



ACE Ceres-Merced Extension Project

Virtual Scoping Meeting for the ACE Ceres-Merced Extension Project EIR

Presentation Given for Virtual Scoping Meetings on June 25,
2020 (3:00 – 4:30 PM and 6:30 – 8:00 PM) and June 30, 2020
(6:30 – 8:00 PM)



Meeting Format

- Presentation, followed by a Questions and Answers session
- For the Questions and Answers session, use the “Q&A” button bottom of your screen (Note: questions will not be answered until the Q&A section near the end of the virtual meeting)



Phone only? Contact Leo Mena at 415-677-7170 to submit questions verbally



Note: Questions asked during this webinar will be considered but are not official scoping comments.

Please e-mail, mail, or use the online submission form to submit official scoping comments.



Agenda

- I. Welcome, Meeting Goals, and Introductions
- II. Project Background
- III. Project Overview
- IV. Project Elements
- V. Environmental Review Process
- VI. Questions and Answers



Welcome, Meeting Goals, and Introductions



Welcome, Meeting Goals, and Introductions

Presenters



Dan Leavitt

Manager of Regional Initiatives
San Joaquin Regional Rail
Commission



Daniel Krause

Project Manager
AECOM



Daniel Hartman

Project Engineer
AECOM



Rich Walter

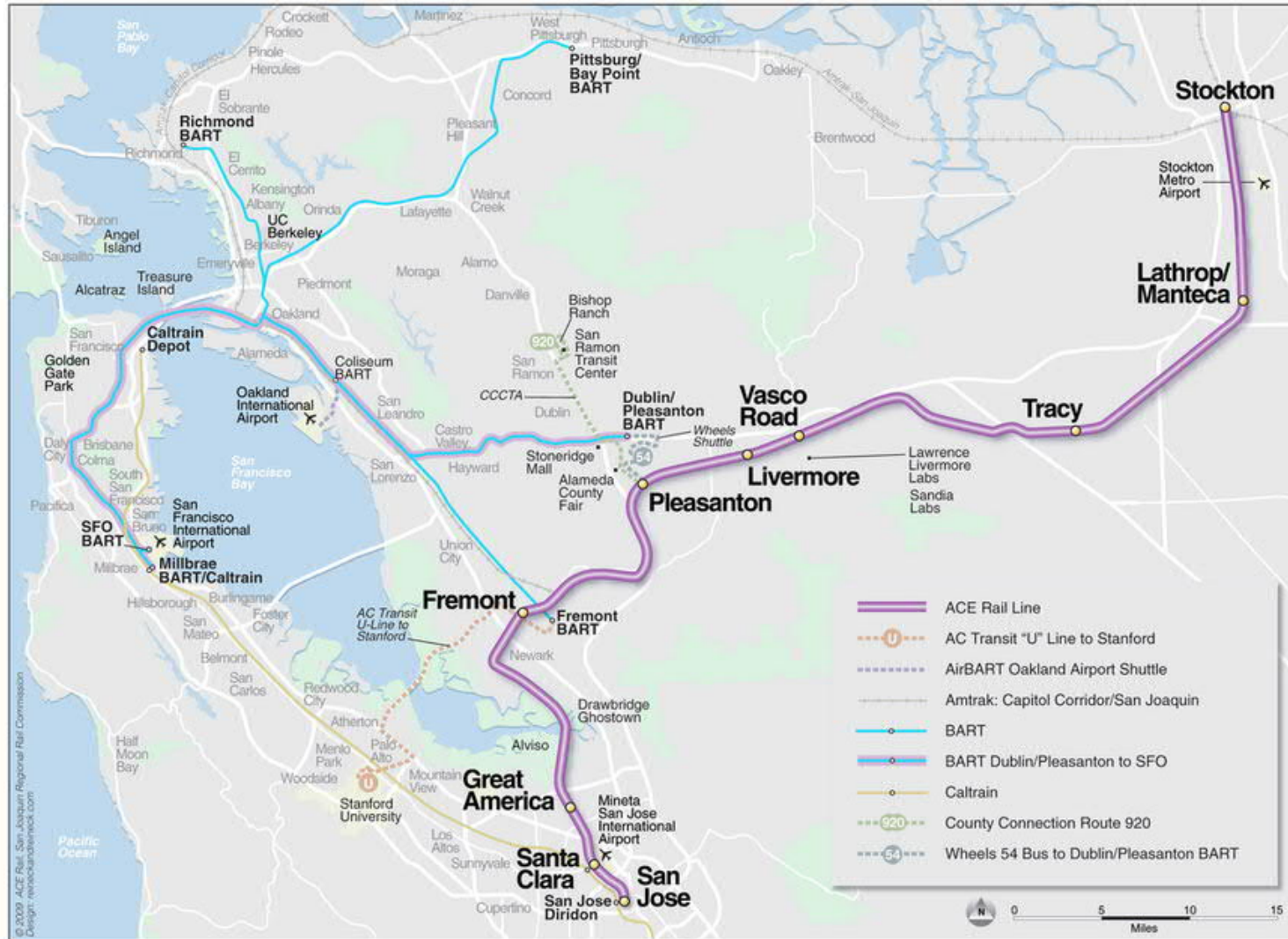
CEQA Lead
ICF



Project Background



Project Background: ACE Today



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Design: reischneider.com



Project Background: ACE Today

Normal Service Pattern (Pre-COVID 19)

- Four (4) Weekday Roundtrips
 - Four (4) Westbound AM Trains run from Stockton to San Jose
 - Four (4) Eastbound PM Trains run from San Jose to Stockton



Temporarily Reduced Service

- Due to reduced demand from the COVID 19 crisis, service is temporarily reduced to two (2) roundtrips each weekday
- The number of train cars has also been reduced



Project Background: ACE Today

Annual Ridership

- Safely transports over 1.5 million passengers (pre-COVID)

Onboard Amenities

- Bike cars with 14 bike stalls
- Tables, power outlets & Wi-Fi onboard

Benefits of Riding ACE

- Relax or work in comfort on ACE versus sitting in traffic
- Socialize with fellow passengers





Project Background: Valley Rail Program



- Valley Rail Program includes expansion of both ACE and the San Joaquins Services
- Valley Rail is funded by the Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP) and other state funding sources.



Project Background: Valley Rail Program (ACE Components)

Existing and Proposed ACE Rail Network



The ACE portion of Valley Rail Program includes:

- Extensions from Stockton to Sacramento/Natomas (Environmental Clearance Phase)
- Extension from Lathrop to Ceres (Approved Project in Final Design and Permitting Phase)
- Extension from Ceres to Merced (Environmental Clearance Phase)

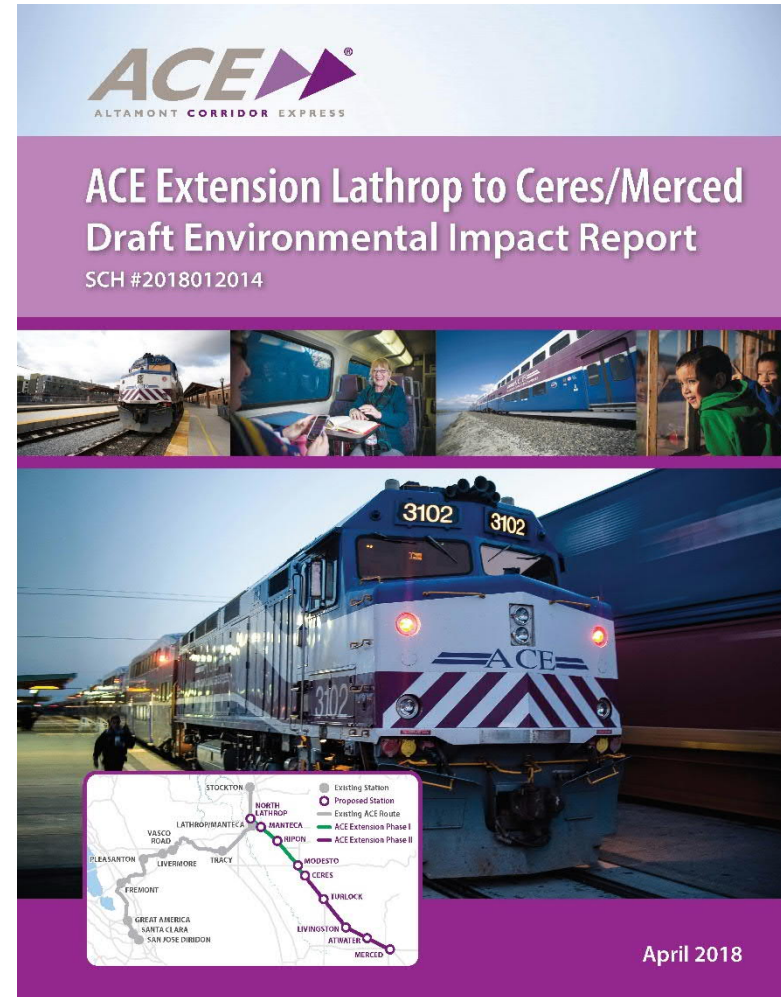


Project Overview



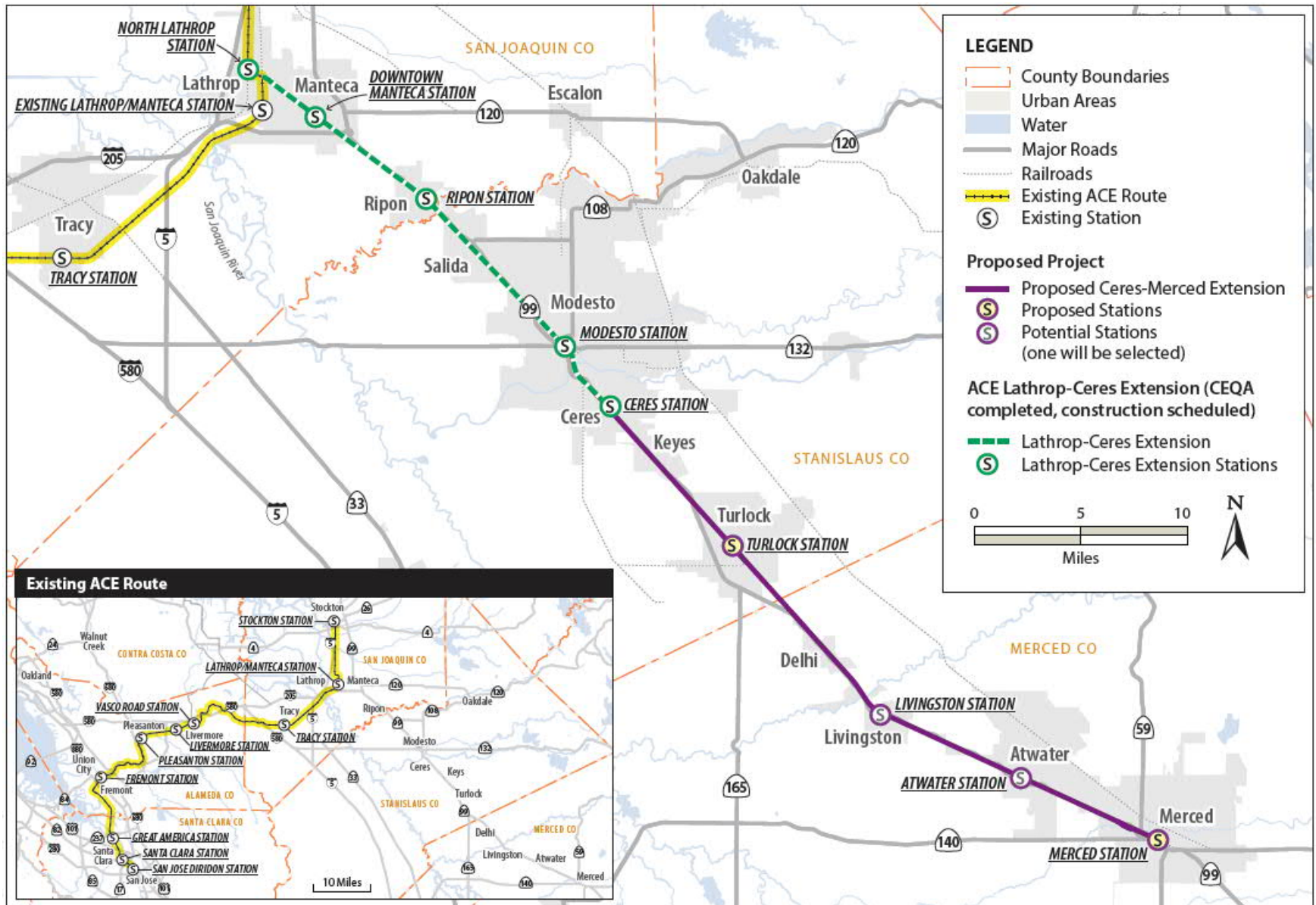
Project Overview: Building on Previous Work

- In 2018, the San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission completed an EIR for the ACE Extension from Lathrop to Ceres and to Merced.
 - Analyzed Phase I of the extension of ACE from North Lathrop to Ceres at a “project-level” detail
 - Analyzed Phase II of the extension of ACE from Ceres to Merced at a “programmatic level” of detail (Proposed Project);
- The current Project is now conducting an EIR at the “project-level” of detail to complete the environmental clearance process for the Ceres-Merced Extension.





Project Overview: Project Location





Project Overview: Project Location (Close-Up View)





Project Overview: Service Plan

Service Plan of the Project includes:

- Four (4) ACE Roundtrips to/from Merced on Weekdays
 - Three (3) roundtrips would run between Merced and Sacramento/Natomas
 - One (1) roundtrip would run between Merced and San Jose
- Timed transfers at the new North Lathrop Station would be provided, connecting passengers on the Natomas to trains to ACE trains headed to San Jose
- Initial service to Merced anticipated to begin in 2025





Project Overview: Project Benefits

Project Benefits



Enhanced commuter and intercity passenger rail and transit **access and connectivity** in the San Joaquin Valley



Additional passenger rail service to areas with no service or very limited service



Support of **transit-oriented development** near proposed station locations



Opportunity to connect with the **future high-speed rail** in Merced



Creation of new transportation **alternatives to automobile use**, which would alleviate traffic on congestion roads and highways in the region



Increased **air quality** and the **reduction of greenhouse gas emissions**



Long-term **health benefits** for ACE riders and residents and employees along the ACE corridor as a result of reduced emissions



Promotion of local and regional land use and transportation planning **sustainability goals and initiatives**



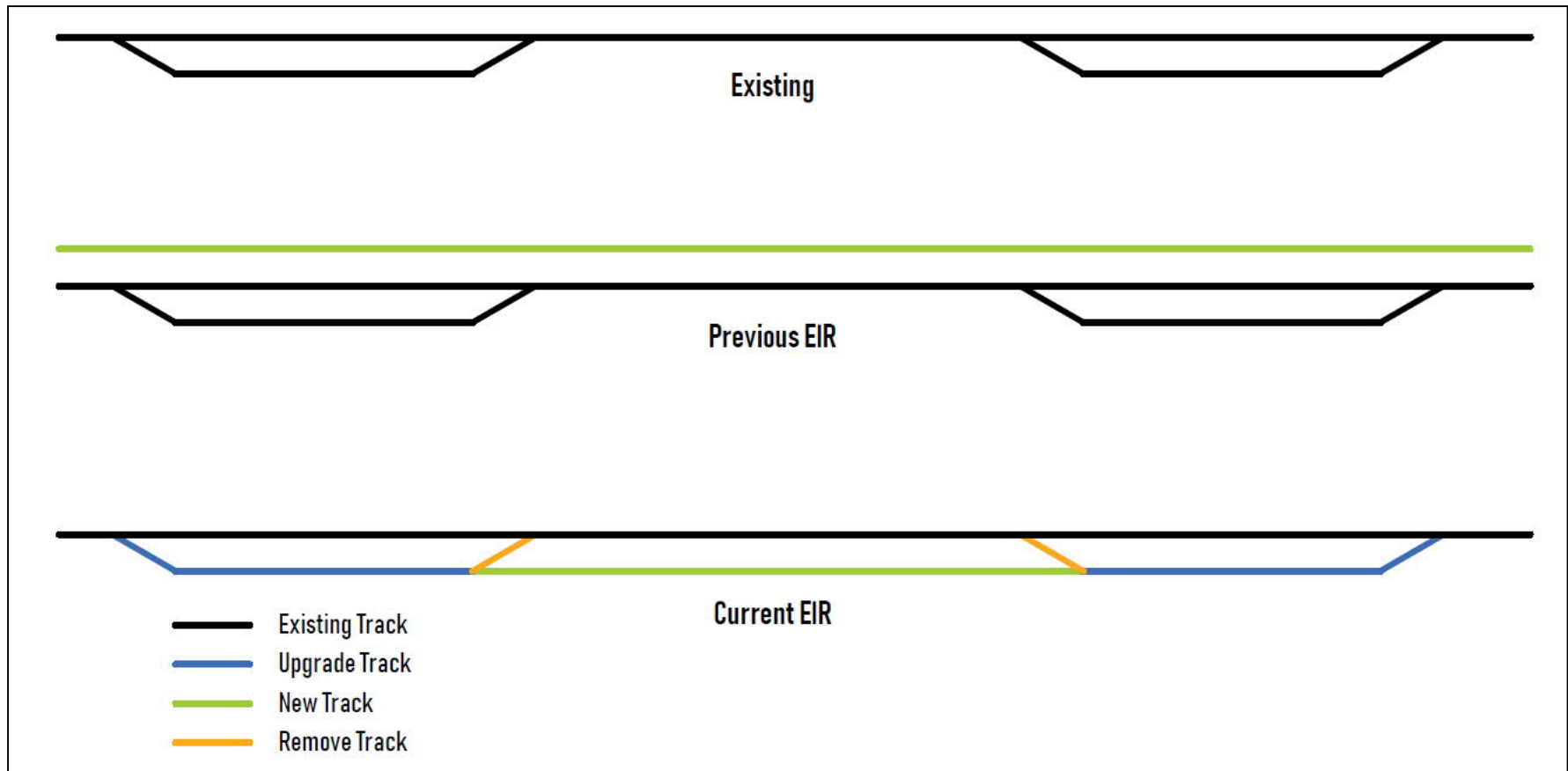
Project Elements



Project Elements: Track Improvements

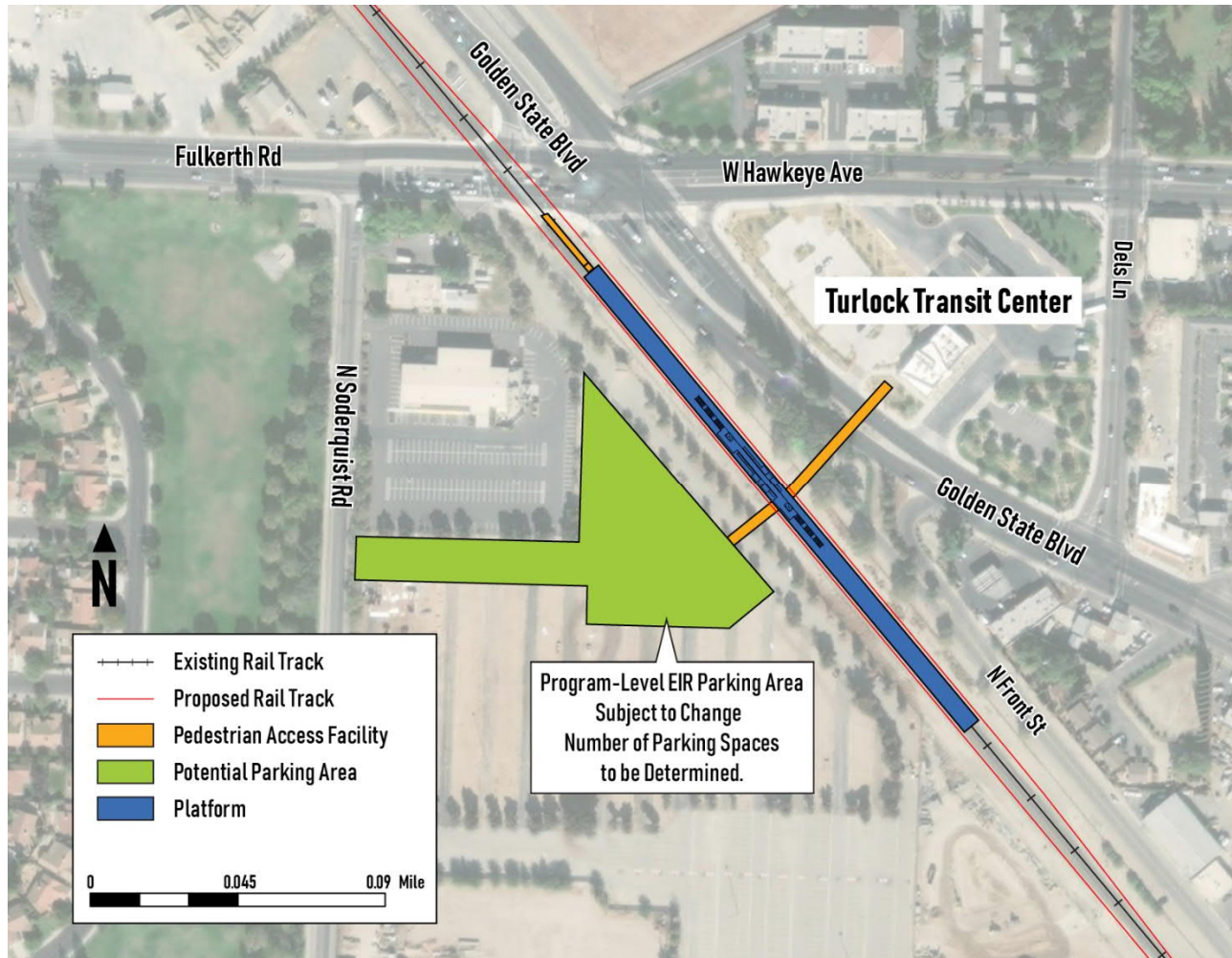
Track Improvements Include:

- Upgrading existing siding tracks
- Build additional to track to create more sections of double-track





Project Elements: Turlock Station



Improvements

- Station Platform
- Pedestrian Access
- Transit Access
- Surface Parking



Project Elements: Livingston Station

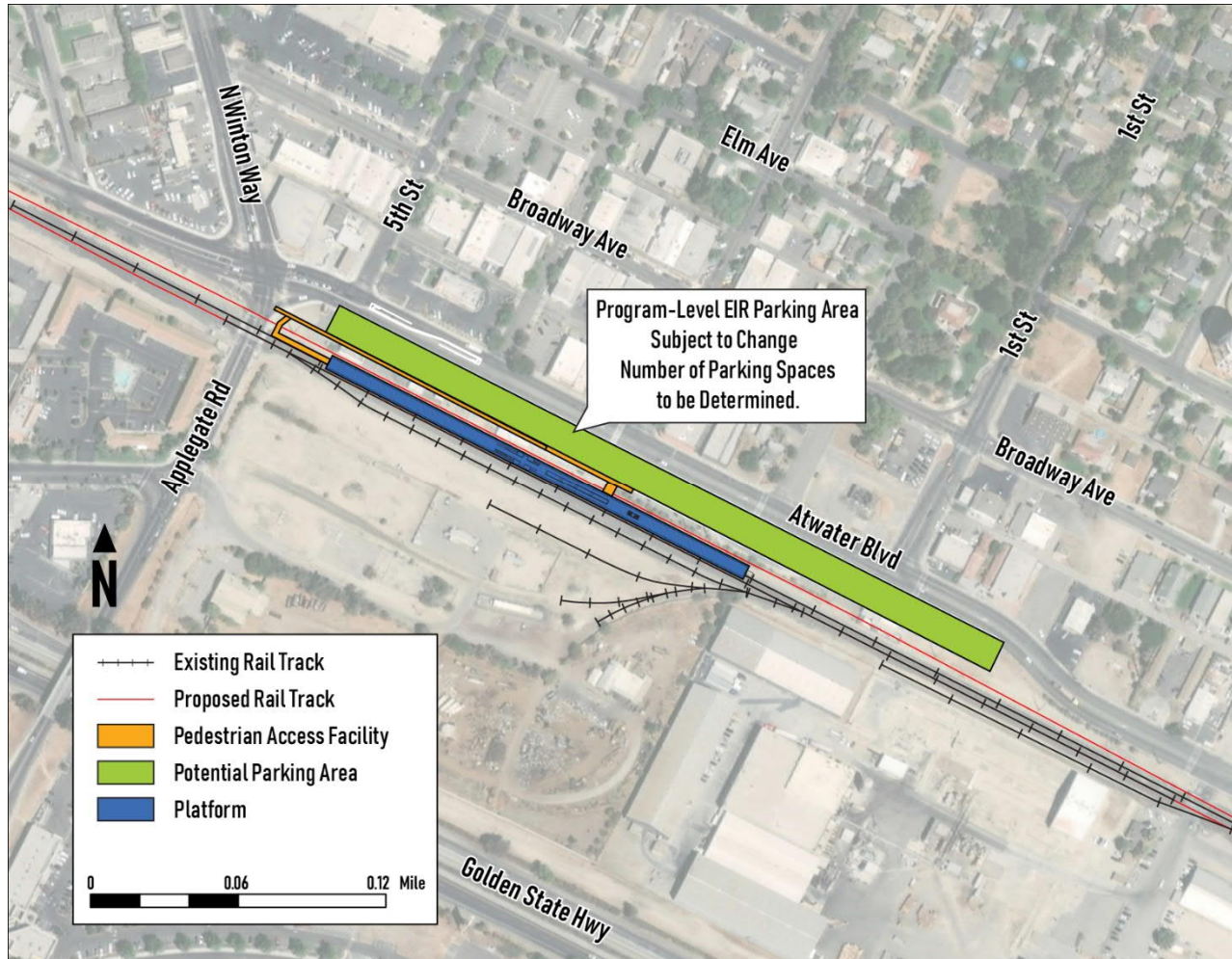


Improvements

- Station Platform
- Pedestrian Access
- Transit Access
- Surface Parking



Project Elements: Atwater Station



Improvements

- Station Platform
- Pedestrian Access
- Transit Access
- Surface Parking



Project Elements: Merced Station

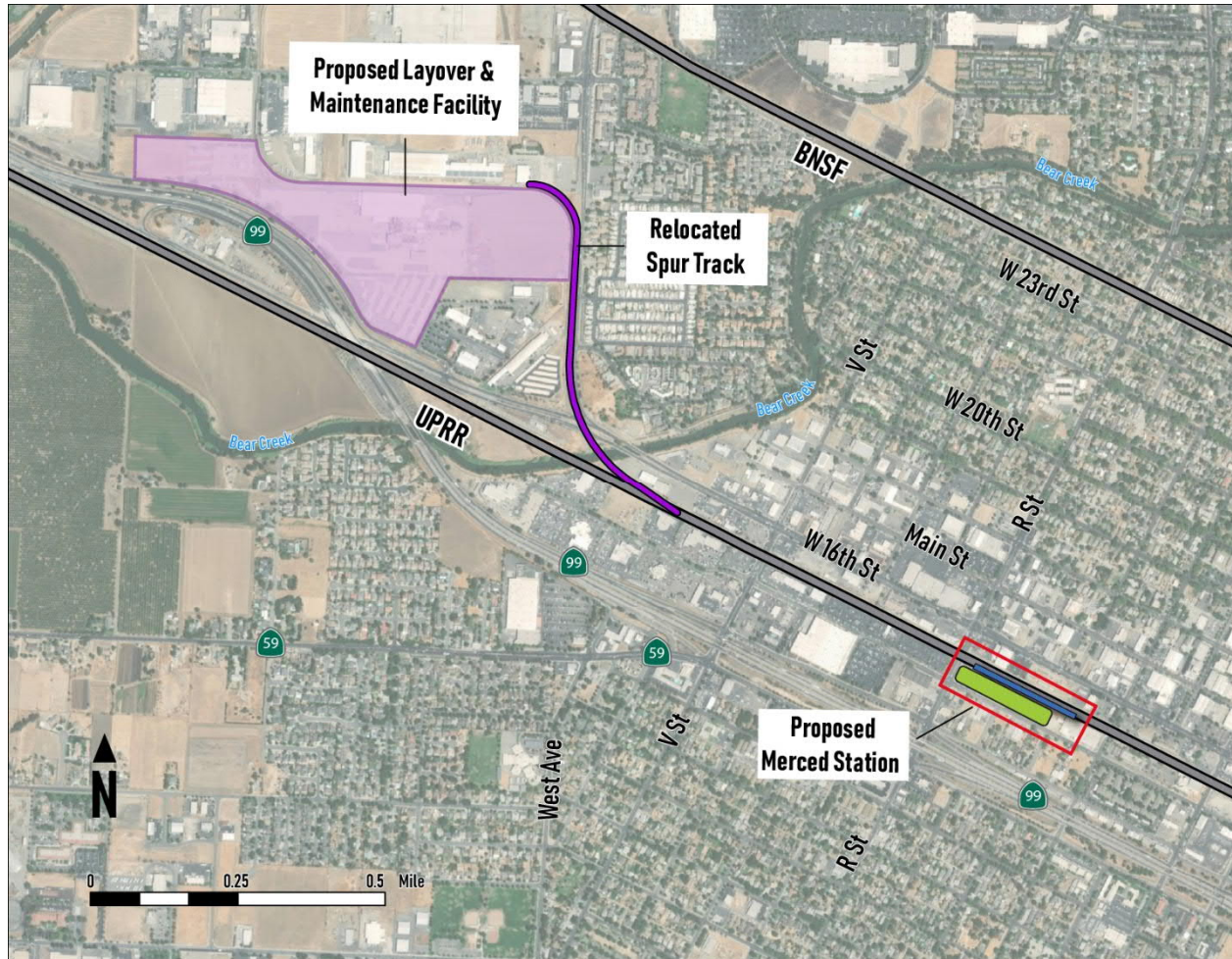


Improvements

- Station Platform
- Pedestrian Access
- Transit Access
- Surface Parking



Project Elements: Merced Layover & Maintenance Facility



Improvements

- Lead Track
- Storage Tracks
- Maintenance Building
- Employee Parking
- Train Wash Facility

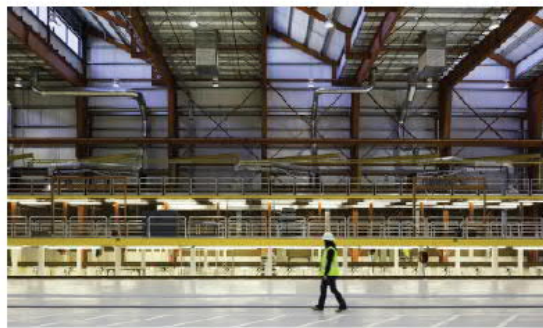


Project Elements: Example of a Maintenance Facility

Outside Views of the Existing ACE Maintenance Facility in Stockton



Inside the Existing ACE Maintenance Facility in Stockton



- The Merced Layover and Maintenance Facility would provide for both maintenance of trains and layover track for trains between service runs.
- For reference, photos of the existing ACE Maintenance Facility located in Stockton are presented to the left.



Environmental Review Process



Environmental Review Process: Project Objectives

Project Objectives



Reduce traffic congestion, improve regional air quality, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions



Enhance commuter rail and intercity service and transit connections in the San Joaquin Valley



Promote local and regional land use and transportation sustainability goals



Environmental Review Process: Environmental Impact Report

- San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission (SJRRC) is the lead agency for this Project, and will prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) consistent with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)
- The Draft EIR will:
 - Identify significant environmental impacts
 - Analyze potential environmental effects and identifies ways to avoid or mitigate them.
 - Evaluate reasonable alternatives that could reduce or avoid environmental impacts
 - Develop detailed mitigation (ways to reduce or avoid environmental impacts)
 - Provide information for public review and comment
 - Disclose to decision makers the impacts, mitigation, and public comments





Environmental Review Process: Potential Environmental Effects



- The EIR will consider impacts to the following resource areas:
 - Aesthetics
 - Agricultural Resources
 - Air Quality
 - Biological Resources
 - Cultural Resources (including Tribal Cultural Resources)
 - Energy
 - Geology and Soils
 - Greenhouse Gas Emissions
 - Hazards and Hazardous Materials
 - Hydrology and Water Quality
 - Land Use and Planning
 - Noise and Vibration
 - Population and Housing
 - Public Services
 - Recreation
 - Safety and Security (including Wildfire)
 - Transportation
 - Utilities and Service Systems



Environmental Review Process: Key Project Milestones and Timeline





Environmental Review Process: Scoping

- Scoping is the first step in the EIR process.
- SJRRC is seeking comments on two things.
 - What should be studied in the EIR
 - Any comments on feasible alternatives that meet most of the project objective and would minimize environmental impacts of the Proposed Project





Environmental Review Process: Scoping Comments

Your input is important to us!

Submit Scoping Comments – through 5:00 pm on July 7, 2020

Mail:

San Joaquin Regional Rail
Commission
Attn: ACE Ceres-Merced Extension
Project
949 East Channel Street
Stockton, CA 95202

Email:

MercedExtComments@acerail.com

Please include “ACE Ceres-Merced
Extension Project” in the subject
heading

Project Website:

Input your contact information and provide comment in
the submission form at the bottom of the Project
webpage at www.acerail.com/merced-extension-eir/



Questions and Answers



Questions and Answers

Open the “Q&A” box at the bottom of your screen to submit a question and view other questions.



Phone only? Contact Leo Mena at 415-677-7170 to submit questions verbally.

Submit Scoping Comments – through 5:00 pm on July 7, 2020

By e-mail: MercedExtComments@acerail.com

By Mail: San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission, Attn: ACE Ceres-Merced Extension Project, 949 East Channel Street, Stockton, CA 95202)

Project Webpage Submission Form: bottom of the Project webpage at www.acerail.com/merced-extension-eir/

Note: Questions asked during this webinar will be considered but are not official scoping comments. Please e-mail, mail, or use online form to submit official scoping comments.



Thank You

Thank you!