from 7% in 1989 to 37% in 1994–1995, and peaking at 55% in 1999–2000). The *Migrant and Seasonal Farm Worker Enumeration Profiles Study for California* (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services [HHS] 2000) used data from secondary sources and interviews to estimate the number of migrant workers in Merced and Madera counties. In the field agriculture, nursery/greenhouse, and food processing sector, HHS estimated that Merced County had 9,420 migrant farmworkers out of a total of 20,345 farmworkers, and Madera County had 10,710 migrant farmworkers out of a total of 23,132 farmworkers. No migrant farmworker housing (e.g., temporary structures or makeshift housing) was observed within the study areas for the UPRR/SR 99 or BNSF alternatives.

During site visits conducted in January 2010 for the project, several transient communities were discovered within the Fresno vicinity of the UPRR and BNSF corridors. Transient camps were observed beneath railroad and highway underpasses within the City of Fresno. The inhabitants of the camps appeared to be organized informally as a group, advertising skilled labor such as plumbing or painting services. These groups are low-income populations.

Table 6-25 shows the total population and the percentage of community of concern populations in the cities and counties in the region compared with the three HST alternative study areas. Appendix A provides figures that illustrate the percentages of minority and low-income populations in the region by census block group. All of the study areas have greater concentrations of minority populations than the cities and counties. The majority of the minority and low-income populations are concentrated in the residential and urban areas within the study area, including the cities of Atwater, Merced, Madera, and Fresno. For most of the study area, the populations are not immediately adjacent to the proposed HST alternatives and tend to be concentrated toward the outer edges of the study area boundaries.

**Table 6-25**  
 Minority and Low-Income Population

Area/Alternative	Percentage Minority (2000)	Percentage Minority (2010)	Percent Low-Income (2000)	Percentage (2006–2010) <sup>a</sup>
<b>HST Alternative</b>				
UPRR/SR 99	70	76	34	26
BNSF	67	75	26	26
Hybrid	68	73	27	26
<b>Counties and Cities</b>				
<b>Merced County</b>	60	68	22	22

Area/Alternative	Percentage Minority (2000)	Percentage Minority (2010)	Percent Low-Income (2000)	Percentage (2006–2010) <sup>a</sup>
Atwater	56	64	19	23
Merced	62	70	28	26
<b>Madera County</b>	53	62	21	19
Chowchilla	45	58	19	18
Madera	75	83	33	26
<b>Fresno County</b>	60	67	23	23
Fresno	63	70	26	70

<sup>a</sup> ACS 2006–2010 data available at the census tract level only  
 Sources: Census block group data from U.S. Census Bureau (2000a, b and 2010a, b).  
 N/A = Not available.

Table 6-26 provides information on minority students and students who participate in the free lunch or reduced-price lunch program. There are 30 elementary schools within the study area; all of the schools except River Bluff Elementary School in Fresno County are Title I schools, which receive funding supplements based on the high proportion of students who qualify for free and reduced-price lunches.

Elementary school data were evaluated because the school attendance boundaries are smaller and more consistent with study area boundaries. However, the attendance boundaries for the schools may be outside of the study area. Consequently, the minority and low-income population data in Table 6-26 are representative of students who may live within the attendance boundaries but not necessarily within the study area. In addition, because this information is based on only the portion of the general population that attends public school, these data may not accurately reflect the number of students who actually reside in the study area. However, this information provides a general demographic characterization of the population in the study area.

**Table 6-26**  
 Elementary Schools – Percent of Minority Students and Percent of Students Receiving Free or Reduced-Price Lunches in 2008–2009

Area/Alternative	Total Students	Minority (%)	Students Receiving Free Lunch (%)	Students Receiving Reduced Price Lunch (%)
UPRR/SR 99 Alternative <sup>a</sup>	16,768	82	67	13
BNSF Alternative <sup>a</sup>	12,029	84	68	13
Hybrid Alternative <sup>a</sup>	11,363	83	66	12
Merced County <sup>b</sup>	56,153	76 <sup>c</sup>	69 <sup>d</sup>	13 <sup>d</sup>
Madera County <sup>b</sup>	29,409	70 <sup>c</sup>	70 <sup>d</sup>	14 <sup>d</sup>

<b>Area/Alternative</b>	<b>Total Students</b>	<b>Minority (%)</b>	<b>Students Receiving Free Lunch (%)</b>	<b>Students Receiving Reduced Price Lunch (%)</b>
Fresno County <sup>b</sup>	193,838	76 <sup>c</sup>	70 <sup>d</sup>	11 <sup>d</sup>
<sup>a</sup> NCES (2010); data as of October 2009. <sup>b</sup> California Department of Education (CDOE) (2009); kindergarten through 12th-grade students in public schools. <sup>c</sup> DOE (2009); 2008–2009 school year data. <sup>d</sup> CDOE (2010).				

All public schools in California collect information on race and ethnicity of students and on the percentage of students who are eligible for free and reduced-price lunches. The lunch data provide information on the number of low-income students, because eligibility is based on family income level. Elementary schools were selected because of the attendance boundary overlap with the study area. For the 2008–2009 school year, elementary schools in the three study areas had higher concentrations of minority students than the three counties and similar levels of students participating in free or reduced-price lunch programs. In addition, the percentage of minority students is higher for all three HST alternative study areas when compared to the 2010 Census information, which indicates an increase in the concentration of the minority population. Low-income families that are not below the poverty level may qualify for free or reduced-price lunches, and the percentage of students who qualify for free or reduced-price lunches is higher than the percentage of low-income population. However, higher percentages of students participating in the lunch program may indicate an increase in the low-income populations.

The following sections provide information on the communities of concern within the three HST alternative study areas. Information is similar for all three HST alternatives because they are all within the same urbanized areas of the cities of Merced and Fresno.

### **6.5.1 UPRR/SR 99 Alternative**

#### **6.5.1.1 North-South Alignment**

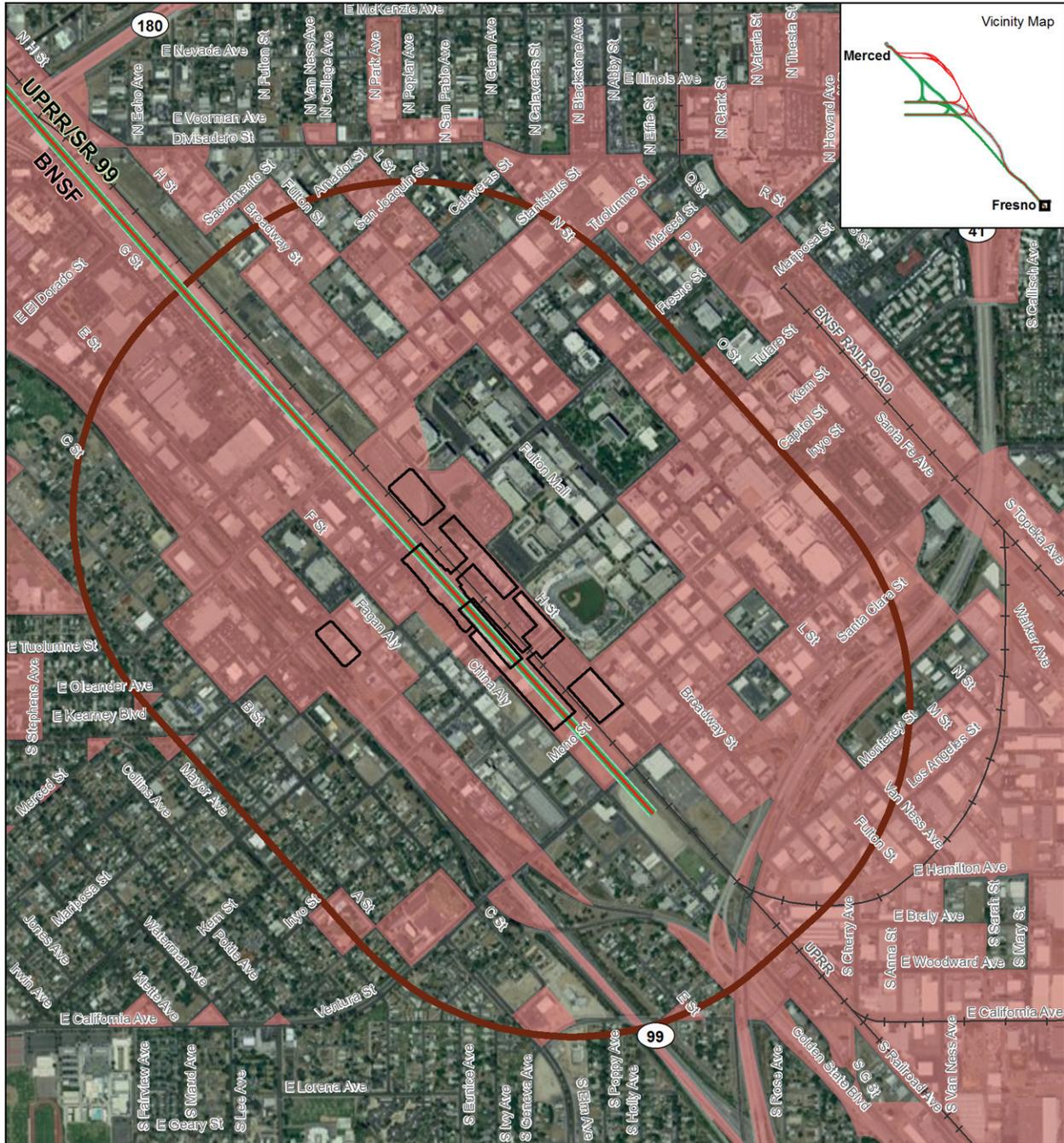
As shown in Table 6-25, the UPRR/SR 99 Alternative study area has higher percentages of minority and low-income populations than the thresholds identified in Section 3.1.5.1. The greatest concentrations of minority populations are Hispanic and Asian (mainly Hmong). 2010 Census data indicate the regional minority percentage has increased since the 2000 Census, and the regional low-income percentage has decreased or remained the same. Data for the UPRR/SR 99 Alternative study area are a subset of the regional data, and regional trends likely apply within the study area also. Communities of concern tend to be located adjacent to the eastern boundary of the alignment and include Chowchilla, the areas north and south of Downtown Madera, the unincorporated communities of Fairmead and Herndon, and the area within the City of Fresno where the alignment is adjacent to Weber Avenue.

#### **6.5.1.2 Downtown Merced and Downtown Fresno Stations**

The potential for environmental justice impacts is great in residential areas and greater in urbanized areas, where higher numbers of residences exist. As illustrated in Figures 6-3 and 6-4, many of the census block groups adjacent to the HST station sites have no population. These areas have existing freight railroads and are surrounded primarily by industrial or commercial areas.

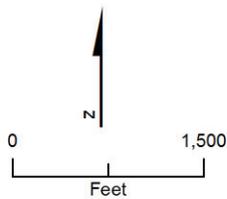
Appendix A provides additional information and figures showing the percentage of minority and low-income populations by census block group and census block in the HST station study areas. Residents tend to be concentrated west of SR 99 in the cities of Merced and Fresno; residential areas are located at the outer edges of both HST station study areas. The Downtown Merced Station study area has resources that serve communities of concern, including the Merced Senior Community Center, the McCombs Youth





Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2010).

MF\_TR\_SJC\_08 Feb 01, 2012



- Station Footprint
- UPRR/SR 99 Alternative
- BNSF Alternative
- Hybrid Alternative
- Station Footprint
- Station Study Area
- Railroad
- Census Block With No Population

**Figure 6-4**  
 Downtown Fresno Station – Areas  
 with Zero Population

Center, and Merced Lao Family Community Inc. No resources related to communities of concern exist in the Downtown Fresno Station study area.

### **6.5.2 BNSF Alternative**

As shown in Table 6-25, the BNSF Alternative study area has higher percentages of minority and low-income populations than the thresholds identified in Section 3.1.5.1. According to 2006-2010 ACS data, all three alternatives would travel through areas with similar percentages of low-income populations. Larger areas of communities of concern adjacent to the BNSF Alternative alignment include the unincorporated communities of Le Grand, Madera Acres, Herndon, and the area within the City of Fresno where the alignment is adjacent to Weber Avenue.

### **6.5.3 Hybrid Alternative**

As shown in Table 6-25, the Hybrid Alternative study area has higher percentages of minority and low-income populations than the thresholds identified in Section 3.1.5.1. The Hybrid Alternative with both the Ave 21 and Ave 24 wyes is similar to the BNSF Alternative because it would also travel through the Madera Acres, and not the City of Madera. Larger areas of communities of concern adjacent to the Hybrid Alternative alignment include the unincorporated community of Madera Acres, Herndon, and the area within the City of Fresno where the alignment is adjacent to Weber Avenue. In addition to the communities of concern under both wyes, the Hybrid Alternative with the Ave 21 Wye would also include the unincorporated community of Fairmead.

### **6.5.4 Heavy Maintenance Facility**

Of the five proposed HMF sites, only the Castle Commerce Center site is close to a populated area with low-income populations that exceed the thresholds identified in Section 3.1.5.1. The other potential HMF sites are located in areas with little or no population and no communities of concern.

## 7.0 Impact Analysis

### 7.1 Environmental Consequences

This section describes the impact analysis relating to socioeconomic, communities, and environmental justice for the proposed project. It describes the methods used to determine the impacts of the project and lists the criteria used to conclude whether an impact would be significant. Measures to mitigate (i.e., avoid, minimize, rectify, reduce, eliminate, or compensate for) significant impacts accompany each impact discussion. Analysts reviewed the technical reports prepared for the Project EIR/EIS (Authority and FRA 2012a) and discussed the potential impacts with all the Chapter 3 EIR/EIS analysts to determine impacts related to socioeconomic, communities, and environmental justice.

### 7.2 Overview

All of the alternative alignments would pass through the cities of Merced and Fresno; the HST stations in these cities would encourage redevelopment, attract new businesses, and revitalize the downtown areas, resulting in primarily beneficial social impacts. The HST alternatives would provide increased employment opportunities and economic benefits that would not occur under the No Project Alternative. In the City of Merced, the HST station and guideway would result in acquisition of facilities used by the surrounding residents, including communities of concern. All of the HST alternatives would result in air quality impacts during construction that could result in impacts on children's health and safety, but with mitigation no significant impacts are anticipated. During operation the HST alternatives would have beneficial effects on air quality as a result of reduced traffic congestion with lowering of emissions when compared to the No Project Alternative.

Because they would pass through fewer communities, the BNSF Alternative with either the Mission Ave East of Le Grand design option or Mariposa Way East of Le Grand design option, and the Hybrid Alternative would have fewer impacts on communities and communities of concern than the UPRR/SR 99 Alternative or the BNSF Alternative with the Mission Ave design option or Mariposa Way design option. The effects associated with the Hybrid Alternative with the Ave 24 Wye on the CCWF property, including effects on CDCR's ability to carry out its mission and CALPIA's revenue flow, could be avoided with the acquisition of land to replace severed lands. The Castle Commerce Center HMF alternative would have more social impacts than the other four HMF alternatives because of the guideway to Merced that would bisect a small community and require residential displacements.

In communities without HST stations or an HMF site, direct social impacts would typically be negligible or adverse rather than beneficial. Social impacts include the effects of property acquisitions, visual changes, noise, and changes in community cohesion. Alternatives that pass through more communities would cause more social impacts. All of the HST alternatives require residential property acquisitions, but these acquisitions are not expected to have any negative effects on school districts because there are replacement properties available in each school district and there would be no long-term effects related to property tax collection. The HST alternatives would result in direct impacts on employment and induce population and employment growth throughout the region including communities that would not have an HST station. The HST stations would also have the potential to increase property values, which would generate increases in the property tax base along with increased sales tax revenue in addition to the new employment opportunities. The direct and indirect impacts would result in increased employment opportunities and economic benefits throughout the region that would not occur under the No Project Alternative. Employment opportunities indirectly generated by the HST alternatives would tend to be high-wage jobs. The jobs would likely be filled by regional workers and would accrue benefits to a greater degree for the communities of concern, with the implementation of mitigation to provide training or other programs to assist with employment.

Generally, the entire Merced to Fresno Section is home to communities of concern. The majority of impacts, both adverse and beneficial, would be predominantly borne by communities of concern in the study area. Of all the census block groups evaluated for all HST alternatives, the range is 0 to 3 census

block groups, depending on HST alternative, that do not have low-income or minority population percentages that exceed the thresholds described in Section 3.1.5.1.

Without mitigation, disproportionately high and adverse effects would occur for communities of concern in the unincorporated communities of (1) Le Grand, under the BNSF Alternative with Mission Ave or Mariposa Way design options, (2) Fairmead, under the UPRR/SR 99 Alternative and the Hybrid Alternative with the Ave 21 Wye, and (3) Franklin-Beachwood, under the Castle Commerce Center HMF alternative. An adequate supply of replacement housing is not currently available for displaced residents in those communities. An adequate supply of replacement housing exists in Merced and Madera counties and the cities of Atwater, Merced, Chowchilla, and Madera. However, people who must relocate outside of the Le Grand, Fairmead, or Franklin-Beachwood communities (because of the lack of an adequate supply of replacement housing) would be isolated from their communities. Mitigation measures could include avoiding residential displacements or providing replacement housing in Le Grand, Fairmead, or Franklin-Beachwood. In Madera Acres, visual impacts with substantial intensity and residual noise effects would be predominantly borne by a community of concern population under the BNSF and Hybrid alternatives.

Under all HST alternatives, benefits associated with the project would likely accrue to a greater degree to communities of concern because they are a large percentage of the population in the region. These benefits include improved mobility within the region, improved traffic conditions on freeways as people increasingly use HSTs, and improvements in air quality within the region. The project would also economically benefit cities and counties by attracting new employment opportunities and those who live and work near the HST stations by creating a new destination that would improve cohesion in the area and increase the property values near the stations. Infill development and redevelopment opportunities in Merced and Fresno would result in greater densities and would reduce pressures to develop agricultural lands.

## **7.3 No Project Alternative**

The No Project Alternative includes planned projects that will likely be implemented by the year 2035. Section 2.2 provides a complete description of the No Project Alternative. Foreseeable future projects include shopping centers, large residential developments, quarries, and expansion of SR 99 to provide full-access interchanges and additional auxiliary lanes by 2020 between Merced and Fresno.

### **7.3.1 Disruption or Severance of Community Interactions or Division of Established Communities**

#### **7.3.1.1 Community Cohesion and Neighborhoods**

Currently planned projects would widen SR 99 and add new interchanges between the cities of Merced and Fresno. These projects would not create barriers that would disrupt or sever community interactions or divide established communities. The SR 99 corridor is primarily associated with commercial and industrial development and acts as a boundary between most of the established communities and neighborhoods in the study area. Widening SR 99 would not create additional barriers, and new interchanges would provide safer and more efficient access to the highway. Future planned growth and associated development would occur in accordance with general plans and land use plans, which aim to strengthen community cohesion. The planned projects would have temporary impacts on children's health and safety, primarily associated with air quality from construction activities, but the projects are not as large in scale as the HST Project and any impacts would likely be smaller in scale. In addition, any expansion of SR 99 would likely result in additional air quality effects in the long-term, so the No Project Alternative would not have the same benefits on air quality as the HST Project.

#### **7.3.1.2 Community Facilities**

The planned projects under the No Project Alternative would undergo or have already undergone project-specific environmental review. Under the No Project Alternative, community facilities would not be affected or would be mitigated to less than significant impacts. Emergency response times and access



would be improved because of SR 99 improvements. No direct or indirect adverse impacts on Section 4(f) lands (i.e., public school facilities open for public recreation) are anticipated.

### **7.3.1.3 Displacement of Local Residents or Businesses**

The No Project Alternative would require fewer property acquisitions and displacements to accommodate transportation improvements than would the HST alternatives.

## **7.3.2 Economic Impacts**

Under the No Project Alternative, the anticipated growth and development would result in increased employment opportunities and sales tax revenues. The No Project Alternative would not lose as much property tax revenue as the HST alternatives because few acquisitions would occur under the No Project Alternative. However, there would be no HST-station-generated appreciation of property values in Merced or Fresno.

### **7.3.2.1 Economic Effects on Agriculture**

The No Project Alternative would result in farmland conversion to accommodate anticipated growth in the region that would occur without the proposed project. These losses would affect property tax revenues and result in negative impacts on agriculture employment. In comparison, the HST alternatives would convert farmland for construction of the project, but would also provide opportunities for focusing more-compact future development on land that is already urbanized within the station areas. This could reduce the amount of farmland converted to urban uses to accommodate future growth beyond current local general plans. The HST is also expected to create additional employment opportunities beyond the No Project Alternative that could be filled by those affected by the loss of agriculture lands.

## **7.3.3 Environmental Effects Disproportionately Borne by a Minority or Low-Income Population**

Existing highway congestion would continue with the expansion of SR 99, and air quality would not improve. More options for inter-regional travel would not occur, and incentives to link multimodal transit opportunities would be low. According to the Bay Area to Central Valley Program EIR/EIS (Authority and FRA 2008), the interstate highway system, commercial airports, and conventional passenger rail system serving the intercity travel market are operating at or near capacity. Without the mode shift to HST, traffic congestion would contribute to higher air pollution, longer travel times, and increasing transportation costs in comparison to the HST alternatives. These impacts would affect all populations with or without a vehicle, including low-income and minority populations, in the same manner.

The No Project Alternative would continue regional reliance on automobiles for travel. It would not address the growing need for a safe, reliable, and affordable mode of travel as an alternative to automobile and air travel to the major metropolitan areas of the state.

## **7.4 High-Speed Train Alternatives**

This section evaluates direct and indirect impacts that would result from construction and operation of each HST alternative. Impacts during the construction period are considered temporary (such as the use of land for construction staging) because they will cease after construction. Operations impacts, such as acquisition of properties necessary for the HST alignment and associated facilities, are considered permanent because these lands would remain dedicated to the HST System.

### **7.4.1 Construction Period Impacts**

The construction period of the project includes purchasing of the right-of-way and testing of HST vehicles, in addition to the heavy construction (e.g., grading, excavating, and laying the HST railbed and guideway). Although property acquisitions would occur prior to construction, the impacts would be

permanent and are discussed in the Project Impacts section. The assumption that displacements would be permanent provides a conservative, worst-case estimate.

### **Disruption or Severance of Community Interactions or Division of Established Communities**

Construction for any of the HST alternatives would result in temporary impacts on communities, such as additional demand for services due to construction purchases and the presence of construction workers; temporary use of properties for project construction; and temporary impacts (e.g., dust and noise) on minority and low-income populations as well as the general population. The effects for each of the HST alternatives are discussed below.

The degree of intensity of the heavy construction disturbance would vary among the proposed alignments. Activities related to building the project include receiving, storing, and moving equipment and materials; clearing and exposing soils, installing lights for nighttime work, which would generally change the visual project landscape. As much as possible, all construction would occur within the right-of-way acquired for the project.

Construction impacts would include temporary increases in noise and dust, visual changes, and traffic congestion related to road closures or detours. Potential construction noise impacts on residential properties would be greater during nighttime construction. However, because the overall noise impacts on both residential and commercial properties would not result in adverse impacts, the overall impacts are expected to have negligible intensity under NEPA and to be less than significant under CEQA. There is also a potential for ground-borne vibration impacts during construction, most notably caused by pile driving. Because of the potential for ground-borne vibration, the vibration impacts would have moderate intensity under NEPA and would be less than significant under CEQA. Additional vibration evaluation will be performed during final design. Refer to the *Merced to Fresno Section Noise and Vibration Technical Report* (Authority and FRA 2012c) for more information.

Adverse construction impacts related to roadway modifications and construction may temporarily disrupt circulation patterns. Although access to some neighborhoods would be disrupted and detoured for short periods during construction, access would continue to be available to neighborhoods. To minimize impacts, roadways that would need to be moved because of the HST project right-of-way requirements would be realigned prior to closure of the existing roadway. Construction would also require an increase in truck traffic, which could increase congestion and would affect pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit systems. Construction of the HST alternatives could increase driver risk, during construction because lane closures, detours, and the movement of construction vehicles would present an added challenge for drivers. This risk could also affect pedestrians and bicyclists, particularly in urban areas, because drivers would be potentially distracted by construction activities.

Construction would require a large number of employees, but it is not expected to have negative effects related to temporary population increases or the need for housing and services. As of 2010, unemployment in the three counties averaged 17%. The construction jobs are anticipated to be filled by residents in the region who have the needed skills. Construction of an HST alternative would have a beneficial impact on the economies of the communities in the associated study areas. Because many of the jobs would be filled by area residents, there are no impacts related to additional housing or services.

Emergency ingress and egress would be maintained at all times. Construction would not affect the provision of police and fire protection services. Law enforcement, fire, and emergency services could experience increased response times because of construction-related road closures, detours, and increased traffic congestion in some locations. Delays would be longer in rural areas than in urban areas because rural roads cross SR 99 and UPRR at infrequent intervals, and closure of one road could result in long detours to cross SR 99 and UPRR.

Adverse construction impacts related to roadway modifications and construction could temporarily obstruct pedestrian and vehicle access to community facilities within the study area, especially those with access from roadway segments that are under construction. Although access to these facilities would be

modified during construction, it would not be eliminated. Noise, dust, and glare could affect community facilities, including parks.

In general, construction would occur primarily outside of (but in some areas adjacent to) established neighborhoods in areas associated with agricultural, commercial, or industrial uses. The alignment would be adjacent to existing transportation corridors, and construction would not bisect or isolate established communities or change the existing community character. Impacts on pedestrian and vehicle circulation are not considered a barrier to interaction, because the HST project is primarily adjacent to existing transportation corridors. Although project construction would affect individuals and property owners, these impacts would be temporary and would not divide neighborhoods or affect the integrity of the neighborhoods. Because the impacts would not divide or affect the integrity of neighborhoods, the construction impacts related to disruption or severance of community interactions or division of established communities would have moderate intensity under NEPA and would be less than significant under CEQA for all HST alternatives.

### ***Downtown Merced and Downtown Fresno Stations***

Construction impacts associated with the station areas would be similar to the impacts identified above, but the construction duration would likely be longer in the HST station areas in Merced and Fresno because of the infrastructure requirements.

### ***UPRR/SR 99 Alternative***

In addition to the construction impacts previously described in the Common Community and Neighborhood Impacts section, the UPRR/SR 99 Alternative would result in construction impacts in the communities of Chowchilla, Fairmead, and Madera. Through Chowchilla, construction of the East Chowchilla design option would occur adjacent to SR 99 and away from downtown and construction of the West Chowchilla design option would occur west of the city, so no additional adverse impacts related to disruption or severance of community interactions or division of established communities are anticipated (other than those previously described in the Common Community and Neighborhood Impacts section). Through Fairmead, construction activities would occur next to residential areas, affecting the quality of life in the community and potentially affecting the only church in Fairmead. Through the City of Madera, construction activities would occur adjacent to a residential area and the downtown business district, and impacts would be similar to those described above. Construction activities would require temporary disruptions to park access in the City of Madera, but temporary access would be provided from other nearby roadways. Therefore, construction impacts related to disruption or severance of community interactions or division of established communities in Fairmead and Madera would have moderate intensity under NEPA and would be less than significant under CEQA. Construction impacts related to disruption or severance of community interactions or division of established communities in Chowchilla, with either the East Chowchilla or West Chowchilla design option, would have negligible intensity under NEPA and would be less than significant under CEQA. The construction impacts would be less than significant under CEQA because the project's social effects during construction would not create any secondary adverse physical impacts.

The UPRR/SR 99 Alternative would generally allow faster emergency response times than the BNSF or Hybrid alternatives because of its proximity to SR 99 and the numerous law enforcement, fire, and emergency services concentrated along the SR 99 corridor. The BNSF and Hybrid alternatives would be outside the urban areas and farther from the emergency services.

### ***BNSF Alternative***

In addition to the construction impacts described in the Common Community and Neighborhood Impacts section, construction impacts would occur in the unincorporated communities of Le Grand and Madera Acres. In Le Grand, if the Mission Ave design option or Mariposa Way design option is implemented, construction activities would occur closer to residences and community resources than with the design options that would route the HSTs east of Le Grand. This would result in a greater level of impact than if

the either of the design options that are east of Le Grand were implemented. Construction impacts related to disruption or severance of community interactions or division of established communities in Le Grand would have moderate intensity under NEPA for the Mission Ave and Mariposa Way design options and negligible intensity under NEPA for the Mission Ave East of Le Grand and Mariposa Way East of Le Grand design options. Construction impacts would be less than significant under CEQA for all design options because the project's social effects are not treated as significant effects on the physical environment under CEQA. Construction impacts related to disruption or severance of community interactions or division of established communities in Madera Acres would have moderate intensity under NEPA because of the proximity of the construction activities and would be less than significant under CEQA because the project's social effects during construction would not create any secondary adverse physical impacts.

### ***Hybrid Alternative***

In addition to the construction impacts described in the Common Community and Neighborhood Impacts section, construction impacts would occur in the communities of Chowchilla, Fairmead, and Madera Acres. These impacts would be the same as those previously described in the Common Community and Neighborhood Impacts section. Impacts on Chowchilla and Fairmead would only occur with the connection to the Ave 21 Wye and would be the same as those described under the UPRR/SR 99 Alternative. Construction impacts related to disruption or severance of community interactions or division of established communities in Madera Acres would have moderate intensity under NEPA because of the proximity of the construction activities and would be less than significant under CEQA because the project's social effects during construction would not create any secondary adverse physical impacts.

### ***Heavy Maintenance Facility***

Construction associated with an HMF at the Harris-DeJager, Fagundes, Gordon-Shaw, or Kojima Development sites would not alter or block access to any communities or community facilities. These sites are located in rural areas with sparse populations and no community facilities, and no communities of concern were identified in these areas. In addition, the amount of land purchased for each facility would be greater than what is actually required, and the surrounding area would buffer construction impacts. Construction impacts related to the disruption or severance of community interactions or division of established communities around these rural HMF sites would have negligible intensity under NEPA because there are no facilities or residents in proximity and would be less than significant under CEQA because the project's social effects during construction would not create any secondary adverse physical impacts.

Construction impacts associated with an HMF at the Castle Commerce Center site would be similar to those previously above in the Common Community and Neighborhood Impacts section. Construction of the guideway linking the HMF site to the Merced HST station would occur within the Franklin-Beachwood community in Merced County. Construction activities would occur close to residences, including a mobile home community, and would affect quality of life in the community. Because the guideway would bisect the mobile home community and construction would occur within the community instead of at the edge of it, impacts related to the disruption or severance of community interactions or division of established communities in Franklin-Beachwood would have substantial intensity under NEPA and would be significant under CEQA.

### **Children's Health and Safety**

During construction, all of the alternatives would have impacts related to air quality that would be reduced with mitigation to less than significant. In the urban areas, the existing transportation corridors typically form the school boundaries within which the student enrollment is drawn, especially elementary and middle schools. Because of this, children would travel away from the alternatives and would not need to cross the alternatives or travel through the station areas. Much of the area adjacent to the alternatives is associated with agriculture, industrial, and commercial uses, which are typically not areas that provide areas for children to congregate. Of the three HST alternatives, the UPRR/SR 99 Alternative results in the

highest level of air quality impacts because of the longer construction duration associated with the length and elevated guideway. The BNSF Alternative is similar, and the Hybrid Alternative results in the lowest air quality impacts. The UPRR/SR 99 also travels through the City of Madera and results in impacts on additional parks, but these facilities are passive parks and not associated with high activity levels where children would congregate. Construction of any of the HMF Alternatives is not anticipated to result in any impacts with substantial intensity during construction on children's health and safety. Refer to Appendix 3.12-C, Children's Health and Safety Risk Assessment, for additional information on construction impacts for the HST alternatives and HMF alternatives.

#### **7.4.1.1 Common Economic Impacts**

All of the HST alternatives would realize similar construction-related economic benefits because of increased sales tax revenues and job creation due to project spending. Jobs would be created through construction of the HST project and through other sectors that provide materials, equipment, and services.

##### **Construction-Related Tax Revenues**

This section describes the potential sales tax revenues that would be generated during construction of the project. Unless specifically exempted, all transactions related to the project would be subject to sales tax. Annual sales tax revenues during construction were derived from the sales tax rates for each county (as of April 1, 2010) and the local expenditures on materials and supplies for each year of construction. Information is also provided on property values and school district funding impacts during construction.

The annual sales tax revenues that would be realized during each year of construction for Merced, Madera, and Fresno counties under each of the HST alternatives (including design options, HST stations, and an HMF) would result in primarily beneficial economic effects. Tables 7-1 through 7-14 show the expenditures and local sales tax revenues for the three HST alternatives over 5 years, including the HST stations, the Castle Commerce Center HMF, and a generic HMF. The sales tax rates for the three counties are 8.25%, 8.75%, and 8.975%, respectively (California Board of Equalization [CBOE] 2010). However, the sales tax rate indicates that only 0.75% of the taxes actually go toward city and county operations. The 0.75% is what is left over for the general fund after accounting for the various components of each county's sales tax rate. For example, in 2010 Merced County had a sales tax rate of 8.25%, which was split between the state (7.25%), county transportation fund (0.25%), and the portion going to city/county general fund account (0.75%). The analysis assumed that the county/city general fund account is the account that supports the county/city operations that are not specifically funded from specially designated accounts. Therefore, the estimated sales tax revenues calculated for this analysis are based on 0.75% (CBOE 2010).

To evaluate the contribution of the project to local sales tax revenues at the end of construction period, the total local sales tax revenues generated from local purchases during the construction period under each HST alternative (e.g., lumber for miscellaneous built-in-place formwork, aggregate, Portland cement, asphalt, steel, and electrical equipment) were compared to the FY 2009/2010 total sales tax revenues for the cities of Merced, Chowchilla, Madera, and Fresno. The proportion of the local purchases that are likely to be purchased within each of the four cities is assumed to be proportional to the size of the city. Because Fresno is the largest of the cities in the study area, a larger proportion of the local purchases are assumed to be made in Fresno. According to 2010 population estimates, percentage of the population that resides in Merced, Chowchilla, Madera, and Fresno is 12%, 2%, 11%, and 72%, respectively. Table 7-2 shows the project's contribution to local sales tax revenues for the HST alternatives, HST stations, and HMF, as determined by these percentages. These additional, though temporary, sales tax revenues range from 7% to 22% of each city's FY 2009/2010 total sales tax revenues under the UPRR/SR 99 Alternative and from less than 1% to 6% of each city's FY 2009/2010 total sales tax revenues for the HST stations and HMFs. These additional sales tax revenues, though temporary, are beneficial effects on the city and county economies and are therefore considered a beneficial effect under NEPA. A negative effect on sales tax revenues that may occur during construction would result from business displacements. Although there are suitable locations for the businesses to

relocate, there may be a loss of revenue while the businesses relocate, and some businesses may close rather than relocate. This would be considered an effect with moderate intensity under NEPA.

Construction activities could result in the potential for lower property values for properties near the construction footprint. The price of properties sold prior to or during construction could decrease compared to their current values as a result of the nearby construction activities. If there is any reduction in property value, this would occur only during construction in the vicinity of any given property and not during the entire construction period of the HST Project. Because the decrease in property value cannot be quantified, the effect is considered to have moderate intensity under NEPA.

Construction of any of the HST alternatives is not anticipated to result in any negative effects on school district funding. Although property acquisitions would occur prior to construction, this is considered a long-term impact and is addressed under Project Impacts. As described below under Temporary Construction Employment, many of the construction jobs could be filled by residents in the region. Because no impacts are anticipated on school district funding during construction, the effect is considered to have negligible intensity under NEPA.

**Table 7-1**  
 Annual Local Project Expenditures and Sales Tax Revenues during Construction

HST Alternative and Feature	Annual Local Project Expenditures (Million 2010\$)	Annual Local Sales Tax Revenues (Million 2010\$)
UPRR/SR 99 Alternative	887 to 1,134	6.7 to 8.5
BNSF Alternative	729 to 806	5.5 to 6.0
Hybrid Alternative	632 to 809	4.7 to 6.1
HST Stations	62.2	0.5
Castle Commerce Center HMF	311.5	2.3
Generic HMF	181	1.4

**Table 7-2**  
 Contribution of Sales Tax Revenues during Construction

HST Alternative and Feature	City of Merced (Million 2010\$)	City of Madera (Million 2010\$)	City of Chowchilla (Million 2010\$)	City of Fresno (Million 2010\$)
UPRR/SR 99	0.8 to 1.03	0.75 to 0.97	0.15 to 0.19	4.94 to 6.33
BNSF	0.66 to 0.73	0.62 to 0.69	0.12 to 0.13	4.07 to 4.49
Hybrid	0.57 to 0.73	0.54 to 0.69	0.11 to 0.14	3.53 to 4.51
HST Stations	0.06	0.05	0.01	0.35
Castle Commerce Center HMF	0.28	0.27	0.05	1.74
Generic HMF	0.16	0.15	0.03	1.01

**Table 7-3**  
 Sales Tax Revenues during Construction of the UPPR/SR 99 Alternative

<b>Construction Year</b>	<b>Annual Local Project Expenditures (Million 2010\$)</b>	<b>Annual Local Sales Tax Revenues (Million 2010\$)</b>
Year 1	88.7 to 113.4	0.66 to 0.85
Year 2	177.3 to 226.8	1.33 to 1.70
Year 3	266.0 to 340.2	1.99 to 2.55
Year 4	221.6 to 283.5	1.66 to 2.13
Year 5	133.0 to 170.1	1.00 to 1.28
<b>Total</b>	<b>886.5 to 1,134.1</b>	<b>6.65 to 8.51</b>

**Table 7-4**  
 Sales Tax Revenues during Construction of the BNSF Alternative

<b>Construction Year</b>	<b>Annual Local Project Expenditures (Million 2010\$)</b>	<b>Annual Local Sales Tax Revenues (Million 2010\$)</b>
Year 1	72.9 to 80.5	0.55 to 0.60
Year 2	145.8 to 161.1	1.09 to 1.21
Year 3	218.7 to 241.6	1.64 to 1.81
Year 4	182.2 to 201.4	1.37 to 1.51
Year 5	109.3 to 120.8	0.82 to 0.91
<b>Total</b>	<b>728.9 to 805.6</b>	<b>5.47 to 6.04</b>

**Table 7-5**  
 Sales Tax Revenues during Construction of the Hybrid Alternative

<b>Construction Year</b>	<b>Annual Local Project Expenditures (Million 2010\$)</b>	<b>Annual Local Sales Tax Revenues (Million 2010\$)</b>
Year 1	63.2 to 80.9	0.47 to 0.61
Year 2	126.4 to 161.8	0.95 to 1.21
Year 3	189.7 to 242.7	1.42 to 1.82
Year 4	158.1 to 202.3	1.19 to 1.52
Year 5	94.8 to 121.4	0.71 to 0.91
<b>Total</b>	<b>632.3 to 809.3</b>	<b>4.74 to 6.07</b>

**Table 7-6**  
 Sales Tax Revenues during Construction of the HST Stations

<b>Construction Year</b>	<b>Annual Local Project Expenditures (Million 2010\$)</b>	<b>Annual Local Sales Tax Revenues (Million 2010\$)</b>
Year 1	6.2	0.05
Year 2	12.4	0.09
Year 3	18.6	0.14
Year 4	15.5	0.12
Year 5	9.3	0.07
<b>Total</b>	<b>62.2</b>	<b>0.47</b>

**Table 7-7**  
 Sales Tax Revenues during Construction of the Castle Commerce Center HMF

<b>Construction Year</b>	<b>Annual Local Expenditures (Million 2010\$)</b>	<b>Local Sales Tax Revenues (Million 2010\$)</b>
Year 1	31.1	0.23
Year 2	62.3	0.47
Year 3	93.5	0.70
Year 4	77.9	0.58
Year 5	46.7	0.35
<b>Total</b>	<b>311.5</b>	<b>2.34</b>

**Table 7-8**  
 Sales Tax Revenues during Construction of the Generic HMF

<b>Construction Year</b>	<b>Annual Local Expenditures (Million 2010\$)</b>	<b>Local Sales Tax Revenues (Million 2010\$)</b>
Year 1	18.0	0.14
Year 2	36.1	0.27
Year 3	54.2	0.41
Year 4	45.2	0.34
Year 5	27.1	0.20
<b>Total</b>	<b>180.6</b>	<b>1.36</b>

**Table 7-9**

Contribution of Sales Tax Revenues during Construction of the UPPR/SR 99 Alternative

Construction Year	City of Merced (Million 2010\$)	City of Madera (Million 2010\$)	City of Chowchilla (Million 2010\$)	City of Fresno (Million 2010\$)
Year 1	0.08 to 0.10	0.08 to 0.10	0.01 to 0.02	0.49 to 0.63
Year 2	0.16- 0.21	0.15 to 0.19	0.03 to 0.04	0.99 to 1.27
Year 3	0.24 to 0.31	0.23 to 0.29	0.04 to 0.06	1.48 to 1.90
Year 4	0.20 to 0.26	0.19 to 0.24	0.04 to 0.05	1.24 to 1.58
Year 5	0.12 to 0.15	0.11 to 0.14	0.02 to 0.03	0.74 to 0.95
<b>Total</b>	<b>0.80 to 1.03</b>	<b>0.75 to 0.97</b>	<b>0.15 to 0.19</b>	<b>4.94 to 6.33</b>

**Table 7-10**

Contribution of Sales Tax Revenues during Construction of the BNSF Alternative

Construction Year	City of Merced (Million 2010\$)	City of Madera (Million 2010\$)	City of Chowchilla (Million 2010\$)	City of Fresno (Million 2010\$)
Year 1	0.07	0.06 to 0.07	0.01	0.41 to 0.45
Year 2	0.13 to 0.15	0.12 to 0.14	0.02 to 0.03	0.81 to 0.90
Year 3	0.20 to 0.22	0.19 to 0.21	0.04	1.22 to 1.35
Year 4	0.16 to 0.18	0.16 to 0.17	0.03	1.02 to 1.12
Year 5	0.10 to 0.11	0.09 to 0.10	0.02	0.61 to 0.67
<b>Total</b>	<b>0.66 to 0.73</b>	<b>0.62 to 0.69</b>	<b>0.12 to 0.13</b>	<b>4.07 to 4.49</b>

**Table 7-11**

Contribution of Sales Tax Revenues during Construction of the Hybrid Alternative

Construction Year	City of Merced (Million 2010\$)	City of Madera (Million 2010\$)	City of Chowchilla (Million 2010\$)	City of Fresno (Million 2010\$)
Year 1	0.06 to 0.07	0.05 to 0.07	0.01	0.35 to 0.45
Year 2	0.11- 0.15	0.11 to 0.14	0.02 to 0.03	0.71 to 0.90
Year 3	0.17 to 0.22	0.16 to 0.21	0.03 to 0.04	1.06 to 1.35
Year 4	0.14 to 0.18	0.13 to 0.17	0.03	0.88 to 1.13
Year 5	0.09 to 0.11	0.08 to 0.10	0.02	0.53 to 0.68
<b>Total</b>	<b>0.57 to 0.73</b>	<b>0.54 to 0.69</b>	<b>0.11 to 0.14</b>	<b>3.53 to 4.51</b>

**Table 7-12**  
 Contribution of Sales Tax Revenues during Construction of the HST Stations

<b>Construction Year</b>	<b>City of Merced (2010\$)</b>	<b>City of Madera (2010\$)</b>	<b>City of Chowchilla (2010\$)</b>	<b>City of Fresno (2010\$)</b>
Year 1	5,620	5,300	1,040	34,710
Year 2	11,250	10,590	2,080	69,420
Year 3	16,870	15,890	3,110	104,130
Year 4	14,060	13,240	2,600	86,780
Year 5	8,440	7,950	1,560	52,070
<b>Total</b>	<b>56,240</b>	<b>52,970</b>	<b>10,380</b>	<b>347,110</b>

**Table 7-13**  
 Contribution of Sales Tax Revenues during Construction of the Castle Commerce Center HMF

<b>Construction Year</b>	<b>City of Merced (2010\$)</b>	<b>City of Madera (2010\$)</b>	<b>City of Chowchilla (2010\$)</b>	<b>City of Fresno (2010\$)</b>
Year 1	28,150	26,520	5,200	173,760
Year 2	56,310	53,030	10,390	347,520
Year 3	84,460	79,550	15,590	521,280
Year 4	70,380	66,290	12,990	434,400
Year 5	42,230	39,770	7,790	260,640
<b>Total</b>	<b>28,150</b>	<b>26,520</b>	<b>5,200</b>	<b>173,760</b>

**Table 7-14**  
 Contribution of Sales Tax Revenues during Construction of the Generic HMF

<b>Construction Year</b>	<b>City of Merced (2010\$)</b>	<b>City of Madera (2010\$)</b>	<b>City of Chowchilla (2010\$)</b>	<b>City of Fresno (2010\$)</b>
Year 1	16,340	15,390	3,020	100,870
Year 2	32,690	30,790	6,030	201,740
Year 3	49,030	46,180	9,050	302,610
Year 4	40,860	38,480	7,540	252,180
Year 5	24,520	23,090	4,530	151,310
<b>Total</b>	<b>163,440</b>	<b>153,940</b>	<b>30,170</b>	<b>1,008,710</b>

## **Employment Growth**

Based on project cost estimates, approximately 10,210 to 17,650 1-year, full-time job equivalents would be created within Merced, Madera, and Fresno counties over the entire construction period, depending on alternative. The higher estimated number of jobs is associated with the UPRR/SR 99 Alternative and the lowest estimate is associated with the Hybrid Alternative. Direct total employment during the construction period within Merced, Madera, and Fresno counties for the HST alternatives, including the stations, is estimated to range from 2,910 to 5,040 total direct annual job years, with the higher estimate associated with the UPRR/SR 99 Alternative and the lower estimate associated with the Hybrid Alternative. Indirect and induced employment jobs are estimated to be between 7,300 and 12,610 total indirect and induced annual job years, with the higher estimate associated with the UPRR/SR 99 Alternative and the lower estimate associated with the Hybrid Alternative. Project-related direct annual job years would provide major employment opportunities in the mining, logging, and construction sector of the three counties.

The average unemployment rate for the three counties was 17.8% in 2010, with 104,367 people unemployed (CEDD 2010a). CEDD reported a loss of 32,300 construction jobs in the San Joaquin Valley between June 2006 and August 2009 (Eberhardt School of Business 2009). As with any large construction project, some influx of population is expected; however, given the high unemployment level and the number of construction workers that have been lost based on the Eberhardt study, the majority of these new construction jobs could be filled by residents in the region. This would be considered a beneficial effect under NEPA.

### **7.4.1.2 Environmental Justice**

Construction impacts would be the same as those previously described in the Disruption or Severance of Community Interactions or Division of Established Communities section. The construction impacts would affect all populations, including communities of concern and because the study area is comprised largely of communities of concern, any impacts would affect them to a larger degree. Areas where the communities of concern could be affected include residences adjacent to the following construction areas: Le Grand under the BNSF Alternative, Fairmead under the UPRR/SR 99 Alternative and the Hybrid Alternative with the Ave 21 Wye, Madera Acres under both the BNSF and Hybrid alternatives, Fresno under all HST alternatives, and Franklin-Beachwood with the HMF at Castle Commerce Center.

Disproportionately high and adverse effects on communities of concern were determined by reviewing the construction impacts associated with the environmental elements addressed in the other technical reports and information provided by the analysts of all the sections in Chapter 3, Affected Environment, Environmental Consequences, and Mitigation Measures, in the Project EIR/EIS. Construction activities would be temporary and activities would likely occur over a longer duration in the station areas. Refer to Section 2, Project Description, for information on the construction period timeframe.

Because the populations within the study area are predominately communities of concern, any construction impacts would affect communities of concern. For all environmental elements, construction would be temporary and the impacts would end once construction is completed. For the following elements, any adverse impacts will be reduced with the implementation of mitigation measures and design features and would not result in any adverse impacts on any population, including communities of concern: Transportation; Air Quality and Global Climate Change; EMF/EMI; Public Utilities and Energy; Hydrology and Water Resources; Geology, Soils, and Seismicity; Safety and Security; Station Planning, Land Use, and Development; Agricultural Lands; and Aesthetics and Visual Quality. Since there are no adverse impacts with the implementation of mitigation measures and design features for these elements, there would be no disproportionately high and adverse effects on communities of concern. Construction activities would result in adverse effects on noise and vibration; however, with mitigation measures the effects would be reduced below adverse, and there would be no disproportionately high and adverse effects on communities of concern. For other environmental elements, including Parks, Recreation, and Open Space; Cultural and Paleontological Resources; and Cumulative Impacts, even with the implementation of mitigation measures impacts could potentially result in adverse effects on the communities of concern. For these elements with adverse effects after mitigation, the adverse effects on

communities of concern would not be greater in magnitude than the adverse effect on the general population. As detailed in the other sections of Chapter 3, mitigation measures are provided for all the elements to reduce impacts and additionally the HST Project would provide employment opportunities that could be filled by the communities of concern with the provision of training identified as a mitigation measure. Construction of the HST Project would not result in any disproportionately high and adverse effects on communities of concern.

The impacts associated with construction of the HST stations were analyzed as part of the HST alternatives. Under all alternatives, the stations would be in the same location, so there would be no differences among the alternatives. As shown in Figures 6-3 and 6-4, the population is limited within the station area and there are no populations in the areas immediately adjacent to the stations. The lack of population in close proximity would reduce some of the impacts, especially those such as air quality, noise, vibration, and visual for which close proximity can result in a higher degree of impact.

Transit routes are not expected to be negatively affected during construction, but may experience increased travel times. For transit-dependent individuals, including low-income persons, travel times on routes near the Merced and Fresno HST stations may increase because of detours or lane closures during construction of the stations and guideway. Although this would increase travel time for transit-dependent individuals, drivers would also experience impacts. The impacts would be the same for transit-dependent and non-transit-dependent individuals.

## 7.4.2 Project Impacts

### 7.4.2.1 Common Community and Neighborhood Impacts

#### **Permanent Disruption or Severance of Community Interactions or Division of Established Communities**

Implementation of any of the HST alternatives would result in beneficial and adverse effects on communities; displacement of residences and businesses; economic impacts, including impacts on tax revenues and the agricultural industry; and impacts on minority and low-income populations, such as property acquisitions and visual changes (which would also affect the general population). The following sections describe these effects for each HST alternative. Because none of the HST alternatives would close existing pedestrian or bicycle facilities, those facilities are not discussed further in this section.

The project would primarily be adjacent to the UPRR/SR 99 and BNSF corridors. The UPRR/SR 99 corridor is associated with commercial and industrial development. The BNSF corridor is less developed. Both corridors currently act as boundaries between established communities and neighborhoods in the study area. Communities provide for the interaction of residential neighborhoods and the business community; community facilities support these interactions. Transportation facilities support community interaction, but they can also be barriers. The proposed north-south HST alignments would not create any new or additional barriers or disruptions that would negatively affect interactions or the quality of life in established communities and neighborhoods. The land uses adjacent to the project are primarily agricultural in the unincorporated areas and primarily commercial and industrial in the urban areas. Where the alternatives are at-grade in the urban areas, overpasses would be constructed to ensure access is maintained and in areas where the overpass would also cross the existing railway, the overpass would also remove a barrier to access. Another benefit to nearby residences and community facilities where overpasses would span the existing railway would result from trains no longer having to sound their horns. Common to all HST alternatives, relocations would occur along the edges of residential areas, primarily in the City of Fresno, but would not bisect any communities or neighborhoods. Similar to the residential acquisitions, many of the agricultural acquisitions would also occur along the edges of these areas. Property acquisitions common to all HST alternatives, primarily in the cities of Merced and Fresno, represent a small portion of the land available in adjacent neighborhoods and would not result in changes in the existing neighborhood intactness or character. Permanent impacts related to disruption or severance of community interactions or division of established communities in Merced and Fresno would

have negligible intensity under NEPA and would be less than significant under CEQA because the project would not divide neighborhoods or communities and would not affect community interactions.

The project has the potential to affect neighborhood quality positively. The proposed HST service would improve linkages to the surrounding region and the state. Neighborhoods (particularly those near the HST stations) may experience increased vitality in terms of improved access, residential infill, employment growth, and greater patronage of local businesses. The areas around the stations could improve community cohesion as new meeting places for residents in the surrounding neighborhoods.

Within the rural and unincorporated areas of the study area, there are few anticipated impacts because few residences are close to the proposed alignments. The new HST corridor has the potential to negatively affect communities by causing a decrease in property values, increasing noise and visual impacts, and physically dividing neighborhoods. However, as previously discussed, existing communities in the study area were developed next to railroad corridors and already experience these impacts. Those areas that are not adjacent to the existing railway corridors may be affected by the introduction of the HST corridor. The Merced and Fresno HST stations would likely improve the neighborhoods and increase property values. For the other communities farther from the station areas, including Le Grand, Chowchilla, Madera, and the Tower District neighborhood in Fresno, there is the potential for physical deterioration of the existing conditions adjacent to the railway corridor that may also result in negative impacts on property values. However, these communities were built around the railway corridors over time, and they have expanded beyond those corridors, de-emphasizing investments along the railway corridors. This has already led to degraded buildings and underutilized land. The elevated HST guideway would not create any new physical barriers, and the removal of some degraded buildings may improve the area. However, the presence of HST may reduce interest in new development and cause land to be underutilized, perpetuating a void in these communities. There are few anticipated impacts in the remaining rural and unincorporated areas of the study area because few residences or businesses are close to the proposed alignments.

The introduction of a new HST corridor that is not adjacent to the existing railway corridors may result in additional areas where physical deterioration could occur. This could negatively affect property values because of noise and visual resource impacts and the negative perception of being near a railway corridor (refer to the Property Values section [under Common Economic Impacts below] for additional information). This would be most noticeable in areas with an elevated guideway and would primarily be related to visual impacts caused by the introduction of new large structures. However, for much of the HST alternatives outside of the communities, the adjacent areas are rural agricultural with no residential or businesses adjacent or nearby; the impacts in these areas would be minimal. Additionally, there is no evidence to indicate the potential for physical deterioration, but consideration may be required in the rural communities where the HST corridor may affect the community character. This impact would have moderate intensity under NEPA and would be less than significant under CEQA because it would not be a new impact for most of these communities and neighborhoods.

Impacts on transportation, visual resources, noise and vibration, air quality, and safety and security could affect community character and cohesion; Table 7-15 summarizes the resource impacts that are common to all HST alternatives.

**Table 7-15**  
 Resource Impacts Potentially Affecting Community Character and Cohesion –  
 Impacts Common to All HST Alternatives

Resource	Potential Impact
Transportation	<p>There would be no new barriers to access in urban areas because the guideway would be grade-separated and existing road networks would be maintained. Some existing roads would be closed in rural areas; many of these access points are associated with the Ave 24 and Ave 21 wyes. Traffic would be diverted, but access points would be maintained at least every 2 miles, which would minimize impacts. Because traffic volumes are low and there are no are neighborhoods or communities along the wyes, no impacts on communities are anticipated. Traffic impacts outside of the Merced and Fresno HST station areas would be negligible.</p> <p>Potential benefits are associated with improvements to regional access, reduced travel times, and reduced traffic congestion.</p> <p>Parking would be provided in the HST station areas, and the additional traffic associated with the stations would affect some of the surrounding intersections. Mitigation measures would minimize or avoid permanent adverse traffic impacts.</p>
Visual and Aesthetics	<p>Visual changes would be noticeable to residents living nearby or who have views of the HST guideway and facilities, especially in areas where the guideway is elevated or where vegetation is removed. When possible, vegetation removed for the project would be replaced, and landscaping would screen sensitive visual environments and sensitive viewers, which would minimize the visual impacts. Visual changes would be noticeable to viewers near the HST facilities, but these changes would occur within an existing transportation corridor and would be compatible with the visual elements in that corridor (e.g., railroads, freeway infrastructure, and power lines). Common impacts related to visual quality would generally not adversely affect neighborhood character and cohesion for entire neighborhoods in the cities of Merced or Fresno. No adverse visual impacts on surrounding neighborhoods are anticipated within the HST station study areas.</p>
Noise and Vibration	<p>The number and severity of noise impacts would vary depending on the type of guideway (i.e., elevated versus at-grade), the speed of the HST, and the type of track (ballast or slab). Severe noise impacts would continue to occur at residences along the alignments even with the construction of sound barriers, but would not affect entire neighborhoods. The full implementation of other measures would reduce the severe impacts for the interior spaces of the other residences but not the exterior uses. Mitigation measures may cause secondary, unwanted visual impacts. Communities may choose to have an increase in noise impacts where conditions are already noisy, such as areas adjacent to existing railroads. No vibration impacts would affect neighborhoods or communities.</p>
Air Quality	<p>All HST alternatives have the potential to improve air quality by reducing regional automobile travel and associated emissions. Operation of any the HST alternatives would have a beneficial or less than significant impact on air quality, except for operation of the HMF, which would have a less than significant impact on air quality after mitigation.</p>

Resource	Potential Impact
Safety and Security	<p>The project would always be grade-separated from all other forms of transportation, including railroads, roadways, and local pedestrian and bike paths. Because the project would be grade-separated, no impacts related to response or travel times of emergency service vehicles are anticipated.</p> <p>Maintaining safety and security at the HST stations and park-and-ride lots is an important consideration for many residents in surrounding neighborhoods. Security enforcement officers would be provided at the HST stations. All three HST alternatives would provide safety and security benefits. Security requirements and the appropriate agency or agencies that would provide security need to be determined. Typically, crime at train stations reflects the crime rate of the surrounding environs; however, implementation of identified mitigation measures and the presence of security at the HST stations and associated parking areas could reduce crime rates.</p>

One community facility, a homeless shelter in Downtown Merced, would be acquired under all three HST alternatives. This acquisition would result in adverse impacts on the community if there are no suitable locations for relocation. All three HST alternatives could affect some buildings in Fresno that are within the construction footprint, and are used by the Children’s Wraparound Program, which is associated with the Mental Health Systems. As the design progresses, the design team will investigate design modifications to avoid the buildings associated with the Mental Health Systems facility in Fresno. Without mitigation the acquisition of the homeless shelter and any impacts on the Children’s Wraparound Program would have substantial intensity under NEPA and would be significant under CEQA.

The only park that would be affected by all HST alternatives is Camp Pashayan, and the HST alternatives would require acquisition of a portion for the columns that support the elevated guideway. This acquisition would not affect the current use of the park or substantially reduce its value because the area is not associated with active use.

None of the HST alternatives would affect public facilities or result in negative impacts related to maintaining acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives. Because the guideway would be grade-separated through urban areas, it would not negatively affect response times or travel times. Preliminary research identified adequate available replacement sites for the affected facilities in the cities of Merced and Fresno. Because there are available locations for affected facilities and no impacts on response times or service ratios, the impacts on services and facilities would have moderate intensity under NEPA and would be less than significant under CEQA.

***Downtown Merced and Downtown Fresno Stations***

In general, the areas around the HST stations in Merced and Fresno (both the Mariposa Street and Kern Street alternatives) would benefit from increased regional transit access and from potential development within station areas in a manner consistent with the goals of the general plans. Neighborhoods (particularly those near HST station areas) may experience increased vitality in terms of improved access, residential infill, increased employment, and greater patronage of local businesses. Residents in the areas surrounding the stations would also realize benefits associated with increased property values.

The HST stations would promote transit-oriented development (TOD) on vacant and underutilized properties in Downtown Merced and Downtown Fresno. The HST stations would act as a catalyst for planned growth in the downtown areas and revitalize surrounding neighborhoods. Indirect impacts of TOD, consisting of high-density residential and mixed-use development around the HST stations, would be beneficial, improving community cohesion and attracting new businesses and residential development. Redevelopment opportunities would occur where allowed by comprehensive and neighborhood plans and where stations can support TOD. The Common Economic Impacts sections below provide additional

information regarding property, and Section 3.13, Station Planning, Land Use, and Development, describes improvements in the HST station areas.

### ***UPRR/SR 99 Alternative***

The UPRR/SR 99 Alternative with the East Chowchilla design option would construct an elevated guideway toward the eastern edge of Chowchilla. The existing UPRR and SR 99 corridors act as a barrier between Downtown Chowchilla and development to the east; however, there are access points. The UPRR/SR 99 Alternative would not result in any new barriers to access because the guideway would be elevated to allow access underneath. The East Chowchilla design option shifts the guideway away from the UPRR corridor toward the SR 99 corridor, away from Downtown Chowchilla. The area is associated with highway commercial uses and is on the opposite side of SR 99 from residential neighborhoods. Because of this move away from the downtown area, no negative impacts anticipated associated with physical deterioration and reduced property values are anticipated. However, the Ave 24 Wye would construct an HST guideway west of Chowchilla, but within the current sphere of influence. This would place the city in the middle of a triangle of HST guideways. Although the majority of road crossings over the HST guideway would be maintained, the wye connection would create a barrier west of Chowchilla where none currently exists. The city believes the guideways would separate Chowchilla from the rest of the county. However, the guideways would not isolate neighborhoods or activity centers. The West Chowchilla design option would pass west of Chowchilla rather than follow SR 99 through town and would not surround the city with HST guideways, but the HST guideway and existing infrastructure associated with the UPRR and SR 99 corridors would result in a triangle. Impacts related to disruption or severance of community interactions or division of established communities in Chowchilla under the East Chowchilla design option would have moderate intensity under NEPA and would be less than significant under CEQA because of the potential barrier due to the Ave 24 Wye would not physically divide Chowchilla.

The UPRR/SR 99 Alternative with the Ave 21 Wye would be similar to the East Chowchilla design option through Chowchilla; however, with the Ave 21 Wye, there would not be a triangle issue in Chowchilla from the HST guideways and existing infrastructure. Impacts related to disruption or severance of community interactions or the physical division of established communities in Chowchilla under the UPRR/SR 99 Alternative with the Ave 21 Wye would have negligible intensity under NEPA and would be less than significant under CEQA because the West Chowchilla design option would avoid Chowchilla.

In Fairmead, the UPRR/SR 99 Alternative would displace residents who could not likely relocate within Fairmead because of the lack of available replacement housing; however, adequate replacement housing exists in Madera County and the nearby cities of Chowchilla and Madera. The elevated HST guideway adjacent to the community of Fairmead would cause a significant adverse visual impact on the community and could negatively affect property values at some residences. Although the alternative would not disrupt or sever community interactions or divide the community, impacts on community character would occur. The UPRR/SR 99 Alternative would be located in proximity to the Galilee Missionary Baptist Church, but would not require the acquisition of the church and would not result in noise impacts. Impacts on community cohesion in Fairmead would have moderate intensity under NEPA because of the displacements and visual impacts and would be less than significant under CEQA because the project would not divide the community or displace a large number of houses and people.

The UPRR/SR 99 Alternative would construct an elevated guideway through Madera that would have substantial visual impacts on residential neighborhoods and the downtown area. The elevated guideway would be the largest structure in the area. Although this alternative would maintain the existing roadway network underneath the elevated guideway, it could create the perception of a barrier. Without mitigation, the area may become unattractive for redevelopment and influence the desirability of the area for future development. This could negatively affect property values and result in physical deterioration in Downtown Madera. With mitigation measures, such as aesthetic designs that use the area below the elevated guideway for business parking or new businesses, the area could become an attractive setting for economic development or recreational uses. Impacts related to disruption or severance of community interactions or division of established communities in the City of Madera would have moderate intensity

under NEPA because of visual impacts and the perception of the HST track as a barrier. The impact would be less than significant under CEQA because the alternative would not physically divide the community or disrupt access across the community.

In Madera, the UPRR/SR 99 Alternative would result in potential visual impacts on three parks because of the nearby elevated guideway. This alternative would need to acquire portions of the Sharon Avenue Linear Park and the Road 27<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> Linear Park. This would be mitigated by acquiring replacement land adjacent to the parks. The long-term use of the parks would not be affected, and the elevated guideway would provide shade in the parks, which would be beneficial to the park users during the hot summer months. Resulting impacts on community facilities would have negligible intensity under NEPA and would be less than significant under CEQA because the parks acquisition can be mitigated and the visual impacts would not be adverse.

### ***BNSF Alternative***

The BNSF Alternative would have similar impacts on community cohesion as those previously described in the Common Community and Neighborhood Impacts section. Differences would occur in the unincorporated communities of Le Grand and Madera Acres. Under the Mission Ave and Mariposa Way design options, an elevated guideway would parallel the BNSF corridor through Le Grand, bisecting a portion of the community. The land to the east that would be bisected by the alignment is primarily agricultural, but does include some residences and industrial-related usage and the majority of the residences and businesses in Le Grand are west of the proposed alignment. The guideway through Le Grand would be elevated and would not create a barrier to transportation access across the BNSF corridor. However, it would create a visual barrier in the community, which could result in negative impacts on property values in Le Grand and the potential for physical deterioration. Impacts related to disruption or severance of community interactions or division of established communities under the Mission Ave and Mariposa Way design options would have moderate intensity under NEPA because of the visual impacts and would be less than significant under CEQA because the project's social effects are not treated as significant effects on the physical environment under CEQA.

The Mission Ave East of Le Grand and Mariposa Way East of Le Grand design options would travel east and avoid the community of Le Grand. Impacts related to disruption or severance of community interactions or division of established communities under these two design options would have negligible intensity under NEPA because the design options avoid Le Grand and would be less than significant under CEQA because the project's social effects are not treated as significant effects on the physical environment under CEQA.

Implementation of the BNSF Alternative with the Ave 24 Wye would affect the VSPW and CCWF by encroaching on the state prison property. CDCR expressed concerns regarding the facilities' ability to expand and to provide meaningful activities to inmates as well as regarding CALPIA's revenue stream (CDCR 2011). The BNSF Alternative with the Ave 24 Wye would sever approximately 30 acres from CCWF, representing less than 5% of the total CCWF area. Severing the area from the CCWF property would affect prison operations, including CALPIA's revenue stream, CDCR's ability to provide meaningful activity and income to inmates, and CCWF's ability to expand in the future. Because these effects would occur on only a small portion of the property, they are considered to have moderate intensity under NEPA. There would be no impact under CEQA because the project would not physically alter the prison facilities.

The BNSF Alternative alignment through Madera Acres would require that existing roadways cross over the guideway. The overpasses would also cross the existing BNSF railway. This would remove an existing barrier to access and improve community cohesion. No community facilities would be affected by this alternative other than those previously described in the Common Community and Neighborhood Impacts section. Impacts related to disruption or severance of community interactions or the physical division of established communities in Madera Acres would have negligible intensity under NEPA because the HST Project would remove a barrier to access and would be less than significant under CEQA because the project's social effects would not create any secondary adverse physical impacts.

### ***Hybrid Alternative***

No community facilities would be affected by this alternative other than those previously described in the Common Community and Neighborhood Impacts section. The Hybrid Alternative with the Ave 24 Wye would have the same impacts on Chowchilla as the UPRR/SR 99 Alternative with the West Chowchilla design option, and the Hybrid Alternative with the Ave 21 Wye would have the same impacts on Chowchilla as the UPRR/SR 99 Alternative with the East Chowchilla design option. Impacts in Fairmead would be the same as those described under the UPRR/SR 99 Alternative. The Hybrid Alternative would also result in the same impacts on Madera Acres as described under the BNSF Alternative. Impacts in Chowchilla and Fairmead would have moderate intensity under NEPA because of the potential barrier in Chowchilla with the Ave 24 Wye and the displacements and visual impacts in Fairmead. In Madera Acres, the impacts would be have negligible intensity under NEPA because the HST Project would remove a barrier to access and would be less than significant under CEQA because the project's social effects would not create any secondary adverse physical impacts.

Impacts on CCWF from the Hybrid Alternative with the Ave 24 Wye would be as described above for the BNSF Alternative.

### ***Heavy Maintenance Facility***

Four of the proposed HMF sites (Harris-DeJager, Fagundes, Gordon-Shaw, and Kojima Development) would not be located in an established community or neighborhood. An HMF at any of these sites would not alter community assets or displace parking. Access to the surrounding arterial road network would be maintained. Impacts related to the disruption or severance of community interactions or division of established communities for an HMF at any of these four sites would be negligible under NEPA and less than significant under CEQA. These four proposed HMF sites would not require acquisition of community facilities or impede access and parking. Impacts on community facilities would have negligible intensity under NEPA because the sites would not be near any communities or neighborhoods and would be less than significant under CEQA because the project's social effects are not treated as significant effects on the physical environment under CEQA.

The Castle Commerce Center HMF site would require the partial acquisition of one community facility, the Castle Air Museum. An area where some of the planes are displayed, including pathways and a portion of the parking lot, would be acquired for some of the HMF trackway used to move the trains. The planes could be moved to other areas of the museum, but this could limit the space for new additions. No other impacts are anticipated because the main operations of the HMF facility would be located approximately 1,500 feet from the museum. The Merced Adult School, Castle Learning Center, is within the construction footprint of the HMF site. As the design progresses, the design team will investigate design modifications to avoid the building since it is located along the edge of the footprint, but if the building is acquired there are suitable locations in the area for relocation. Impacts related to the acquisition of community facilities within the Castle Commerce Center HMF site would have moderate intensity under NEPA because of the impact on the community facilities and would be less than significant under CEQA because the project's social effects would not create any secondary adverse physical impacts.

The guideway between an HMF at Castle Commerce Center and the Merced HST station would bisect the unincorporated community of Franklin-Beachwood. The guideway would require several property acquisitions and would affect more than half of a mobile home park. Because the loss of the mobile homes could result in the park no longer being feasible due to the loss of income, the acquisition may result in closure of the mobile home park. These acquisitions would likely result in adverse impacts on the mobile home park unless the number of mobile homes within the construction footprint is substantially reduced. Preliminary research indicates that the supply of available acceptable replacement mobile homes is insufficient in the relocation area, and displaced residents would need to be relocated to other types of housing in the nearby cities of Atwater and Merced. Under this scenario, residents of the mobile home park would no longer belong to the same community, which could result in significant impacts. The alignment would also introduce a new visual element that would act as a barrier, dividing the community of Franklin-Beachwood. This could result in physical deterioration and reduced property values, which

would negatively affect the community. The guideway would also bisect a community facility, a public elementary school in the Merced City School District. The guideway would be located on the grounds of the Joe Stefani Elementary School, adjacent to the school buildings. Although the guideway would not require the acquisition of any buildings, the school would likely need to be relocated because of the proximity of the guideway. The open space and playgrounds associated with the school ground are considered public and can be used by the area residents for recreation activities. If the school is acquired, a new school would need to be built within the same general area to minimize impacts on school attendance boundaries and school bus routes. The guideway between the Downtown Merced Station and the Castle Commerce Center HMF would also require acquisition of three community facilities: Merced Lao Family Community, Merced Senior Center, and McCombs Youth Center. The outreach team met with members of the Merced Lao Family Community, and meetings regarding the project were held at the Merced Senior Center. Additional outreach will be conducted with the affected facilities. These impacts would have substantial intensity under NEPA and would be significant under CEQA because of the bisection of the mobile home park, the number of mobile home units affected, and the impact associated with the displacement of Joe Stefani Elementary School.

Overpasses would need to be constructed for the roadways in Downtown Merced for the at-grade guideway. The overpasses would also span the existing railway, removing a barrier to access, and would eliminate the need for train horns, which would result in a benefit.

Impacts on transportation, visual resources, noise and vibration, air quality, and safety and security could affect the community setting. Table 7-16 summarizes the impacts on those resources regarding community character cohesion, neighborhoods, and community resources during operation of the HST System.

**Table 7-16**  
 Potential Impacts on Community Cohesion, Neighborhoods, and Community Resources  
 during Operation – Proposed HMF Sites

Resource	Potential Impact
Transportation	The HMF sites would require modifications to surrounding roads but would not result in any impacts on the surrounding communities.
Visual and Aesthetics	Impacts on the visual environment and visual resources are not anticipated for any of the proposed HMF sites, with the exception of the Castle Commerce Center site, where the impacts could affect the character of the Franklin-Beachwood community. The guideway would travel through Franklin-Beachwood and could be seen as a barrier. The four other proposed sites are in areas that are primarily agricultural, and the HMF would not be entirely visible from adjacent areas or roadways. Development of an HMF at these locations would not have a negative impact on the visual environment because they would not obstruct views or vistas.
Noise and Vibration	Noise impacts may continue at sensitive receptors along the access guideway after the implementation of mitigation. Implementation of full mitigation measures would result in no interior noise impacts indoors at the sensitive receptors and only exterior noise impacts. No vibration impacts would affect neighborhoods or communities.
Air Quality	The Castle Commerce Center HMF would result in impacts with substantial intensity even with the implementation of mitigation measures. No impacts with substantial intensity are expected at any of the other proposed HMF sites during operation after the implementation of mitigation.
Safety and Security	The HMF design would follow safety standards. O&M procedures would be developed to meet safety and security requirements, and workers would be trained regarding those procedures. No negative impacts related to safety are anticipated at any of the HMF sites.

### **Children's Health and Safety**

Overall, none of the HST alternatives are anticipated to result in impacts of substantial intensity on children's health and safety over the long term of the HST Project. All of the alternatives would result in improvements to air quality, the alternatives are all separated to avoid any conflicts, and no community facilities where children congregate would be acquired by any of the alternatives. In the urban areas, the existing transportation corridors form the boundaries for many of the schools, especially elementary and middle schools. Because of this, children would travel away from the alternatives and would not need to cross the alternatives or travel through the station areas. Much of the area adjacent to the alternatives is associated with agriculture, industrial, and commercial uses, which are typically not areas that provide areas for children to congregate. All of the alternatives would result in the temporary acquisition of parks, but the remaining park areas could remain open for use. None of the alternatives are expected to result in any effects with substantial intensity on children's health and safety. The UPRR/SR 99 would affect an additional three parks in the City of Madera and would require the full closure of two of these parks; however, the parks do not contain many amenities and are linear parks that primarily provide access to other areas. The park impacts are considered substantial with mitigation, but there would be no negative effects on children's health and safety. The BNSF Alternative includes overpasses in the community of Madera Acres that would be constructed over the HST and railway corridor. These overpasses would improve safety for children in the area, and the Hybrid Alternative would have the same beneficial effect as described for the BNSF Alternative. The Castle Commerce Center HMF site would result in more impacts than the other HMF sites because the guideway to the HMF site would require the relocation of facilities where children would congregate. Refer to the Children's Health and Safety Risk Assessment found in Volume II of the Merced to Fresno Section EIR/EIS (Authority and FRA 2012) for additional information on construction impacts for the HST alternatives and HMF alternatives.

### **Displacement of Local Residents or Businesses**

The Merced to Fresno Section of the HST System is approximately 60 miles long (between the cities of Merced and Fresno) and crosses urban and rural lands. To comply with Authority guidance to use existing transportation corridors when feasible, the Merced to Fresno Section would be primarily sited adjacent to the existing UPRR and BNSF corridors. In some cases, engineering constraints and avoidance of environmental impacts require deviation from these railway corridors. In these cases, particularly in urban areas, there is a potential need for property acquisitions (and relocations) to construct the HST guideway, maintenance facilities, detours, overpasses, and associated structures. This would result in a direct impact from construction, although property acquisitions would occur prior to construction. Therefore, displacements are considered permanent and are discussed in this section rather than the Construction Period Impacts section.

The Uniform Relocation Act ensures that persons displaced as a result of a federal action or by an undertaking involving federal funds are treated fairly, consistently, and equitably. This helps to ensure persons will not suffer disproportionate injuries as a result of projects designed for the benefit of the public as a whole. Persons who would be displaced would personally work with a Relocation Agent from the Authority. If the high-speed train project would require a considerable number of people to be relocated, the Authority may establish a temporary Relocation Field Office on or near the project. Project relocation offices will be open during convenient hours and evening hours if necessary. In addition to these services, the Authority is required to coordinate its relocation activities with other agencies causing displacements to ensure that all persons displaced receive fair and consistent relocation benefits.

Analysis shows that impacts would occur on mobile homes, senior housing facilities, and single-family and multifamily residences under all HST alternatives. Displacement impacts on parks, churches, day-care centers, city and county agencies, warehouse distribution centers, manufacturing facilities, and retail establishments would also occur under all HST alternatives.

As shown in Table 7-17, the lowest range of residential and business displacements would be under the Hybrid Alternative than with the other two HST alternatives, because the Hybrid Alternative would pass through more rural areas. Although the UPRR/SR 99 Alternative would more closely follow an existing

transportation corridor, that corridor is heavily commercialized and would result in a greater number of business displacements. Displacement information is the same for all HST alternatives for the Merced and Fresno HST stations and for the three design options to the Fresno HST station. Tables 7-18 through 7-20 show the range of displacements for the design options under each alternative and within each City and County.

**Table 7-17**  
 Range of Residential and Business Displacements

<b>Alternative</b>	<b>Residential Units and Number of People Displaced (units/number of people<sup>a,b</sup>)</b>	<b>Businesses and Number of People Displaced (units/number of people<sup>a,c</sup>)</b>
UPRR/SR 99 Alternative	193/650 to 228/773	284/4,230 to 295/4,388
BNSF Alternative	215/716 to 244/815	217/3,420 to 237/3,721
Hybrid Alternative	186/614 to 213/701	212/3,363 to 226/3,564
Castle Commerce Center HMF	35/116	42/745
Harris-DeJager HMF	2/7	0/0
Fagundes HMF	5/16	0/0
Gordon-Shaw HMF	4/13	4/76
Kojima Development HMF	2/7	0/0
<p><sup>a</sup>Number of people are rounded to the nearest whole number.</p> <p><sup>b</sup>The number of displaced persons values are based on estimated averages of 3.3 people per residential unit for Merced County, 3.2 people per residential unit for Madera County, and 3.1 people per residential unit for Fresno County. Agricultural/residential, commercial/multifamily residential and commercial/residential displacements are included as residential displacements to provide a conservative estimate.</p> <p><sup>c</sup> The number of displaced employees was determined by using estimated averages of 1 FTE employee per 325 sf for commercial land uses, 1 FTE employee for 250 sf for municipal land uses (offices), and 1 FTE employee for 525 sf for industrial land uses (including manufacturing, distribution, and warehousing). Agricultural displacements are not included.</p> <p>Notes:</p> <p>Merced Station information is included in the main alignment information.</p> <p>Displaced unit and resident values for parcels located in more than one jurisdiction (i.e., cross city/county boundaries) are included in the jurisdiction with the greater portion of the parcel.</p> <p>Values do not include 150-bed Merced Homeless Shelter.</p> <p>Values for Parksdale and Madera Acres are included under Madera County.</p> <p>Values for Atwater are included under Merced County.</p>		

**Table 7-18**  
 Residential and Business Displacements under the UPRR/SR 99 Alternative

<b>UPRR/SR 99 Alternative</b>	<b>Residential Units/ Number of People Displaced<sup>a,b</sup></b>	<b>Businesses/Number of Employees Displaced<sup>a,c</sup></b>
<b>Impacts by Project Combination</b>		
<b>UPRR/SR 99 with West Chowchilla Design Option and Ave 24 Wye</b>	<b>190/622</b>	<b>261/3,863</b>
Merced County	2/7	1/19
City of Merced	43/135	46/736
Madera County	37/127	15/180
City of Chowchilla	0/0	0/0
City of Madera	61/233	64/768
City of Fresno	47/144	135/2,160
<b>UPRR/SR 99 with East Chowchilla Design Option and Ave 24 Wye</b>	<b>194/654</b>	<b>261/3,862</b>
Merced County	3/10	1/19
City of Merced	43/135	46/736
Madera County	44/150	16/192
City of Chowchilla	2/6	1/11
City of Madera	61/233	62/744
City of Fresno	47/144	135/2,160
<b>UPRR/SR 99 with East Chowchilla Design Option and Ave 21 Wye</b>	<b>219/738</b>	<b>264/3,892</b>
Merced County	3/10	1/19
City of Merced	43/135	46/736
Madera County	66/222	18/216
City of Chowchilla	0/0	3/33
City of Madera	65/248	62/744
City of Fresno	48/147	134/2,144
<b>HST Stations<sup>b</sup></b>		
<b>Mariposa Street Station Alternative</b>	<b>3/9</b>	<b>31/496</b>
City of Fresno	3/9	23/368

<b>UPRR/SR 99 Alternative</b>	<b>Residential Units/ Number of People Displaced<sup>a,b</sup></b>	<b>Businesses/Number of Employees Displaced<sup>a,c</sup></b>
<b>Kern Street Station Alternative</b>	<b>3/9</b>	<b>31/496</b>
City of Fresno	3/9	23/368
<p><sup>a</sup>Number of people are rounded to the nearest whole number.</p> <p><sup>b</sup>The number of displaced persons values are based on estimated averages of 3.3 people per residential unit for Merced County, 3.2 people per residential unit for Madera County, and 3.1 people per residential unit for Fresno County. Agricultural/residential, commercial/multifamily residential and commercial/residential displacements are included as residential displacements to provide a conservative estimate.</p> <p><sup>c</sup> The number of displaced employees was determined by using estimated averages of 1 FTE employee per 325 sf for commercial land uses, 1 FTE employee for 250 sf for municipal land uses (offices), and 1 FTE employee for 525 sf for industrial land uses (including manufacturing, distribution, and warehousing). Agricultural displacements are not included.</p> <p>Notes:</p> <p>Merced Station information is included in the main alignment information.</p> <p>Displaced unit and resident values for parcels located in more than one jurisdiction (i.e., cross city/county boundaries) are included in the jurisdiction with the greater portion of the parcel.</p> <p>Values do not include 150-bed Merced Homeless Shelter.</p> <p>Values for Parksdale and Madera Acres are included under Madera County.</p> <p>Values for Atwater are included under Merced County.</p>		

**Table 7-19**  
Residential and Business Displacements under the BNSF Alternative

<b>BNSF Alternative</b>	<b>Residential Units/ Number of People Displaced<sup>a,b</sup></b>	<b>Businesses/Number of Employees Displaced<sup>a,c</sup></b>
<b>Project Combination</b>		
<b>BNSF North-South Alignment with Ave 24 Wye</b>	<b>196/615</b>	<b>189/2,944</b>
Merced County	0/0	0/0
City of Merced	40/126	34/544
Le Grand	0/0	0/0
Madera County	64/210	20/240
City of Chowchilla	1/3	0/0
Madera Acres	50/190	0/0
City of Fresno	47/144	135/2,160
<b>BNSF North-South Alignment with Ave 21 Wye</b>	<b>185/580</b>	<b>182/2,860</b>
Merced County	0/0	0/0
City of Merced	40/126	34/544
Le Grand	0/0	0/0

<b>BNSF Alternative</b>	<b>Residential Units/ Number of People Displaced<sup>a,b</sup></b>	<b>Businesses/Number of Employees Displaced<sup>a,c</sup></b>
Madera County	54/177	13/156
City of Chowchilla	0/0	0/0
Madera Acres	50/190	0/0
City of Fresno	47/144	135/2,160
<b>Le Grand Design Options</b>		
<b>Mission Ave</b>	<b>30/102</b>	<b>16/265</b>
Merced County	15/50	1/19
City of Merced	3/9	12/192
Le Grand	12/43	3/54
Madera County	0/0	0/0
City of Chowchilla	0/0	0/0
City of Fresno	0/0	0/0
<b>Mission Ave East of La Grand</b>	<b>21/69</b>	<b>12/192</b>
Merced County	17/56	0/0
City of Merced	3/9	12/192
Le Grand	1/4	0/0
Madera County	0/0	0/0
City of Chowchilla	0/0	0/0
City of Fresno	0/0	0/0
<b>Mariposa Way</b>	<b>39/132</b>	<b>17/281</b>
Merced County	24/80	1/19
City of Merced	3/9	13/208
Le Grand	12/43	3/54
Madera County	0/0	0/0
City of Chowchilla	0/0	0/0
City of Fresno	0/0	0/0
<b>Mariposa Way East of La Grand</b>	<b>30/100</b>	<b>14/227</b>
Merced County	24/80	1/19
City of Merced	3/9	13/208
Le Grand	3/11	0/0
Madera County	0/0	0/0
City of Chowchilla	0/0	0/0

<b>BNSF Alternative</b>	<b>Residential Units/ Number of People Displaced<sup>a,b</sup></b>	<b>Businesses/Number of Employees Displaced<sup>a,c</sup></b>
City of Fresno	0/0	0/0
<b>HST Station<sup>b</sup></b>		
<b>Mariposa Street Station Alternative</b>	<b>3/9</b>	<b>31/496</b>
City of Fresno	3/9	23/368
<b>Kern Street Station Alternative</b>	<b>3/9</b>	<b>31/496</b>
City of Fresno	3/9	23/368
<p><sup>a</sup>Number of people are rounded to the nearest whole number.</p> <p><sup>b</sup>The number of displaced persons values are based on estimated averages of 3.3 people per residential unit for Merced County, 3.2 people per residential unit for Madera County, and 3.1 people per residential unit for Fresno County. Agricultural/residential, commercial/multifamily residential and commercial/residential displacements are included as residential displacements to provide a conservative estimate.</p> <p><sup>c</sup> The number of displaced employees was determined by using estimated averages of 1 FTE employee per 325 sf for commercial land uses, 1 FTE employee for 250 sf for municipal land uses (offices), and 1 FTE employee for 525 sf for industrial land uses (including manufacturing, distribution, and warehousing). Agricultural displacements are not included.</p> <p>Notes:</p> <p>Merced Station information is included in the main alignment information.</p> <p>Displaced unit and resident values for parcels located in more than one jurisdiction (i.e., cross city/county boundaries) are included in the jurisdiction with the greater portion of the parcel.</p> <p>Values do not include 150-bed Merced Homeless Shelter.</p> <p>Values for Parksdale and Madera Acres are included under Madera County.</p> <p>Values for Atwater are included under Merced County.</p>		

**Table 7-20**  
Residential and Business Displacements under the Hybrid Alternative

<b>Hybrid Alternative</b>	<b>Residential Units/ Number of People Displaced<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>Businesses/Number of Employees Displaced</b>
<b>North-South Alignment</b>		
<b>North-South Alignment with Ave 24 Wye</b>	<b>183/605</b>	<b>189/2,995</b>
Merced County	2/7	1/19
City of Merced	43/135	46/736
Madera County	50/164	8/96
City of Chowchilla	1/3	0/0
Madera Acres	39/148	0/0
City of Fresno	48/147	134/2,144
<b>North-South Alignment with Ave 21 Wye</b>	<b>210/692</b>	<b>195/3,068</b>
Merced County	3/10	1/19
City of Merced	43/135	46/736

<b>Hybrid Alternative</b>	<b>Residential Units/ Number of People Displaced<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>Businesses/Number of Employees Displaced</b>
Madera County	81/166	10/120
City of Chowchilla	0/0	3/33
Madera Acres	36/137	0/0
City of Fresno	47/144	135/2,160
<b>HST Stations<sup>b</sup></b>		
<b>Mariposa Street Station Alternative</b>	<b>1/3</b>	<b>31/496</b>
City of Fresno	1/3	23/368
<b>Kern Street Station Alternative</b>	<b>3/9</b>	<b>31/496</b>
City of Fresno	3/9	23/368
<p><sup>a</sup>Number of people are rounded to the nearest whole number.</p> <p><sup>b</sup>The number of displaced persons values are based on estimated averages of 3.3 people per residential unit for Merced County, 3.2 people per residential unit for Madera County, and 3.1 people per residential unit for Fresno County. Agricultural/residential, commercial/multifamily residential and commercial/residential displacements are included as residential displacements to provide a conservative estimate.</p> <p><sup>c</sup> The number of displaced employees was determined by using estimated averages of 1 FTE employee per 325 sf for commercial land uses, 1 FTE employee for 250 sf for municipal land uses (offices), and 1 FTE employee for 525 sf for industrial land uses (including manufacturing, distribution, and warehousing). Agricultural displacements are not included.</p> <p>Notes:</p> <p>Merced Station information is included in the main alignment information.</p> <p>Displaced unit and resident values for parcels located in more than one jurisdiction (i.e., cross city/county boundaries) are included in the jurisdiction with the greater portion of the parcel.</p> <p>Values do not include 150-bed Merced Homeless Shelter.</p> <p>Values for Parksdale and Madera Acres are included under Madera County.</p> <p>Values for Atwater are included under Merced County.</p>		

Residential and business displacements around the Merced and Fresno HST stations would be the same under all HST alternatives. The Merced HST station would affect up to 43 residences and 46 businesses. Among the two Fresno HST alternatives, the Mariposa Street Station Alternative would have two fewer residential displacements than the Kern Street Station Alternative. However, the Kern Street Alternative would result in two fewer business displacements than the Mariposa Street Station Alternative.

Among the HMF alternatives, an HMF at the Castle Commerce Center site would result in the greatest number of residential and business displacements. The majority of the displacements are associated with the access guideway between the HMF and the Merced HST station. An HMF at the Harris-DeJager site or the Kojima Development site would not result in business displacements and would result in the fewest residential displacements.

The percentage of population over age 65 is 7.7% in the UPRR/SR 99 Alternative study area and 7.5% in the BNSF Alternative study area. The percentage of the disabled population over age 5 is approximately 22% in all three study areas. These populations, particularly the disabled population, would likely need special services to assist with relocation.

A preliminary analysis of replacement facilities based on the information provided in the *Merced to Fresno Section Draft Relocation Impact Report* (Authority and FRA 2012d) confirmed that there is an adequate

supply of suitable residential and business properties for nearly all displaced occupants in the cities of Atwater, Merced, Le Grand, Chowchilla, Madera, and Fresno, and in the rural areas of Merced and Madera counties. Within Merced County, Madera County, and the City of Fresno, approximately 3,900 residential properties are available of comparable price, size, and type. Within the cities of Merced, Chowchilla, Madera, and Fresno, there are 2,625 residential properties available (1,670 of those are in Fresno). In addition, there are numerous residential properties available for rent in the three cities that are comparable in price, size, and type. Because there are a sufficient number of suitable residential properties, no construction of replacement housing would be required.

The number of people affected by the residential displacements ranges from a low of approximately 614 under the Hybrid Alternative with a connection to the Ave 24 Wye to a high of 815 under the BNSF Alternative with the Mission Ave design option and a connection to the Ave 24 Wye. Overall, the Hybrid Alternative would result in residential displacements slightly lower than the UPRR/SR 99 Alternative.

The preliminary analysis also indicates that there is a sufficient supply of available sites in the study area to accommodate the potential business displacements. Because of siting requirements and land availability constraints, agricultural enterprises, farm businesses, and specialized industries including quarries, granaries, and processor facilities may be unable to relocate or will require more time to relocate. Impacts on these specific businesses would have substantial intensity under NEPA, because relocation would be disruptive and some businesses might not be able to relocate. Impacts on these businesses would be less than significant under CEQA under CEQA because the project's economic effects are not treated as significant effects on the physical environment under CEQA.

None of the HST alternatives would result in the displacement of substantial amounts of housing or people that would necessitate the construction of replacement housing. Residential displacements would occur in all three counties and, as previously described, there are a suitable number of relocation opportunities in the cities and counties. The project will comply with the Uniform Relocation Act. The act and its amendments provide mandatory rules and requirements on how federal, state, and local agencies compensate for impacts on property owners or tenants who need to relocate if they are displaced by a federally funded project. In addition, housing of last resort will be available, if required. Housing of last resort may involve the use of replacement housing payments that exceed the maximum amounts allowed under the Uniform Relocation Act or other methods of providing comparable decent, safe, and sanitary housing within the displaced person's financial means. The overall impacts of property acquisitions would have moderate intensity under NEPA and would be less than significant under CEQA because there are a number of suitable relocation opportunities.

### ***UPRR/SR 99 Alternative***

The majority of the residential and business displacements identified in Table 7-18 would occur in the cities of Merced, Madera, and Fresno. The remaining displacements would be in the City of Chowchilla and in rural, unincorporated portions of Merced and Madera counties, including Fairmead. Similar to the residential displacements, a majority of the business displacements would occur in the cities of Merced, Madera, and Fresno.

### ***BNSF Alternative***

The majority of the residential and business displacements identified in Table 7-19 would occur in Le Grand, Madera Acres, and the City of Fresno. Additional rural residential displacements would occur, primarily between Merced and Le Grand along the Mission Ave and Mariposa Way design options. The East of Le Grand design option would result in fewer displaced residences and businesses than the design options that go through Le Grand, because the East of Le Grand design option does not travel through town.

### ***Hybrid Alternative***

The majority of the residential and business displacements identified in Table 7-20 would occur in Madera Acres and the cities of Madera and Fresno. The Hybrid Alternative would not travel through the City of



Madera, which would be affected by the UPRR/SR 99 Alternative, or the unincorporated community of Le Grand, which would be affected by the BNSF Alternative.

### ***Heavy Maintenance Facility***

Table 7-17 provides information on the residential and business displacements associated with the HMF sites. The Castle Commerce Center site would have the highest number of displacements because of the guideway that would connect the site to downtown Merced. An HMF at any of the other proposed sites would all require a small number of residential displacements; only the Castle Commerce Center site and Gordon-Shaw site would result in business displacements.

The majority of the residences that would be displaced by an HMF at the Castle Commerce Center site are associated with the guideway that would connect the HMF to the Downtown Merced Station. Acquisition of half of a mobile home park would affect the property owner, who would lose half of the income generated by the park. The mobile home park might not be able to remain in business.

### **School District Funding**

All of the HST alternatives would result in the acquisition of residential properties, ranging from 186 to 244 residential acquisitions, affecting between 614 to 815 residents depending on the HST alternative. The estimates of residential displacements in Tables 7-17 to 7-20 represent the total number of residents affected; the number of students would be lower because the residential displacements are based on households, which would include other family members who would either be too young or are no longer in school.

The displacement of residential properties is not anticipated to negatively affect schools or school district funding because of a decrease in school district attendance or loss of property tax revenues. The residential displacements associated with the HST alternatives would occur over a large area and within a number of school districts. There are properties available for sale in almost all of the school districts. For all of the HST alternatives, the school districts with the greatest residential displacements are those in the cities of Merced, Madera, and Fresno, where about 160 of the total residential displacements would occur. Of the 160 within those 3 cities, over half are located in the Madera Unified School District. Of the 12 school districts in the study area, there are 3 districts where the number of residential displacements is greater than the residential properties identified for sale. The Le Grand Union Elementary, Le Grand Union High, and Alview-Dairyland Union Elementary districts currently do not have enough properties for sale to offset those that could be acquired. For the Le Grand school district, these areas would be affected only under the BNSF Alternative; the Alview-Dairyland Union Elementary District would be affected by all HST alternatives with the Ave 21 Wye. Refer to Effects on School District Funding and Transportation Bus Routes Technical Memorandum found in Volume II of the Merced to Fresno Section EIR/EIS (Authority and FRA 2012) for additional information on the residential displacements within the school districts. For all of the alternatives, the residential displacements would be concentrated in the larger urban areas, where there are a number of suitable sites for relocations, and in the rural areas the number of properties available for sale, in foreclosure, and with mitigation are not expected to result in any negative effects on student relocations; therefore, the loss of revenues for the school districts would be considered an effect with negligible intensity under NEPA.

As described below under Operations-Related Tax Revenues, the property tax reductions vary from 0.1% for Madera County to 1.3% for Merced County as a result of all property acquisitions. The conversion of land uses to a transportation-related use would result in a permanent conversion and the property would no longer be taxed, which could negatively affect school districts by removing those properties from the tax rolls of the counties. However, for Merced and Fresno counties, the stations in the cities of Merced and Fresno are expected to increase economic vitality and result in an overall increase in property values and property tax collections. This would benefit those school districts in close proximity to the station areas. Although there would be no station in Madera County, ample properties are available for sale, so no long-term effects related to school district funding would be likely. In addition, the county would be expected to benefit, and the HST Project would create new employment opportunities. As described in

Section 3.18, Regional Growth, the HST Project would add about 5,445 new opportunities and economic vitality. These opportunities could result in additional property tax revenues for the county. If an HMF site is located in Madera County the site would also be expected to result in additional property tax revenues within the county. Refer to Effects on School District Funding and Transportation Bus Routes Technical Memorandum found in Volume II of the Merced to Fresno Section EIR/EIS (Authority and FRA 2012) for additional information on the residential displacements within the school districts. For all of the alternatives, the loss of property tax revenue from acquisitions would be small when compared to the total property tax revenues collected by the counties, which would be considered an effect with negligible intensity under NEPA.

**7.4.2.2 Common Economic Impacts**

Economic impacts during operations were evaluated for the entire Merced to Fresno project (i.e., guideways, HST stations, and an HMF). The economic impacts are based on preliminary cost estimates developed for the project. Key economic benefits from the project include the potential for increased property tax and sales tax revenues and new sources of employment. *The Economic Impact of the California High Speed Rail in the Sacramento/Central Valley Area* (Kantor 2008) determined that the HST Project would provide several economic benefits to the region. The study evaluated the effects for the all project components including the guideway, HST stations, and HMF. Benefits include positive effects on services, communications, utilities, finance, insurance, and real estate sectors in the Central Valley. The project would improve regional access, reduce travel times, and reduce traffic congestion on many local roadways, which would provide an economic benefit to the region (refer to the Transportation Technical Report [Authority and FRA 2012b]). Because project operations would result in positive economic effects, this is considered a beneficial effect under NEPA.

**Operations-Related Tax Revenues**

This section describes the tax revenues that would be generated during operation of the project. Unless specifically exempted, all transactions related to the project would be subject to sales tax. Annual sales tax revenues during operation were estimated by using the sales tax rates for each of the counties (as of April 1, 2010) and the local expenditures on materials and supplies. Table 7-21 shows the annual local expenditures for materials and supplies and the sales tax revenues realized during operation of the project. Some materials are assumed to be purchased locally (e.g., gasoline, oil, paint, and light bulbs). The sales tax rates for Merced, Madera, and Fresno counties are 8.25%, 8.75%, and 8.975%, respectively (CBOE 2010). However, only 0.75% of these tax rates actually go towards city and county operations. Therefore, the estimated sales tax revenues shown in Table 7-21 are based on 0.75% (CBOE 2010).

**Table 7-21**  
 Annual Sales Tax Revenues during Operation

<b>Annual Total Operation and Maintenance Expenditures (Million 2010\$)</b>	<b>Annual Local Project Expenditures (Million 2010\$)</b>	<b>Annual Local Sales Tax Revenues (Million 2010\$)</b>
208.3	31.2	0.23

To evaluate the contribution of the project to local sales tax revenues during the operation phase of the project, the analyst compared the total local sales tax revenues generated during the operation to the FY 2009/2010 total sales tax revenues for the four major cities in the study area (Merced, Chowchilla, Madera, and Fresno). The proportion of the local purchases that are likely to be made within each of the cities is assumed to be proportional to the size of the city. Because Fresno is the largest city in the study

area, a larger proportion of the local purchases made within the region are assumed to be made in Fresno. According to the 2010 population estimates, the percentage of the population residing in the cities of Merced, Chowchilla, Madera, and Fresno is approximately 12%, 2%, 11%, and 74%, respectively. Table 7-22 shows the project’s contribution to local sales tax revenues, as determined by these percentages. The additional and permanent sales tax revenues account for less than 1% (between 0.25% and 0.61% of each city’s FY 2009/2010 total sales tax revenues. These additional sales tax revenues benefit the city and county economies. Because project operations would result in additional sales tax revenues, this is considered a beneficial effect under NEPA.

**Table 7-22**  
 Contribution of Sales Tax Revenues during Operation

<b>Expenditure/Revenue</b>	<b>City of Merced (Million 2010\$)</b>	<b>City of Madera (Million 2010\$)</b>	<b>City of Chowchilla (Million 2010\$)</b>	<b>City of Fresno (Million 2010\$)</b>
Annual Local Project Expenditures	3.76	3.54	0.69	23.23
Annual Local Sales Tax Revenues	0.03	0.03	0.01	0.17
Annual Sales Tax Revenues as a Percentage of City’s FY 2009/2010 General Fund Sales Tax Revenues	0.43	0.57	0.61	0.25

Because the HST alternatives would require property acquisitions, all three counties would lose property tax revenues. The extent of the loss would depend on the property tax rate used, which varies by jurisdiction and by associated special districts. In the case of rural properties, especially agricultural lands, the rate would also depend on whether the property is contracted under the Williamson Act. Because the actual property tax rates applicable to all the properties identified for acquisition are likely to vary, the current analysis uses an assumed rate of 1%.

The 1% property tax rate was applied to the total assessed value of all the partial and full property acquisitions for each county. These property tax revenues were then compared to each county’s most recent (FY 2009/2010) general fund property tax revenues. Table 7-23 summarizes property tax revenue losses for Merced, Madera, and Fresno counties (based on data from the county assessor for each county). All the HST alternatives would have the same property tax revenue impact in Fresno County because the alignment would be same for all HST alternatives. Overall, the BNSF Alternative would have the greatest impact on all three counties and the UPRR/SR 99 Alternative and the Hybrid Alternative would have lower impacts and the impacts are similar on all three counties. For all of the alternatives, the loss of property tax revenue from acquisitions would be small when compared to the total property tax revenues collected by the counties, which would be considered an effect with negligible intensity under NEPA.

For the proposed HMF sites, there would only be impacts in Merced and Madera counties, where the proposed sites are located. Because the HMF sites would be provided at no cost or include other incentives, the analysis did not include the impact of lost property tax revenues. The information in Table 7-23 only identifies the potential lost property tax revenues associated with additional property requirements. Of the five potential HMF sites, the Castle Commerce Center site would have the greatest property tax impact because the guideway connection to the Merced HST station would require additional property acquisitions. In the case of partial acquisitions of agricultural land, the loss in property tax revenues may need to take into account the possibility that some farming operations could lose their viability as farming enterprises if parts of the land are acquired. In such instances, the project may acquire the entire farm, even though only a little part of it is actually needed for the project. The total assessed value of acquisitions includes these acquisitions. The property tax revenues that would be lost

because of acquisitions required to construct the different project alternatives are not substantial when compared to the total property tax revenues collected by the three counties.

In the case of partial acquisitions of agricultural land, the loss in property tax revenues may need to take into account the possibility that some farming operations could lose their viability as farming enterprises if parts of the land are acquired. In such instances, the project may acquire the entire farm even though only a small part of it is actually needed for the project. The total assessed value of acquisitions includes these types of acquisitions. In accordance with measures discussed in Section 3.14, Agricultural Lands, smaller parcels could be incorporated into adjacent farming operations, thus avoiding the loss of the entire parcel.

**Table 7-23**  
 Property Tax Revenues during Operation

	<b>Merced County</b>	<b>Madera County</b>	<b>Fresno County</b>
<b>UPRR/SR 99 Alternative</b>			
Property Value (Million 2010\$) <sup>a</sup>	57.45 to 60.76	59.71 to 67.46	98.66
Property Tax Revenues (Million 2010\$) <sup>a</sup>	0.57 to 0.60	0.59 to 0.67	0.98
Lost Property Tax Revenues (percentage of FY 2009/2010 county general fund property tax revenues)	1.2 to 1.3	2.0 to 2.2	0.5
<b>BNSF Alternative</b>			
Property Value (Million 2010\$) <sup>a</sup>	55.46 to 57.45	73.32 to 81.17	98.66
Property Tax Revenues (Million 2010\$) <sup>a</sup>	0.55 to 0.57	0.73 to 0.81	0.98
Lost Property Tax Revenues (percentage of FY 2009/2010 county general fund property tax revenues)	1.1 to 1.2	2.4 to 2.7	0.5
<b>Hybrid Alternative</b>			
Property Value (Million 2010\$) <sup>a</sup>	57.62 to 60.90 60.9057.62 to 60.90	66.13 to 69.70	98.66
Property Tax Revenues (Million 2010 \$) <sup>a</sup>	0.57 to 0.60	0.66 to 0.69	0.98
Lost Property Tax Revenues (percentage of FY 2009/2010 county general fund property tax revenues)	1.1 to 1.2	2.2 to 2.3	0.5
<b>HMF Alternatives<sup>b</sup></b>			
Lost Property Tax Revenues (percentage of FY 2009/2010 county general fund property tax revenues)			
Castle Commerce Center	0.1	NA	NA
Harris-DeJager	0.02	NA	NA
Fagundes	NA	0.02	NA
Gordon-Shaw	NA	0.02	NA
Kojima Development	NA	0.02	NA
<sup>a</sup> Property tax is an average of the property values for the following categories: urban, dense urban, suburban, dense suburban, and rural including agricultural. <sup>b</sup> NA = not applicable.			

## **Property Values**

There is the potential for the project to increase the property tax base by generating increases in property values in region. Although these values cannot be quantified, based upon information in the studies discussed below it has been shown that the potential exists for the values of residential and commercial properties to increase. Property value increases can result from both the new access to HST and the stations acting as a catalyst for new development and redevelopment in the station area. This section discusses the impacts related to property values associated with railroad projects. As previously discussed, railways have been a major factor in the development of cities in the study area. Growth has focused around the railway stations; however, most of the railroad stations are no longer used and the areas adjacent to the railways are now associated with industrial and commercial development. The HST alternatives in the Merced to Fresno Section are primarily adjacent to either the UPRR or BNSF, and many of the negative impacts associated with the railways already occur and will continue to occur.

The analysis of property values included a literature review on the impacts of rail transit projects on property values; however, the majority of these studies are focused on the area around the transit stations, not along the railway between the stations. Additionally, these studies are associated with light rail and commuter rail; there have been no studies on the property value impacts with high-speed train projects, which have greater distances between stations.

*Impacts of Rail Transit on Property Values* (Diaz 1999) and *Reconnecting America* (Federal Transit Administration 2008) provide information on residential property values for 22 rail transit projects and commercial property values for 10 rail transit projects. The projects are in several cities including Sacramento, San Diego, San Jose, and Toronto, Canada. The studies occurred between 1972 and 2004, and all of the studies focused on the area around the stations, not the area between the stations where the likelihood of negative impacts on property values is more likely. In all but five of the studies, both the residential and commercial property values were positively affected. The timeframe of the five studies that did not identify positive effects was in the early 1990s. The potential reasons for the negative or no discernable outcome are related to either the economic recession or because there was not enough information on real estate transactions since the railways had been in operation to realize a positive change in the property values. These studies show that the potential exists for increased property values for residential and commercial properties. Increased values are a function of the proximity of the properties to the HST stations, access, and the potential for new development and redevelopment at higher densities. The studies did not take into account the potential for impacts related to noise and visual resources in areas outside the station area; however, as previously described, there is the potential for physical deterioration, and it is possible that some properties could decrease in value.

The property acquisitions would likely result in a permanent loss of property tax revenues in all three counties, it is possible that these losses could be offset in the future by property taxes on the project properties. The construction and operation of an HMF site in Merced County or Madera County would result in beneficial impacts on taxes and sales tax revenue. There is also the possibility of reductions in property values in areas that are not near the HST stations, because of the impacts associated with the HST (e.g., noise and visual impacts). For those areas farther away from the stations but in near the HST guideway (particularly the elevated guideway), property values may decrease (particularly residential property values). As previously discussed, there is also the potential for physical deterioration in the communities of Le Grand, Madera, and Fairmead and the Tower District neighborhood in Fresno; however, the existing railway corridors have already resulted in areas of degraded buildings and underutilized land. With mitigation, the effects would be minimized. The loss of property values could result in lower property tax revenues. However, in most areas the alignments would be located adjacent to either the UPRR or BNSF corridors, where these impacts have already occurred. Outside of the communities, the adjacent land uses are primarily associated with rural agriculture. Few residences and businesses are near the proposed alignments, which further minimizes the overall impact of reduced property values, because those land uses would not be negatively affected by visual or noise impacts. Indirect impacts in the form of increased property values and the resulting increased property tax revenues could occur around the HST stations. The stations would attract commercial and office development and high-density residential development associated with TOD into the surrounding



downtown core. New developments would likely result in higher property values in Downtown Merced and Downtown Fresno than would occur under the No Project Alternative. The impacts caused by property acquisitions would have moderate intensity under NEPA because of the loss of property tax revenues, and the impacts on property values would have negligible intensity under NEPA because the potential of lower property values is low and further minimized because a large portion of the alternatives is located in rural areas associated with agricultural land uses.

**Employment Growth**

The economic growth study conducted for the Bay Area to Central Valley Program EIR/EIS (Authority and FRA 2008) found that the additional population growth under the HST alternatives would be driven by regional job growth (that is, internal to Merced, Madera, and Fresno counties) induced by the presence of the HST System, rather than by population shifts from the Bay Area and Southern California. In general, the HST station areas would offer a more attractive market for commercial and office development than the same areas under the No Project Alternative. Project operation would improve state and regional connectivity while creating job opportunities across many sectors of the regional economy (Cambridge Systematics Inc. 2010; Kantor 2008). The employment created has the potential to draw workers to the region. Overall, it is expected that employment growth from project operation would be a net benefit for the region as a whole. For those businesses that decide not to relocate and go out business, impacts would include not only the jobs at those individual businesses but also jobs among suppliers. However, this effect is anticipated to have negligible intensity given the new employment opportunities associated with the HST alternatives.

For any of the three HST alternatives, it is estimated that approximately 32,000 jobs would be created by 2035 within the three counties as a result of the operation of the HST project. This total would include the direct jobs to operate and maintain the project in the three-county region (approximately 1,300 jobs), as well as the indirect and induced jobs created to support these new workers and the additional jobs created as a result of the improved connectivity and growth in the overall regional economy. The total number of new jobs created as a result of the HST is an approximately 3.8% increase in total employment above the 2035 estimate of the 845,986 total jobs in the region under the No Project Alternative (Cambridge Systematics Inc. 2010). The HST alternatives would provide an additional employment growth of 6% in Merced County, 5% in Madera County, and 3% in Fresno County as illustrated in Table 7-24. The HMFs would attract high-skill and high-wage technical jobs (e.g., welders and mechanics), professional jobs, and other jobs in the service, government, and financial sectors.

**Table 7-24**  
 Regional Projected and Induced Employment

County	RTP 2035 Projections	Program EIS 2035 No Project Projections	HST-Induced Growth	Total 2035 HST Alternative Projections	Growth Inducement
Merced	155,300	132,367	7,811	140,178	6%
Madera	94,480	103,453	5,445	108,898	5%
Fresno	618,682	610,166	18,549	628,715	3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>868,462</b>	<b>845,986</b>	<b>31,805</b>	<b>877,791</b>	<b>4%</b>

For percent growth inducement, used higher of the two growth inducement rates from Cambridge Systematics (2003) and Cambridge Systematics (2007).  
 Sources: CDOF (2010b), MCTC (2010), MCAG (2010).

Potential effects from a NEPA perspective are examined from the standpoint of both the intensity and context of the effect. As described above, the intensity would be slight given the size of the region's labor force. Therefore, the effect would have moderate intensity under NEPA in the short term and there would be no effect under NEPA in the long term.

### **Business Impacts**

For all three HST alternatives, most of the businesses that would likely be affected by the project are within the alignment rights-of-way, including the HST station footprints. These businesses include auto dealerships, restaurants, gas stations, motels, businesses that serve the surrounding agricultural community, and industrial and warehouse facilities. The majority of the businesses that would be affected are located in the downtown areas of Merced, Madera, and Fresno. There are no business districts (e.g., a cluster of stores) within these downtown areas that would be negatively affected by the acquisitions. In the urban areas, where such businesses are located, the guideway would be elevated, minimizing the amount of required right-of-way to construct the project. It is also likely that some businesses would be able to relocate under the guideway after construction is complete, which would minimize impacts. In rural areas, the guideway would pass through agricultural land. The largest industries, based on the number of employees, in the three counties are associated with agriculture, services, and government.

In addition to the potential direct impacts on businesses, the HST alternatives may result in physical deterioration of areas if property values decline because of the project. Physical deterioration is not expected within the downtown areas of Merced and Fresno because the HST stations would be a catalyst for new development and redevelopment there. In areas where there is no HST station, such as downtown Madera, the elevated guideways could have a negative impact on the businesses; however, as previously discussed, the implementation of mitigation measures may result in beneficial effects for the downtown area.

### **Impacts on the Agricultural Industry**

Given that the Central Valley of California is one of the most productive agricultural areas in the world, it is important to understand the potential effects of the project on the region's agricultural production and movement of goods. Agricultural areas would be converted to a transportation-related use as a result of the project, which would result in the permanent loss of agricultural lands. Although it is likely that much of this production would relocate, there would be some production that could not be easily replaced given the limited availability of suitable replacement lands (e.g., limitations on prime farmland and new locations for animal operations). Moreover, some relocated agricultural production would take time to re-establish full production levels. In addition, there would be effects on dairy and livestock operations as well as on associated waste ponds and other onsite facilities. Also, any reduced agricultural production would have an additional multiplier effect on the region's economy and could affect businesses involved in agricultural services, food processing, and the transportation of goods. Because no agricultural land would be acquired within Fresno County only Merced and Madera counties are discussed.

All of the HST alternatives would have a short-term reduction in agricultural production for the total value of agricultural production in each of the two counties. The loss of agricultural production from Merced and Madera counties as a result of the property acquisitions of agricultural land, ranges from approximately 1,000 to 1,500 acres depending on the alternative. The amount of land required is less than 0.1% of the agricultural land in production (approximately 1.7 million acres). Additionally, much of the land that would be required is linear areas of land located along the edges of the farms; therefore, the impact would be negligible. When a parcel is divided into two useable parcels, crop-production area is less than the area of the remaining parcel because all four borders area are needed for equipment turning. This reduces the efficiency of the farming area, but does not remove the area from agricultural production. As described in the affected environment discussion, agriculture was a \$3.4 billion industry in 2009 and the loss of land would result in a slight reduction of this value. Employment in the agricultural sector accounted for about 16% and 24% of the total industry employment in 2008 in Merced and Madera counties, respectively (CEDD 2010b). In 2008, farm earnings accounted for about 9% and 7% of

the total personal income in Merced and Madera counties, respectively (U.S. Department of Commerce 2010). The loss of agricultural land could result in a reduction in the number of farm workers, who could be negatively affected if the acquisition results in permanent job losses or if they are unable to find work on another farm or industry in the region. This effect would be minimized if the agricultural production relocated elsewhere in the region.

Conversion of land with dairy operations would include the loss of structures and facilities, as well as removal of associated land from growing forage crops or receiving waste. The conversions of partial property would result in secondary impacts. For example, changes to land areas that receive dairy waste would require modification of the dairy waste management and nutrient management plans, and would result in the need to increase offsite waste disposal or reduce the number of cattle. Relocation or a substantial change in dairy operations would result in the need to obtain a new or modified conditional use permit from the local jurisdiction or new air and water quality permits from regulatory agencies. Dairies are not classified as Important Farmland, and therefore the impact would not result in farmland conversion.

Overall, the amount of land removed from agricultural production in the two counties is a very small percentage of two-county total production. Farm owners would be compensated under the Uniform Relocation Act, as amended. Even so, there would be potential for temporary disruption to agricultural operations as production is reallocated between owners and as facilities are relocated. Related economic sectors, such as processing facilities, could also experience some short-term multiplier effects from reduced production. Because of the effect of the HST alternatives on agricultural operations, the effect under NEPA would have moderate intensity in the short term because of this adjustment period. In the long term, the effect under NEPA would have negligible intensity because the loss of agricultural land from the HST Project would be less than 0.1% of the agricultural land in production and much of the land that required is linear or industry.

In addition to the permanent property acquisitions, the project would also have the potential to result in road closures in the rural areas where the alignment would be at-grade. Because agriculture is central to the economy of the region, permanent road closures resulting from the project were examined to identify potential effects on regional access for agricultural operations. These effects from restriction in regional access include increased costs to operations and increased difficulties in moving workers and equipment to cultivate and harvest fields and deliver products to processing facilities and markets.

For all HST alternatives and HMF locations, the road closures associated with the project are dispersed and detours to alternative routes are approximately 2 miles or less, so regional access for agricultural operations (e.g., moving workers and equipment to cultivate and harvest fields and deliver products to processing operations and markets) is not expected to be restricted. Therefore, effects would have negligible intensity under NEPA.

#### **7.4.2.3 Environmental Effects Disproportionately Borne by Communities of Concern**

This section describes the potential impacts on communities of concern within the study area. The analysis identified impacts within census block groups that include communities of concern. As described previously, of all the census block groups in the study area, the ranges in the census block groups that do not exceed the identified thresholds identified in Section 3.1.5.1 is 0 to 3 depending on the HST alternative. These areas and impacts were reviewed to determine the potential for adverse impacts that may be predominantly borne by communities of concern or disproportionately high and adverse impacts on those populations. Impacts unique to each alternative based on the presence of communities of concern are described in the text following Table 7-25. Table 7-25 summarizes impacts common to all three HST alternatives and the relevance of those impacts on communities of concern. Because the study area is predominately communities of concern, any impacts identified in Table 7-25 would affect communities of concern.

**Table 7-25**  
 Impacts Common to All Alternatives

<b>Environmental Element</b>	<b>Impacts Summary</b>	<b>Relevance to Environmental Justice</b>
Transportation	<p>The HST stations would be multimodal transportation hubs that would reinforce existing local transit systems. There would be no impacts on non-motorized facilities. The HST alternatives would improve regional travel times, reliability, and convenience for all populations. Operation of the HST System would shift some people from automobiles to HSTs, reducing traffic volumes on the surrounding roadways. However, impacts with substantial intensity are anticipated along SR 99 due to the relocation of SR 99 and impacts with substantial intensity have also been identified in the vicinity of the Merced and Fresno stations. With mitigation, the impacts would be reduced, but there would still be adverse impacts associated with two intersections near the Fresno station.</p> <p>In rural areas, some existing roadways would be closed, but access would be maintained at least every 2 miles. Traffic would be diverted to other routes. Because traffic volumes are low, impacts are expected to be negligible.</p>	<p>Improvements in the transportation system with the addition of the HST System would accrue to all populations. With mitigation, the majority of the impacts would be reduced to below adverse. The remaining adverse impacts would occur near the Fresno station where the population is limited, so the impacts would be further minimized; therefore, no disproportionately high and adverse effects on communities of concern are expected.</p>
Air Quality	<p>All HST alternatives would result in a net benefit on regional and statewide air quality from HST operation because of the lowering of emissions. There would be no adverse impacts during operation and mitigation would reduce any impacts.</p>	<p>All residents in the San Joaquin Valley would benefit from the decrease in air pollutants associated with the projected shift in transportation modes. No adverse impacts are expected on communities of concern.</p>
Noise and Vibration	<p>All of the HST alternatives would result in noise impacts without mitigation. With mitigation consisting only of sound barriers, HST operation would result in a number of remaining severe impacts. Even with the full implementation of mitigation measures, some receptors would remain impacted, but only the exterior uses would be affected. Full implementation of the mitigation measures would minimize interior noise impacts for residential properties.</p>	<p>The exterior noise impacts would be severe and the impacts would affect the populations in the study area to the same degree. Because the interior noise impacts would be mitigated, leaving only exterior impacts, and adverse impacts would not result in impacts that are greater in magnitude than impacts on the general population, no disproportionately high and adverse effects on communities of concern are anticipated.</p>
EMF/EMI	<p>HST operation would not result in any adverse impacts. Implementation of prevention measures would result in impacts with negligible intensity.</p>	<p>No adverse impacts on communities of concern are anticipated.</p>
Public Utilities and Energy	<p>HST operation would not result in any adverse impacts. The HST Project would increase the demand for electricity, but would result in an overall reduction in energy consumption in California.</p>	<p>No adverse impacts on communities of concern are anticipated.</p>

Environmental Element	Impacts Summary	Relevance to Environmental Justice
Biological Resources and Wetlands	HST operation would not result in any adverse impacts. Mitigation would reduce a number of the impacts to negligible.	No adverse impacts on communities of concern are anticipated.
Hydrology and Water Resources	HST operation would not result in any adverse impacts, and impacts would be reduced with the implementation of avoidance and minimization measures.	No adverse impacts on communities of concern are anticipated.
Geology, Soils, and Seismicity	HST operation would not result in any adverse impacts. Impacts would be negligible with the implementation of standard design measures and BMPs.	No adverse impacts on communities of concern are anticipated.
Hazardous Materials and Waste	HST operation would increase hazardous materials use and waste generation, but would not result in any adverse impacts. With implementation of regulatory requirements, impacts would be negligible.	No adverse impacts on communities of concern are anticipated.
Safety and Security	There would be no adverse impacts with the HST alternatives and only impacts with negligible intensity with the implementation of standard design features and plans.	No adverse impacts on communities of concern are anticipated.
Socioeconomics and Communities	<p>The HST alternatives would not result in the physical division of communities; therefore, there would be no adverse impacts. The placement of the guideway alongside existing highway and railroad corridors through urban areas would lessen the impacts on communities and neighborhoods adjacent to the HST alignment. The wyes would be located in sparsely populated areas adjacent to existing roads and are expected to have few social, neighborhood, and community impacts. The HST Project would result in a number of property acquisitions, but would not result in any adverse impacts at the regional level because there are adequate replacement properties.</p> <p>There are a number of motels in the study area within the City of Fresno. Motels often serve as temporary housing for low-income people who do not have access to permanent housing and often employ low-skilled workers in service positions, and some employees may earn wages below the poverty level. Preliminary research indicates adequate available replacement sites for relocation. Permanent residents of displaced motels could relocate to other motels in Fresno.</p> <p>The Downtown Merced Station would result in the acquisition of a facility that provides a unique service to communities of concern. The facility would be relocated prior to demolition, so there would be no adverse impact with mitigation.</p> <p>The HST Project would have a beneficial effect on the economy. Although some agricultural jobs may be lost, mitigation related to job training will be provided and targeted to communities of concern.</p>	<p>There would be no adverse effects on communities of concern from the division of communities, and potentially beneficial effects would result due to job training and new jobs, especially in the station area.</p> <p>Adverse effects on communities of concern would result because of the property acquisitions associated with the HST Project. The implementation of mitigation measures would result in the impacts no longer being adverse.</p>

Environmental Element	Impacts Summary	Relevance to Environmental Justice
Station Planning, Land Use, and Development	Property acquisitions would convert existing land uses to a transportation-related use. The cities of Merced and Fresno are in the process of updating general and specific plans with goals and policies related to the HST alternatives and stations. The HST stations could be a catalyst for higher-density development and greater levels of redevelopment, which would be a beneficial effect. No adverse impacts would occur.	No adverse impacts on communities of concern are expected.
Agricultural Lands	The HST alternatives would convert lands currently used for agriculture to a transportation-related use, including Important Farmland, which would result in adverse impacts that would remain even after mitigation. All other impacts would not be adverse and, after mitigation, would be reduced to negligible intensity. .	The loss of Important Farmland would be dispersed throughout the study area and land owners would be compensated. No adverse impacts on communities of concern are expected.
Parks, Recreation, and Open Space	HST operation would result in adverse impacts due to the permanent acquisition of park property. Mitigation for property acquisition will include financial compensation for purchase and development of replacement park property, but the impacts would still remain adverse after mitigation. In addition, noise levels would result in adverse impacts on one park, but with mitigation, the noise impacts would be reduced to moderate intensity.	The acquisition of park property would result in impacts and the impacted parks are located in areas with communities of concern. Mitigation includes the development of replacement park property which would minimize the impacts. Additionally, the areas under any elevated guideway would remain available as park resources; therefore, no disproportionately high and adverse effects on communities of concern are expected.
Aesthetics and Visual Quality	The HST alternatives would construct elevated guideways where none currently exist, which would result in adverse impacts. Even with mitigation, which would reduce the level of impact, the impacts would remain adverse.	The visual impact of the elevated guideway would result in adverse impacts. Even with mitigation, the impacts would remain adverse, and therefore, are anticipated to result in disproportionately high and adverse effects on communities of concern.
Cultural and Paleontological Resources	HST operation would result in adverse impacts on a historic property, but with mitigation the impact would be reduced to moderate intensity. Other project impacts would not be adverse.	There would be an adverse impact without mitigation, but with mitigation, there would be no adverse effects on communities of concern.
Cumulative Impacts	The HST Project along with other reasonable foreseeable actions may result in impacts on noise and vibration; agricultural lands; and parks, recreation, and open space. With mitigation the impacts are still expected to remain and would be considered adverse.	There would be adverse impacts without mitigation and, even with mitigation, there would be adverse impacts. Mitigation would reduce the level of impact, and the impacts would not affect communities of concern to a greater degree of magnitude than other populations.

## **Station Alternatives**

The impacts associated with operation of the HST stations were analyzed as part of the HST alternatives. Under all alternatives, the stations are in the same location, so there is no difference between the alternatives. As shown in Figures 6-3 and 6-4, the population is limited within the station area and there are no populations in the areas immediately adjacent to the station. With HST operation and the potential development of TOD, the station areas would have beneficial effects for communities of concern in the reference community by providing new sources of employment. For populations, including the general population and communities of concern, that are in close proximity, the redevelopment associated with TOD would lead to higher property taxes, which could lead to some people leaving the station area.

## **UPRR/SR 99 Alternative**

The UPRR/SR 99 Alternative would affect communities of concern in Chowchilla, Fairmead, and Madera. No adverse impacts on communities of concern would be expected in Chowchilla because the alternative would follow SR 99 along the eastern edge of the city, through industrial and commercial land uses.

An elevated guideway would run adjacent to the Community of Fairmead and would require the acquisition of residential properties. Preliminary research indicates that available replacement properties currently exist in Madera County and the nearby cities of Chowchilla and Madera, but not within Fairmead. The displacements are not considered significant adverse property impacts because adequate available housing exists within the relocation area. However, these displacements would be predominantly borne by a community of concern. Impacts would be considered disproportionately high and adverse because people relocated outside of Fairmead would be isolated from their community.

The elevated HST guideway would create a substantial adverse visual impact in Fairmead because of the size of the structure and its close proximity to the community. This could result in reduced property values in Fairmead. These impacts would be predominantly borne by a community of concern. Aesthetic designs would reduce visual impacts but not avoid them.

Property acquisitions would occur in Madera, but adequate available replacement sites exist within the city to accommodate displaced residents and businesses. The elevated HST guideway would result in substantial visual impacts on residential neighborhoods and Downtown Madera. However, with mitigation measures such as aesthetic designs, the area underneath the elevated guideway could become an attractive setting for economic development or recreational uses. Noise impacts may remain, depending on community input and the specific noise mitigation measures. Although impacts with moderate to substantial intensity on community cohesion and visual resources would be predominantly borne by communities of concern, these impacts would not be appreciably more severe or greater in magnitude than the adverse effect on the general population. The use of aesthetic design guidelines would minimize visual impacts. There may be moderate noise impacts on adjacent residences, but these residences are in areas adjacent to existing transportation corridors and are exposed to increased noise levels. Mitigation measures to address noise would also be implemented to reduce noise impacts.

## **BNSF Alternative**

The BNSF Alternative would affect Le Grand and Madera Acres, which have minority communities of concern. The elevated guideway would be adjacent to communities of concern and would require the acquisition of residential properties for the Mission Ave or Mariposa Way design options. Preliminary research indicates that available replacement properties currently exist in Merced and Madera counties and the nearby cities of Merced, Chowchilla, and Madera, but not in Le Grand. The displacements are not considered significant adverse property impacts because adequate available housing exists within the relocation area. However, these displacements would be predominantly borne by a community of concern and would be considered disproportionately high and adverse because people relocated outside of Le Grand would be isolated from their community.

The elevated guideway through Le Grand would minimize impacts on the transportation network, but it would create significant adverse visual impacts. Implementing aesthetic design guidelines would reduce

the visual impacts but not avoid them. The elevated guideway may also result in negative impacts on property values for nearby residents. Impacts on communities of concern would not occur with the Mission Ave East of Le Grand and Mariposa Way East of Le Grand design options because the HST guideway would bypass Le Grand to the east. The elevated guideway may also result in negative impacts on the value of nearby properties.

The BNSF Alternative would pass through Madera Acres on an at-grade guideway and would affect single-family residences. There is an adequate supply of available replacement residences in the area, and those displaced would be compensated.

### **Hybrid Alternative**

The Hybrid Alternative with the Ave 21 Wye connection would affect Chowchilla the same as the UPRR/SR 99 Alternative with the East Chowchilla design option and Fairmead the same as the UPRR/SR 99 Alternative. Madera Acres would be affected in the same way as previously described under the BNSF Alternative. No other communities of concern would be affected that are unique to the Hybrid Alternative.

### **Heavy Maintenance Facility**

The area to be acquired for the HMF would be much larger than the actual projected footprint of the facility. The HMF would be buffered from the adjacent uses by this extra land. Many of the facilities would be located on existing agricultural land and in rural areas where the impacts would be small. An HMF would provide approximately 1,500 jobs to the region. Jobs at the HMF would include a variety of technical (such as welders and mechanics) and professional jobs. Jobs created at the HMF site would likely be filled by workers in the region and would result in employment benefits. The jobs created would not result in any benefits that would accrue to a greater degree to the communities of concern, unless they have the necessary skills or are provided a training program that would enable employment.

The Harris-DeJager, Fagundes, Gordon-Shaw, and Kojima Development sites are located in areas that have sparse populations. There would be no adverse impacts associated with operation of the HMF at any of these locations; therefore, these sites would not result in any disproportionate high and adverse effects on communities of concern.

Through acquisitions, the Castle Commerce Center HMF would affect more than half of the mobile homes in Merced Mobile Estates, which is in the Franklin-Beachwood community in Merced County. It is likely that many of those in the park own their mobile homes. Preliminary research indicates that there is an insufficient supply of available decent, safe, and sanitary mobile homes and vacant mobile home lots in the area. Displaced residents would be relocated to other types of housing in the nearby cities of Atwater or Merced. Because half of the mobile home park would be acquired and residents could not relocate within the park, the acquisitions would result in a loss of community cohesion, and relocated individuals would be isolated from their community. The guideway would also introduce a new visual element that would create a visual barrier, dividing the community. The guideway may result in negative effects on nearby property values. These impacts would be predominantly borne by the community of concern in the mobile home park and would be disproportionately high and adverse on that community. It is likely that the mobile home park provides modest cost housing, and many of the residents would be expected to be low-income. Because of this, these impacts would be predominantly borne by the community of concern in the mobile home park and would be disproportionately high and adverse on that population.

The guideway connecting the Castle Commerce Center HMF to the Downtown Merced Station would displace the Merced Lao Family Community, Merced Senior Center, and McCombs Youth Center, all of which serve communities of concern. There are adequate available replacement sites within Downtown Merced to accommodate these facilities. Because the facilities could be relocated in the same general area, the impacts are not expected to result in disproportionately high and adverse impacts.

#### 7.4.2.4 Environmental Justice Effects Conclusion

All HST alternatives and the Castle Commerce Center HMF would result in adverse impacts on communities of concern primarily related to property acquisitions and visual impacts. These impacts would be predominantly borne by communities of concern located within the study area and would be disproportionately high and adverse compared to impacts on the general population and the population in the reference community. For the other environmental elements, there are either no adverse impacts or the adverse effects would and not result in any impacts on communities of concern that are greater in magnitude than the impact on the general population. As described in Section 7.5, the project includes mitigation measures that would minimize or avoid the impact on all populations, including communities of concern for many of the environmental elements. The Authority and FRA, along with EPA, U.S. Housing and Urban Development, and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), have also entered into a Interagency Partnership and established a "*Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for Achieving an Environmentally Sustainable High-Speed Train System in California*," which includes a common goal of integrating HST station access and amenities into the fabric of surrounding neighborhoods (Authority and FRA 2011). The principles for this partnership are to help improve access to affordable housing, increase transportation options, lower transportation costs, and protect the environment in communities nationwide. The implementation of the MOU would be beneficial to all populations, including communities of concern. One example is that the Authority may establish a temporary Relocation Field Office to help facilitate relocation efforts. Project relocation offices would be open during convenient hours and evening hours if necessary. In addition to these services, the Authority is required to coordinate its relocation activities with other agencies causing displacements to ensure that all persons displaced receive fair and consistent relocation benefits to all affected persons, including persons within communities of concern. The Authority would also continue the existing activities similar to the workshops that have been held in the City of Fresno to discuss the HST Project and collect community input. Meetings in September 2011 and February 2012 provided overviews on the relocation process, including the "Your Property, Your High-Speed Train Project" and brochures on the Relocation Assistance Program on the ROW process were made available, with emphasis on property and business owner rights under the Constitution, and Federal and State laws and regulations. The overview provided a presentation with a question and answer period following.

According to EO 12898, the offsetting benefits associated with the project should be considered as part of the environmental justice analysis. The project would provide benefits that would accrue to all populations, including communities of concern in the reference community. These benefits would include improved mobility within the region, improved traffic conditions on freeways as modes divert to HST, improvements in air quality within the region, and new employment opportunities during construction and operation. Because much of the study area population has communities of concern, these project benefits are likely to accrue to a greater degree to the communities of concern.

Jobs created by construction and operation of the project would likely be filled by workers in the region. The new jobs would not result in any benefits that would accrue to a greater degree to the communities of concern unless they have the necessary skills or they receive training or some other type of program that would enable employment. However, to offset any disproportionate effects, special recruitment, training, and job set-aside programs would be developed so that communities of concern are able to benefit from the jobs created by the HST Project.

## 7.5 Mitigation Measures

The Authority has considered avoidance and minimization measures that are consistent with the Statewide Program EIR/EIS and Bay Area to Central Valley Program EIR/EIS commitments. The Authority must comply with the Uniform Relocation Act.

The provisions of the Uniform Relocation Act apply to all acquisitions of real property or displacements of people resulting from federal or federally assisted programs or projects. The act provides for fair and equitable treatment of all such persons. Additionally, the Fifth Amendment of the United States

Constitution provides that private property may not be taken for public use without payment of “just compensation.”

The Uniform Relocation Act requires the owning agency to notify affected owners of the agency’s intent to acquire an interest in their property, including a written offer letter of just compensation that specifically describes those property interests and assigns a right-of-way specialist to each property owner to assist them with this process. The Uniform Relocation Act also provides financial and advisory benefits to displaced individuals to help them relocate their residence or business. Benefits are available to owners and tenants of residential and business properties.

The Uniform Relocation Act requires provision of relocation benefits to all eligible persons regardless of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. Benefits for eligible owners and tenants are determined on an individual basis and explained in detail by an assigned right-of-way specialist.

Similarly, the project must adhere to California Relocation Assistance Act Requirements. Owners of private property have federal and state constitutional guarantees that their property will not be taken for public use or damaged unless they first receive just compensation. Just compensation is measured by the fair market value of the acquired property. According to the Code of Civil Procedure Section 1263.320a, “fair market value is considered to be the highest price on the date of valuation that would be agreed to by a seller, being willing to sell, but under no particular or urgent necessity for so doing, nor obliged to sell; and a buyer, being ready, willing and able to buy but under no particular necessity for so doing, each dealing with the other with the full knowledge of all the uses and purposes for which the property is reasonably adaptable and available.”

Additionally, the Statewide Program EIR/EIS mitigation strategies have been refined and adapted for the Project Draft EIR/EIS. The evaluation of impacts in this section is largely based on impacts identified in technical reports and the Project EIS/EIR, including transportation, air quality and global climate change, noise and vibration, and aesthetic and visual quality. The technical reports include mitigation measures that minimize or avoid some of the social, economic, and environmental justice impacts identified in this analysis. The mitigation measures are assumed for impacts on those resources. The following mitigation measures are available to the Authority to reduce substantial adverse environmental impacts resulting from implementation of the proposed project.

The Authority has developed more detailed information about how it plans to comply with the Uniform Relocation Act and the California Relocation Assistance Act. The Authority has developed three detailed relocation assistance documents modeled after Caltrans versions. The documents are listed below and included in Appendix C, Relocation Information:

- Your Rights and Benefits as a Displacee under the Uniform Relocation Assistance Program (Residential).
- Your Rights and Benefits as a Displacee under the Uniform Relocation Assistance Program (Mobile Home).
- Your Rights and Benefits as a Displaced Business, Farm or Nonprofit Organization under the Uniform Relocation Assistance Program.

### 7.5.1 Construction Period

**SO-MM#1: Develop and implement a construction management plan.** The design-build contractor will develop and implement a construction management plan, for approval by the Authority, to address communications, community impacts, visual protection, air quality, safety controls, noise controls, and traffic controls to minimize impacts on property owners and businesses, including low-income households and minority populations, and to maintain access to local businesses, residences, and emergency services. Communications to the public will be consistent with the ongoing outreach efforts and providing in other languages, as required, including Spanish, Lao, and Hmong. The plan will maintain

access to local businesses during construction and use signs to instruct customers regarding access to businesses during construction. In addition, the plan will include efforts to coordinate with local transit providers to minimize impacts on local and regional bus routes in affected communities. Construction management plans are standard for large infrastructure projects such as this one and are considered effective in minimizing community impacts.

**SO-MM#2: Develop a relocation mitigation plan.** Before any acquisitions occur, the Authority will develop a relocation mitigation plan, in consultation with affected cities and counties. In addition to establishing a program to minimize the economic disruption related to relocation, the relocation mitigation plan will be written in a style that also enables it to be used as a public information document. The plan will be intended to meet the following objectives:

- Provide affected property and business owners and tenants a high level of individualized assistance in situations when relocation is necessary.
- Make a best effort to minimize the permanent closure of displaced businesses and non-profit agencies as a result of relocations.
- Within the limits established by law and regulation, minimize the economic disruption caused to tenants and residents by relocation.
- In individual situations where warranted, consider the cost of obtaining the entitlement permits necessary to relocate to a suitable location and take those costs into account when establishing the fair market value of the property.
- Provide those business owners who require complex permitting (such as dairies) with regulatory compliance assistance.

The relocation mitigation plan will include the following components:

- A description of the appraisal, acquisition, and relocation process that describes the activities of the appraisal and relocation specialists, for the benefit of the reader.
- A means of assigning appraisal and relocation staff to affected property owners, tenants, or other residents on an individual basis.
- Individualized assistance to affected property owners, tenants, or other residents in applying for funding, including research to summarize loans, grants, and federal aid available, and research of demographically similar areas for relocation.
- Creation of an ombudsman’s position to act as a single point of contact for property owners, residents, and tenants with questions about the relocation process. The ombudsman will also act to address property owners’, tenants’, and other residents’ concerns about the relocation process as it applies to their situations.

Relocation mitigation plans are commonly used for large infrastructure projects that remove a large number of residences and businesses, such as this project, and are considered successful in minimizing the impact to individual property owners.

## 7.5.2 Project

**S SO-MM#3: Implement measures to reduce impacts associated with the division of existing communities.** Minimize impacts associated with the Castle Commerce Center HMF guideway to the Merced Estate mobile home park. Make every effort to locate suitable replacement housing for displaced residents. In cases where residents wish to remain in their neighborhoods, the purchase and development of infill lots or other real estate, relocation of existing buildings to vacant lots, and coordination with city staff regarding zoning and permit issues may be required. This mitigation measure

will be effective in minimizing the impacts of the project by reducing the distance that residences, businesses, and community facilities are relocated.

**SO-MM#4: Implement measures to reduce impacts associated with the relocation of community facilities.** Minimize impacts associated with the acquisition of the homeless shelter in Merced, which is affected by all alternatives, and Joe Stefani Elementary School, Merced Lao Family Community, Merced Senior Center, McCombs Youth Center, which are affected by the Castle Commerce Center HMF, by conducting outreach and coordinating with the facility prior to acquisition. Coordinate with the respective parties prior to land acquisition to reconfigure or relocate facilities, as necessary, to minimize disruption to activities. To reduce disruption to the use of these community facilities, the Authority will make sure that reconfiguring of land uses or buildings or relocating of community facilities is completed before the demolition of any existing structures. Work with the City of Merced and Merced City School District to facilitate the construction of the facilities prior to demolition of the existing structures. During the design process, the Outreach Team will conduct targeted outreach efforts for these facilities to understand and determine their needs for siting criteria. This mitigation measure will be effective in minimizing the impacts of the project by completing new facilities prior to relocation being necessary, and by involving affected facilities in the process of identifying new locations for their facilities.

**SO-MM#5: Continue outreach to disproportionately and negatively affected environmental justice communities of concern.** The Authority will continue to conduct substantial environmental justice outreach activities in adversely affected neighborhoods to obtain resident feedback on potential impacts and suggestions for mitigation measures. Input from these communities will be used to refine project features during the design phase and facilitate the identification of the highest priority mitigation measures developed for the Merced to Fresno section. In addition, to offset any disproportionate effects, the Authority will develop special recruitment, training, and job set-aside programs so that minority and low-income populations are able to benefit from the jobs created by the project. This type of outreach is common for large infrastructure projects with long construction periods and has been found to be effective.

**SO-MM#6: Avoid displacements or consider housing options in Franklin-Beachwood, Le Grand, Fairmead, and rural areas.** Displaced residents in these minority communities and rural areas may be unable to relocate within the same community because comparable replacement housing may not be available or limited at the time of acquisition. During property acquisition in these communities and rural areas, the Authority will consider all comparable replacement housing options to allow displaced residents to remain in their communities, including but not limited to the following:

- Construct new housing on vacant lots within the communities.
- For any large parcels, relocate the residential structure or structures on the property if that is feasible and would move them outside the project area.
- Move the residential structures to nearby vacant parcels.

This mitigation measure will be effective by minimizing the distances that residences or businesses have to relocate within these communities and by working to keep them within their current community.

**SO-MM#7: Develop measures to minimize the potential for physical deterioration.** The Authority will work with the communities on the design of these features consistent with Technical Memorandum 200.6, Aesthetic Guidelines for Non-Station Structures (Authority 2012). Local communities will provide input on the use of the area underneath the elevated guideway, which could be used as a trail or for business parking for new and existing businesses, making the area underneath the guideway an attractive setting for economic development or recreational uses. Where the elevated guideway is adjacent to residential areas, the Authority will plant trees along the edges of the rights-of-way to help reduce the visual contrast. The Authority will also plant vegetation within lands acquired for the project after construction is complete. This type of mitigation measure is commonly used for large infrastructure projects to minimize impacts from new structures.



**SO-MM#8: Provide access modifications to affected farmlands.** In cases where partial property acquisitions result in the division of farmlands, the Authority will provide overcrossings or undercrossings of the HST guideway to allow continued access and use of farmlands. This will include the design of overcrossings or undercrossings to allow the passage of farm equipment. Refer to Section 3.14, Agricultural Lands of the Final EIR/EIS, for additional information. This mitigation measure will be effective because it will maintain access to farmlands for farmers whose property is bisected.

Secondary effects of mitigation measures are not anticipated.

## 7.6 NEPA Impacts Summary

Direct and indirect effects have been identified under NEPA for the construction and operation periods of the project. The following sections discuss impacts related to communities in general, displacement of residences and businesses, economic impacts, and impacts on communities of concern.

With the No Project Alternative, currently planned projects would undergo or have already undergone project-specific environmental review, and no impacts related to the bisection of communities or negative effects on community facilities are anticipated. The widening of SR 99 and addition of new interchanges between the cities of Merced and Fresno would not create barriers that would disrupt or sever community interactions or divide established communities. The No Project Alternative would require fewer property acquisitions and displacements to accommodate transportation improvements than would the HST alternatives, and although the No Project Alternative would not lose as much property tax revenue as the HST alternatives there would be no HST-station-generated appreciation of property values. The No Project Alternative would result in decreases in farmland production, but in comparison, the HST alternatives would also provide opportunities for focusing more compact future development on land that is already urbanized within the station areas. This could reduce the amount of farmland converted to urban uses to accommodate future growth beyond current local general plans. The No Project Alternative would continue regional reliance on automobiles for travel and not have the same benefits to environmental populations as the HST project. Because the No Project Alternative would not divide any communities or have the same beneficial effects as the HST alternatives, the No Project Alternative does not result in any impacts that would be considered significant under NEPA.

### 7.6.1 Construction

#### 7.6.1.1 Disruption or Severance of Community Interactions or Division of Established Communities

Construction impacts related to noise, dust, visual changes, and changes in traffic patterns would not affect overall community integrity or result in any impacts with substantial intensity, but would affect the quality of life in the communities in the study area. The impacts of the HST alternatives on community interactions in the cities of Merced and Fresno during construction would have moderate intensity because the construction would not divide or affect the integrity of neighborhoods within the communities. Because the impact occur on the edges of communities and do not interfere with interaction or divide the communities, none of the impacts to the communities within the study area would be considered significant under NEPA.

#### 7.6.1.2 Economic Impacts

Overall, construction of the project would result in beneficial effects on tax revenues and employment. Effects with moderate intensity on city and county revenues could result from loss of property tax and sales tax revenues. This would occur as a result of construction activities, which would potentially lower property taxes on those properties in close proximity to the HST and, if businesses were unable to relocate within the same jurisdiction, there may be a negative effect on sales tax revenues. Although suitable locations are available, there would still be a temporary loss while the businesses relocated. In addition, business owners may close rather than relocate, which would affect sales tax revenues. These

are effects of moderate intensity and the region contains many available relocations, these impacts would not be considered significant under NEPA.

### **7.6.1.3 Environmental Effects Disproportionately Borne by a Minority or Low-Income Population**

Construction of the HST Project would result in effects on communities of concern; however, the construction impacts would not be disproportionately high and adverse because mitigation measures and project design features have been identified that would reduce the effects for most of the environmental elements, resulting in a moderate intensity. For the remaining elements, would not result in adverse effects on communities of concern that are greater in magnitude than those effects on the general population. The construction of the HST Project has the potential to result in beneficial effects related to employment for communities of concern, with the implementation of mitigation. Additionally, outreach will continue during design to seek input on impacts and mitigation, and therefore, collectively, the impacts would not be considered significant under NEPA.

## **7.6.2 Project**

### **7.6.2.1 Disruption or Severance of Community Interactions or Division of Established Communities**

Permanent impacts related to disruption or severance of community interactions or division of established communities in the cities of Merced and Fresno would be negligible under all HST alternatives because access would still be maintained. The HST guideway would not create a barrier in these communities because it would follow existing transportation corridors and would be elevated to maintain access. All of the HST alternatives would require the relocation of a facility in Downtown Merced, but there are suitable locations in the downtown area where these facilities could relocate prior to acquisition. Impacts on community facilities in the cities of Merced and Fresno would be of moderate intensity. Also adequate available replacement sites currently exist for affected facilities and design could further avoid the impacts. None of these impacts would be considered significant under NEPA.

The BNSF Alternative with the Ave 24 Wye and the Hybrid Alternative with the Ave 24 Wye would encroach on CCWF, resulting in an effect with moderate intensity on prison operations, including revenue flow. The Castle Commerce Center HMF site would divide a mobile home park in Franklin-Beachwood, requiring many property acquisitions and causing visual impacts. The impacts on community interactions in Franklin-Beachwood would have substantial intensity and would be considered significant under NEPA because of the impacts resulting from the division of the community, the property acquisitions within the mobile home park, and the visual impacts associated with the guideway. The guideway associated with the Castle Commerce Center would also require the acquisition of facilities in Downtown Merced resulting in impacts with substantial intensity. However, there are suitable locations in the downtown area where they could relocate, so this would not be considered significant under NEPA.

### **7.6.2.2 Displacement of Local Residents or Businesses**

At the regional level, the overall impacts of property acquisitions would be moderate because preliminary research indicates an adequate available supply of replacement sites for displaced residents and businesses within the relocation area. The UPRR/SR 99 Alternative would affect the fewest number of residential properties and the highest number of business properties. The BNSF Alternative would affect the greatest number of residential properties. The Hybrid Alternative would affect a similar number of residential properties as the UPRR/SR 99 Alternative, and the Hybrid Alternative would result in the fewest number of business property impacts. The impacts would not be considered significant because there are a sufficient number of residential and business replacement properties within close proximity of the relocations. Agricultural businesses and some specialized businesses (e.g., quarries and granaries) may be unable to relocate because of siting requirements and land availability; impacts on those businesses could have substantial intensity for those businesses, but these effects would be localized and not affect the broader economic condition of the communities. The acquisition of residential displacements



occurs in each of the cities where the HST travels and with mitigation would be an impact of moderate intensity. A review of the availability of housing and the locations of these displacements relative to the school districts revealed that the displacements would result in impacts of negligible intensity on school district funding as a result of property acquisitions or relocation of students. The impacts related to displaces residential and business properties and the impacts on school district funding would not be considered significant under NEPA.

### **7.6.2.3 Economic Impacts**

Operation of any of the HST alternatives would result in beneficial direct and indirect impacts on tax revenues and employment in the region. The amount of agricultural land lost under any of the HST alternatives would not result in impacts with substantial intensity on the overall regional agricultural economy (Merced and Madera counties) because the loss of farmland removed from production, less than 0.05% of the total agricultural lands in the two counties, is minimal compared to the farmland production within the two counties. Property owners would be compensated under the Uniform Relocation Act, but farm workers might be negatively affected if they are unable to find other employment, resulting in impacts with moderate intensity, and is further minimized with mitigation related to job recruitment and training for the HST project.

### **7.6.2.4 Environmental Effects Disproportionately Borne by a Minority or Low-Income Population**

Under all HST alternatives, moderate noise impacts and displacements and relocations in the cities of Merced and Fresno would be predominantly borne by communities of concern. With mitigation, the effects of displacements and relocations on communities of concern would not be substantial and would not be appreciably more severe or greater in magnitude than the adverse effect on the general population. These impacts on the communities of concern would not be considered significant under NEPA.

There are also visual impacts and displacement and relocations in the communities of Fairmead, Madera, Le Grand, and Madera Acres depending on the HST alternative. In the City of Madera, mitigation measures would be implemented to reduce the impacts; therefore, the impact on the communities of concern would not be considered significant under NEPA. In the communities of Fairmead, Le Grand, and Madera Acres, even with the implementation of mitigation measures the impacts could result in impacts that would be considered significant under NEPA because the elevated guideway is in close proximity to the small communities or the residents may have to relocate outside of the community because there are not enough replacement properties available.

The Castle Commerce Center HMF site would cause disproportionately high and adverse impacts on a minority population in the Franklin-Beachwood community. Half of a mobile home park would be acquired, and displaced residents would be relocated elsewhere because of the lack of available housing within the community. These displaced people would be isolated from their community. The guideway would also require the acquisition of three community facilities that serve communities of concern. This change to this community is significant under NEPA because of the number of displacements and lack of available compatible housing in proximity to the same community support structure.

Under all HST alternatives, benefits would likely accrue to a greater degree to communities of concern because they comprise a large percentage of the population in the study areas and in the reference community. These benefits would include improved mobility within the region, improved traffic conditions on freeways, improvements in air quality within the region, and new employment opportunities during construction and operation. Jobs created by construction and operation of the project would likely be filled by workers in the region. The new jobs would not result in any benefits that would accrue to a greater degree to the communities of concern unless they have the necessary skills or they receive training or some other type of program that would enable employment. Mitigation has been identified to address this issue. These benefits would not be considered significant under NEPA.

## 7.7 CEQA Significance Conclusions

Table 7-26 summarizes significant social impacts under CEQA thresholds, associated mitigation measures, and the level of significance after mitigation.

**Table 7-26**  
 Summary of Significant Social Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Impact	Level of Significance before Mitigation	Mitigation Measure	Level of Significance after Mitigation
<p><b>SO#1: Division of Merced Estates Mobile Home Park.</b> The guideway between the Castle Commerce Center HMF and the Merced HST station would bisect an existing mobile home community, displacing approximately 50% of the homes.</p>	<p>Significant</p>	<p><b>SO-MM#2:</b> Develop a relocation mitigation plan;</p> <p><b>SO-MM#3:</b> Implement measures to reduce impacts associated with the division of existing communities;</p> <p><b>SO-MM#5:</b> Continue outreach to disproportionately and negatively affected environmental justice communities of concern;</p> <p><b>SO-MM#6:</b> Investigate avoidance of displacements or consider other replacement housing options in Franklin-Beachwood, Le Grand, and Fairmead.</p>	<p>Significant</p>
<p><b>SO#2: Displacement of Community Facilities.</b> The guideway between the Castle Commerce Center HMF and the Merced HST station would require the acquisition of three community facilities.</p>	<p>Significant</p>	<p><b>SO-MM#2:</b> Develop a relocation mitigation plan;</p> <p><b>SO-MM#4:</b> Avoid or replace community facilities;</p> <p><b>SO-MM#5:</b> Continue outreach to disproportionately and negatively affected environmental justice communities of concern.</p>	<p>Less than significant</p>

Impact	Level of Significance before Mitigation	Mitigation Measure	Level of Significance after Mitigation
<p><b>SO#3: Displacement of Community Facility.</b> All of the HST alternatives would result in the acquisition of a homeless shelter in the City of Merced.</p>	<p>Significant</p>	<p><b>SO-MM#4:</b> Avoid or replace community facilities;</p> <p><b>SO-MM#5:</b> Continue outreach to disproportionately and negatively affected environmental justice communities of concern.</p>	<p>Less than significant</p>



## 8.0 References

- AECOM. 2011. *Merced to Fresno Section Historic Architecture Survey Report*. March 2011.
- Bertaut, Carol. 2009. *The Financial Crisis and U.S. Cross-Border Financial Flows*. Federal Reserve Bulletin. November.
- California Board of Equalization (CBOE). 2010. *California City & County Sales & Use Tax Rates*. Available at <http://www.boe.ca.gov/cgi-bin/rates.cgi>. Accessed November 12, 2010.
- California Department of Education (CDOE). 2010. *School Nutrition Program County Profile Report, 2008-2009*. Demographics Office. Available at [www.cde.ca.gov/ds/sh/sn](http://www.cde.ca.gov/ds/sh/sn). Accessed February 16, 2010.
- California Department of Education (CDOE). 2009. *2008–2009 School Year Data*. Demographics Office.
- California Department of Finance (CDOF). 2010a. *E-5 Population and Housing Estimates for Cities, Counties and the State, 2001-2010, with 2000 Benchmark*.
- California Department of Finance (CDOF). 2010b. *P1 Population Projections with Race/Ethnic Detail*. Internet site: <http://www.dof.ca.gov/research/demographic/reports/view.php>. Accessed June 25, 2010.
- California Department of Food and Agriculture. 2009. *California Agricultural Highlights 2008-2009*. Available at: [http://www.cdafa.ca.gov/statistics/PDFs/ResourceDirectory\\_2008-2009.pdf](http://www.cdafa.ca.gov/statistics/PDFs/ResourceDirectory_2008-2009.pdf). Accessed March 22, 2010.
- California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). 2009. *Route 99 Corridor Business Plan*. September 2009.
- California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). 1997. *Environmental Handbook Volume 4: Community Impacts Assessment*. Available at [www.dot.ca.gov/ser/vol4/envhb4.pdf](http://www.dot.ca.gov/ser/vol4/envhb4.pdf). Accessed May 2010.
- California Employment Development Department (CEDD). 2010a. *Employment by Industry Data – Annual Average Labor Force Data for Counties*. Available at <http://www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/?pageid=166>. Accessed January 20, 2011.
- California Employment Development Department (CEDD). 2010b. *Projections of Employment by Industry and Occupation – Industry Projections*. Available at <http://www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/?pageid=145>. Accessed January 25, 2011.
- California Employment Development Department (CEDD). 2010c. *Unemployment and Labor Force Data for Counties*. Available at <http://www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/?pageid=1006>. Accessed January 25, 2011.
- California Employment Development Department (CEDD). 2010d. *Unemployment and Labor Force Data for Sub-County Areas*. <http://www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/?pageid=1006>. Accessed January 25, 2011.
- California High-Speed Rail Authority and Federal Railroad Administration (Authority and FRA). 2012. *California High-Speed Train (HST) Merced to Fresno Section Final Project Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS) and Section 4(f) Statement and Draft General Conformity Determination. Volume II: Technical Appendices*. Sacramento, CA, and Washington, D.C. April 2012.

- California High-Speed Rail Authority and Federal Railroad Administration (Authority and FRA). 2010. *Bay Area to Central Valley High-Speed Train (HST) Program Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS)*. Available at [http://www.cahighspeedrail.ca.gov/ba\\_cv\\_program\\_eir.aspx](http://www.cahighspeedrail.ca.gov/ba_cv_program_eir.aspx).
- California High-Speed Rail Authority (Authority). 2012. *Technical Memorandum 200.6, Aesthetic Guidelines for Non-Station Structures*. Sacramento, CA. February 2012.
- California High-Speed Rail Authority and Federal Railroad Administration (Authority and FRA). 2010a. *Draft Environmental Justice Outreach Plan, Draft California High-Speed Train Project EIR/EIS, Merced to Fresno Section*. Sacramento, CA, and Washington, DC. January 2010.
- California High-Speed Rail Authority and Federal Railroad Administration (Authority and FRA). 2011a. *California High-Speed Train Project Merced to Fresno Section Project EIR/EIS*. Sacramento, CA, and Washington, DC. August 2011.
- California High-Speed Rail Authority and Federal Railroad Administration (Authority and FRA). 2011b. *Merced to Fresno Section. Transportation Technical Report, Draft California High-Speed Train Project EIR/EIS*. Sacramento, CA, and Washington, DC. Prepared by AECOM and CH2M HILL. August 2011.
- California High-Speed Rail Authority and Federal Railroad Administration (Authority and FRA). 2011c. *Merced to Fresno Section Draft Relocations Impact Report (DRIR), California High-Speed Train Project EIR/EIS*. Sacramento, CA, and Washington, DC. Prepared by AECOM and CH2M HILL. May 2011.
- California High-Speed Rail Authority and Federal Railroad Administration (Authority and FRA). 2011d. *Merced to Fresno Section Noise and Vibration Technical Report, California High-Speed Train Project EIR/EIS*. Sacramento, CA, and Washington, DC. Prepared by AECOM and CH2M HILL. August 2011.
- California High-Speed Rail Authority and Federal Railroad Administration (Authority and FRA). 2009a. *Public Participation Plan, Draft California High-Speed Train Project EIR/EIS, Merced to Fresno Section*. Prepared by AECOM. Sacramento, CA, and Washington, DC. August 18, 2009.
- California High-Speed Rail Authority and Federal Railroad Administration (Authority and FRA). 2009b. *Draft Tribal Consultation Plan, Draft California High-Speed Train Project EIR/EIS, Merced to Fresno Section*. Sacramento, CA, and Washington, DC. October 2009.
- California High-Speed Rail Authority and Federal Railroad Administration (Authority and FRA). 2005. *Final Program Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS) for the Proposed California High-Speed Train (HST) System*. August.
- Cambridge Systematics, Inc. 2003. *Economic Growth Effects of the System Alternatives for the Program Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement, Final Report*. Oakland, CA. July 2003.
- Cambridge Systematics, Inc. 2007. *Economic Growth Effects Analysis for the Bay Area to Central Valley Program-Level Environmental Impact Report and Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement, Final Report*. Oakland, CA. July 2007.
- Cambridge Systematics. 2010. *California High Speed Rail County-Level Growth Inducement Projections*. Developed for use in regional environmental studies. Oakland, CA. July 2010.
- City of Atwater. 2000. *City of Atwater General Plan*. Available at <http://www.atwater.org/index.cfm?page=1320197>. Adopted July 24, 2000. Accessed July 2010.

- City of Chowchilla. 2011. *City of Chowchilla 2040 General Plan Update*. Prepared by Valley Planning Consultants Inc. (VPC). Chowchilla, CA. May 3, 2011.
- City of Fresno. 2010a. *Municipal Code and Charter of Fresno, California. Chapter 12 Article 16 Historic Preservation Ordinance*. Available online at: [http://library2.municode.com/default-now/home.htm?infobase=14478&doc\\_action=whatsnew](http://library2.municode.com/default-now/home.htm?infobase=14478&doc_action=whatsnew). Accessed on February 27, 2010.
- City of Fresno. 2010b. *City of Fresno Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Trails Master Plan*. Available at <http://www.fresno.gov/Government/DepartmentDirectory/PublicWorks/TrafficEngineering/BMP/default.htm>. Accessed January 17, 2011.
- City of Fresno. 2009. 50th Comprehensive Annual Financial Report. Available at <http://www.fresno.gov/Government/DepartmentDirectory/Finance/FinancialReports/AnnualReports.htm>. Accessed January 20, 2011
- City of Fresno. 2002a. *2025 Fresno General Plan and Related Environmental Impact Report No. 10130*. Available at <http://www.fresno.gov/Government/DepartmentDirectory/PlanningandDevelopment/Planning/2025FresnoGeneralPlan.htm>. City of Fresno Planning & Development Department, Advance Planning. Fresno, CA. Accessed July 2010.
- City of Fresno. 2002b. *West Area Community Plan*.
- City of Fresno. 1998. *Highway City Neighborhood Specific Plan*. January 1998.
- City of Fresno. 1996. *Fulton/Lowell Specific Plan*. January 1996.
- City of Fresno. 1991. *Tower District Specific Plan*. March 1991.
- City of Fresno. 1989. *Central Area Community Plan*. July 1989.
- City of Fresno. 1988. *Bullard Community Plan*. December 1988.
- City of Fresno. 1977a. *Edison Community Plan*. May 1977.
- City of Fresno. 1977b. *Fresno High/Roeding Community Plan*. December 1977.
- City of Fresno. 2011a. *The Fulton Corridor Specific Plan*. Available at <http://fresnodowntownplans.com/project/details/fcsp>. Accessed January 11, 2012.
- City of Fresno. 2011b. *Downtown Neighborhoods Community Plan*. Available at <http://fresnodowntownplans.com/project/details/dncp>. Accessed January 11, 2012.
- City of Madera. 2009. *City of Madera General Plan Update and Environmental Impact Report*. Public review draft. Available at <http://maderageneralplan.com/>. Accessed July 2010.
- City of Merced. 2012. *Merced Vision 2030 General Plan*. Available at <http://www.cityofmerced.org/civica/filebank/blobdload.asp?BlobID=9167>. Merced, CA. January 2012.
- City of Merced. 2009. *Comprehensive Annual Financial Report 2009*. Available at [http://www.cityofmerced.org/depts/finance/financial\\_reports/default.asp](http://www.cityofmerced.org/depts/finance/financial_reports/default.asp). Accessed January 20, 2011.
- City of Merced. 2007a. *2007 Downtown Strategy*. December
- City of Merced. 2007b. *South Merced Community Plan*. November

- City of Merced. 2006. *Prosper Merced Economic Development Strategy*. December 2006.
- City of Merced. 1997. *Merced Vision 2015 General Plan*. Available at [http://www.cityofmerced.org/depts/cd/planning/merced\\_vision\\_2015\\_general\\_plan.asp](http://www.cityofmerced.org/depts/cd/planning/merced_vision_2015_general_plan.asp). Adopted April 1997. Accessed July 2010.
- Congressional Research Service. 2009. *Farm Labor Shortages and Immigration Policy*. November 9, 2009
- Council of Fresno County Governments. 2010. *2011 Regional Transportation Plan – Long Range Transportation Vision for the Fresno County Region for the Years 2010 to 2035*. Adopted July 29. Available at <http://www.fresnocog.org/document.php?pid=272>. Accessed October 17, 2010.
- Cowan, Tadlock, 2005. *California's San Joaquin Valley: A Region in Transition*. Congressional Research Service, The Library of Congress. December 12, 2005.
- Diaz, Roderick B. 1999. "Impacts of Rail Transit on Property Values." *Proceedings of the 1999 Commuter Rail/Rapid Transit Conference*. American Public Transportation Association. May 22–27, 1999.
- Downtown Fresno Association. 2010. Old Armenian Town. Available online at: <http://www.downtownfresno.org/105.html>. Accessed March 17, 2010.
- Eberhardt School of Business. Business Forecasting Center. 2009. *Unemployment in the San Joaquin Valley in 2009: Fish or Foreclosure?* August 11, 2009.
- EdSource. 2009. *The Basics of California's School Finance System*. Available at [http://www.edsource.org/pub\\_QA\\_FinanceSyst06.html](http://www.edsource.org/pub_QA_FinanceSyst06.html). Mountain View, CA. January 2009.
- EdSource. 2011. *School Finance Highlights 2010-11*. Available at <http://www.edsource.org/pub11-school-finance-highlights.html>. Mountain View, CA. January 2011.
- Federal Transit Administration. 2008. Reconnecting America, Center for Transit-Oriented Development, *Capturing the Value of Transit*. Available at <http://www.reconnectingamerica.org/public/projects/318>.
- Fresno County. 2010. Auditor-Controller/Treasurer-Tax Collector. Available at <http://www.co.fresno.ca.us/Departments.aspx?id=118>. Accessed March 3, 2010.
- Fresno County. 2000. *Fresno County General Plan*. Available at <http://www.co.fresno.ca.us/DepartmentPage.aspx?id=19705&terms=general+plan>. Accessed July 2010.
- Kantor, Shawn. 2008. *The Economic Impact of the California High Speed Rail in the Sacramento/Central Valley Area*. September 2008.
- Kopshever, Jim. 2011. E-mail from Jim Kopshever, Harris-DeJager site property owner, to Peter Valentine, regarding withdrawal of site from consideration for use as an HMF, October 27, 2011.
- Madera County. No date. *Fairmead Specific Plan*.
- Madera County. 2011. *Draft Fairmead Colony Area Plan*. Available at [http://www.madera-county.com/rma/planningdept/planning\\_dept\\_docs.html](http://www.madera-county.com/rma/planningdept/planning_dept_docs.html). Accessed May 2011. Madera, CA.
- Merced County. 2010. *Merced County Final Budget Fiscal Year July 2009–June 2010*. Available at <http://www.co.merced.ca.us/>. Accessed February 7, 2010.
- Madera County Transportation Commission (MCTC). 2010. *Madera County 2011 Regional Transportation Plan*. Adopted July 21, 2010. Available at <http://www.maderactc.org/public.html>. Accessed October 17, 2010. Madera, CA.

- Merced County. 2004. *University Community Plan*.
- Merced County. 2004. *University Community Plan*. December 2004.
- Merced County. 1999. *Merced County Year 2000 General Plan*.
- Madera County. 1995. *Madera County General Plan*. Available at [http://www.madera-county.com/rma/planningdept/planning\\_dept\\_docs.html](http://www.madera-county.com/rma/planningdept/planning_dept_docs.html). Adopted October 24, 1995. Accessed July 2010.
- Merced County. 1990. *Merced County Year 2000 General Plan*. Available at [www.co.merced.ca.us/index.aspx?NID=436](http://www.co.merced.ca.us/index.aspx?NID=436). Adopted December 4, 1990. Accessed July 2010. Merced, CA.
- Merced County Agricultural Commissioner (Merced CAC) 2010. *Agricultural Commissioner's Annual Report*. Available at <http://www.co.merced.ca.us/Archive.aspx?AMID=36>. Accessed July 27, 2010.
- Madera County Agricultural Commissioner (Madera CAC). 2010. *Agricultural Crop Reports*. Available at <http://www.madera-county.com/agcommissioner/cropreports/index.html>. Accessed July 27, 2010.
- Merced County Association of Governments. 2008. *Merced County Regional Bicycle Transportation Plan*. Available at [www.mcagov.org/pdfs/2009/FinalRegBP.pdf](http://www.mcagov.org/pdfs/2009/FinalRegBP.pdf). Accessed June 2010.
- Merced County Association of Governments (MCAG). 2010. *2011 Regional Transportation Plan for Merced County*. Adopted July 15, 2010. Merced, CA.
- National Association of Realtors. 2010. Web site. Available at [www.realtor.com](http://www.realtor.com). Accessed June 4, July 5, July 13, and July 14, 2010.
- National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). 2010. U.S. Department of Education Institute of Education Sciences. Available at <http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/schoolsearch/>. Accessed February 2010.
- Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG). 2001. *Employment Density Study Summary Report*. October 31, 2010.
- U.S. Census Bureau. 2010. *Terms and Definitions*. Available at <http://www.census.gov/popest/topics/terms/national.html>. Accessed March 2010.
- U.S. Census Bureau. 2009. *American Community Survey Demographic and Housing Estimates: 2005–2009*. Available at <http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/main.html?lang=en>. Accessed April 2011.
- U.S. Census Bureau. 2000a. Decennial Census 2000a Summary File 1 – 100-% Data. Available at <http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/main.html?lang=en>. Accessed January 2010.
- U.S. Census Bureau. 2000b. Decennial Census 2000b Summary File 3 – Sample Data. Available at <http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/main.html?lang=en>. Accessed January 2010.
- U.S. Census Bureau. 2010. Decennial Census – 2010 Census Summary File 1. Available at <http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml>. Accessed January 2012. Washington, DC.
- U.S. Census Bureau. 2010. 2006-2010 ACS 5-Year Estimate. Available at <http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/searchresults.xhtml?refresh=t>. Accessed January 2012. Washington, DC.

- U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). *1997 Census of Agriculture*. United states Summary and State Data. Volume 1 Geographic Area Series Part 51. Available at <http://www.nass.usda.gov/census/>. Accessed November 2010. Washington, DC. Updated March 1999.
- U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). 2009. *Census of Agriculture*. February 9; updated December 2009. Available at <http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/>. Accessed November 2010.
- U.S. Department of Agriculture. 2007. *2007 Census of Agriculture State Data: California*. Table 9. Available at [http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2007/Full\\_Report/index.asp](http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2007/Full_Report/index.asp)
- U.S. Department of Commerce. 2010. *Regional Economic Information System (REIS) Regional Accounts Data, Local Area Personal Income*. Table CA 05 – Personal income and employment summary. Available at <http://www.bea.gov/regional/reis/>. Accessed July 1, 2010.

## 9.0 Preparer Qualifications

Name	Education	Experience	Role
Rob Rodland, A.I.C.P.	B.A., Geography, University of Washington	10 years of experience	Senior Technical Review
Sumi Malik, A.I.C.P.	M.S., Urban and Regional Planning, Portland State University; B.S., Biology, Indiana University at Bloomington	6 years of experience	Local Growth, Station Planning, and Land Use
Terra Lingley	M.S., Urban and Regional Planning, Portland State University; B.A., Anthropology, University of Arizona	2 years of experience	Analysis support
Colleen Roberts, A.I.C.P.	B.A., Art History, Yale University	12 years of experience	Growth
Fatuma Yusuf, Ph.D.	Ph.D., Agricultural Economics, Washington State University  M.S., Statistics, Washington State University  M.A., Agricultural Economics, Washington State University; B.S., Range Management, University of Nairobi	14 years of experience	Socioeconomics, Communities, and Environmental Justice; and Regional Growth



APPENDIX A

# Environmental Justice

---



# Appendix A: Environmental Justice

## Demographic Information

Table A-1 shows the presence of minority populations based upon 2010 Census data. The table also includes information on the Census Block Groups for the proposed HMF sites. Figures A-1 through A-6, presented at the end of this appendix, show the percentages of minority persons in the region by census block group.

**Table A-1**  
 Minority Populations by Counties, Cities, and Block Groups within Study Area  
 for UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, and Hybrid Alternatives

Alternative	Census Block Group	African American (%)	Native American (%)	Asian (%)	Hispanic (%)	Total of All Minority Groups (%)
<b>Counties (reference community)</b>						
	Fresno County, Total	5	1	9	50	67
	Madera County, Total	3	1	2	54	62
	Merced County, Total	3	1	7	55	68
<b>Cities/Communities</b>						
	Fresno, Total	8	1	12	47	70
	Madera, Total	3	1	2	77	83
	Fairmead, Total	6	1	7	68	77
	Chowchilla, Total	12	1	2	40	58
	Merced, Total	6	1	12	50	70
	Le Grand, Total	1	1	1	82	85
	Atwater, Total	4	1	5	53	64
<b>Fresno County Block Groups</b>						
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Block Group 1, Census Tract 2	16	1	12	64	95
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Block Group 1, Census Tract 3	39	0	6	51	97
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Block Group 1, Census Tract 7	21	1	2	72	97
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Block Group 1, Census Tract 20	19	1	6	54	84
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Block Group 2, Census Tract 20	4	1	5	53	66
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Block Group 3, Census Tract 20	3	2	8	73	89



Alternative	Census Block Group	African American (%)	Native American (%)	Asian (%)	Hispanic (%)	Total of All Minority Groups (%)
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Block Group 3, Census Tract 21	5	1	2	66	76
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Block Group 4, Census Tract 21	4	1	7	59	73
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Block Group 1, Census Tract 38.05	13	1	9	53	78
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Block Group 1, Census Tract 38.09	12	1	11	51	77
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Block Group 2, Census Tract 38.09	12	0	11	49	76
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Block Group 4, Census Tract 42.05	8	1	4	48	63
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Block Group 1, Census Tract 42.07	6	1	24	37	71
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Block Group 2, Census Tract 42.07	12	1	12	60	87
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Block Group 1, Census Tract 42.16	5	1	14	37	59
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Block Group 2, Census Tract 3	15	1	8	70	95
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Block Group 3, Census Tract 4	14	1	3	66	84
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Block Group 1, Census Tract 37.01	5	1	8	64	79
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Block Group 1, Census Tract 42.12	10	0	13	38	65
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Block Group 2, Census Tract 42.12	10	1	5	39	58
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Block Group 1, Census Tract 42.15	7	0	14	35	60
<b>Madera County Block Groups</b>						
BNSF, Kojima HMF	Block Group 1, Census Tract 2.01	27	2	1	34	70
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid, Gordon-Shaw HMF	Block Group 2, Census Tract 2.01	6	1	1	66	77
Fagundes HMF	Block Group 2, Census Tract 2.02	1	0	4	42	50
UPRR/SR 99 and Hybrid	Block Group 2, Census Tract 3	2	1	0	51	57

<b>Alternative</b>	<b>Census Block Group</b>	<b>African American (%)</b>	<b>Native American (%)</b>	<b>Asian (%)</b>	<b>Hispanic (%)</b>	<b>Total of All Minority Groups (%)</b>
UPRR/SR 99 and Hybrid	Block Group 6, Census Tract 3	1	1	2	37	44
UPRR/SR 99 and Hybrid	Block Group 7, Census Tract 3	1	1	1	42	47
UPRR/SR 99	Block Group 1, Census Tract 5.02	4	0	1	82	87
UPRR/SR 99	Block Group 3, Census Tract 5.02	4	0	2	77	85
UPRR/SR 99	Block Group 4, Census Tract 5.02	3	1	1	79	85
UPRR/SR 99	Block Group 2, Census Tract 5.03	4	1	10	57	74
UPRR/SR 99	Block Group 3, Census Tract 5.03	2	0	3	55	62
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Block Group 1, Census Tract 5.06	2	0	2	67	73
UPRR/SR 99	Block Group 2, Census Tract 5.06	2	0	1	73	78
BNSF and Hybrid	Block Group 3, Census Tract 5.06	2	0	1	64	70
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Block Group 1, Census Tract 5.07	3	1	1	74	80
BNSF and Hybrid	Block Group 4, Census Tract 5.07	3	0	2	56	61
UPRR/SR 99	Block Group 2, Census Tract 5.08	2	1	1	87	91
UPRR/SR 99	Block Group 3, Census Tract 6.02	1	0	0	96	98
UPRR/SR 99	Block Group 1, Census Tract 7	3	1	1	34	42
UPRR/SR 99	Block Group 2, Census Tract 7	2	1	5	52	63
UPRR/SR 99	Block Group 1, Census Tract 8	3	1	1	78	85
UPRR/SR 99	Block Group 2, Census Tract 8	3	0	1	87	91
UPRR/SR 99	Block Group 3, Census Tract 8	3	0	0	85	89
UPRR/SR 99	Block Group 4, Census Tract 8	1	1	0	88	91

Alternative	Census Block Group	African American (%)	Native American (%)	Asian (%)	Hispanic (%)	Total of All Minority Groups (%)
UPRR/SR 99	Block Group 5, Census Tract 8	2	1	1	79	84
UPRR/SR 99	Block Group 6, Census Tract 8	1	1	1	72	76
UPRR/SR 99	Block Group 3, Census Tract 9	3	1	3	89	96
<b>Merced County Block Groups</b>						
Harris-DeJager HMF	Block Group 2, Census Tract 9.01	1	0	1	61	65
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Block Group 2, Census Tract 13.01	3	1	2	50	58
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid, CCC HMF	Block Group 3, Census Tract 13.01	8	0	2	51	64
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Block Group 2, Census Tract 13.02	5	1	8	49	65
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Block Group 3, Census Tract 13.02	7	1	7	55	74
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Block Group 1, Census Tract 14.01	5	1	5	46	61
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Block Group 2, Census Tract 14.01	5	1	6	53	68
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid, CCC HMF	Block Group 2, Census Tract 15.02	2	0	4	89	97
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Block Group 1, Census Tract 16.01	9	0	8	72	90
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Block Group 2, Census Tract 16.01	7	0	7	83	98
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Block Group 3, Census Tract 16.01	3	0	7	84	95
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Block Group 1, Census Tract 16.02	7	0	21	60	90
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Block Group 1, Census Tract 17	4	1	12	55	74
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Block Group 2, Census Tract 17	5	0	9	40	57
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Block Group 3, Census Tract 17	4	1	2	56	65
BNSF	Block Group 1, Census Tract 19.02	1	1	1	81	84

Alternative	Census Block Group	African American (%)	Native American (%)	Asian (%)	Hispanic (%)	Total of All Minority Groups (%)
CCC HMF	Block Group 1, Census Tract 5.03	15	2	5	40	64
CCC HMF	Block Group 1, Census Tract 8.01	5	1	6	54	69
CCC HMF	Block Group 1, Census Tract 9.02	2	1	17	43	65
CCC HMF	Block Group 4, Census Tract 9.02	4	1	16	52	75
CCC HMF	Block Group 1, Census Tract 15.02	3	1	17	58	81
CCC HMF	Block Group 1, Census Tract 15.02	7	1	7	78	93

Notes:  
 HMF = heavy maintenance facility.  
 Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2010).

Table A-2 shows the presence of populations below the year 2010 poverty threshold based upon 2006 to 2010 ACS data. The table also includes information for the proposed HMFs sites. Figures A-7 through A-12, presented at the end of this appendix, show the percentages of low-income persons in the region by census tract.

**Table A-2**  
 Median Household Income and Population below the Poverty Threshold by Census Tracts within Study Area for UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, and Hybrid Alternatives

Alternative	Census Tract	Median Household Income in 2010 (\$)	Percentage Below the Poverty Level
<b>Counties</b>			
	Fresno County, Total	46,430	23
	Madera County, Total	46,039	19
	Merced County, Total	43,844	22
<b>Cities/Communities</b>			
	Fresno, Total	43,124	25
	Madera, Total	40,889	26
	Fairmead, Total	31,900	35
	Chowchilla, Total	39,902	18

Alternative	Census Tract	Median Household Income in 2010 (\$)	Percentage Below the Poverty Level
	Merced City, Total	36,269	26
	Le Grand	35,694	23
	Atwater, Total	42,226	23
<b>Fresno County Census Tracts</b>			
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Census Tract 2	15,898	48
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Census Tract 3	20,993	35
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Census Tract 4	30,453	47
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Census Tract 6	19,778	55
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Census Tract 7	24,904	39
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Census Tract 21	33,895	23
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Census Tract 37.01	27,981	24
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Census Tract 37.02	29,282	24
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Census Tract 38.05	37,821	30
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Census Tract 38.09	53,359	21
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Census Tract 42.05	29,151	12
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Census Tract 42.07	47,820	21
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Census Tract 42.15	74,792	25
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Census Tract 42.16	71,552	3
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Census Tract 47.04	26,770	34
<b>Madera County Census Tracts</b>			
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid, Kojima HMF, Gordon-Shaw HMF	Census Tract 2.01	37,772	20

<b>Alternative</b>	<b>Census Tract</b>	<b>Median Household Income in 2010 (\$)</b>	<b>Percentage Below the Poverty Level</b>
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid, Fagundes HMF	Census Tract 2.02	54,107	14
UPRR/SR 99 and Hybrid	Census Tract 3	34,474	22
UPRR/SR 99	Census Tract 5.02	37,451	29
UPRR/SR 99	Census Tract 5.03	64,735	12
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Census Tract 5.06	54,504	20
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Census Tract 5.07	51,667	18
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Census Tract 5.08	50,244	12
UPRR/SR 99	Census Tract 6.02	27,923	35
UPRR/SR 99	Census Tract 6.03	29,279	26
UPRR/SR 99	Census Tract 6.04	39,453	36
UPRR/SR 99	Census Tract 7	55,606	6
UPRR/SR 99	Census Tract 8	27,946	38
UPRR/SR 99	Census Tract 9	30,417	41
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Census Tract 10	50,517	24
<b>Merced County Census Tracts</b>			
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid, CCC HMF, Harris-DeJager HMF	Census Tract 9.01	47,077	17
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid, CCC HMF	Census Tract 13.01	30,858	25
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Census Tract 13.02	25,134	22
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Census Tract 14.01	35,278	26
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid, CCC HMF	Census Tract 15.02	26,662	33
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Census Tract 16.01	22,221	56
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Census Tract 16.02	33,062	38

Alternative	Census Tract	Median Household Income in 2010 (\$)	Percentage Below the Poverty Level
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Census Tract 17	29,444	35
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Census Tract 19.02	41,719	18
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Census Tract 26	80,109	15
CCC HMF	Census Tract 5.03	50,096	17
CCC HMF	Census Tract 8.01	45,088	19
CCC HMF	Census Tract 9.02	54,770	14
CCC HMF	Census Tract 15.01	45,146	17
CCC HMF	Census Tract 25	55,919	9

Notes:  
 Grey cells indicate the area meets environmental justice criteria.  
 HMF = heavy maintenance facility.  
 N/A = not applicable.  
 Source: U.S. Census (2010).

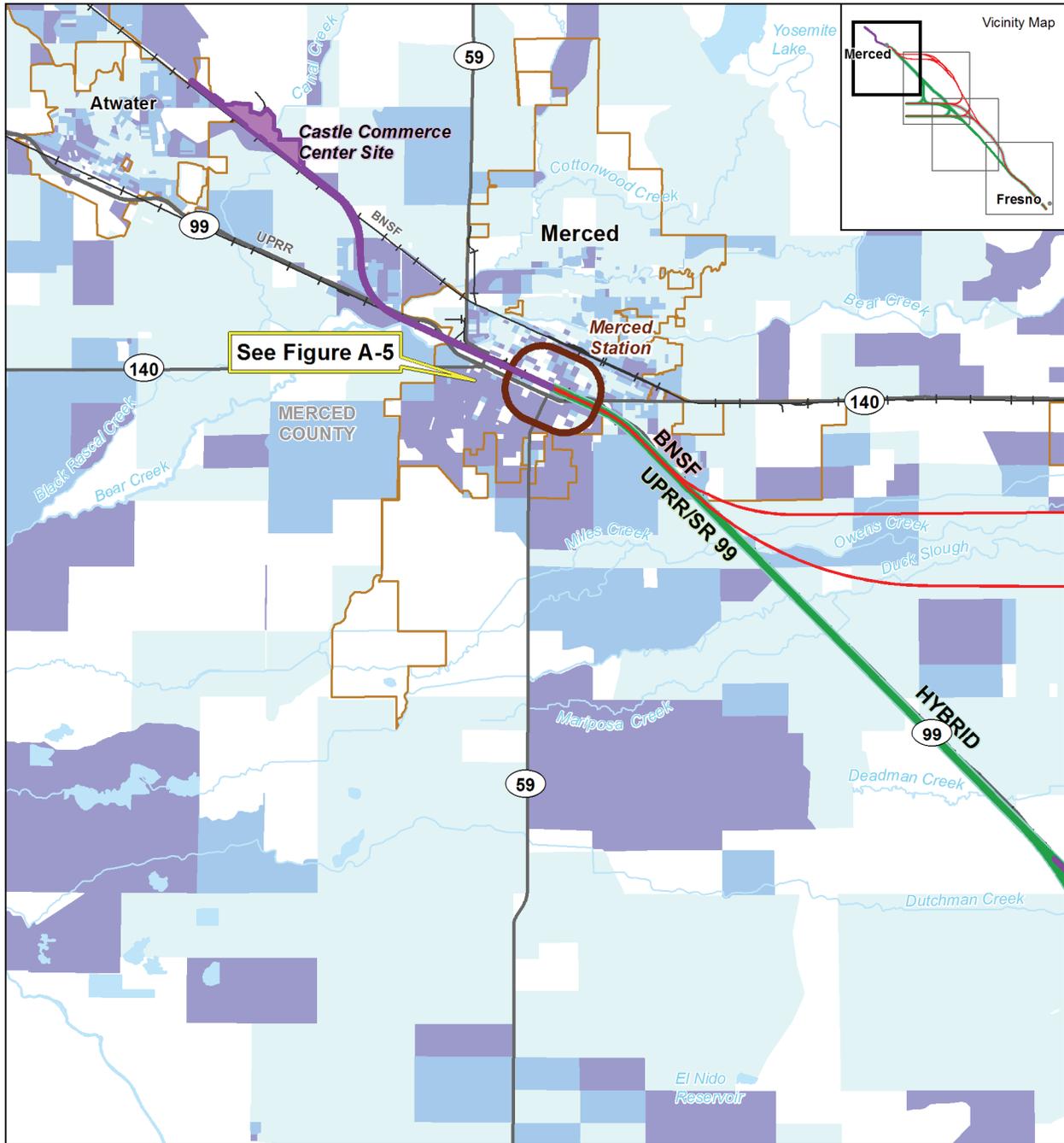
As shown in Table A-3, all of the schools have minority populations that exceed the thresholds based on eligibility for the free/reduced-price lunch program, which are those families that exceed the low-income threshold.

**Table A-3**  
 Elementary Schools within the Study Areas of UPRR/SR 99 and BNSF Alternatives and Percentages of Minority and Free and Reduced-Price-Lunch-Eligible Students

Alternative	School	Number of Total Students	Minority Students (%)	Free-Lunch-Eligible Students (%)	Reduced-Price-Lunch-Eligible Students (%)
<b>City of Atwater</b>					
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Aileen Colburn Elementary		85	72	12
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Mitchell Elementary		79	55	11
<b>City of Chowchilla</b>					
UPRR/SR 99	Stephens Elementary	209	59	87	11
UPRR/SR 99,	Fairmead Elementary	415	62	70	11

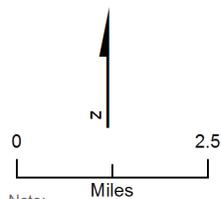
Alternative	School	Number of Total Students	Minority Students (%)	Free-Lunch-Eligible Students (%)	Reduced-Price-Lunch-Eligible Students (%)
BNSF, Hybrid					
UPRR/SR 99	Ronald Reagan Elementary	401	58	69	9
UPRR/SR 99	Merle L. Fuller Elementary	393	63	75	11
<b>City of Fresno</b>					
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Addams Elementary	827	86	85	8
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Calwa Elementary	724	99	85	7
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Columbia Elementary	581	97	96	2
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Herndon-Barstow Elementary	316	82	52	48
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Kirk Elementary	338	99	90	5
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Lincoln Elementary	503	98	91	5
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	River Bluff Elementary	795	59	25	9
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Roosevelt Elementary	506	84	64	14
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	William Saroyan Elementary	711	66	31	12
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	John Steinbeck Elementary	679	84	55	18
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Teague Elementary	676	91	66	13
<b>City of Madera</b>					
UPRR/SR 99	Alpha Elementary	737	91	66	25
BNSF, Hybrid	Berenda Elementary	778	77	50	21
UPRR/SR 99	Cesar Chavez Elementary	666	97	82	15
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Dixieland Elementary	300	82	66	16
UPRR/SR 99	John Adams Elementary	743	69	40	18
UPRR/SR 99	Lincoln Elementary	829	74	34	15
UPRR/SR 99	James Madison Elementary	705	93	89	10

<b>Alternative</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Number of Total Students</b>	<b>Minority Students (%)</b>	<b>Free-Lunch-Eligible Students (%)</b>	<b>Reduced-Price-Lunch-Eligible Students (%)</b>
UPRR/SR 99	Nishimoto Elementary	814	95	76	14
UPRR/SR 99	George Washington Elementary	707	96	76	12
<b>City of Merced</b>					
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	John Muir Elementary	568	80	82	10
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Pioneer Elementary	793	80	62	13
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Charles Wright Elementary	481	79	65	14
UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, Hybrid	Don Stowell Elementary	446	96	83	7



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (2000).

MF\_TR\_SJC\_13-16\_a Jul 13, 2011



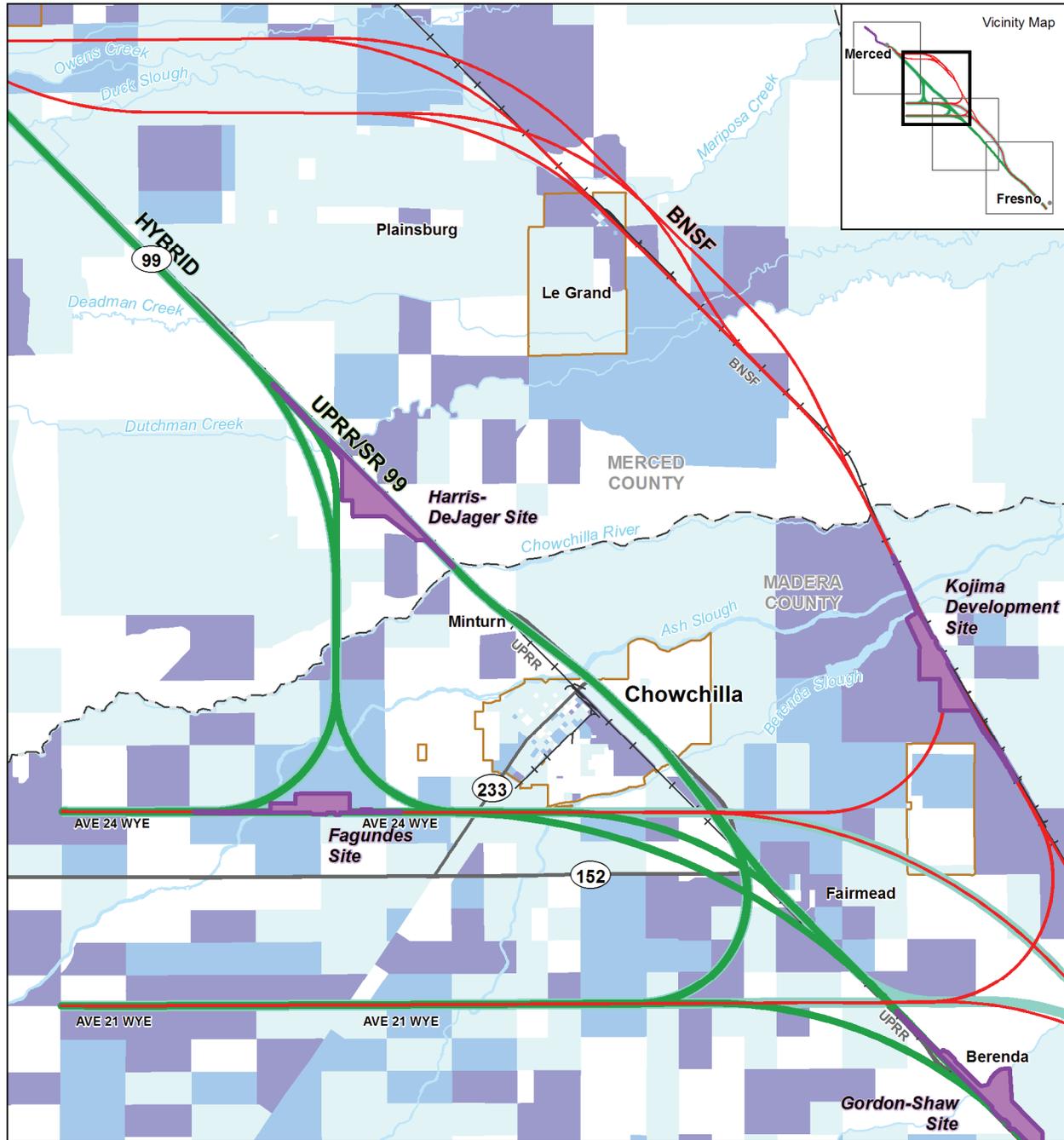
Note:  
 Census blocks are considered to have substantial environmental justice populations if the percent of minority residents is above 50 percent or 10 percentage points higher than the three county average (68 percent).

- UPRR/SR 99 Alternative
- BNSF Alternative
- Hybrid Alternative
- Potential Heavy Maintenance Facility
- Station Study Area
- City Limit
- County Boundary
- Railroad

**Minority Population Percentage by Census Block**

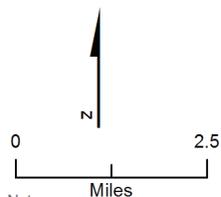
- Census Block With No Population
- 1 < 50%
- 50 - 68%
- > 68%

**Figure A-1**  
 Minority Population by Census Block  
 in the Merced Project Vicinity



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (2000).

MF\_TR\_SJC\_13-16\_b Jul 13, 2011



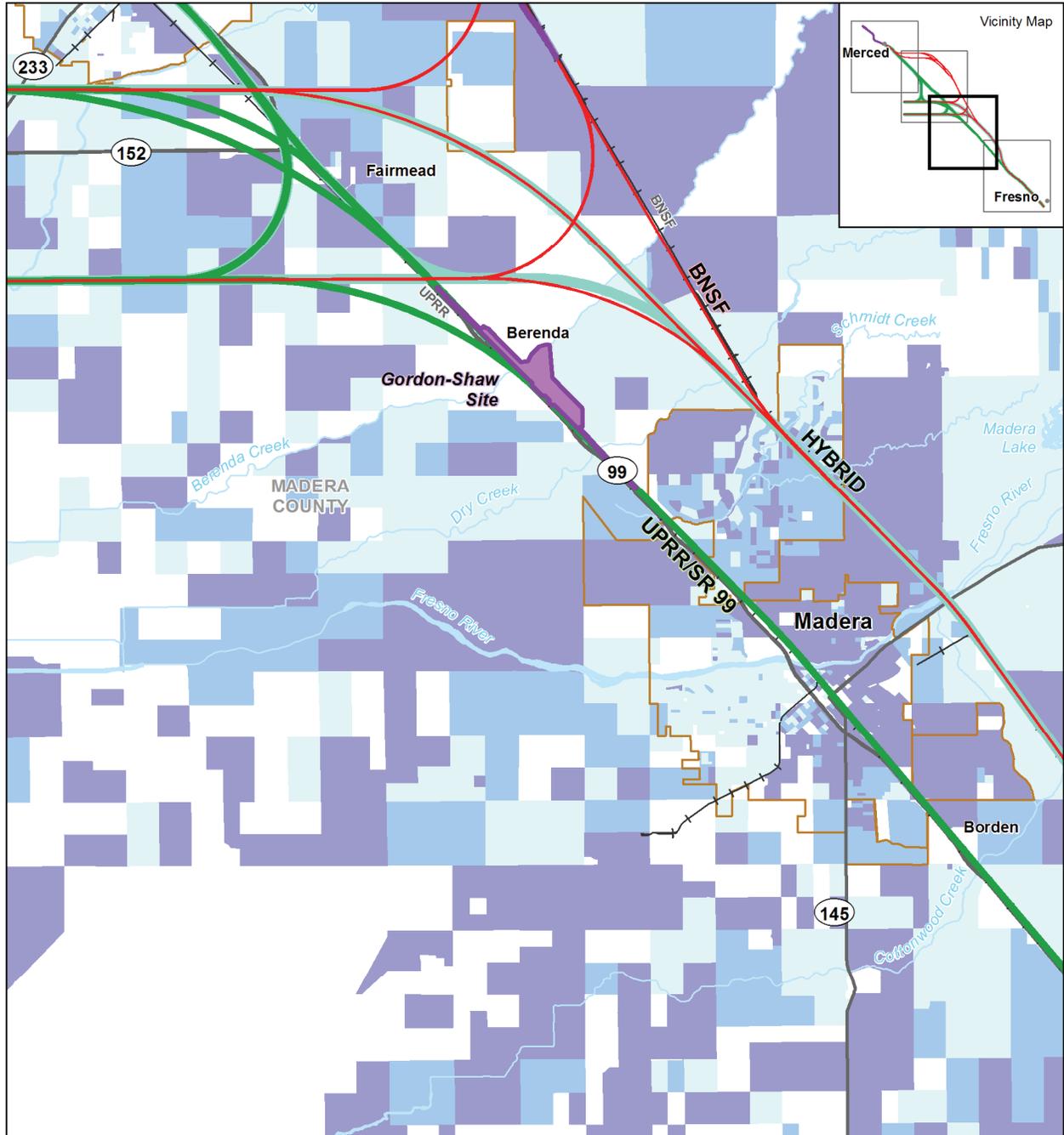
Note:  
 Census blocks are considered to have substantial environmental justice populations if the percent of minority residents is above 50 percent or 10 percentage points higher than the three county average (68 percent).

- UPRR/SR 99 Alternative
- BNSF Alternative
- Hybrid Alternative
- Potential Heavy Maintenance Facility
- Station Study Area
- City Limit
- County Boundary
- Railroad

**Minority Population Percentage by Census Block**

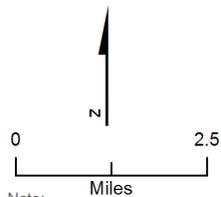
- Census Block With No Population
- 1 < 50%
- 50 - 68%
- > 68%

**Figure A-2**  
 Minority Population by Census Block  
 in the Chowchilla Project Vicinity



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (2000).

MF\_TR\_SJC\_13-16\_c Jul 13, 2011



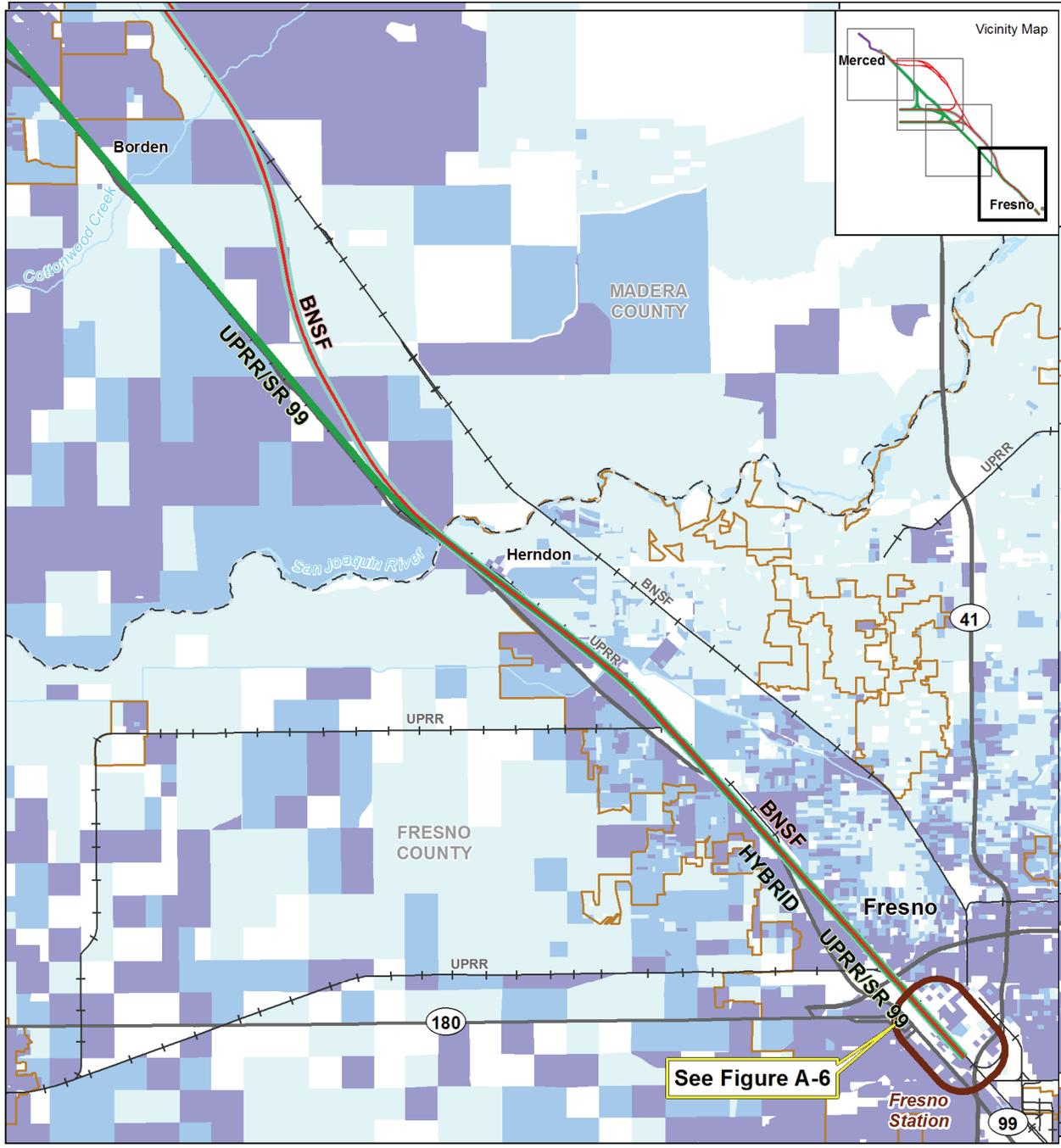
Note:  
 Census blocks are considered to have substantial environmental justice populations if the percent of minority residents is above 50 percent or 10 percentage points higher than the three county average (68 percent).

- UPRR/SR 99 Alternative
- BNSF Alternative
- Hybrid Alternative
- Potential Heavy Maintenance Facility
- Station Study Area
- City Limit
- County Boundary
- Railroad

**Minority Population Percentage by Census Block**

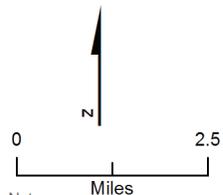
- Census Block With No Population
- 1 < 50%
- 50 - 68%
- > 68%

**Figure A-3**  
 Minority Population by Census Block  
 in the Madera Project Vicinity



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (2000).

MF\_TR\_SJC\_13-16\_d Jul 13, 2011



Note:  
 Census blocks are considered to have substantial environmental justice populations if the percent of minority residents is above 50 percent or 10 percentage points higher than the three county average (68 percent).

- UPRR/SR 99 Alternative
- BNSF Alternative
- Hybrid Alternative
- Potential Heavy Maintenance Facility
- Station Study Area
- City Limit
- - - County Boundary
- +— Railroad

**Minority Population Percentage by Census Block**

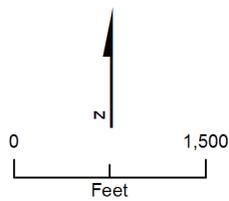
- Census Block With No Population
- 1 < 50%
- 50 - 68%
- > 68%

**Figure A-4**  
 Minority Population by Census Block  
 in the Fresno Project Vicinity



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (2000).

MF\_TR\_SJC\_09 Aug 05, 2011



- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="color: green;">—</span> UPRR/SR 99 Alternative</li> <li><span style="color: red;">—</span> BNSF Alternative</li> <li><span style="color: blue;">—</span> Hybrid Alternative</li> <li><span style="border: 1px solid brown; border-radius: 50%; width: 10px; height: 10px; display: inline-block;"></span> Station Study Area</li> <li><span style="border: 1px solid orange; width: 10px; height: 10px; display: inline-block;"></span> City Limit</li> <li><span style="border-top: 1px solid black; width: 10px; display: inline-block;"></span> Railroad</li> </ul> | <p><b>Minority Population Percentage by Census Block</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="background-color: white; border: 1px solid black; width: 15px; height: 10px; display: inline-block;"></span> Census Block With No Population</li> <li><span style="background-color: lightblue; width: 15px; height: 10px; display: inline-block;"></span> 1 &lt; 50%</li> <li><span style="background-color: mediumblue; width: 15px; height: 10px; display: inline-block;"></span> 50 - 68%</li> <li><span style="background-color: darkblue; width: 15px; height: 10px; display: inline-block;"></span> &gt; 68%</li> </ul> |
|--|---|

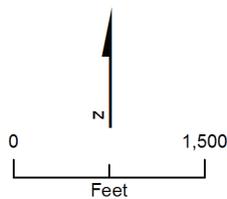
Note:  
 Census blocks are considered to have substantial environmental justice populations if the percent of minority residents is above 50 percent or 10 percentage points higher than the three county average (68 percent).

**Figure A-5**  
 Minority Population by Census Block  
 in the Downtown Merced Station  
 Study Area



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (2000).

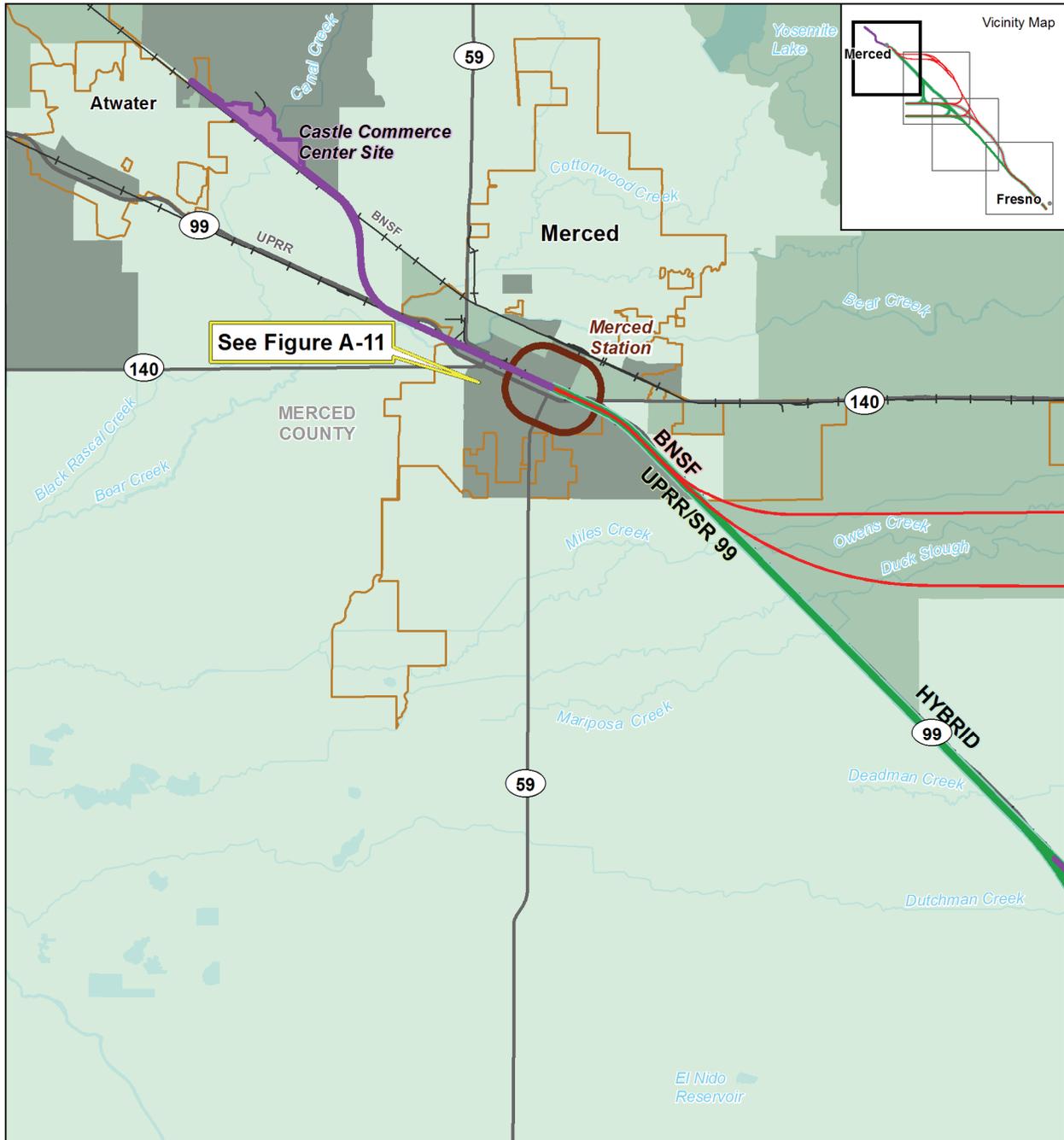
MF\_TR\_SJC\_10 Aug 05, 2011



- UPRR/SR 99 Alternative
  - BNSF Alternative
  - Hybrid Alternative
  - Station Study Area
  - Railroad
- 
- Minority Population Percentage by Census Block**
- Census Block with No Population
  - 1 < 50%
  - 50 - 68%
  - > 68%

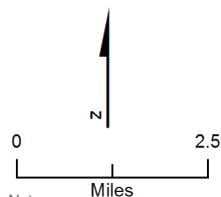
Note:  
 Census blocks are considered to have substantial environmental justice populations if the percent of minority residents is above 50 percent or 10 percentage points higher than the three county average (68 percent).

**Figure A-6**  
 Minority Population by Census Block  
 in the Downtown Fresno Station  
 Study Area



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (2000).

MF\_TR\_SJC\_17-20\_a Jul 13, 2011

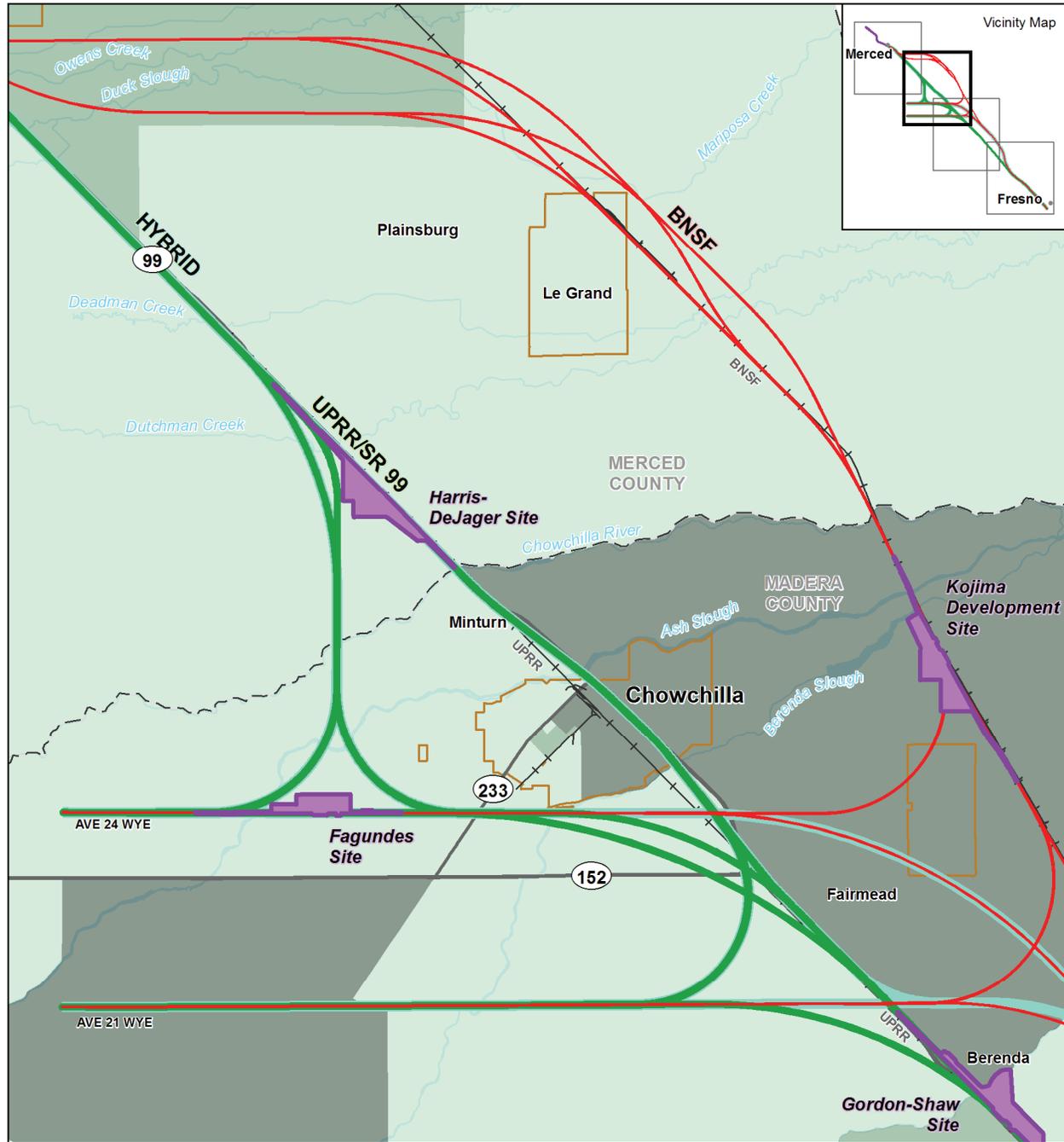


Note:  
 Census block groups are considered to have substantial environmental justice populations if the percent of the low-income residents is above 25 percent or 10 percentage points higher than the three county average (32 percent).

- UPRR/SR 99 Alternative
- BNSF Alternative
- Hybrid Alternative
- Potential Heavy Maintenance Facility
- Station Study Area
- City Limit
- County Boundary
- Railroad

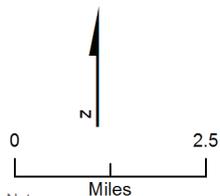
- Low Income Percentage**
- < 25%
  - 25 - 32%
  - > 32%

**Figure A-7**  
 Low-Income Population in the Merced Project Vicinity



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (2000).

MF\_TR\_SJC\_17-20\_b Jul 13, 2011



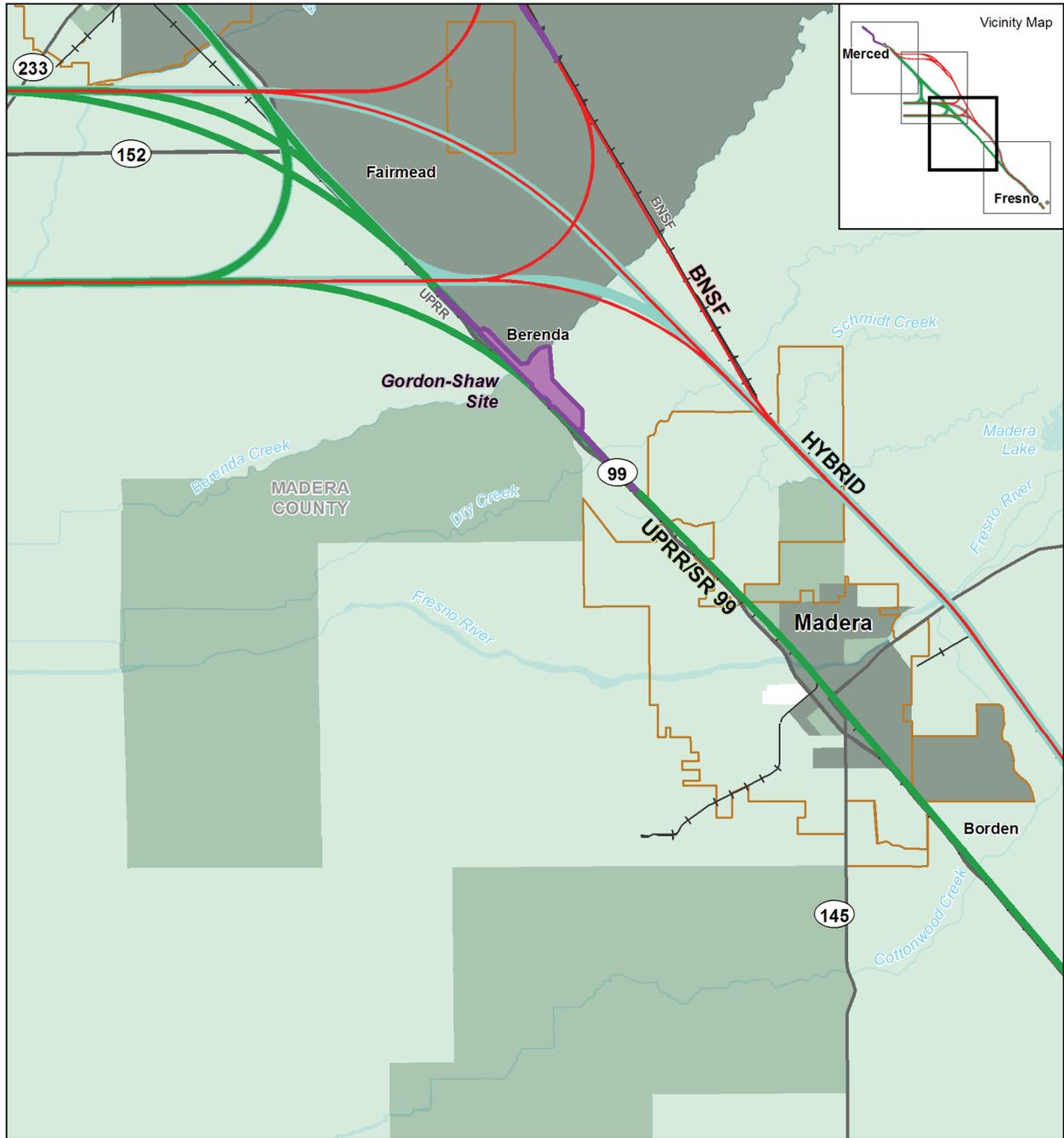
Note:  
 Census block groups are considered to have substantial environmental justice populations if the percent of the low-income residents is above 25 percent or 10 percentage points higher than the three county average (32 percent).

- UPRR/SR 99 Alternative
- BNSF Alternative
- Hybrid Alternative
- Potential Heavy Maintenance Facility
- Station Study Area
- City Limit
- County Boundary
- + Railroad

**Low Income Percentage**

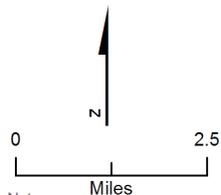
- < 25%
- 25 - 32%
- > 32%

**Figure A-8**  
 Low-Income Population in the  
 Chowchilla Project Vicinity



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (2000).

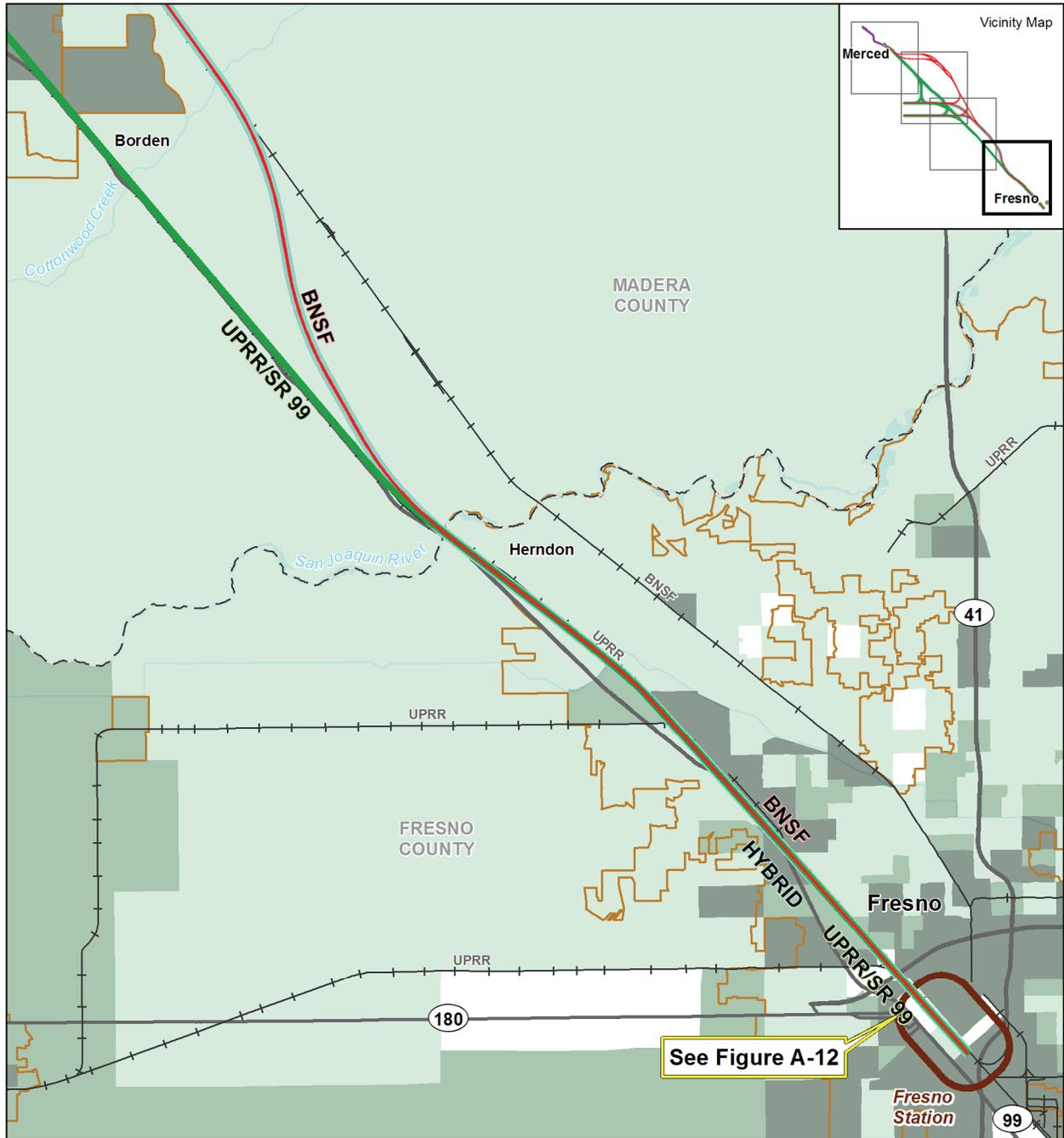
MF\_TR\_SJC\_17-20\_c Jul 13, 2011



Note:  
 Census block groups are considered to have substantial environmental justice populations if the percent of the low-income residents is above 25 percent or 10 percentage points higher than the three county average (32 percent).

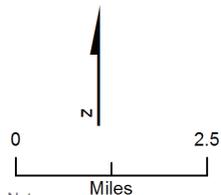
- |  |                                      |  |          |
|--|--------------------------------------|--|----------|
|  | UPRR/SR 99 Alternative               |  | < 25%    |
|  | BNSF Alternative                     |  | 25 - 32% |
|  | Hybrid Alternative                   |  | > 32%    |
|  | Potential Heavy Maintenance Facility |  |          |
|  | Station Study Area                   |  |          |
|  | City Limit                           |  |          |
|  | County Boundary                      |  |          |
|  | Railroad                             |  |          |

**Figure A-9**  
 Low-Income Population in the  
 Madera Project Vicinity



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (2000).

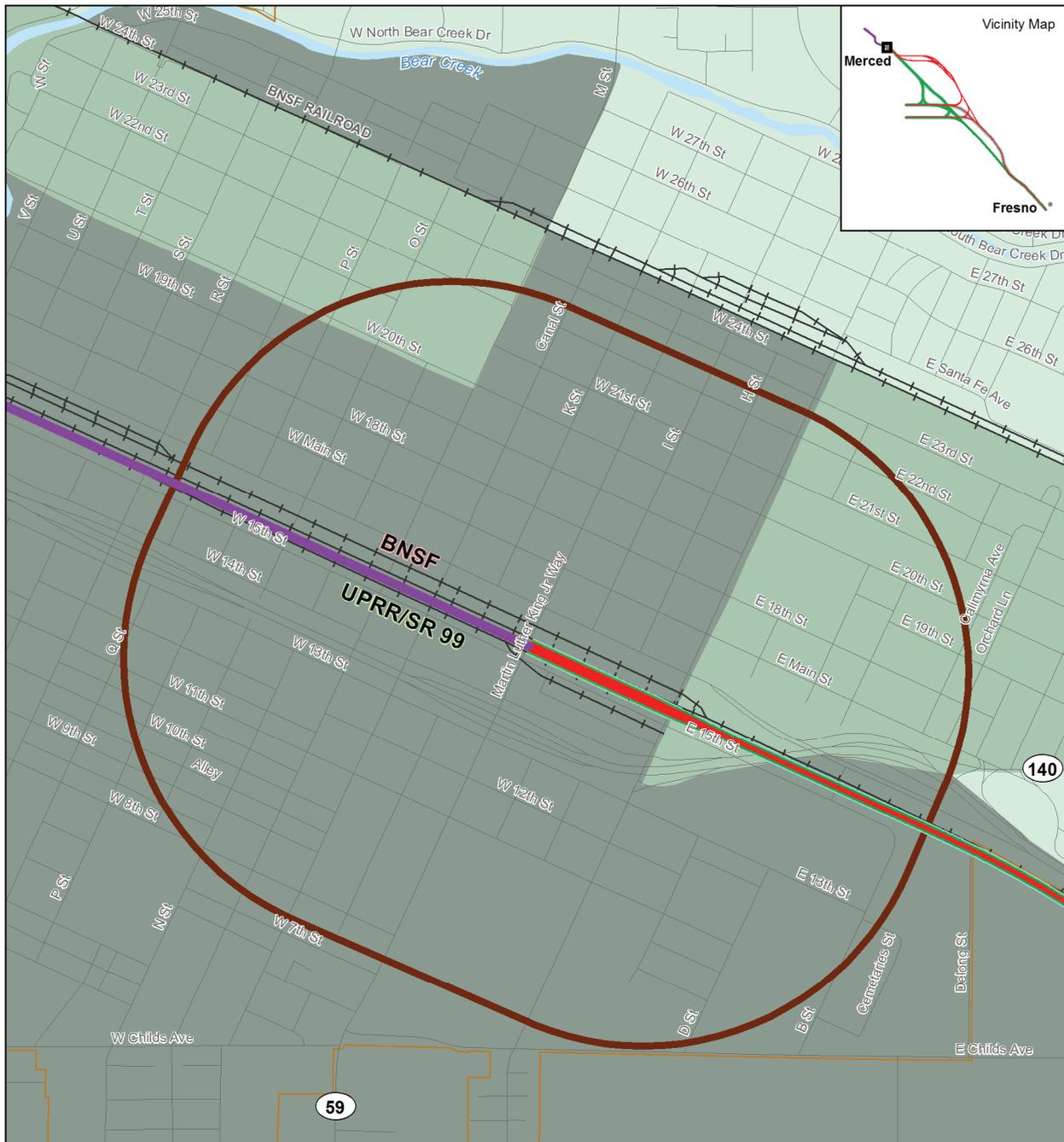
MF\_TR\_SJC\_17-20\_d Jul 13, 2011



Note:  
 Census block groups are considered to have substantial environmental justice populations if the percent of the low-income residents is above 25 percent or 10 percentage points higher than the three county average (32 percent).

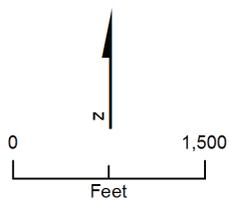
- |  |                                      |  |          |
|--|--------------------------------------|--|----------|
|  | UPRR/SR 99 Alternative               |  | < 25%    |
|  | BNSF Alternative                     |  | 25 - 32% |
|  | Hybrid Alternative                   |  | > 32%    |
|  | Potential Heavy Maintenance Facility |  |          |
|  | Station Study Area                   |  |          |
|  | City Limit                           |  |          |
|  | County Boundary                      |  |          |
|  | Railroad                             |  |          |

**Figure A-10**  
 Low-Income Population in the Fresno Project Vicinity



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (2000).

MF\_TR\_SJC\_11 Aug 05, 2011



- |                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| UPRR/SR 99 Alternative | <b>Low Income Percentage by Census Block Group</b> |
| BNSF Alternative       |  |
| Hybrid Alternative     |  |
| Station Study Area     | < 25%  |
| City Limit             | 25 - 32%   |
| Railroad               | > 32%  |

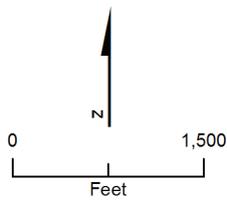
Note:  
 Census block groups are considered to have substantial environmental justice populations if the percent of the low-income residents is above 25 percent or 10 percentage points higher than the three county average (32 percent).

**Figure A-11**  
 Low-Income Population in the  
 Downtown Merced Station Study Area



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (2000).

MF\_TR\_SJC\_12 Aug 05, 2011



- UPRR/SR 99 Alternative
  - BNSF Alternative
  - Hybrid Alternative
  - Station Study Area
  - Railroad
- Census Block Group With No Population
  - < 25%
  - 25 - 32%
  - > 32%

Note:  
Census block groups are considered to have substantial environmental justice populations if the percent of the low-income residents is above 25 percent or 10 percentage points higher than the three county average (32 percent).

**Figure A-12**  
Low-Income Population in the  
Downtown Fresno Station Study Area

**APPENDIX B**

# **Community Facilities**

---



## Appendix B: Community Facilities

Table B-1 lists community facilities in study area. The facility identifier (ID) listed in the first column corresponds to the numeric identifiers in Figures B-1 through B-7.

**Table B-1**  
 Community Facilities

Facility ID	Name	Type	County	City	Address
1	Castle Air Museum	Cultural	Merced	Atwater	5050 Santa Fe Drive
2	Castle Family Health Center	Social	Merced	Atwater	3605 Hospital Road
3	Challenger Learning Center	School	Merced	Atwater	3553 Challenger Way
4	Merced Scholars Charter School	School	Merced	Merced	808 West 16th Street
5	Atwater Castle Head Start	School	Merced	Atwater	2050 Academy Drive
6	Joe Stefani Elementary School	School	Merced	Merced	2768 Rancho Lane
7	Franklin Elementary School	School	Merced	Merced	2736 Franklin Road
8	Merced Community Law Enforcement Office (CLEO)	Public service	Merced	Merced	2736 N Franklin Rd
9	Islamic Center of Merced	Religious	Merced	Merced	2322 Ashby Road
10	John Fremont Elementary School	School	Merced	Merced	1120 West 22nd Street
11	Merced County Sherriff's Office	Public service	Merced	Merced	700 West 22nd Street
12	Faith Mission Ministries, Inc.	Social	Merced	Merced	909 W. 18th Street
13	Harvest Christian Center	Religious	Merced	Merced	161 East 16th Street
14	Salvation Army of Merced	Social	Merced	Merced	1440 West 12th Street
15	Calvary Assemble of God/Harvest Time	Social	Merced	Merced	1021 R Street
16	Full Gospel Temple	Religious	Merced	Merced	990 West 12th Street
17	Merced Lao Family Community Inc.	Social	Merced	Merced	855 West 15th Street
18	Merced Senior Community Center	Social	Merced	Merced	755 West 15th Street

Facility ID	Name	Type	County	City	Address
19	Merced Sierra Meadows	Social	Merced	Merced	720 West 15th Street
20	McCombs Youth Center	Social	Merced	Merced	615 W 15th Street
21	Mision Cristiana Pricipe de Paz	Religious	Merced	Merced	2172 Yosemite Parkway
22	Multicultural Arts Center	Cultural	Merced	Merced	645 West Main Street
23	Merced Civic Center	Government	Merced	Merced	678 West 18th Street
24	Merced Baptist Church	Religious	Merced	Merced	533 W Main Street
25	Merced Post Office	Post Office	Merced	Merced	415 West 18th Street
26	Universal Church	Religious	Merced	Merced	437 West 18th Street
27	Central Presbyterian Church	Religious	Merced	Merced	1921 Canal Street
28	Merced Montessori School	School	Merced	Merced	436 West 21st Street
29	Our Lady of Mercy – St. Patrick’s Parrish	Religious	Merced	Merced	435 West 21st Street
30	Havenwood Shelter	Social	Merced	Merced	121 West 20th Street
31	Catholic Charities of Merced	Social	Merced	Merced	336 West Main Street
32	Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Church	Religious	Merced	Merced	519 West 12th Street
33	Galen Clark Preschool	School	Merced	Merced	211 East 11th Street
34	Merced County Office of Education	School	Merced	Merced	632 West 13th Street
35	South Station	Public service	Merced	Merced	470 West 11th Street
36	Yosemite High (Continuation) School	School	Merced	Merced	1900 G Street
37	Iglesia Bautista de la Comunidad	Religious	Merced	Merced	1135 H Street
38	Station 51 – Merced Fire Department Station	Public service	Merced	Merced	99 E 16th Street
39	Grace Fellowship Foursquare Church	Religious	Merced	Merced	290 East Main Street
40	Homeless Shelter	Social	Merced	Merced	317 East 15th Street
41	Merced Medical Center Merced	Hospital	Merced	Merced	301 E 13th Street
42	New Faith Tabernacle	Religious	Merced	Merced	208 East 10th Street
43	Evergreen Cemetery	Cemetery	Merced	Merced	B and E 13th Street
44	Truth Tabernacle	Religious	Merced	Merced	925 East Childs Avenue

Facility ID	Name	Type	County	City	Address
45	Le Grand United Methodist Church	Religious	Merced	Le Grand	3821 S Washington
46	Merced County Library - Le Grand	Government	Merced	Le Grand	12949 Le Grand Road
47	Le Grand High School	School	Merced	Le Grand	12961 Le Grand Road
48	Le Grand Elementary School	School	Merced	Le Grand	13071 Le Grand Road
49	U.S. Post Office	Government	Merced	Le Grand	13201 Jefferson Street
50	Le Grand Fire Station 84	Public service	Merced	Le Grand	3875 Santa Fe Drive
51	Le Grand State Preschool	School	Merced	Le Grand	4140 South Cook Street
52	United Pentecostal Church	Religious	Madera	Madera	745 N H Street
53	Galilee Missionary Baptist Church	Religious	Madera	Chowchilla	22491 Fairmead Blvd
54	Grace Tabernacle Church	Religious	Madera	Chowchilla	19492 Ave 22 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub>
55	Progressive Church of God in Christ	Religious	Madera	Madera	15873 Cardwell Street
56	Morning Star Baptist Church	Religious	Madera	Madera	16587 Harper Boulevard
57	Iglesia Pentecostal Unida Hispanic	Religious	Madera	Madera	900 Sonora Street
58	Madera Drive-In Theatre	Cultural	Madera	Madera	201 E Lincoln Avenue
59	Mexican American Activity Center	Social	Madera	Madera	716 Columbia
60	Pentecostal Tabernacle - Universal Church	Religious	Madera	Madera	313 Riverside Drive
61	First Southern Baptist Church	Religious	Madera	Madera	711 Nebraska Avenue
62	New Harvest Christian Fellowship	Religious	Madera	Madera	510 North Gateway Drive
63	Victory Outreach Madera Church	Religious	Madera	Madera	525 North E Street
64	Community Bible Church	Religious	Madera	Madera	333 East Central Avenue
65	Madera City Hall	Government	Madera	Madera	205 West 4th Street
66	Heartland Opportunity Center	Social	Madera	Madera	323 North E Street
67	Madera County Museum	Cultural	Madera	Madera	209 West Yosemite



Facility ID	Name	Type	County	City	Address
68	Madera County Library	Library	Madera	Madera	121 North G Street
69	Believers Church of Madera	Religious	Madera	Madera	117 North E Street
70	New Generation Christian	Religious	Madera	Madera	119 North B Street
71	Madera County Courthouse	Government	Madera	Madera	209 West Yosemite
72	First Presbyterian Church	Religious	Fresno	Fresno	1540 M Street
73	Madera Post Office	Post Office	Madera	Madera	201 South D Street
74	Center for Joyful Living - Spiritual Awareness Center	Religious	Madera	Madera	218 South D Street
75	Frank A Bergon Senior Center	Social	Madera	Madera	238 South D Street
76	Job Service	Social	Madera	Madera	209 E 7th Street
77	Madera Police Department Headquarters	Public service	Madera	Madera	330 South C Street
78	Madera Free Will Baptist Church	Religious	Madera	Madera	119 N B St
79	Madera Community Hospital	Hospital	Madera	Madera	1250 E Almond Ave
80	Sunrise Church of God in Christ	Religious	Madera	Madera	1250 E Almond Ave
81	Madera Baptist Academy	School	Madera	Madera	13234 Golden State Boulevard
82	Celebration Church	Religious	Fresno	Fresno	4842 W Jacquelyn Avenue
83	Victory Life Center	Religious	Fresno	Fresno	5303 N Market Avenue
84	Highway City United Pentecostal	Religious	Fresno	Fresno	5230 N Market Ave
85	First Spanish Baptist Church	Religious	Fresno	Fresno	5365 West Mission Avenue
86	Highway City Neighborhood Center	Social	Fresno	Fresno	5140 N State Street
87	Faith Tabernacle	Religious	Fresno	Fresno	4343 N Golden State Boulevard
88	Pathway Community Day School	School	Fresno	Fresno	4317 N Golden State Boulevard

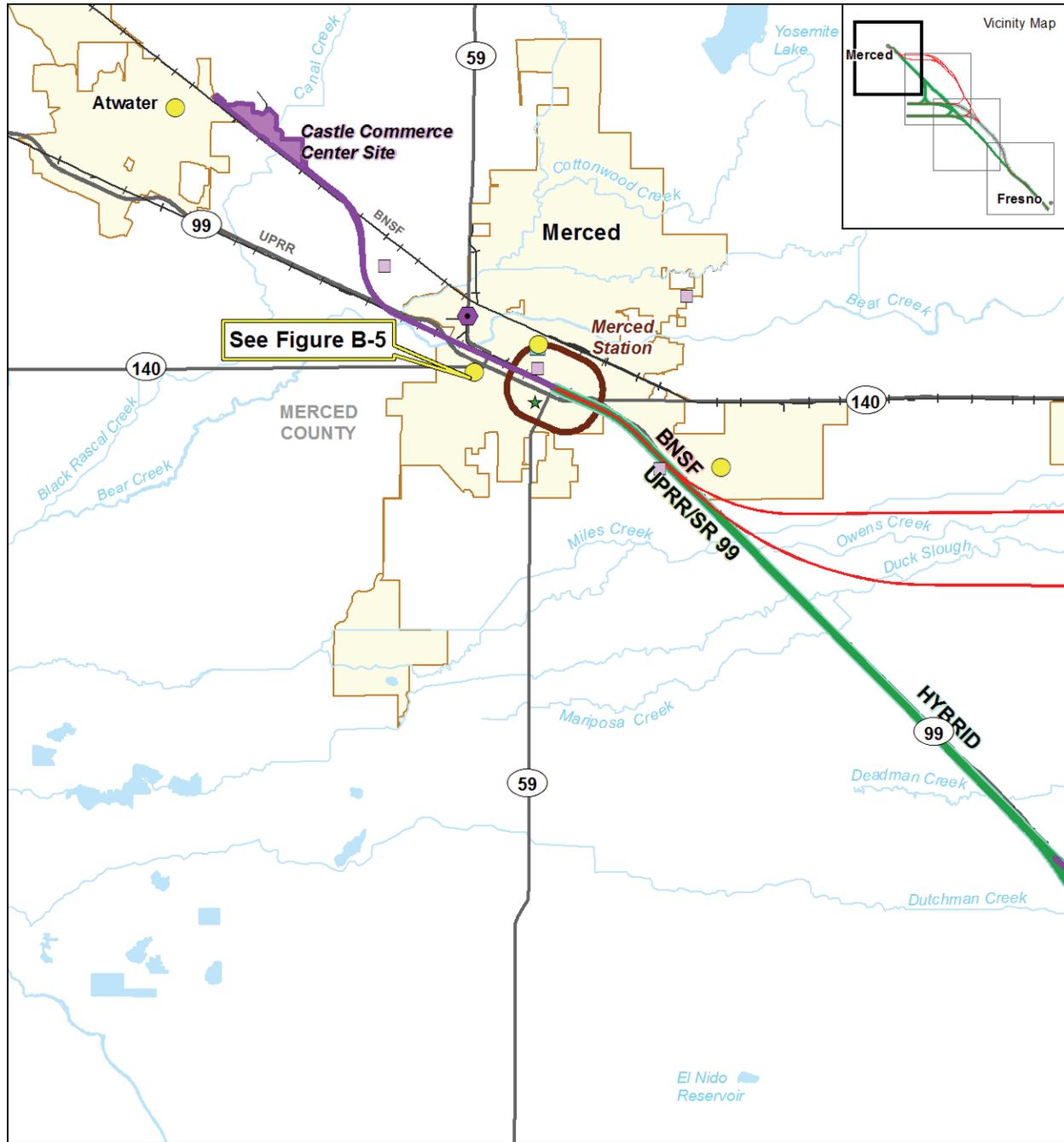
Facility ID	Name	Type	County	City	Address
89	Jehovah's Witness Park & Princeton Congregation	Religious	Fresno	Fresno	3214 W Princeton Avenue
90	Fresno Unity Group Homes	Social	Fresno	Fresno	2745 North Hughes Ave
91	The Hacienda	Social	Fresno	Fresno	2550 West Clinton Avenue
92	Bel Haven	Social	Fresno	Fresno	2020 North Weber Avenue
93	BAPS West	Religious	Fresno	Fresno	1425 West Pine Avenue
94	Kenya's Little Ark Preschool	School	Fresno	Fresno	420 West Olive Avenue
95	Fort Miller Blockhouse Museum	Cultural	Fresno	Fresno	Near Roeding Park
96	Diocese of Fresno	Religious	Fresno	Fresno	1550 N Fresno Street
97	Church on the Rock	Religious	Fresno	Fresno	320 North Palm Avenue
98	Velarde Training Center	School	Fresno	Fresno	136 North Thorne Avenue
99	Bethel Evangelical Lutheran Church	Religious	Fresno	Fresno	187 N Broadway
100	Apostolic Assembly-The Faith	Religious	Fresno	Fresno	110 N Yosemite Ave
101	Iglesia de Jesucristo Palabra Miel Fresno	Religious	Fresno	Fresno	843 E Divisadero
102	World Impact Fresno	Religious	Fresno	Fresno	1955 Broadway Street
103	Salvation Army	Social	Fresno	Fresno	1854 Fulton Street
104	African-American Museum	Cultural	Fresno	Fresno	1857 Fulton Street
105	Salvation Army Church	Religious	Fresno	Fresno	1854 Fulton Street
106	Iglesia Apostolica Unida	Religious	Fresno	Fresno	2123 Amador Street
107	Fresno Revival Center	Religious	Fresno	Fresno	11 North San Pablo Avenue
108	Fresno Religious Society of Friends	Religious	Fresno	Fresno	2219 San Joaquin Street
109	Hope Manor	Social	Fresno	Fresno	1665 M Street
110	Power House Institutional Church	Religious	Fresno	Fresno	1615 N Street
111	School of Unlimited Learning	School	Fresno	Fresno	2336 Calaveras Street
112	Arte Américas	Cultural	Fresno	Fresno	1630 Van Ness Avenue

Facility ID	Name	Type	County	City	Address
113	Fresno Metropolitan Museum of Art, History, and Science	Cultural	Fresno	Fresno	1555 Van Ness Avenue
114	Cornerstone Church/Academy Charter	Religious	Fresno	Fresno	1545 Fulton Street
115	Center for Professional Development	Public service	Fresno	Fresno	1833 E Street
116	Cornerstone Church - Feeding Fresno	Social	Fresno	Fresno	1515 Broadway Street
117	The Downtown Church	Religious	Fresno	Fresno	1441 Fulton Street
118	Worldwide Ministries - The Downtown Church	Religious	Fresno	Fresno	1441 Fulton Street
119	Warnors Center for Performing Arts	Cultural	Fresno	Fresno	1400 Fulton Street
120	Fresno County Civil Courthouse	Government	Fresno	Fresno	2317 Tuolumne Street
121	New Kingdom Church	Religious	Fresno	Fresno	1607 C Street
122	Fresno County Sheriff Department	Public service	Fresno	Fresno	2200 Fresno Street
123	Memorial Auditorium	Cultural	Fresno	Fresno	2425 Fresno Street
124	Fresno County Public Library (Central)	Library	Fresno	Fresno	2420 Mariposa Street
125	Post Office (Civic Center Fresno)	Government	Fresno	Fresno	2309 Tulare Street
126	Fresno County Plaza Building	Government	Fresno	Fresno	2220 Tulare Street
127	Fresno Superior Courthouse	Government	Fresno	Fresno	2220 Tulare Street
128	Fresno County Superintendent	Public service	Fresno	Fresno	1111 Van Ness Avenue
129	Fresno Police Department	Public service	Fresno	Fresno	1211 Fresno Street
130	Golden Cross Health Care of Fresno	Social	Fresno	Fresno	1233 A Street
131	La Vera's Educational Center	Pre-school	Fresno	Fresno	1015 Fresno Street
132	First Mexican Baptist Church	Religious	Fresno	Fresno	1061 E Street
133	Fresno Buddhist Temple	Religious	Fresno	Fresno	1340 Kern Street

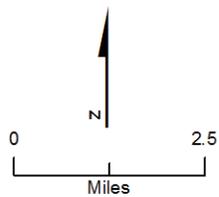
Facility ID	Name	Type	County	City	Address
134	Harvest of Harmony International Church	Religious	Fresno	Fresno	1410 Kern Street
135	Fresno Convention and Entertainment Center	Cultural	Fresno	Fresno	700 M Street
136	Holy Trinity Armenian Apostolic Church	Religious	Fresno	Fresno	537 M Street
137	Armenian Community Center	Social	Fresno	Fresno	2348 Ventura Street
138	Bellevue Elementary School	School	Merced	Atwater	1020 East Bellevue Road
139	Centro De Avivamiento	Religious	Merced	Merced	2525 Beachwood Drive
140	Calvary Temple Pentecostal Church	Religious	Merced	Merced	2740 N. State Highway 59
141	Merced County Adult Services	Social	Merced	Merced	2777 N State Highway 59
142	Merced County Library	Government	Merced	Merced	2100 O Street
143	Merced Police Department	Public Service	Merced	Merced	470 W 11th Street
144	Friends International Christian University	School	Merced	Merced	2125 O Street
145	John C. Fremont Charter School	School	Merced	Merced	1120 W. 22nd Street
146	Seventh Day Adventist Church	Religious	Merced	Merced	2222 E Olive Avenue
147	Bethesda Apostolic Faith Church	Religious	Merced	Merced	637 W. Main Street
148	Pioneer Elementary School	School	Merced	Merced	2950 E. Gerard Avenue
149	House of Prayer Pentecostal Church	Religious	Merced	Merced	590 Henry Road
150	Grace Community Church	Religious	Madera	Chowchilla	238 Kings Avenue
151	Madera County Library	Government	Madera	Chowchilla	300 Kings Avenue
152	Cornerstone Community Church	Religious	Madera	Chowchilla	208 Fig Tree Road
153	Ronald Regan Elementary School	School	Madera	Chowchilla	2200 S. Lake Tahoe Drive
154	Shepherd's Temple Church of God in Christ	Religious	Madera	Chowchilla	16283 Avenue 24 1/2
155	Fairmead Elementary School	School	Madera	Chowchilla	19421 Avenue 24 1/2

Facility ID	Name	Type	County	City	Address
156	Iglesia Bautista El Calvario	Religious	Madera	Madera	201 Cleveland Avenue
157	Trinity Episcopal Church	Religious	Madera	Madera	420 E. 4th Street
158	Madera County Home Protection	Social	Madera	Madera	629 East Yosemite Avenue
159	George Washington Elementary	School	Madera	Madera	509 E. South Street
160	Madera Fire Department	Public Services	Madera	Madera	317 N. Lake Street
161	Arbor Vitae Cemetery	Cemetery	Madera	Madera	1301 Roberts Avenue
162	Joachim's Catholic School	School	Madera	Madera	401 W. 5th Street
163	St. Joachim's Catholic Church	Religious	Madera	Madera	401 W. 5 <sup>th</sup> Street
164	Norman M. Gould Educational Center	School	Madera	Madera	117 W. Dunham Street
165	Madera Bible Church	Religious	Madera	Madera	124 Walnut Street
166	Second Baptist Church	Religious	Madera	Madera	828 S. A Street
167	Eastside Head Start	School	Madera	Madera	112 South A Street
168	Sierra Vista Elementary School	School	Madera	Madera	917 East Olive Avenue
169	Planned Parenthood: Madera Health Center	Social	Madera	Madera	500 East Almond Avenue #1
170	Parkwood Elementary School	School	Madera	Madera	1150 East Pecan Avenue
171	River Bluff Elementary School	School	Fresno	Fresno	6150 West Palo Alto Avenue
172	Rio Vista Middle School	School	Fresno	Fresno	6240 West Palo Alto Avenue
173	Herndon-Barstow Elementary School	School	Fresno	Fresno	6265 N. Grantland Avenue
174	Saroyan Elementary School	School	Fresno	Fresno	5650 West Escalon Avenue
175	Northgate Assembly of God Church	Religious	Fresno	Fresno	2707 W Dakota Avenue
176	Badr Islamic Center	Religious	Fresno	Fresno	4222 West Alamos Avenue
177	The River Ministries	Religious	Fresno	Fresno	4450 N. Brawley Avenue
178	North Fresno Assembly of God Church	Religious	Fresno	Fresno	2707 W Dakota Avenue

Facility ID	Name	Type	County	City	Address
179	Ambassador Baptist Church	Religious	Fresno	Fresno	3354 E Clinton Avenue
180	Homan Elementary School	School	Fresno	Fresno	1602 W Harvard Avenue
181	Our Lady of Victory Church	Religious	Fresno	Fresno	2850 N Crystal Avenue
182	West Mc Kinley Church	Religious/ School	Fresno	Fresno	3014 West McKinley Avenue
183	West Mc Kinley Church Preschool	School	Fresno	Fresno	3014 West McKinley Avenue
184	Fremont Elementary School	School	Fresno	Fresno	1005 W Weldon Avenue
185	Archangles Michael and Gabriel COPTIC Orthodox Church	Religious	Fresno	Fresno	985 N Palm Avenue
186	Fresno Union Academy	School	Fresno	Fresno	
187	Muir Elementary School	School	Fresno	Fresno	410 East Dennett Avenue
188	Columbia Elementary School	School	Fresno	Fresno	1025 S Trinity Street
189	Lowell Preschool	School	Fresno	Fresno	171 North Poplar Avenue
190	Rescue the Children (Fresno Rescue Mission)	Social	Fresno	Fresno	2141 N. Parkway Drive
191	Poverello House	Social	Fresno	Fresno	412 F Street
192	Fresno Rescue Mission (Main Campus)	Social	Fresno	Fresno	310 G Street

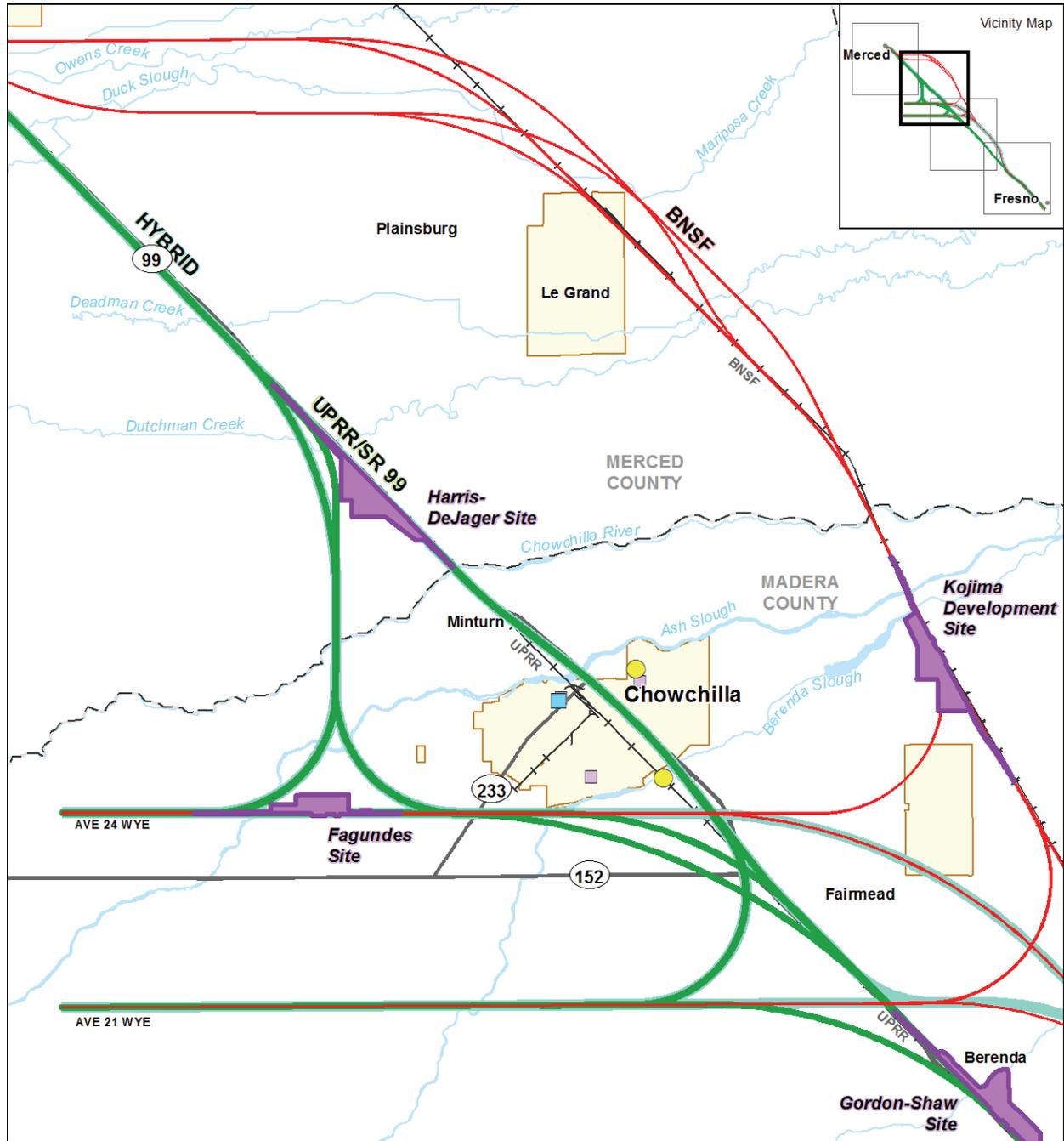


MF\_EIS\_SCJ\_01 Apr 06, 2012

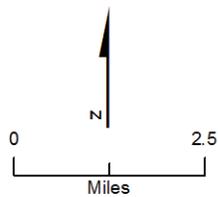


- |                                      |             |                   |
|--------------------------------------|-------------|-------------------|
| UPRR/SR 99 Alternative               | Cemetery    | Public Services   |
| BNSF Alternative                     | Cultural    | Religious         |
| Hybrid Alternative                   | Government  | Religious/ School |
| Potential Heavy Maintenance Facility | Library     | School            |
| Station Study Area                   | Hospital    | Public Service    |
| County Boundary                      | Post Office | Social            |
| Railroad                             |             |                   |

**Figure B-1**  
 Community Facilities in the Merced  
 Project Vicinity

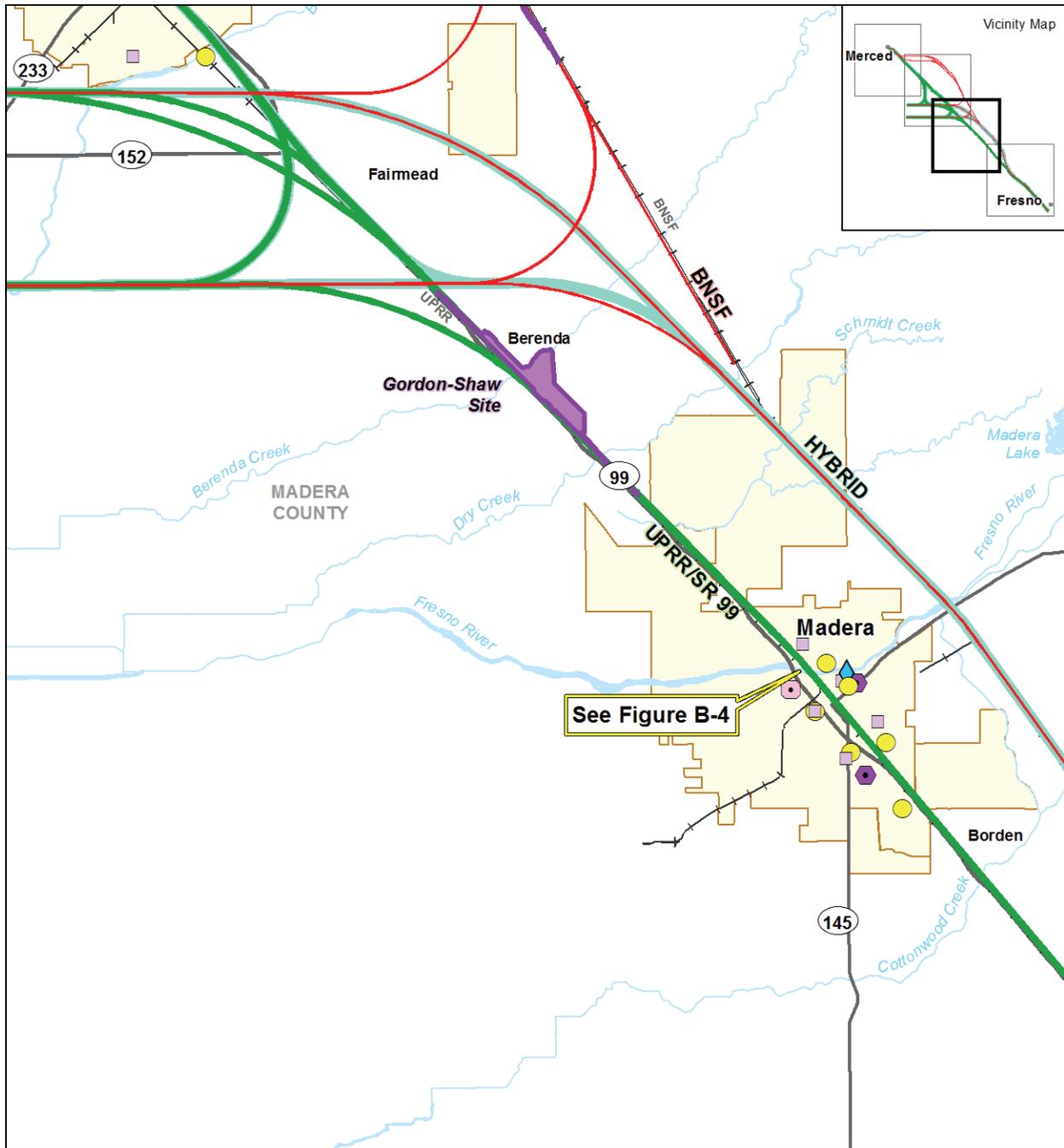


MF\_EIS\_SCJ\_03 Apr 06, 2012

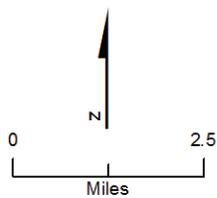


- |                                      |             |                   |
|--------------------------------------|-------------|-------------------|
| UPRR/SR 99 Alternative               | Cemetery    | Public Services   |
| BNSF Alternative                     | Cultural    | Religious         |
| Hybrid Alternative                   | Government  | Religious/ School |
| Potential Heavy Maintenance Facility | Library     | School            |
| Station Study Area                   | Hospital    | Public Service    |
| County Boundary                      | Post Office | Social            |
| Railroad                             |             |                   |

**Figure B-2**  
 Community Facilities in the  
 Chowchilla Project Vicinity



MF\_EIS\_SCJ\_04 Apr 06, 2012



- |                                      |             |                   |
|--------------------------------------|-------------|-------------------|
| UPRR/SR 99 Alternative               | Cemetery    | Public Services   |
| BNSF Alternative                     | Cultural    | Religious         |
| Hybrid Alternative                   | Government  | Religious/ School |
| Potential Heavy Maintenance Facility | Library     | School            |
| Station Study Area                   | Hospital    | Public Service    |
| County Boundary                      | Post Office | Social            |
| Railroad                             |             |                   |

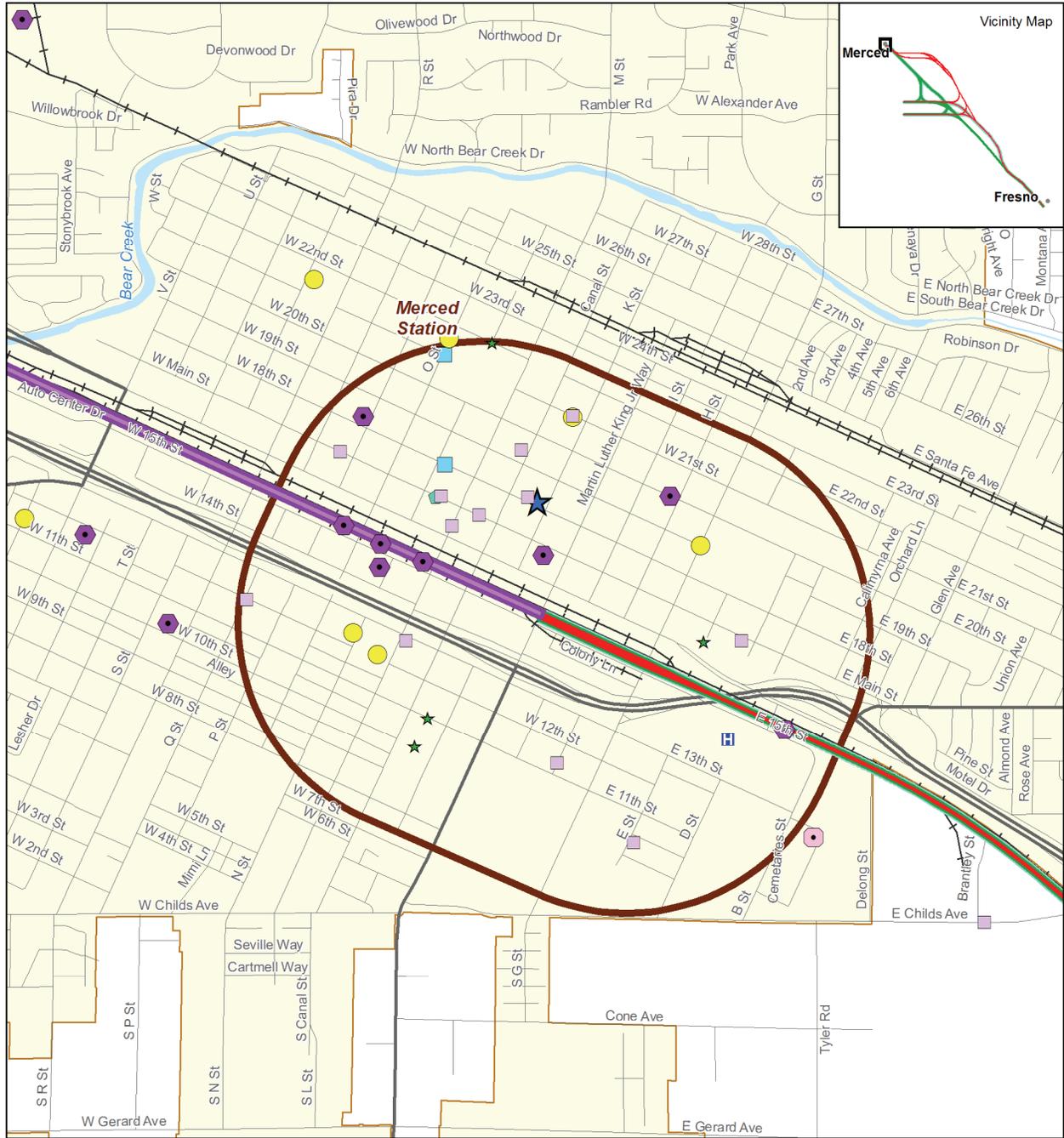
**Figure B-3**  
 Community Facilities in the Madera  
 Project Vicinity



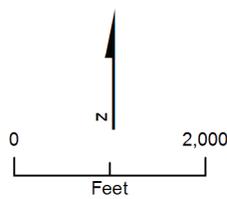
MF\_EIS\_SCJ\_04A Feb 13, 2012

- UPRR/SR 99 Alternative
- BNSF Alternative
- Hybrid Alternative
- Potential Heavy Maintenance Facility
- Station Study Area
- - - County Boundary
- +— Railroad
- ◆ Cultural
- Government
- ▲ Library
- Hospital
- ★ Post Office
- Religious
- School
- ★ Public Service
- ⬡ Social

**Figure B-4**  
 Community Facilities  
 in the City of Madera

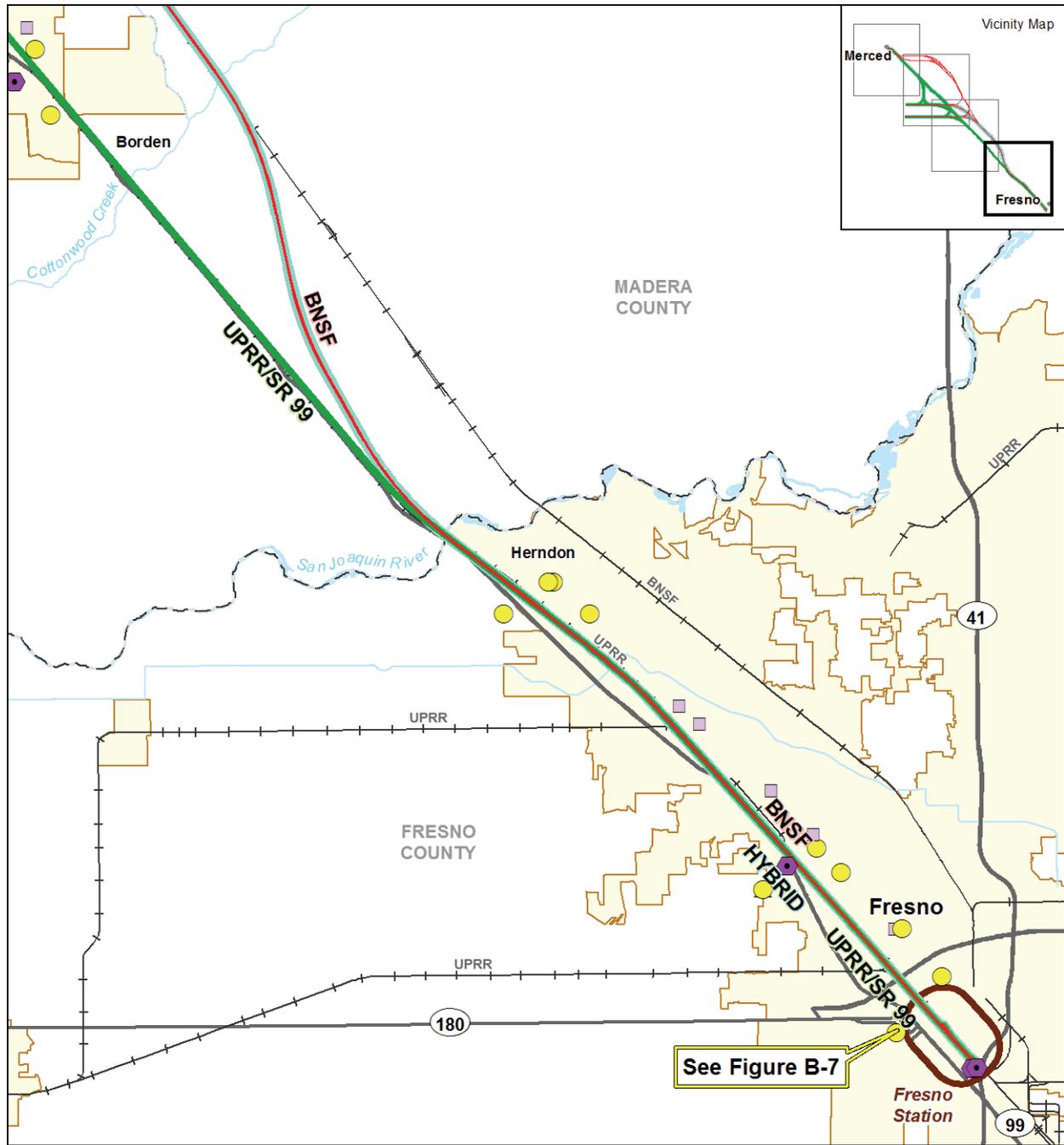


MF\_EIS\_SCJ\_02 Feb 13, 2012

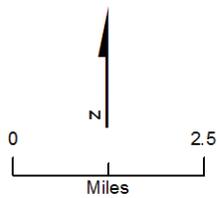


- UPRR/SR 99 Alternative
- BNSF Alternative
- Hybrid Alternative
- Potential Heavy Maintenance Facility
- Station Study Area
- County Boundary
- Railroad
- Cemetery
- Cultural
- Government
- Hospital
- Library Building
- ★ Post Office
- Religious
- School
- ★ Public Service
- Social

**Figure B-5**  
 Community Facilities in  
 the Merced Station  
 Study Area



MF\_EIS\_SCJ\_05 Apr 06, 2012



- |                                      |             |                   |
|--------------------------------------|-------------|-------------------|
| UPRR/SR 99 Alternative               | Cemetery    | Public Services   |
| BNSF Alternative                     | Cultural    | Religious         |
| Hybrid Alternative                   | Government  | Religious/ School |
| Potential Heavy Maintenance Facility | Library     | School            |
| Station Study Area                   | Hospital    | Public Service    |
| County Boundary                      | Post Office | Social            |
| Railroad                             |             |                   |

**Figure B-6**  
 Community Facilities in  
 the Fresno Project  
 Vicinity



APPENDIX C

# Relocation Information

---





**CALIFORNIA**  
**High-Speed Rail Authority**

**Your Rights and Benefits as a  
Displacee under the Uniform  
Relocation Assistance Program  
(Residential)**

**Prepared By  
California High-Speed Rail Authority  
June 23, 2011**



## **Introduction**

In building any large, modern transportation project, the displacement of a small percentage of the population is often necessary. However, it is the policy of the High-Speed Rail Authority (Authority) that displaced persons shall not suffer unnecessarily as a result of a program, like the High-Speed Train Project (Project), that is designed to benefit the public as a whole.

Individuals, families, businesses, farms, and nonprofit organizations displaced by the Project may be eligible for relocation advisory services and payments.

This brochure provides information about available relocation services and payments. If you are required to move as the result of the Project, a Relocation Agent will contact you. The Relocation Agent will be able to answer your specific questions and provide additional information.

## **Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 as Amended “The Uniform Act”**

The purpose of the Uniform Act is to provide for uniform and equitable treatment of persons displaced from their homes, businesses, farms, or nonprofit organizations by federal and federally assisted programs and to establish uniform and equitable land acquisition policies for federal and federally assisted programs.

Title 49, Part 24, of the Code of Federal Regulations implements the Uniform Act in accordance with the following relocation assistance objective:

To ensure that persons displaced as a direct result of federal or federally-assisted projects are treated fairly, consistently and equitably so that such persons will not suffer disproportionate injuries as a result of projects designed for the benefit of the public as a whole.

*While every effort has been made to assure the accuracy of this booklet, you must understand that it does not have the force and effect of law, rule, or regulation governing the payment of benefits. In the event of any difference between a statement in this brochure and any provision of law, rule or regulation, the latter will be followed.*

## Some Important Definitions

You will be able to understand your relocation benefits better if you become familiar with the following terms:

**Comparable Replacement Dwelling** is a dwelling which is:

- (1) Decent, safe, and sanitary. *(See definition below.)*
- (2) Functionally equivalent to the displacement dwelling.
- (3) Adequate in size to accommodate the persons being relocated.
- (4) In an area not subject to unreasonable adverse environmental conditions.
- (5) In a location generally not less desirable than the location of your displacement dwelling with respect to public utilities and commercial and public facilities, and reasonably accessible to your place of employment.
- (6) On land that is typical in size for residential development with typical improvements.
- (7) Currently available on the market.
- (8) Within your financial means.

**Decent, Safe and Sanitary (DS&S) Dwelling** is a dwelling that meets applicable local housing and occupancy codes. It also shall:

- (1) Be structurally sound, weather tight, and in good repair.
- (2) Contain a safe electrical wiring system adequate for lighting and other devices.
- (3) Contain a heating system capable of sustaining a healthful temperature (of approximately 70 degrees) for a displaced person, except in those areas where local climatic conditions do not require such a system.
- (4) Be adequate in size with respect to the number of rooms and area of living space needed to accommodate the displaced persons. The number of persons occupying each habitable room used for sleeping purposes shall not exceed that permitted by local housing codes.

- (5) Have a separate, well-lighted and ventilated bathroom that provides privacy to the user and contains a sink, bathtub or shower stall, and a toilet, all in good working order and properly connected to appropriate sources of water and to a sewage drainage system.

*Note: In the case of a housekeeping dwelling, there shall be a kitchen area that contains a fully usable sink, properly connected to potable hot and cold water and to a sewage drainage system, and adequate space and utility service connections for a stove and refrigerator.*

- (6) Contains unobstructed egress to safe, open space at ground level. If the replacement dwelling unit is on the second story or above, with access directly from or through a common corridor, the common corridor must have at least two means of egress.
- (7) *For a displaced person with a disability, be free of any barriers which would preclude reasonable ingress, egress, or use of the dwelling by that displaced person.*

**Displaced Person or Displacee** is any person who moves from real property or moves personal property from real property as a result of the acquisition of the real property, in whole or in part, or as the result of a written notice from the agency of its intent to acquire the real property needed for this transportation project. In the case of a partial acquisition, the Authority shall determine if a person is displaced as a direct result of the acquisition.

Persons **not lawfully present** in the United States are not eligible to receive relocation payments and assistance.

Relocation benefits will vary, depending upon the type and length of occupancy. As a residential displacee, you will be classified as either:

- An owner occupant of a residential property (includes mobile homes)
- A tenant occupant of a residential property (includes mobile homes and sleeping rooms)

**Dwelling** is the place of permanent or customary and usual residence of a person, according to local custom or law, including a single family house; a single family unit in a two-family, multi-family, or multi-purpose property; a unit of a condominium or cooperative housing project; a non-housekeeping unit; a mobile home; or any other residential unit.

**Owner** is a person who is considered to have met the requirement to own a dwelling if the person purchases or holds any of the following interests in real property:

- (1) Fee title, a life estate, a land contract, a 99-year lease, or a lease, including any options for extension, with at least 50 years to run from the date of acquisition; or
- (2) An interest in a cooperative housing project that includes the right to occupy a dwelling; or
- (3) A contract to purchase any interests or estates described in (1) or (2); or
- (4) Any other interest, including a partial interest, which in the judgment of the Authority warrants consideration as ownership.

**Tenant** is a person who has the temporary use and occupancy of real property owned by another.

## Moving Expenses

If you qualify as a displaced person, you are entitled to reimbursement of your moving costs and certain related expenses incurred in moving. The methods of moving and the various types of moving cost payments are explained below.

Displaced individuals and families may choose to be paid on the basis of actual, reasonable moving costs and related expenses, or according to a fixed moving cost schedule. However, to ensure your eligibility and prompt payment of moving expenses, you should contact your Relocation Agent before you move.

### You Can Choose Either

**Actual Reasonable Moving Costs.** You may be paid for your actual reasonable moving costs and related expenses when a commercial mover performs the move. Reimbursement will be limited to a move of 50 miles or less. Related expenses *may* include:

- Transportation

- Packing and unpacking personal property.
- Disconnecting and reconnecting household appliances.
- Temporary storage of personal property.
- Insurance while property is in storage or transit.

**Or**

**Fixed Moving Cost Schedule.** You may be paid on the basis of a fixed moving cost schedule. Under this option, you will not be eligible for reimbursement of related expenses listed above. The fixed schedule is designed to cover these expenses.

Examples (Year 2008 Rate):

4 Rooms - \$1,175

7 Rooms - \$1,900

The Fixed Move Schedule for a furnished unit (e.g. you are a tenant of an apartment that is furnished by your landlord) is also based on the following schedule.

Example (Year 2008 Rate):

1 Room - \$400

Each additional room - \$65

Under the Fixed Move Schedule, you will not receive any additional payments for temporary storage, lodging, transportation or utility hook-ups.

## **Replacement Housing Payments**

The type of Replacement Housing Payment (RHP) depends on whether you are an owner or a tenant, and on the length of your occupancy in the property being acquired. If you are a qualified **owner occupant** of more than 180 days prior to the initiation of negotiations for the acquisition of your property, you may be entitled to a RHP that consists of:

**Price Differential, and  
Mortgage Differential, and  
Incidental Expenses;**

**Or**

**Rent Differential**

If you are a qualified **owner occupant** of more than 90 days but less than 180 days, **OR** you are a qualified **tenant occupant** of at least 90 days, you may be entitled to a RHP as follows:

**Rent Differential**

**Or**

**Downpayment Option**

Length of occupancy simply means counting the number of days that you actually occupied a dwelling before the date of initiation of negotiations by the Authority for the purchase of the property. The term “initiation of negotiations” means the date the Authority makes the first personal contact with the owner of real property, or the owner’s representative, to give either of them a written offer for the property to be acquired.

*Note: If you have been in occupancy less than 90 days before the initiation of negotiations and the property is subsequently acquired, or if you move onto the property after the initiation of negotiations and you are still in occupancy on the date of acquisition, you may or may not be eligible for a Replacement Housing Payment. Check with your Relocation Agent before you make any decision to vacate your property.*

## **For Owner Occupants of 180 Days or More**

If you qualify as a 180-day owner occupant, you may be eligible, in addition to the fair market value of your property, for a Replacement Housing Payment that consists of a Price Differential, Mortgage Differential and/or Incidental Expenses.

The **Price Differential** payment is the amount by which the cost of a replacement



dwelling exceeds the acquisition cost of the displacement dwelling. This payment will assist you in purchasing a comparable decent, safe, and sanitary (DS&S) replacement dwelling. The Authority will compute the maximum payment you may be eligible to receive.

In order to receive the full amount of the calculated Price Differential, you must purchase a decent, safe and sanitary dwelling and spend at least the amount calculated by the Authority to be the cost of a comparable replacement property.

**The Mortgage Differential** payment will reimburse you for any increased mortgage interest costs you might incur because the interest rate on your new mortgage exceeds the interest rate on the property acquired by the Authority. The payment computation is complex as it is based on prevailing rates, your existing loan and your new loan. Also, a part of this payment may be prorated, for example, as reimbursement for a portion of your loan origination fees and mortgage points.

To be eligible to receive this payment, the acquired property must have been encumbered by a bona fide mortgage that was a valid lien for at least 180 days prior to the initiation of negotiations.

You may also be reimbursed for any actual and necessary **Incidental Expenses** that you incur in relation to the purchase of your replacement property. These expenses may be those costs for title search, recording fees, credit report, appraisal report, and certain other closing costs associated with the purchase of property. You will not be reimbursed for any recurring costs such as prepaid real estate taxes and property insurance.

If the total amount of your **Replacement Housing Payment** (Price Differential, Mortgage Differential and Incidental Expenses) exceeds \$22,500, the payment must be deposited directly into an escrow account or paid directly to the mortgage company.

#### **EXAMPLES OF PRICE DIFFERENTIAL PAYMENT COMPUTATION:**

Assume that the Authority purchases your property for \$98,000. After a thorough study of available, decent, safe and sanitary dwellings on the open market, the Authority determines that a comparable replacement property will cost you \$100,000. If your purchase price is \$100,000, you will receive \$2,000 (*see Example A*).

If your actual purchase price is more than \$100,000, you pay the difference (*see Example B*). If your purchase price is less than \$100,000, the differential payment will be based on actual costs (*see Example C*).

How much of a differential payment you receive depends on how much you actually spend on a replacement dwelling as shown in these examples:

**The Authority's Computation**

Cost of Comparable Replacement Property	\$100,000
Acquisition Price of Your Property	<u>-\$ 98,000</u>
Maximum Price Differential	\$ 2,000

**Example A**

Purchase Price of Replacement Property	\$100,000
Cost of Comparable Replacement Property	\$100,000
Acquisition Price of Your Property	<u>-\$ 98,000</u>
Maximum Price Differential	\$ 2,000

**Example B**

Purchase Price of Replacement Property	\$105,000
Cost of Comparable Replacement Property	\$100,000
Acquisition Price of Your Property	<u>\$ 98,000</u>
Maximum Price Differential	\$ 2,000
You Must Pay the Additional	\$ 5,000

**Example C**

Cost of Comparable Replacement Property	\$100,000
Purchase Price of Replacement Property	\$ 99,000
Acquisition Price of Your Property	<u>\$ 98,000</u>
Price Differential	\$ 1,000

*In Example C you will only receive \$1,000, not the full amount of the Authority's "Comparable Replacement Property," because of the "Spend to Get" requirements.*

**If you are a "180-day owner occupant" in order to receive the full amount of the Replacement Housing Payment (Price Differential, Mortgage Differential and Incidental Expenses), you must:**

- A) Purchase and occupy a DS&S replacement dwelling within one year after the later of:

- (1) The date you first receive a notification of an available replacement house, **Or**
- (2) The date that the Authority has paid the acquisition cost of your current dwelling (usually the closing of escrow on State's acquisition),

**And**

B) Spend at least the amount of the Authority's "Comparable Replacement Property" for a replacement property,

**And**

C) File a claim for relocation payments within 18 months of the later:

- (1) The date you vacate the property acquired by the Authority, **Or**
- (2) The date that the Authority has paid the acquisition cost of your current dwelling (usually the close of escrow on State's acquisition)

**You will not be eligible to receive any relocation payments until the Authority has actually made the first written offer to purchase the property. Also, you will receive at least 90 days' written notice before you must move.**

## **For Owner Occupants and Tenants of 90 Days or More**

If you qualify as a 90-day occupant (either as an owner or tenant), you may be eligible for a Replacement Housing Payment in the form of a Rent Differential.

The **Rent Differential** payment is designed to assist you in renting a comparable decent, safe and sanitary replacement dwelling. The payment is based on the difference between the base monthly rent for the property acquired by the Authority (including average monthly cost for utilities) and the lesser of:

- (a) The monthly rent and estimated average monthly cost of utilities for a comparable replacement dwelling as determined by the Authority, **Or**
- (b) The monthly rent and estimated average monthly cost of utilities for the decent, safe and sanitary dwelling that you actually rent as a replacement dwelling.

Utility costs are those expenses you incur for heat, lights, water and sewer regardless of the source (e.g. electricity, propane, and septic system). They do not include garbage, cable, telephone, or security. The utilities at your property are the average costs over the last 12 months. The cost of utilities at the comparable replacement property is based on the estimated costs for the last 12 months for the type of dwelling and area used in the calculation.

This difference between (a) and (b) is multiplied by 42 months and may be paid to you in a lump sum payment or in periodic installments in accordance with policy and regulations.

In order to receive the full amount of the calculated Rent Differential, you must rent a decent, safe and sanitary dwelling and spend at least the amount calculated by the Authority to be the rental rate of a comparable replacement property.

This payment may, with certain limitations, be converted to a **Downpayment Option** to assist you in purchasing a replacement property.

**Example of Rent Differential Payment Computation:**

After a thorough study of comparable, decent, safe and sanitary dwellings that are available for rent, the Authority determines that a comparable replacement property will rent for \$325.00 per month.

**The Authority's Computation (rates are per month)**

Rental Rate for Comparable Replacement Property	\$ 325
PLUS average estimated utilities costs	<u>+100</u>
TOTAL Cost to Rent Comparable Replacement Property	= \$ 425

Rental Rate for Your Current Property	\$ 300
PLUS average utilities costs	<u>+ 90</u>
TOTAL Cost to Rent Current Property	= \$ 390

Comparable Replacement Property including utilities	\$ 425
Cost you currently pay to rent your property including utilities	<u>+ 390</u>
Difference	= \$ 35

Multiplied by 42 months = \$1,470 Rent Differential

**Example A:**

Rental Rate you pay for a Replacement Property including estimated average utilities costs	\$ 525
Comparable Replacement Property including utilities	\$ 425
Cost you currently pay to rent your property including utilities	\$ 390

Because \$425 is less than \$525, the Rent Differential is based on the difference between \$390 and \$425.

Rent Differential (\$35 x 42 months = \$1,470)

*In this case you spent “at least” the amount of the Comparable Replacement Property on the replacement property and will receive the full amount.*

**Example B:**

Rental Rate you pay for a Replacement Property including estimated average utilities costs	\$ 400
Comparable Replacement Property including utilities	\$ 425
Cost you currently pay to rent your property including utilities	\$ 390

Because \$400 is less than \$525, the Rent Differential is based on the difference between \$400 and \$390.

Rent Differential (\$10 x 42 months = \$420)

*In this case you spent “less than” the amount of the Comparable Replacement Property on the replacement property and will not receive the full amount.*

**If you are a “90- day owner occupant” in order to receive the full amount of your replacement housing payment (*Rent Differential*), you must:**

A) Rent and occupy a DS&S replacement dwelling within one year after the later of:

- (1) The date you first receive a notification of an available replacement dwelling, **Or**
- (2) The day you vacate the property acquired by the Authority, **And**

B) Spend at least the amount of the Authority’s calculation of “Comparable Replacement Property” to rent a replacement property,

**And**

C) File a claim for relocation payments within 18 months of the later of:

- (1) The date you vacate the property acquired by the Authority, **Or**
- (2) The date that the Authority has paid the acquisition cost of your current dwelling (usually the close of escrow on State's acquisition)

**You will not be eligible to receive any relocation payments until the Authority has actually made the first written offer to purchase the property. Also, you will receive at least 90 days' written notice before you must move.**

***Note 1:** The time periods for a 90-day owner occupant are different from those for a 180-day owner occupant.*

***Note 2:** If the Rent Differential is converted to a Downpayment Option, there is no "spend-to-get" requirement.*

## **Downpayment Option**

The Rent Differential payment may, with certain limitations, be converted to a **Downpayment Option** to assist you in purchasing a replacement property. The downpayment option is a direct conversion of the Rent Differential payment.

If the Authority's calculated Rent Differential is between \$0 and \$5,250, your downpayment option will be \$5,250, which can be used toward the purchase of a replacement decent, safe and sanitary dwelling.

If the Rent Differential is over \$5,250, you may be able to convert the entire amount of the Rent Differential to a downpayment option.

The downpayment option must be used for the acquisition of the replacement dwelling, plus any eligible incidental expenses (see "180-day Owner Occupants Incidental Expenses") related to the purchase of the property. You must work closely with your Relocation Agent to ensure you can utilize the full amount of your downpayment option toward the purchase.

If any portion of the Rent Differential was used prior to the decision to convert to a downpayment option, those advance payments will be deducted from the entire benefit.

## **Last Resort Housing**

On most projects, an adequate supply of housing will be available for sale and for rent, and the benefits provided will be sufficient to enable you to relocate to comparable housing. However, there may be projects in certain locations where the supply of available housing is insufficient to provide the necessary housing for those persons being displaced. In such cases, the Authority will utilize a method called Last Resort Housing. Last Resort Housing allows the Authority to construct, rehabilitate or modify housing in order to meet the needs of the people displaced from a project. The Authority can also pay above the statutory limits of \$5,250 and \$22,500 in order to make available housing affordable.

## **Relocation Advisory Assistance**

Any individual, family, business or farm displaced by the Authority shall be offered relocation advisory assistance for the purpose of locating a replacement property. Relocation services are provided by qualified personnel employed by, or under contract with, the Authority. It is their goal and desire to be of service to you and to assist in any way possible to help you relocate successfully.

A Relocation Agent from the Authority will contact you personally. Relocation services and payments will be explained to you in accordance with your eligibility. During the Agent's initial interview with you, your housing needs and desires will be determined as well as your need for assistance. You cannot be required to move unless at least one comparable replacement dwelling is made available to you.

You can expect to receive the following services, advice and assistance from your Relocation Agent who will:

- Explain the relocation benefits and eligibility requirements.
- Provide the amount of the replacement housing payments in writing.
- Assure the availability of a comparable replacement property before you move.



- Inspect possible replacement residential units for DS&S compliance.
- Provide information on counseling you can obtain to help minimize hardships in adjusting to your new location.
- Assist you in completing loan documents, rental applications or Relocation Claims Forms.

AND provide information on:

- Security deposits
- Interest rates and terms
- Typical downpayments
- VA and FHA loan requirements
- Real property taxes
- Consumer education literature on housing

If you desire, your Relocation Agent will give you current listings of other available replacement housing. Transportation will be provided to inspect available housing, especially if you are elderly or handicapped. Though you may use the services of a real estate broker, the Authority cannot provide a referral.

Your Relocation Agent is familiar with the services provided by others in your community and will provide information on other federal, state, and local housing programs offering assistance to displaced persons. If you have special needs, your Relocation Agent will make every effort to secure the services of those agencies with trained personnel who have the expertise to help you.

If the high-speed train project will require a considerable number of people to be relocated, the Authority may establish a temporary Relocation Field Office on or near the project. Project relocation offices will be open during convenient hours and evening hours if necessary.

In addition to these services, the Authority is required to coordinate its relocation activities with other agencies causing displacements to ensure that all persons displaced receive fair and consistent relocation benefits.

**Remember:** YOUR RELOCATION AGENT is there to offer advice and assistance. Do not hesitate to ask questions. And be sure you fully understand all of your rights and available benefits.

## YOUR RIGHTS AS A DISPLACEE

All eligible displacees have a freedom of choice in the selection of replacement housing, and the Authority will not require any displaced person to accept a replacement dwelling provided by the Authority. If you decide not to accept the replacement housing offered by the Authority, you may secure a replacement dwelling of your choice, providing it meets DS&S housing standards. The Authority will not pay more than your calculated benefits on any replacement property.

The most important thing to remember is that the replacement dwelling you select must meet the basic “decent, safe, and sanitary” standards. Do not execute a purchase agreement or a rental agreement until a representative from the Authority has inspected and certified in writing that the dwelling you propose to occupy meets the basic standards. **DO NOT jeopardize** your right to receive a replacement housing payment by moving into a substandard dwelling.

It is important to remember that your relocation benefits will not have an adverse effect on your:

- Social Security Eligibility
- Welfare Eligibility
- Income Taxes

In addition, Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 and later acts and amendments make discriminatory practices in the purchase and rental of most residential units illegal if based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.

Whenever possible, minority persons shall be given reasonable opportunities to relocate to a decent, safe, and sanitary replacement dwelling, not located in an area of minority concentration, and that is within their financial means. This policy, however, does not require the Authority to provide a person a larger payment than is necessary to enable that person to relocate to a comparable replacement dwelling.

The Authority’s Non-Discrimination Policy ensures that all services and/or benefits will be administered to the general public without regard to race, color, national origin, or sex in compliance with Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act (42 USC, sec. 2000d, et seq.).



And you always have the right to appeal any decision by the Authority regarding your relocation benefits and eligibility.

Your right of appeal is guaranteed in the Uniform Act which states that any person may file an appeal with the head of the responsible agency if that person believes that the agency has failed to determine properly the person's eligibility or the amount of a payment authorized by the Act.

If you indicate your dissatisfaction, either verbally or in writing, the Authority will assist you in filing an appeal and will explain the procedures to be followed. You will be given a prompt and full opportunity to be heard. You have the right to be represented by legal counsel or other representative in connection with the appeal (but solely at your own expense). The Authority will consider all pertinent justifications and materials submitted by you and other available information needed to ensure a fair review. The Authority will provide you with a written determination resulting from the appeal with an explanation of the basis for the decision. If you are still dissatisfied with the relief granted, the Authority will advise you that you may seek judicial review.

*Reference: Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended (42 U.S.C. sec. 4601 et seq.) ( Uniform Act); and Implementing Regulations (49 C.F.R. Part 24)*



**CALIFORNIA**  
**High-Speed Rail Authority**

**Your Rights and Benefits as a  
Displacee Under the Uniform  
Relocation Assistance Program  
(Mobile Home)**

**Prepared By  
California High-Speed Rail Authority  
June 23, 2011**



## Introduction

In building any large, modern transportation project, the displacement of a small percentage of the population is often necessary. However, it is the policy of the High-Speed Rail Authority (Authority) that displaced persons shall not suffer unnecessarily as a result of a program, like the High-Speed Train Project, designed to benefit the public as a whole.

Individuals, families, businesses, farms, and nonprofit organizations displaced by the Project may be eligible for relocation advisory services and payments.

This brochure provides information about available relocation services and payments. If you are required to move as the result of the Project, a Relocation Agent will contact you. The Relocation Agent will be able to answer your specific questions and provide additional information.

### **Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 as Amended “The Uniform Act”**

The purpose of the Uniform Act is to provide for uniform and equitable treatment of persons displaced from their homes, businesses, farms or nonprofit organizations by federal and federally assisted programs and to establish uniform and equitable land acquisition policies for federal and federally assisted programs.

Title 49, Part 24, of the Code of Federal Regulations implements the Uniform Act in accordance with the following relocation assistance objective:

To ensure that persons displaced as a direct result of federal or federally-assisted projects are treated fairly, consistently and equitably so that such persons will not suffer disproportionate injuries as a result of projects designed for the benefit of the public as a whole.

*While every effort has been made to assure the accuracy of this booklet, you must understand that it does not have the force and effect of law, rule, or regulation governing the payment of benefits. In the event of any difference between a statement in this brochure and any provision of law, rule or regulation, the latter will be followed.*

## Some Important Definitions

You will be able to understand your relocation benefits better if you become familiar with the following terms:

**Comparable Replacement Dwelling** is a dwelling which is:

- (1) Decent, safe, and sanitary. *(See definition below.)*
- (2) Functionally equivalent to the displaced dwelling.
- (3) Adequate in size to accommodate the family being relocated.
- (4) In an area not subject to unreasonable adverse environmental conditions.
- (5) In a location generally not less desirable than the location of your displacement dwelling with respect to public utilities and commercial and public facilities, and reasonably accessible to the place of employment.
- (6) On land that is typical in size for residential development with typical improvements.
- (7) Currently available on the market.
- (8) Within your financial means.

**Decent, Safe and Sanitary (DS&S) Dwelling** is a dwelling that meets applicable local housing and occupancy codes. It also shall:

- (1) Be structurally sound, weather tight, and in good repair.
- (2) Contain a safe electrical wiring system adequate for lighting and other devices.
- (3) Contain a heating system capable of sustaining a healthful temperature (of approximately 70 degrees) for a displaced person, except in those areas where local climatic conditions do not require such a system.

- (4) Be adequate in size with respect to the number of rooms and area of living space needed to accommodate the displaced persons. The number of persons occupying each habitable room used for sleeping purposes shall not exceed that permitted by local housing codes.
- (5) Have a separate, well-lighted and ventilated bathroom that provides privacy to the user and contains a sink, bathtub or shower stall, and a toilet, all in good working order and properly connected to appropriate sources of water and to a sewage drainage system.

***Note:** In the case of a housekeeping dwelling, there shall be a kitchen area that contains a fully usable sink, properly connected to potable hot and cold water and to a sewage drainage system, and adequate space and utility service connections for a stove and refrigerator.*

- (6) Contains unobstructed egress to safe, open space at ground level. If the replacement dwelling unit is on the second story or above, with access directly from or through a common corridor, the common corridor must have at least two means of egress.
- (7) *For a displaced person with a disability, be free of any barriers which would preclude reasonable ingress, egress, or use of the dwelling by that displaced person.*

**Displaced Person or Displacee** is any person who moves from real property or moves personal property from real property as a result of the acquisition of the real property, in whole or in part, or as the result of a written notice from the agency of its intent to acquire the real property needed for this transportation project. In the case of a partial acquisition, the Authority shall determine if a person is displaced as a direct result of the acquisition.

Residents **not lawfully present** in the United States are not eligible to receive relocation payments and assistance.

Relocation benefits will vary, depending upon the type and length of occupancy. As a residential displacee, you will be classified as either:

- An owner occupant of a residential property (includes mobile homes)
- A tenant occupant of a residential property (includes mobile homes and sleeping rooms).

**Dwelling** is the place of permanent or customary and usual residence of a person, according to local custom or law, including a single family house; a single family unit in a two-family, multi-family, or multi-purpose property; a unit of a condominium or cooperative housing project; a non-housekeeping unit; a mobile home; or any other residential unit.

**Mobile Home** generally refers to single, double or triple wide mobile home units. It does not include manufactured homes that are permanently affixed to the realty, as these are treated as single family dwellings. However, it may include certain trailers or recreational vehicles that are a primary residence depending on how they are permanently affixed to the real property.

**Owner** is a person who is considered to have met the requirement to own a dwelling if the person purchases or holds any of the following interests in real property:

- (1) Fee title, a life estate, a land contract, a 99-year lease, or a lease including any options for extension with at least 50 years to run from the date of acquisition; or
- (2) An interest in a cooperative housing project which includes the right to occupy a dwelling; or
- (3) A contract to purchase any interests or estates described in (1) or (2); or
- (4) Any other interest, including a partial interest, which in the judgment of the agency warrants consideration as ownership.

**Tenant** is a person who has the temporary use and occupancy of real property owned by another.

## **Mobile Homes**

If the mobile home *is not* acquired by the Authority, the owner (regardless of who occupies it) of a mobile home is eligible for a payment to move the mobile home to a replacement piece of land based on an actual cost basis. This includes the cost to disassemble, move and reassemble any porches, decks, skirting and/or awnings.

Additional costs may be eligible for reimbursement if the Authority determines they are “actual, reasonable and necessary.” Some of these costs might include:

- Anchoring the unit to the new pad
- Additional axles or brakes on the mobile home that are required for transportation
- Temporary protection of an extra wide mobile home unit that must be split during the move
- Utility hook-ups to the unit (e.g. water, sewer, septic, electricity, gas), if utilities are already available to the mobile home location (e.g. pad)
- Necessary repairs to meet local and state codes
- Modifications necessary to meet “decent, safe and sanitary” requirements
- With limitations, a non-returnable entrance fee to the mobile home park

The movement of the mobile home must be performed by a qualified mover and the payment will be based on the lower of two bids obtained by the owner of the mobile home and approved by the Authority. The Authority cannot pay for the move of the mobile home beyond 50 miles unless there are no suitable replacement pieces of land or mobile home parks within the 50-mile radius. Approval for a move beyond 50 miles must be obtained in advance of the move.

## **Moving Expenses**

In addition to moving the mobile home, the occupants (regardless of who owns it) may be eligible for a payment to move their personal property, if they qualify as “displaced persons.”

The methods of moving and the various types of moving cost payments are explained below. Displaced individuals and families may choose to be paid on the basis of actual, reasonable moving costs and related expenses, or according to a fixed moving cost schedule. However, to ensure your eligibility and prompt payment of moving expenses, you should contact your Relocation Agent before you move.

## You Can Choose Either

**Actual Reasonable Moving Costs.** You may be paid for your actual reasonable moving costs and related expenses when a commercial mover performs the move.

Reimbursement will be limited to a move of 50 miles or less. Related expenses *may* include:

- Transportation
- Packing and unpacking personal property
- Disconnecting and reconnecting household appliances
- Temporary storage of personal property
- Insurance while property is in storage or transit

Or

**Fixed Moving Cost Schedule.** You may be paid on the basis of a fixed moving cost schedule. Under this option, you will not be eligible for reimbursement of related expenses listed above. The fixed schedule is designed to cover such expenses.

Examples (Year 2008 Rate):

4 Rooms - \$1,175  
7 Rooms-\$1,900

If the furniture is moved with the mobile home, the amount of the fixed payment is based on the following schedule:

Example (Year 2008 Rate):

1 Room - \$400  
Each additional room - \$65

Normally no additional payments for temporary storage, lodging, transportation or utility hook-ups of household appliances can be paid with the fixed move schedule. However, the mobile home occupants who choose to move back into the same mobile home at the new location may receive an allowance for food and lodging during the

move and set-up time. Also, utility hook-ups to the mobile home unit may be eligible for reimbursement.

**Note:** *Even if the mobile home is acquired by the Authority, the occupants of the mobile home (regardless of who owns it) are still eligible for a payment to move their personal property.*

## Replacement Housing Payments

The occupant of a mobile home unit may be eligible for a replacement housing payment. The type of Replacement Housing Payment (RHP) depends on whether you are an owner or a tenant *of the mobile home*, and the length of occupancy in the mobile home unit that is on property being acquired for the Project.

If you are a qualified **owner occupant** of both the land and the mobile home for more than 180 days prior to the initiation of negotiations for the acquisition of your property, and the mobile home unit is acquired by the Authority, you may be entitled to a RHP that consists of:

**Price Differential, and  
Mortgage Differential, and  
Incidental Expenses;**

**Or**

**Rent Differential**

You do not have to purchase and occupy another mobile home unit in order to receive your RHP - however, the new residential unit must meet the “decent, safe and sanitary” requirements.

If the mobile home is not acquired by the Authority, you may still be eligible for a RHP to assist you with purchasing a replacement piece of land where you can move your mobile home.

It is important to know that if you **do not own both** the mobile home and the property, your RHP can be limited. You must work closely with your Relocation Agent to fully understand your eligibility.

If you are a qualified **owner occupant** of the mobile home for more than 90 days but less than 180 days, OR you are a qualified **tenant occupant** of the mobile home for at least 90 days, you may be entitled to a RHP as follows:

**Rent Differential**

**Or**

**Downpayment Option**

As the occupant of a mobile home, regardless of the length of time or your status as an owner or tenant, your payment will vary depending upon the following:

- Whether the mobile home unit was acquired by the Authority
- Whether you are the owner of the mobile home
- Whether you will occupy the mobile home at the new location if it is moved
- Whether you choose to occupy another type of unit such as a single family residence.

Length of occupancy simply means counting the number of days that you actually occupied the mobile home unit on the land that is being acquired by the Authority prior to the date of initiation of negotiations by the Authority for the purchase of the property. The term “initiation of negotiations” means the date the Authority makes the first personal contact with the owner of the real property, or the owner’s representative, to give either of them a written offer for the property to be acquired.

**Note:** *If you have been in occupancy less than 90 days before the initiation of negotiations and the property is subsequently acquired, or if you move onto the property after the initiation of negotiations and you are still in occupancy on the date of acquisition, you may or may not be eligible for a Replacement Housing Payment. Check with your Relocation Agent before you make any decision to vacate your property.*

## **For Owner Occupants of 180 Days or More**

If you qualify as a 180-day owner occupant, you may be eligible, in addition to the fair market value of your property, for a Replacement Housing Payment that consists of a Price Differential, Mortgage Differential and/or Incidental Expenses.



The **Price Differential** payment is the amount by which the cost of a replacement dwelling exceeds the acquisition cost of the displacement dwelling. This payment will assist you in purchasing a comparable decent, safe, and sanitary (DS&S) replacement dwelling. The Authority will compute the maximum payment you may be eligible to receive.

In order to receive the full amount of the calculated price differential, you must spend at least the amount calculated by the Authority to be the cost of a comparable replacement property.

**The Mortgage Differential** payment will reimburse you for any increased mortgage interest costs you might incur because the interest rate on your new mortgage for the real property, or the loan obtained for just the mobile home unit, exceeds the interest rate on the property acquired by the Authority. The payment computation is complex because it is based on prevailing rates, your existing loan and your new loan. Also, a part of this payment may be prorated, for example, as reimbursement for a portion of your loan origination fees and mortgage points.

To be eligible to receive this payment, the acquired property must have been encumbered by a bona fide mortgage which was a valid lien for at least 180 days prior to the initiation of negotiations.

You may also be reimbursed for any actual and necessary **Incidental Expenses** that you incur in relation to the purchase of your replacement property. These expenses may be those costs for title search, recording fees, credit report, appraisal report, and certain other closing costs associated with the purchase of property. You may also be eligible for certain costs related to the purchase of a new mobile home, such as sales tax or use tax payments, DMV title transfer fees, or building and transportation permits. You will not be reimbursed for any recurring costs such as prepaid real estate taxes and property insurance.

If the total amount of your **Replacement Housing Payment (RHP)** (Price Differential, Mortgage Differential and Incidental Expenses) exceeds \$22,500, the payment must be deposited directly into an escrow account or paid directly to the mortgage company.

## EXAMPLES OF PRICE DIFFERENTIAL PAYMENT COMPUTATION:

**SCENARIO 1:** If you *owned and occupied the mobile home for at least 180 days*, and it's on *your own property*, and the Authority *acquires your mobile home*, then you are entitled to receive a **Price Differential** based on a comparable residential property.

Assume that the Authority purchases your property and mobile home for \$98,000. After a thorough study of available, decent, safe and sanitary dwellings on the open market, the Authority determines that a comparable replacement property, a mobile home on a similar size lot, will cost you \$100,000. If your purchase price of the replacement property is \$100,000, you will receive \$2,000 (*see Example A*).

If your actual purchase price is more than \$100,000, you pay the difference (*see Example B*). If your actual purchase price is less than \$100,000, the differential payment will be based on actual costs (*see Example C*).

*Remember: You do not have to purchase another mobile home as your replacement property.*

How much of a differential payment you receive depends on how much you actually spend on a replacement dwelling as shown in these examples:

### The Authority's Computation

Comparable Replacement Property and Mobile Home:	\$100,000
Acquisition Price of Your Property and Mobile Home:	<u>-\$ 98,000</u>
Maximum Price Differential:	\$ 2,000

### Example A

Purchase Price of Replacement Property and Mobile Home:	\$100,000
Comparable Replacement Property and Mobile Home:	\$100,000
Acquisition Price of Your Property and Mobile Home:	<u>-\$ 98,000</u>
Maximum Price Differential:	\$ 2,000

### Example B

Purchase Price of Replacement Property and Mobile Home:	\$105,000
Comparable Replacement Property and Mobile Home:	\$100,000
Acquisition Price of Your Property and Mobile Home:	- <u>\$ 98,000</u>
Maximum Price Differential:	\$ 2,000
You Must Pay the Additional:	\$ 5,000

### Example C

Comparable Replacement Property and Mobile Home:	\$100,000
Purchase Price of Replacement Property and Mobile Home:	\$ 99,000
Acquisition Price of Your Property and Mobile Home:	- <u>\$ 98,000</u>
Price Differential:	\$ 1,000

*In Example C you will only receive \$1,000 - not the full amount of the Authority's "Comparable Replacement Property" because of the "Spend to Get" requirements.*

**SCENARIO 2:** If you ***owned and occupied the mobile home for at least 180 days***, and it's on ***your own property***, and the Authority DOES NOT ***acquire your mobile home***, then you are entitled to receive a **Price Differential** based on a comparable residential property on which you can relocate your mobile home.

Assume that the Authority purchases your land for \$48,000. After a thorough study of available locations for purchase that can accommodate the mobile home unit that you retained (which will be moved by a qualified mover), the Authority determines that a comparable replacement piece of land will cost you \$51,000. If your actual purchase price is \$51,000, you will receive \$3,000 (*see Example A*).

If your actual purchase price is more than \$51,000, you pay the difference (*see Example B*). If your actual purchase price is less than \$51,000, the differential payment will be based on actual costs (*see Example C*).

*Remember: You do not have to buy a replacement piece of land for your mobile home. You can sell your mobile home to a private party, and purchase a single family residence. However, your RHP will be based on the replacement value of the land.*



How much of a differential payment you receive depends on how much you actually spend on a replacement dwelling as shown in these examples:

**The Authority’s Computation**

Comparable Replacement Land:	\$ 51,000
Acquisition Price of Your Land:	- <u>\$ 48,000</u>
Maximum Price Differential:	\$ 3,000

**Example A**

Purchase Price of Replacement Land:	\$ 51,000
Comparable Replacement Land:	\$ 51,000
Acquisition Price of Your Land:	<u>- \$ 48,000</u>
Maximum Price Differential	\$ 3,000

**Example B**

Purchase Price of Replacement Land:	\$ 55,000
Comparable Replacement Land:	\$ 51,000
Acquisition Price of Your Land:	<u>- \$ 48,000</u>
Maximum Price Differential:	\$ 3,000
You Must Pay the Additional:	\$ 4,000

**Example C**

Comparable Replacement Property:	\$ 51,000
Purchase Price of Replacement:	\$ 49,500
Acquisition Price of Your Property:	- <u>\$ 48,000</u>
Price Differential	\$ 1,500

*In Example C you will only receive \$1,500 - not the full amount of the Authority’s “Comparable Replacement Property” because of the “Spend to Get” requirements.*

**SCENARIO 3:** If you *owned and occupied the mobile home for at least 180 days*, and it's on land that you rent (e.g. a mobile home park), and the Authority DOES NOT *acquire your mobile home*, you may be entitled to a **Rent Differential** based on a comparable piece of land.

However, if the Authority acquires your mobile home because it cannot be moved, it is not considered "decent, safe and sanitary," there are no comparable replacement locations, or available mobile home parks will not accept it because of its size or condition, you may be entitled to a **Price Differential** for the mobile home plus a **Rent Differential** for the land you rent in the Mobile Home Park.

Assume that for \$38,000, the Authority purchases your mobile home that is located in a Mobile Home Park where you pay \$400 per month for rent (which includes heat, lights, water, garbage, and sewer). The Authority conducts a thorough study of available pieces of land for rent that can accommodate a mobile home unit **and** determines the purchase price of a comparable mobile home unit. An example of your entitlement might be:

**The Authority's Computation**

Comparable replacement land for rent:	\$ 500
Rent you currently pay at the mobile home park:	\$ 400
Monthly difference:	\$ 100
Multiplied times 42 months =	
Maximum Rent Differential:	\$ 4,200

. . . if you spend at least \$500 per month at the new location.

PLUS:

Comparable Replacement Mobile Home for purchase	\$42,000
Acquisition Price of Mobile Home you occupy	\$38,000
Maximum Price Differential:	\$ 4,000

. . . if you pay at least \$42,000 for a new mobile home to be set up at the new mobile home park

**If you are a “180 day owner occupant,” in order to receive the full amount of the Replacement Housing Payment (*Price Differential, Mortgage Differential and Incidental Expenses*), you must:**

A) Purchase and occupy a DS&S replacement dwelling within one year after the later of:

(1) The date you first receive a notification of an available replacement residential property (e.g., mobile home on an existing location, land available for your mobile home, or another type of residential unit), **Or**

(2) The date that the Authority has paid the acquisition cost of your mobile home and/or land (usually the closing of escrow on the Authority’s acquisition),

**And**

B) Spend at least the amount of the Authority’s “Comparable Replacement Property” for a replacement property,

**And**

C) File a claim for relocation payments within 18 months of the later:

(1) The date you vacate the property acquired by the Authority, **Or**

(2) The date that the Authority has paid the acquisition cost of your current dwelling (usually the close of escrow on the Authority’s acquisition).

**You will not be eligible to receive any relocation payments until the Authority has actually made the first written offer to purchase the property. Also, you will receive at least 90 days’ written notice before you must move.**

### **For Owner Occupants and Tenants of 90 Days or More**

If you qualify as a 90-day occupant (either as an owner or tenant), you may be eligible for a Replacement Housing Payment in the form of a Rent Differential. Remember, it is your status in the mobile home unit that determines your “occupancy.”

The **Rent Differential** payment is designed to assist you in renting a comparable decent, safe and sanitary replacement dwelling. The payment is based on the difference between the base monthly rent for the property acquired by the Authority (including average monthly cost for utilities) and the lesser of:

(a) The monthly rent and estimated average monthly cost of utilities for a comparable replacement dwelling as determined by the Authority, **Or**

(b) The monthly rent and estimated average monthly cost of utilities for the decent, safe and sanitary dwelling that you actually rent as a replacement dwelling.

Utility costs are those expenses you incur for heat, lights, water and sewer regardless of the source (e.g., electricity, propane, and septic system). It does not include garbage, cable, telephone, or security. The cost of utilities at your property is based on the average costs over the last 12 months. The cost of utilities at the comparable replacement property is based on the estimated costs for the last 12 months for the type of dwelling and area used in the calculation.

This difference between (a) and (b) is multiplied by 42 months and may be paid to you in a lump sum payment or in periodic installments in accordance with policy and regulations.

In order to receive the full amount of the calculated Rent Differential, you must spend at least the amount calculated by the Authority on a replacement property.

This payment may, with certain limitations, be converted to a **Downpayment Option** to assist you in purchasing a replacement property. (See page 18 for a full explanation).

### **Examples of Replacement Housing Payments for 90 day occupants:**

**Situation 1:** You *owned and occupied* the mobile home unit and the land for at least 90 days but not more than 180 days. You are entitled to a **Rent Differential** based on the difference between the economic rent of your home (the unit and the land) and that of a comparable home (the unit and the land) that is available for rent.

If you move the mobile home, you are entitled to a **Rent Differential** based on the difference between the economic rent of the mobile home site and that of a comparable mobile home site that is available for rent.

**Situation 2:** You *rented and occupied* for at least 90 days the mobile home unit that was located on land you owned. You are entitled to a **Rent Differential** based on the difference between the actual rent of your mobile home plus the economic rent of the mobile home site, and that of a comparable mobile home (the unit and site) that is available for rent.

**Situation 3:** You *rented and occupied the* mobile home and the land for at least 90 days. You are entitled to a **Rent Differential** based on the difference between the actual rent of the mobile home unit (including utilities) and the land, and that of a comparable home (the unit and the land) that is available for rent.

**Situation 4:** You *owned and occupied* the mobile home for at least 90 days, on land that you rented. You are entitled to a **Rent Differential** based on the difference between the economic rent of the mobile home PLUS the actual rent of the mobile home site, and the cost of a comparable mobile home (the unit and site) that is available for rent.

If you move the mobile home, you are entitled to a **Rent Differential** based on the difference between the actual or economic rent of the mobile home site and that of a comparable mobile home site that is available for rent.

**If you are a “90 day owner occupant,” in order to receive the full amount of your Replacement Housing Payment (*Rent Differential*), you must:**

A) Rent and occupy a DS&S replacement dwelling within one year after the later of:

(1) The date you first receive a notification of an available replacement dwelling,

**Or**

(2) The date you vacate the property acquired by the Authority,

**And**

B) Spend at least the amount of the Authority’s “Comparable Replacement Property” to rent a replacement property,

**And**

C) File a claim for relocation payments within 18 months of the later of:

(1) The date you vacate the property acquired by the Authority, **Or**

(2) The date that the Authority has paid the acquisition cost of your current dwelling (usually the close of escrow on the Authority's acquisition).

**If you are a "90 day occupant," in order to receive the full amount of your Replacement Housing Payment (*Rent Differential*), you must:**

A) Rent and occupy a DS&S replacement dwelling within one year after day you vacate the property acquired by the Authority,

**And**

B) Spend at least the amount of the Authority's "Comparable Replacement Property" to rent a replacement property,

**And**

C) File a claim for relocation payments within 18 months of the day you vacate the property acquired by the Authority.

**You will not be eligible to receive any relocation payments until the Authority has actually made the first written offer to purchase the property. Also, you will receive at least 90 days' written notice before you must move.**

## **Downpayment Option**

The Rent Differential payment may, with certain limitations, be converted to a **Downpayment Option** to assist you in purchasing a replacement property. The Downpayment Option is a direct conversion of the Rent Differential payment.

If the Authority's calculated Rent Differential is between \$0 and \$5,250, your downpayment will be \$5,250 which can be used towards the purchase of a replacement decent, safe and sanitary dwelling.

If the Rent Differential is over \$5,250, you may be able to convert the entire amount of the Rent Differential to a Downpayment Option.

The Downpayment Option must be used for the required downpayment, which is usually a percentage of the entire purchase price, plus any eligible incidental expenses (*see*

*page 10; 180-day Owner Occupants Incidental Expenses*) related to the purchase of the property. You must work closely with your Relocation Agent to ensure you can utilize the full amount of your Downpayment Option towards the purchase.

If any portion of the Rent Differential was used prior to the decision to convert to a downpayment, those advance payments will be deducted from the entire benefit.

## **Last Resort Housing**

On most projects, an adequate supply of housing will be available for sale and for rent, and the benefits provided will be sufficient to enable you to relocate to comparable housing. However, there may be projects in certain locations where the supply of available housing is insufficient to provide the necessary housing for those persons being displaced. In such cases, the Authority will utilize a method called Last Resort Housing. Last Resort Housing allows the Authority to construct, rehabilitate or modify housing in order to meet the needs of the people displaced from a project. The Authority can also pay above the statutory limits of \$5,250 and \$22,500 in order to make available housing affordable.

## **Relocation Advisory Assistance**

Any owner or occupant of a mobile home displaced by the Authority shall be offered relocation advisory assistance for the purpose of locating a replacement property. Relocation services are provided by qualified personnel employed by, or under contract with, the Authority. It is their goal and desire to be of service to you and assist in any way possible to help you successfully relocate.

A Relocation Agent from the Authority will contact you personally. Relocation services and payments will be explained to you in accordance with your eligibility. During the initial interview with you, your housing needs and desires will be determined as well as your need for assistance. You cannot be required to move unless at least one comparable replacement dwelling is made available to you. You can expect to receive the following services, advice and assistance from your Relocation Agent who will:

- Explain the relocation benefits and eligibility requirements.
- Provide the amount of the replacement housing payments in writing.
- Assure the availability of a comparable property before you move.
- Inspect possible replacement residential units for DS&S compliance.
- Provide information on counseling you can obtain to help minimize hardships in adjusting to your new location.
- Assist you in completing loan documents, rental applications or Relocation claims.

AND provide information on:

- Security deposits
- Interest rates and terms
- Typical down payments
- VA and FHA loan requirements
- Real and personal property taxes
- Qualified mobile home movers, including disassembly and reassembly
- Mobile Home Park requirements and fees
- Consumer education literature on housing

If you desire, your Relocation Agent will give you current listings of other available replacement housing. Transportation will be provided to inspect available housing, especially if you are elderly or handicapped. Though you may use the services of a real estate broker, the Authority cannot provide a referral.

Your Relocation Agent is familiar with the services provided by others in your community and will provide information on other federal, state, and local housing programs offering assistance to displaced persons. If you have special problems, your Relocation Agent will make every effort to secure the services of those agencies with trained personnel who have the expertise to help you.

If the high-speed train project will require a considerable number of people to be relocated, the Authority may establish a temporary Relocation Field Office on or near the project. Project relocation offices will be open during convenient hours and evening hours if necessary.

In addition to these services, the Authority is required to coordinate its relocation activities with other agencies causing displacements to ensure that all persons displaced receive fair and consistent relocation benefits.

**Remember:** YOUR RELOCATION AGENT is there to offer advice and assistance. Do not hesitate to ask questions. And be sure you fully understand all of your rights and available benefits.

## **YOUR RIGHTS AS A DISPLACEE**

All eligible displacees have a *freedom of choice* in the selection of replacement housing, and the Authority will not require any displaced person to accept a replacement

dwelling provided by the Authority. If you decide not to accept the replacement housing offered by the Authority, you may secure a replacement dwelling of your choice, providing it meets DS&S housing standards. The Authority will not pay more than your calculated benefits on any replacement property.

The most important thing to remember is that the replacement dwelling you select must meet the basic “decent, safe, and sanitary” standards. **Do not execute a purchase agreement or a rental agreement** until a representative from the Authority has inspected and certified in writing that the dwelling you propose to occupy meets the basic standards. **DO NOT jeopardize** your right to receive a replacement housing payment by moving into a substandard dwelling.

It is important to remember that your relocation benefits will **not have an adverse** affect on your:

- Social Security Eligibility
- Welfare Eligibility
- Income Taxes

In addition, **Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968** and later acts and amendments make discriminatory practices in the purchase and rental of most residential units illegal if based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.

Whenever possible, minority persons shall be given reasonable opportunities to relocate to decent, safe, and sanitary replacement dwellings, not located in an area of minority concentration, and that is within their financial means. This policy, however, does not require the Authority to provide a person a larger payment than is necessary to enable a person to relocate to a comparable replacement dwelling.

The Authority’s **Non-Discrimination Policy** ensures that all services and/or benefits will be administered to the general public without regard to race, color, national origin, or sex in compliance with Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act (42 USC, sec. 2000d. et seq.).

And you always have the **Right to Appeal** any decision by the Authority regarding your relocation benefits and eligibility.



Your Right of Appeal is guaranteed in the Uniform Act which states that any person may file an appeal with the head of the responsible agency if that person believes that the agency has failed to properly determine the person's eligibility or the amount of a payment authorized by the Act.

If you indicate your dissatisfaction, either verbally or in writing, the Authority will assist you in filing an appeal and explain the procedures to be followed. You will be given a prompt and full opportunity to be heard. You have the right to be represented by legal counsel or other representative in connection with the appeal (but solely at your own expense). The Authority will consider all pertinent justifications and materials submitted by you and other available information needed to ensure a fair review. The Authority will provide you with a written determination resulting from the appeal with an explanation of the basis for the decision. If you are still dissatisfied with the relief granted, the Authority will advise you that you may seek judicial review.

*Reference: Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended (42 U.S.C. sec. 4601 et seq.) ( Uniform Act); and Implementing Regulations (49 C.F.R. Part 24)*





**Your Rights and Benefits as a Displaced Business,  
Farm or Nonprofit Organization under the  
Uniform Relocation Assistance Program**

**Prepared By  
California High-Speed Rail Authority  
June 23, 2011**



## Introduction

In building any large, modern transportation project, the displacement of a small percentage of the population is often necessary. However, it is the policy of the High-Speed Rail Authority (Authority) that displaced persons shall not suffer unnecessarily as a result of a program, like the High-Speed Train Project (Project), that is designed to benefit the public as a whole.

Businesses, farms, and nonprofit organizations displaced by the Project may be eligible for relocation advisory services and payments.

This brochure provides information about available relocation services and payments. If you are required to move as the result of the Project, a Relocation Agent will contact you. The Relocation Agent will be able to answer your specific questions and provide additional information.

### **Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 as Amended, “The Uniform Act”**

The purpose of the Uniform Act is to provide for uniform and equitable treatment of persons displaced from their homes, businesses, farms or nonprofit organizations, by federal and federally assisted programs and to establish uniform and equitable land acquisition policies for federal and federally assisted programs.

Title 49, Part 24, of the Code of Federal Regulations implements the Uniform Act in accordance with the following relocation assistance objective:

To ensure that persons displaced as a direct result of federal or federally-assisted projects are treated fairly, consistently and equitably so that such persons will not suffer disproportionate injuries as a result of projects designed for the benefit of the public as a whole.

*While every effort has been made to assure the accuracy of this brochure, you must understand that it does not have the force and effect of law, rule, or regulation governing the payment of benefits. In the event of any difference between a statement in this brochure and any provision of law, rule or regulation, the latter will be followed.*

## Relocation Services

The California-High Speed Rail Authority has two programs to aid businesses, farms and nonprofit organizations which must relocate.

These are:

1. The Relocation Advisory Assistance Program, which is to aid you in locating a suitable replacement property, and
2. The Relocation Payments Program, which is to reimburse you for certain costs involved in relocating. These payments are classified as:
  - Moving and Related Expenses (costs to move personal property not acquired).
  - Reestablishment Expenses (expenses related to the replacement property).
  - In-Lieu Payment (a fixed payment in lieu of moving and related expenses, and reestablishment expenses).

**NOTE:** *A payment for loss of goodwill is considered an acquisition cost. California law and the federal regulations mandate that relocation payments cannot duplicate other payments such as loss of goodwill. You will **not** be eligible to receive any relocation payments until the State has actually made the first written offer to purchase the property. You will also receive at least 90 days' written notice before you must move.*

## Some Important Definitions

You will be able to understand your relocation benefits better if you become familiar with the following terms:

**Business** is any lawful activity, except a farm operation (see definition on following page), that is conducted primarily for the purchase, sale, lease and/or rental of personal and/or real property, and/or for the manufacture, processing, and/or marketing of products, commodities, and/or any other personal property, or primarily for the sale of services to

the public, or primarily for outdoor advertising display purposes when the display must be moved as a result of the project, or by a nonprofit organization that has established its nonprofit status under applicable federal or state law.

**Displaced Person or Displacee** is any person who moves from real property or moves personal property from real property as a result of the acquisition of the real property, in whole or in part, or as the result of a written notice from the agency of its intent to acquire the real property needed for this transportation project. In the case of a partial acquisition, the Authority shall determine if a person is displaced as a direct result of the acquisition.

Owners and tenants **not lawfully present** in the United States are not eligible to receive relocation payments and assistance.

**Contributes Materially** means that during the two taxable years before the taxable year in which displacement occurs, a business or farm operation must have had average annual gross receipts of at least \$5,000 or average annual net earnings of at least \$1,000, or their income must have contributed at least 33 1/3 percent of the owner's or operator's average annual gross income from all sources, in order to qualify as a bona-fide operation.

**Farm Operation** is any activity conducted solely or primarily for the production of one or more agricultural products or commodities, including timber, for sale and home use, and customarily producing such products or commodities in sufficient quantity to be capable of contributing materially to the operator's support.

**Nonprofit Organization** is a public or private entity that has established its nonprofit status under applicable law and is exempt from paying federal income taxes.

## MOVING EXPENSES

If you qualify as a displaced business, farm or nonprofit organization, you are entitled to reimbursement of your moving costs and certain related expenses incurred in moving. To qualify you must legally occupy the property as the owner or lessee/tenant when the Authority initiates negotiations for the acquisition of the property **or** at the time the Authority acquires title or takes possession of the property. However, to assure your eligibility and prompt payment of moving expenses, you should contact your Relocation Agent before you move.

## You Can Choose Either:

**Actual Reasonable Moving Costs.** You may be paid for your actual reasonable moving costs and related expenses when a commercial mover performs the move. Reimbursement will be limited to a move of 50 miles or less. Related expenses, with limitations, *may* include:

- Transportation.
- Packing and unpacking of personal property.
- Disconnecting and reconnecting personal property related to the operation.
- Temporary storage of personal property.
- Insurance while property is in storage or transit, or the loss and damage of personal property if insurance is not reasonably available.
- Expenses in finding a replacement location.
- Professional services to plan and monitor the move of the personal property to the new location.
- Licenses, permits and fees required at the replacement location.

## OR

**Self-Move Agreement.** You may be paid to move your own personal property based on the lower of two acceptable bids obtained by the Authority. Under this option, you will still be eligible for reimbursement of related expenses listed above that were not included in the bids.

## OR

**In-Lieu Payment.** You can accept a fixed payment between \$1,000 and \$20,000, based on your annual earnings **in lieu of**, that is, **in place of** the moving cost, related expenses and reestablishment cost.

**Actual Reasonable Moving Costs:**

You may be paid the actual reasonable and necessary costs of your move when a professional mover performs the move. All of your moving costs must be supported by paid receipts or other evidence of expenses incurred. In addition to the transportation costs of your personal property, certain other expenses may also be reimbursable, such as packing, crating, unpacking and uncrating, and the disconnecting, dismantling, removing, reassembling, and reinstalling of relocated machinery, equipment, and other personal property.

Other expenses such as professional services necessary for planning and carrying out the move, temporary storage costs, and the cost of licenses, permits and certifications may also be reimbursable. This is not intended to be an all-inclusive list of moving related expenses. Your Relocation Agent can provide you with a complete explanation of reimbursable expenses.

**Self-Move Agreement:**

If you agree to take full responsibility for all or part of the move of your business, farm, or nonprofit organization, the Authority may approve a payment not to exceed the lower of two acceptable bids obtained by the Authority from qualified moving firms or a qualified Authority agent. A low-cost or uncomplicated move may be based on a single bid or estimate at the Authority's discretion. The advantage of this moving option is that it relieves the displaced business, farm or nonprofit organization operator from documenting all moving expenses. The Authority may make the payment without additional documentation as long as the payment is limited to the amount of the lowest acceptable bid or estimate. Other expenses, such as professional services for planning, storage costs, and the cost of licenses, permits, and certifications may also be reimbursable if determined to be necessary. These latter expenses must be pre-approved by the Relocation Agent.

**Requirements:**

Before you move, you must provide the Authority with the:

- Certified inventory of all personal property to be moved.
- Date you intend to vacate the property.
- Address of the replacement property.
- Opportunity to monitor and inspect the move from the acquired property to the replacement property.

**Related Expenses:**

- 1. Searching Expenses for Replacement Property.** Displaced businesses, farms and nonprofit organizations are entitled to reimbursement for actual reasonable expenses incurred in searching for a replacement property, not to exceed \$2,500. Expenses may include transportation, meals, and lodging when away from home; the reasonable value of the time spent during the search; fees paid to the real estate agents, brokers or consultants; and other expenses determined to be reasonable and necessary by the Authority.
- 2. Direct Loss of Tangible Personal Property.** Displaced businesses, farms, and nonprofit organizations may be eligible for a payment for the actual direct loss of tangible personal property which is incurred as a result of the move or discontinuance of the operation. This payment will be based upon the **lesser of:**
  - a. The fair market value of the item for continued use at the displacement site minus the proceeds from its sale.

**OR**

  - b. The estimated cost of moving and reinstalling the replaced item, based on the lowest acceptable bid or estimate obtained by the Authority for eligible moving and related expenses, including dismantling and reassembly, but with no allowance for storage, cost of code requirement betterments or upgrades at the replacement site.

**EXAMPLE:**

You determine that the “document shredder” cannot be moved to the new location because of its condition, and you will not replace it at the new location.

Fair market value of the document shredder based on its use at the current location	\$ 1,500
Proceeds: Price received from selling the document shredder	<u>\$ 500</u>
Net Value	\$ 1,000
<b>OR</b>	
Estimated cost to move	\$ 1,050

Based on the lesser of the two on previous page, the amount of the payment for Loss of Tangible Personal Property = **\$ 1,000**

Note: You are also entitled to all reasonable costs incurred in attempting to sell the document shredder (e.g. advertisement).

**3. Purchase of Substitute Personal Property.** If an item of personal property, which is used as part of the business, farm, or nonprofit organization, is not moved but is promptly replaced with a substitute item that performs a comparable function at the replacement site, the displacee is entitled to payment of the lesser of:

- a. The cost of the substitute item, including installation costs at the replacement site, minus any proceeds from the sale or trade-in of the replaced item;

**OR**

- b. The estimated cost of moving and reinstalling the replaced item, based on the lowest acceptable bid or estimate obtained by the Authority for eligible moving and related expenses, including dismantling and reassembly, but with no allowance for storage, cost of code requirement betterments or upgrades at the replacement site.

**EXAMPLE:**

You determine that the copying machine cannot be moved to the new location because it is now obsolete and you will replace it.

Cost of a substitute copy machine including installation costs at the replacement site	\$ 3,000
Trade-in Allowance	- \$ 2,500
Net Value	\$ 500

**OR**

Estimated cost to move	\$ 550
------------------------	--------

Based on the lesser of the above, the amount of the payment for Substitute Personal Property = **\$ 500**

You determine that the chairs will not be used at the new location because they no longer match the decor and you will replace them.

Cost of substitute chairs	\$ 1,000
Proceeds from selling the chairs	- \$ 100
Net Value	\$ 900

**OR**

Estimated cost to move	\$ 200
------------------------	--------

Based on the lesser of the above, the amount of the payment for Substitute Personal Property = **\$ 200**

Note: You are also entitled to all reasonable costs incurred in attempting to sell the copy machine and/or chairs.

4. **Disconnecting and Reinstallation.** You will be reimbursed for your actual and reasonable costs to disconnect, dismantle, remove, reassemble and reinstall any machinery, equipment or other personal property in relation to its move to the new location. This includes connection to utilities available nearby and any modifications to the personalty that are necessary to adapt it to the utilities at the replacement site.
5. **Physical changes at the new location.** You may be reimbursed for certain physical changes to the replacement property if the changes are necessary to permit the reinstallation of machinery or equipment necessary for the continued operation of the business. **Note:** *The changes cannot increase the value of the building for general purposes, nor can they increase the mechanical capability of the buildings beyond its normal requirements.*
6. The cost of installing utilities from the right of way line to the structure(s) or improvements on the replacement site.
7. The reasonable cost of marketing studies, feasibility surveys and soil testing.
8. The reasonable cost of professional real estate services needed for the purchase or lease of a replacement site.
9. The amount of one-time assessments or impact fees for anticipated heavy utility usage.

## Reestablishment Expenses

A small business, farm or nonprofit organization may be eligible for a payment, not to exceed \$10,000, for expenses actually incurred in relocating and reestablishing the enterprise at a replacement site.

Reestablishment expenses may include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Repairs or improvements to the replacement real property required by federal, state or local laws, codes or ordinances.
2. Modifications to the replacement real property to make any structures suitable for the business operation.
3. Construction and installation of exterior signing to advertise the business.
4. Redecoration or replacement such as painting, wallpapering, paneling or carpeting when required by the condition of the replacement site or for aesthetic purposes.
5. Advertising the new business location.
6. The estimated increased costs of operation at the replacement site during the first two years, for items such as:
  - a) Lease or rental charges
  - b) Personal or real property taxes
  - c) Insurance premiums, and
  - d) Utility charges (excluding impact fees).
7. Other items that the Authority considers essential for the reestablishment of the business or farm.

**Note:** A nonprofit organization must substantiate that it cannot be relocated without a substantial loss of existing patronage (membership or clientele). The payment is based on the average of two years annual gross revenues less administrative expenses.

## **In-Lieu Payment (Fixed)**

Business - Displaced businesses may be eligible for a fixed payment in lieu of (in place of) actual moving expenses, personal property losses, searching expenses, and reestablishment expenses. The fixed payment may not be less than \$1,000 or more than \$20,000.

For a business to be eligible for a fixed payment, the Authority must determine the following:

1. The business owns or rents personal property that must be moved due to the displacement.
2. The business cannot be relocated without a substantial loss of existing patronage.
3. The business is not part of a commercial enterprise having more than three other businesses engaged in the same or similar activity and which are under the same ownership and are not being displaced by the Authority.
4. The business contributed materially to the income of the displaced business operator during the two taxable years prior to displacement. Any business operation that is engaged solely in the rental of space to others is not eligible for a fixed payment. This includes the rental of space for residential or business purposes.

Farm Operation – Displaced farm operations may be eligible for a fixed payment in lieu of (in place of) actual moving expenses, personal property losses, searching expenses, and reestablishment expenses. The fixed payment may not be less than \$1,000 or more than \$20,000. In the case of a partial acquisition of land, which was a farm operation before the acquisition, the fixed payment shall be made only if the Authority determines that:

1. The acquisition of part of the land caused the operator to be displaced from the farm operation on the remaining land; or
2. The partial acquisition caused a substantial change in the nature of the farm operation.

Eligibility requirements for nonprofit organizations are slightly different from eligibility requirements for businesses and farm operations. If you represent a nonprofit organization that is being displaced and are interested in a fixed payment, please consult your Relocation Agent for additional information.

### The Computation of Your In-Lieu Payment:

The fixed payment for a displaced business or farm is based upon the average annual net earnings of the operation for the two taxable years immediately preceding the taxable year in which it is displaced. The Authority may use a different two year period if it is determined that the last two taxable years do not accurately reflect the earnings of the operation.

**EXAMPLE:** The Authority acquires your property and you move in 2011:

2009 Annual Net Earnings	\$10,500
2010 Annual Net Earnings	<u>\$ 12,500</u>
TOTAL	\$ 23,000
<b>Average over two years</b>	<b>\$ 11,500</b>

This two-year average would be the amount of your in-lieu payment. **Remember:** This payment is in place of all other moving benefits, including reestablishment expenses. You must provide the Authority with proof of net earnings to support your claim.

Proof of net earnings can be documented by income tax returns, certified financial statements, or other reasonable evidence of net earnings acceptable to the Authority.

*Note: The computation for nonprofit organizations differs in that the payment is computed on the basis of average annual gross revenues less administrative expenses for the two year period specified above.*

### Before You Move:

- A. Request a determination of entitlement for in-lieu payment from your Relocation Agent.
- B. Include a written statement of the reasons the business cannot be relocated without a substantial loss in net earnings.
- C. Provide certified copies of tax returns for the two tax years immediately preceding the tax year in which you move. For example, if you move anytime in

the year 2012, regardless of when negotiations began or the Authority took title to the property, the taxable years would be 2010 and 2011.

- D. You will be notified of the amount you are entitled to after the application is received and approved,
- E. You cannot receive the payment until after you vacate the property, AND submit a claim for the payment within 18 months of the date of your move.

## **Relocation Advisory Assistance**

Any business, farm or nonprofit organization displaced by the Authority shall be offered relocation advisory assistance for the purpose of locating a replacement property. Relocation services are provided by qualified personnel employed by, or under contract with, the Authority. It is their goal and desire to be of service to you and to assist in any way possible to help you relocate successfully.

A Relocation Agent from the Authority will contact you personally. Relocation services and payments will be explained to you in accordance with your eligibility. During the Agent's initial interview with you, your needs and preferences will be determined as well as your need for assistance.

You can expect to receive the following services, advice and assistance from your Relocation Agent who will:

- Determine your needs and preferences.
- Explain the relocation benefits and eligibility requirements.
- Provide information on replacement properties for your consideration.
- Provide information on counseling you can obtain to help minimize hardships in adjusting to your new location.
- Assist you in completing loan documents, rental applications or Relocation Claims Forms.

AND will provide information on:

- Security deposits
- Interest rates and terms
- Typical downpayments

- Permits, fees and local planning
- SBA loan requirements
- Real property taxes
- Consumer education literature

If you desire, your Relocation Agent will give you current listings of other available replacement property. Transportation will be provided to inspect available property, especially if you are elderly or handicapped. Although you may use the services of a real estate broker, the Authority cannot provide a referral.

Your Relocation Agent is familiar with the services provided by others in your community and will provide information on other federal, state, and local programs offering assistance to displaced persons. If you have special needs, your Relocation Agent will make every effort to secure the services of those agencies with trained personnel who have the expertise to help you.

If the high-speed train project will require a considerable number of people to be relocated, the Authority may establish a temporary Relocation Field Office on or near the project. Project relocation offices will be open during convenient hours and evening hours if necessary.

In addition to these services, the Authority is required to coordinate its relocation activities with other agencies causing displacements to ensure that all persons displaced receive fair and consistent relocation benefits. **Remember:** YOUR RELOCATION AGENT is there to offer advice and assistance. Do not hesitate to ask questions. And be sure you fully understand all of your rights and available benefits.

## YOUR RIGHTS AS A DISPLACEE

It is important to remember that your relocation benefits will not have an adverse effect on your:

- Social Security Eligibility
- Welfare Eligibility
- Income Taxes

In addition, Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 and later acts and amendments make discriminatory practices in the purchase and rental of most residential units illegal if based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.



The Authority's Non-Discrimination Policy ensures that all services and/or benefits will be administered to the general public without regard to race, color, national origin, or sex in compliance with Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act (42 USC, sec. 2000d, et seq.).

And you always have the right to appeal any decision by the Authority regarding your relocation benefits and eligibility.

Your right to appeal is guaranteed in the Uniform Act which states that any person may file an appeal with the head of the responsible agency if that person believes that the agency has failed to determine properly the person's eligibility or the amount of a payment authorized by the Act.

If you indicate your dissatisfaction, either verbally or in writing, the Authority will assist you in filing an appeal and explain the procedures to be followed. You will be given a prompt and full opportunity to be heard. You have the right to be represented by legal counsel or other representative in connection with the appeal (but solely at your own expense).

The Authority will consider all pertinent justifications and materials submitted by you and other available information needed to ensure a fair review. The Authority will provide you with a written determination resulting from the appeal with an explanation of the basis for the decision. If you are still dissatisfied with the relief granted, the Authority will advise you that you may seek judicial review.

*Reference: Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended (42 U.S.C. sec. 4601, et seq.) (Uniform Act); and Implementing Regulations (49 C.F.R. Part 24)*