



MERCED

THE CI

To: The Honorable Mayor and City Council
From: Steven S. Carrigan, City Manager
Date: June 26, 2020
Re: City Council Information Report

**NO CI
NEXT
WEEK**



POLICE POLICY REVIEW COMMITTEE ANNOUNCED

There was a news conference Thursday morning where Mayor Mike Murphy announced the formation of a community advisory committee to review the Merced Police Department's policies and procedures. The 18-member advisory group, headed by Dee Tatum, is to return to the City Council with recommendations within 90 days. Local and Fresno news media attended the event. See the attached news release.

ACE TRAIN MERCED EXTENSION PROJECT NOP

The San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission (SJRRC) issued a Notice of Preparation (NOP) for the ACE Train Ceres to Merced Extension Project Environmental Impact Report (EIR). SJRRC proposes to extend ACE passenger rail service from Ceres to Merced by upgrading some existing tracks and constructing new tracks at certain locations within the existing UPRR Fresno Subdivision right-of-way (ROW) over a total distance of approximately 34 miles. Three new stations and a layover and maintenance facility would be constructed along the extension alignment (see attached map).



The Project would consist of the following:

- A **Ceres to Merced Extension Alignment** consisting of upgrades and new tracks and bridges within the UPRR Fresno Subdivision between Ceres and Merced;
- New Turlock, Livingston or Atwater, and Merced Stations along the extension alignment; and
- A new permanent **Merced Layover & Maintenance Facility** to support extension operations.

The purpose of the EIR is to evaluate the environmental issues associated with the proposed improvements included in the Project. The SJRRC conducted two online scoping meetings on June 25, 2020, and third is scheduled for Tuesday, June 30. Notice of Preparation comments are due to the SJRRC by Tuesday, July 7. A copy of the NOP, project location map, and project fact sheet are attached.

PUBLIC WORKS HELPS OUT DOS PALOS

The City of Dos Palos had trouble with its drinking water supply, with algae clogging its filtration system, so its neighboring communities have rallied to support the local residents. The City of Merced sent over a water truck, and local Realtors bought pallets of water that the City transported over for residents to drink. Holl Sheet Metal added \$2,000 in cash to help out. Plus, the Westside has been assisting, too. The actions earned the City numerous compliments on social media and more than 20,000 engagements. (typically, a good post would see the City getting 6,000 engagements).



WELL 20 CONSTRUCTION (MISSION & TYLER)

Work continues on the new well site at Mission & Tyler under the supervision of the Public Works Department, with the contractor framing the roof on the well building this week.



SCHOOL CROSSWALK & LEGENDS PAINTED

Public Works Streets crews finished painting all school crosswalks and school legends this week.



ENGINEERING UPDATE

Water Well Site #20

Clark Bros. Inc., workers are currently working on the roof of the well building.



M St. – Childs to 8th Street Roadway Improvements

TBS Contractors are currently working on the installation of a water line along M Street.



PARK AND REC NEWS

The Parks and Recreation Department will begin a limited reopening beginning Monday, July 6. The Applegate Park Zoo will resume normal operations to the public the same day. The summer playground program will also begin that day, and registrations are now open. See attached flier.

The Youth Council will be hosting a drive-thru event, Kits for Kids, on Friday, July 3, from 6 to 8 p.m. at the Merced Welcome Center. A flier is attached.



SAVE THE DATE

June 29 – Special Council Meeting
June 30 – ACE Virtual Scoping Session 6:30 p.m.
July 3 – City offices closed for the holiday, **NO CI**
July 6 – Council meeting

REPORTS & CORRESPONDENCE

- | | |
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| 2. ACE information | Pg. 8 |
| 3. Summer Playground Program flier | Pg. 16 |
| 4. Youth Council Kits for Kids | Pg. 18 |

Police policy review committee announced

An advisory committee to review the Merced Police Department policies and procedures was introduced to the public by Merced Mayor Mike Murphy today during a morning news conference.

Noting that it was exactly a month since the death of George Floyd at the hands of Minneapolis police officers, Murphy said the committee's purpose was "to understand what our Department is doing well, and where we can improve within the bounds of California state law."

Murphy said he worked with Council member Delray Shelton and other Council members in selecting the committee members. "Many people on this advisory committee have had both positive and negative experiences with law enforcement," Murphy said. "The life experiences of the committee members and the professional experiences of our police officers are both important and necessary parts of this discussion."

Murphy said he supported the men and women in the Department, who are "some of the best around. They are talented, professional, and run toward danger to protect us when others run away."

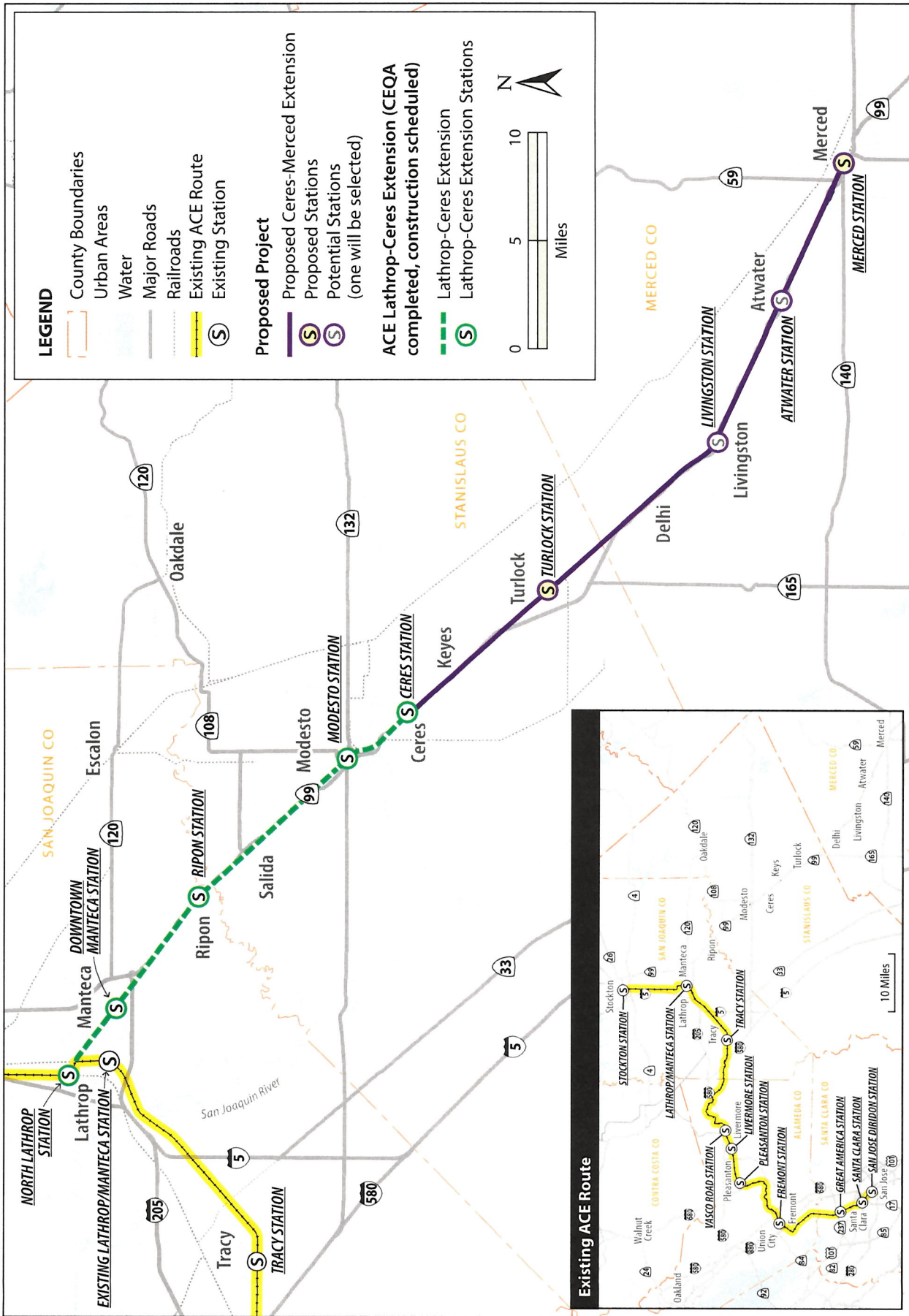
Dee Tatum, a retired CEO of Merced County and retired Air Force officer, will chair the committee. Tatum said he expects the meetings to be "very spirited and very open."

"I have no agenda," Tatum said. "I want to represent all of Merced."

Interim Police Chief Tom Cavallero said he will be working with the group to develop better policies. "Law enforcement policies are, and always have been, evolving documents," Cavallero said, and they change to meet the needs of the public. "They must also necessarily reflect the expectations of that community."

Besides Tatum, the members of the Committee are: Rhonda Batson, Allen Brooks, Wil Dean, Nailah Hubbard, Cesar "C-Flo" Johnson, Sharon Jones, Edwin Kainth, See Lee, Kari May, Nellie McGarry, Robert Morris, Rudy Sanchez, Al Schaap, Shane Smith, Gabriela Spiva, Moua Thao and Tatiana Vizcaino.

The date for the first meeting is pending. The committee will report back to the City Council with its recommendations within 90 days.



Project Location
ACE Ceres-Merced Extension Project



ACE Ceres-Merced Extension Project



Project Overview

The San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission (SJRRRC) proposes to extend ACE passenger rail service from Ceres to Merced by upgrading some existing tracks and constructing new tracks at certain locations within the existing UPRR Fresno Subdivision right-of-way (ROW) over a total distance of approximately 34 miles.

Three new stations and a layover and maintenance facility would be constructed along the extension alignment.

The Project would consist of the following:

1. A **Ceres to Merced Extension Alignment** consisting of upgrades and new tracks and bridges within the UPRR Fresno Subdivision between Ceres and Merced
2. New **Turlock, Livingston or Atwater, and Merced Stations** along the extension alignment
3. A new permanent **Merced Layover & Maintenance Facility** to support extension operations

Existing and Proposed ACE Rail Network

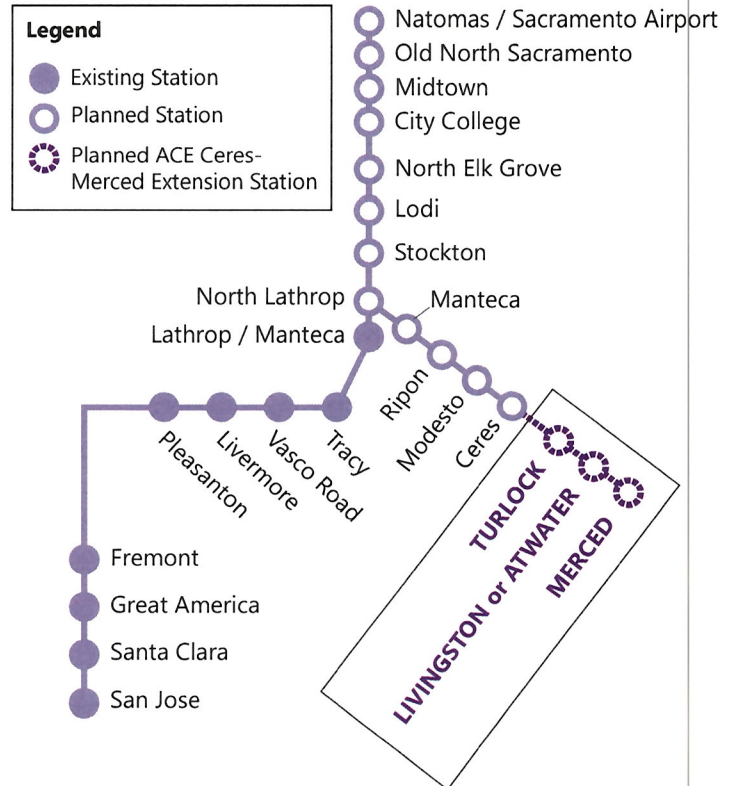


Figure 1. Proposed Project Map



The purpose of the Project is to address growing traffic congestion, unhealthy air quality, climate change, and a general lack of access to rail transportation in the San Joaquin Valley.

Environmental Review

SJRRRC will prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The EIR will evaluate the environmental issues associated with the proposed improvements included in the Project.

This new project-level EIR will be tiered from the programmatic analysis in the EIR completed for ACE Extension Lathrop to Ceres/Merced Project, published in 2018.

The EIR will assess and inform the public about potential impacts of the Project, including mitigation measures, where necessary.

Who is the Lead Agency?

SJRRRC is the lead agency for this effort. To help ensure a successful process, the SJRRRC is working closely with local stakeholders, including the Counties and Cities where the Project would be located.

Benefits of Project



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 congested 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 Timeline



We want to hear from

For more information on the project, and to sign up for our email list, visit:
www.acerail.com/merced-extension-eir

Stay Connected

Join ACE on our social media platforms for the most up to date information.



[fb.com/AltamontCorridorExpress](https://www.facebook.com/AltamontCorridorExpress)



[@ACE_train](https://twitter.com/ACE_train)

Contact:

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Director of Capital Projects
kevin@acerail.com
www.acerail.com



NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

ACE Ceres–Merced Extension Project

SCOPING PERIOD: THURSDAY MAY 28, 2020 – TUESDAY JULY 7, 2020

DATE: May 28, 2020
TO: Agencies, Organizations, and Interested Parties
FROM: San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission
SUBJECT: Notice of Preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the ACE Ceres-Merced Extension Project

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission (SJRRRC) intends to prepare an environmental impact report (EIR), consistent with requirements under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The purpose of the EIR is to evaluate the environmental issues associated with the proposed improvements included in the Altamont Commuter Express (ACE) Ceres–Merced Extension Project (Project). The SJRRRC will serve as the lead agency under CEQA for the EIR.

The purpose of this Notice of Preparation (NOP) is to notify agencies, organizations, and individuals that SJRRRC plans to prepare the EIR and to request input on the scope of the environmental analysis to be performed. From public agencies, we are inviting comments on the scope and context of the environmental information that is germane to each agency’s statutory responsibilities with regard to the Project. SJRRRC is also requesting interested individuals’ or organizations’ views on the scope of the environmental document.

A. Scoping Period

The public scoping period will begin on Thursday, May 28, 2020. Written responses and comments on the scope of the ACE Ceres-Merced Extension Project will be accepted until 5:00 PM on Tuesday, July 7, 2020. Please send written comments to:

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

Your comments may also be sent by email to MercedExtComments@acerail.com. Please include the “ACE Ceres–Merced Extension Project” in the subject heading.

B. Virtual Scoping Meetings

In accordance with current social distancing guidance related to the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19), all scoping meetings for the ACE Ceres-Merced Extension Project will be held online as webinars. Virtual scoping meetings will take place at the following times:

- Virtual Scoping Meeting #1 (Webinar) – June 25 (3:00 pm – 4:30 pm)
- Virtual Scoping Meeting #2 (Webinar) – June 25 (6:30 pm – 8:00 pm)
- Virtual Scoping Meeting #3 (Webinar) – June 30 (6:30 pm – 8:00 pm)

The link to join each virtual scoping meeting will be made available on the Project webpage (<https://acerail.com/merced-extension-eir>) the day of the webinar. Visit the Project webpage at <https://acerail.com/merced-extension-eir> to sign up to receive email reminders for these webinars. Virtual scoping meetings will begin with a live presentation providing an overview of the Project and the CEQA process, followed by a question and answer session based on questions submitted online from attendees. All three virtual scoping meetings will be identical in format and content. The scoping meetings will provide an opportunity for the lead agency to explain the Project and to give interested agencies, organizations, and individuals an opportunity to ask questions related to the scope and content of the EIR.

C. Project History

SJRRRC manages and operates the ACE service, which currently provides commuter rail service between San Jose and Stockton. The existing 86-mile ACE service corridor passes through Santa Clara, Alameda, and San Joaquin Counties, with 10 stations along the route. At the western end of the ACE corridor, ACE operates on an approximately 4-mile segment of track between San Jose and Santa Clara owned and operated by the Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board (PCJPB, also referred to as Caltrain). North of the Santa Clara Station to Stockton, ACE operates on approximately 82 miles of track owned by Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR). ACE operates on portions of UPRR's Coast, Niles, Oakland, and Fresno subdivisions.¹

As part of Senate Bill (SB) 132 passed in April 2017, SJRRRC was awarded \$400 million for the ACE service expansion in the San Joaquin Valley, including associated system improvements. SJRRRC prepared a prior EIR for the ACE Extension Lathrop to Ceres/Merced Project in 2017-2018. The prior EIR analyzed a Phase I extension from Lathrop to Ceres at a project-level detail and Phase II extension from Ceres to Merced at a programmatic level of detail. The prior EIR was certified and Phase I of the Project was approved by the SJRRRC Board of Commissioners on August 3, 2018. The extension to Ceres is currently in the engineering design and permitting phase and is anticipated to start construction in fall of 2021.

The Project, for which this NOP is being released, is Phase II of the project that was analyzed in the ACE Extension Lathrop to Ceres/Merced EIR. The new EIR that is being prepared by the SJRRRC will analyze the potential environmental impacts from expanding ACE service between Ceres and Merced at a project-level detail. This new project-level EIR is tiered from the programmatic analysis in the prior EIR and, thus, where appropriate, the new EIR will incorporate analysis from the prior analysis.

D. Project Location

As shown in Figure 1, the Project spans Stanislaus and Merced Counties. SJRRRC proposes to extend ACE passenger rail service from Ceres to Merced by constructing and upgrading tracks with the existing UPRR Fresno Subdivision right-of-way (ROW), a total distance of approximately 34 miles. New stations and a layover and maintenance facility would be constructed along the extension alignment. The Project limits include portions of the Fresno Subdivision's ROW, additional ROW for new facilities (stations and a layover and maintenance facility), and construction or access areas located outside the ROW.

¹ A *subdivision* is a portion of railroad or railway that operates under a single timetable (authority for train movement in the area).

E. Project Objectives

The primary objectives of the Project are to enhance commuter rail and intercity service and transit connectivity in the San Joaquin Valley; reduce traffic congestion, improve regional air quality, and reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions; and to promote local and regional land use and transportation sustainability goals. Each of these objectives is discussed in detail below.

- **Enhance commuter rail and intercity service and transit connections in the San Joaquin Valley.**
Project improvements would support enhanced commuter and intercity passenger rail and transit access and connectivity, as well as provide additional surface passenger transportation capacity in the San Joaquin Valley. The ACE extension to Merced would extend the reach of the existing commuter and intercity rail transportation network of the San Joaquin Valley. The Project would provide additional service to areas currently lacking access to passenger rail transportation as well as supplementing rail service to other areas. The Project would support transit-oriented development near proposed station locations. The Project would also provide an opportunity to connect with the future California High-Speed Rail System, which would integrate ACE service into a unified northern California rail network. These commuter and intercity rail connections are expected to stimulate additional ACE ridership.
- **Reduce traffic congestion, improve regional air quality, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.**
An expanded and improved ACE system would provide a transportation alternative to automobile use, which would alleviate traffic congestion on corridor highway segments (along State Route-99, Interstate [I-] 205, I-580, I-680, and I-880) and result in air quality benefits and a reduction in GHG emissions. In addition, by maximizing connections with other transit services within the San Joaquin Valley, the Project would contribute to indirect benefits related to alleviating congestion and improving regional air quality. Reductions in air pollutant emissions represent long-term health benefits for ACE riders, and for residents and employees along the ACE corridor. In addition, reduction of GHG emissions would help California to meet its goals under Assembly Bill 32, the 2006 Global Warming Solutions Act (as amended by Senate Bill 32), as well as other state GHG emission reduction goals.
- **Promote local and regional land use and transportation sustainability goals.**
Metropolitan areas are implementing strategies to encourage more efficient use of land resources, improve mobility, and provide alternative transportation facilities and services in order to lower GHG emissions and to maintain air quality standards. One statewide strategy adopted in the California State Implementation Plan is the development of multi-use transportation corridors, including the addition of more transit and the expansion of rail modal options. This Project would further improve regional air quality and reduce GHG emissions, beyond reducing VMT from automobiles, by supporting regional land use and transportation planning goals under the Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act of 2008 (also known as SB 375) and other local, regional, and state sustainability initiatives. ACE is evaluating potential new ACE stations between Ceres and Merced. The new transit stations could act as a catalyst for smart growth in communities by revitalizing city core areas and addressing traffic congestion issues in the cities of the northern San Joaquin Valley.

F. Project Description

The Project would consist of the following:

- a **Ceres to Merced Extension Alignment** consisting of upgrades and new tracks and bridges within the UPRR Fresno Subdivision between Ceres and Merced;
- new **Turlock, Livingston or Atwater**, and **Merced Stations** along the extension alignment; and
- a new permanent **Merced Layover & Maintenance Facility** to support extension operations.

Upon implementation of full operations of the Project, ACE train service would consist of the following:

- In the morning, three northbound trains would run from Merced Station to the Natomas/Sacramento Airport Station (included in the Valley Rail Sacramento Extension Project). Passengers boarding in Merced and Stanislaus Counties and Southern San Joaquin County would either stay on the train in the direction of Sacramento or transfer onto the three westbound trains in the direction of San Jose at the North Lathrop Station (timed transfers). One westbound train would run from Merced Station to San Jose Diridon Station.
- In the evening, three southbound trains would run from Natomas/Sacramento Airport Station to Merced Station. ACE passengers returning from the Bay Area would transfer at the North Lathrop Station (timed transfers) onto the three Sacramento to Merced trains. One eastbound/southbound train would run from San Jose Diridon Station to Merced Station.

The potential impacts from the increased operation of ACE trains between Natomas/Sacramento Airport Station and Cabral Station have been analyzed in the *Valley Rail Sacramento Extension Project EIR*. In addition, increased operation of ACE trains between the North Lathrop Station and Ceres Station have already been analyzed in the *ACE Extension Lathrop to Ceres/Merced EIR*. This Project would not increase the train service in these areas beyond what was considered in these previous EIRs. Thus, the EIR for this Project is focused on the operational impacts associated with increased train service (four roundtrip ACE trips) between Ceres Station and the proposed Merced Station.

No improvements are proposed along the existing ACE corridor between Stockton and San Jose. However, where applicable, the EIR will analyze operational impacts due to changes in ridership at existing ACE stations² in the San Francisco Bay Area.

H. Potential Environmental Effects

The lead agency has initially determined that the following topics will be included for evaluation in the EIR: 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, and Utilities and Service Systems. The EIR will consider both temporary construction-period and permanent impacts. The EIR will also include a cumulative impact analysis of the impacts of the Project in combination with other planned railway projects, transportation improvements, and land use plans and projects in the various cities along the Project corridor.

² These include the San Jose Diridon, Santa Clara, Great America, Fremont, Pleasanton, Livermore, and Vasco Road Stations.

SJRRC is seeking comments from agencies, stakeholders, and the public regarding the scope of the environmental topics that will be analyzed in the EIR.

I. Alternatives

As required by CEQA, the EIR will consider a reasonable range of alternatives in addition to the proposed Project. SJRRC is seeking comments from agencies, stakeholders, and the public regarding feasible alternatives for evaluation in the EIR. After consideration of input from project scoping and development of environmental analysis of the proposed Project, SJRRC will consider the need for analysis of additional alternatives. Only alternatives that are feasible, meet most of the Project objectives, and reduce one or more significant environmental impacts of the proposed Project will be analyzed in detail in the Alternatives chapter of the EIR. Alternatives that are infeasible, that do not meet most of the Project objectives, or that do not reduce one or more significant environmental impacts of the proposed Project will be discussed briefly in the EIR as to why they were dismissed from further consideration but will not be analyzed in the EIR as allowed by the requirements of CEQA.

SJRRC is seeking comments from agencies, stakeholders, and the public regarding the potential alternatives that will be analyzed in the EIR.



Summer Playground

• RAHILLY PARK 2020 •

JULY 6TH-
JULY 31ST
8AM-12:00PM
M-F

Join us for a summer adventure!
3400 N. Parsons Ave.

Come create some summer memories



Registration

\$ 25 A WEEK

ADVENTURES

Camp activities and events include:

- Hiking along Rascal Creek Bike Path
- Family Color Run
- Outdoor Week
- Water Day
- Nerf Battle
- Safety Week (w/ Police & Fire)
- Recreation Outdoor Activities
- Fun & Competitive Games
- Into the Wild Activities
- Summer Crafts
- Field Trip to the Zoo*

...and many more!

Events/Activities will be modified to accommodate social distancing

ONGOING WEEKLY ACTIVITIES

Fun Friday

Special Events

FOR REGISTRATION AND INFO

(209)385-6235

DOWNLOAD CAMP APPLICATION @ CITYOFMERCED.ORG

EMAIL: KINDAVONGL@CITYOFMERCED.ORG

632 W. 18TH STREET, MERCED:



MERCED YOUTH COUNCIL
PRESENTS:

KITS FOR KIDS

*ONE PER VEHICLE

FREE DRIVE-THRU EVENT

TOYS

BOOKS

MASKS

LIMITED SUPPLIES

RAFFLE

GIFT CARDS & 8" SAMSUNG TABLETS

JOIN US @8PM ON FACEBOOK LIVE

Here to see our community kids

SMILE!

JULY 3, 2020

6-8PM

MERCED WELCOME CENTER

710 W 16TH ST

STAY TUNED FOR OUR UPCOMING WEEKLY BINGO



@MercedYouth



@MercedYouthCouncil

