

APPENDIX 3.13-A

Land Use Plans, Goals, and Policies

1.0 Land Use Plans, Goals, and Policies

1.1 Introduction

A review of state, regional, and local land use plans identified goals, objectives, and/or policies pertinent to the Merced to Fresno Section of the HST Project. The HST project is a state project and is not subject to mandatory consistency with local land use plans or local zoning ordinances. However, analysis was performed to identify those regional and local goals and policies related to the HST Project and to identify any inconsistencies only in the regional plans that could result in potential environmental impacts. The following sections summarize the related plans. Table 3.13A-1 (at the end of this section) lists the specific goals, objectives, and policies in the plans and discusses the project's consistency with them. The table includes only those policies that are relevant to the project. The Merced to Fresno Section is consistent with the regional plans for the study area.

1.2 State Land Use Plans

State law requires that local governments (cities and counties) adopt general plans to guide local growth and development. The following section describes relevant general plans and the local regulatory setting.

1.3 Summaries of Local Land Use Plans

1.3.1 City of Atwater General Plan

The *City of Atwater General Plan* (City of Atwater 2000) presents a vision of the city for the year 2020 and represents a community consensus. It is a guide for citizens and city officials for discussions about community growth and development, and it provides a framework for decisions on those issues. The overriding themes of the general plan are transition and diversification. The primary challenge facing the city is successfully guiding Atwater's transformation from a former military-based community to one that appeals to a broad range of businesses, industries, and residents.

Table 3.13A-1 summarizes goals and policies relevant to the project.

1.3.2 Merced County General Plan

The *Merced County General Plan* (Merced County 1990) is the guiding document for the county's future growth and development. The plan documents the proposed general distribution, general location, and extent of uses of land within the unincorporated areas of the county for housing; business; industry; open space, including agriculture, recreation, and enjoyment of scenic beauty; education; public building spaces and grounds; solid and liquid waste facilities; and other categories of public and private use of the land. The plan identifies specific designations for land use in unincorporated areas of the county.

The review also includes the *Franklin/Beachwood Community Specific Plan* (Merced County 1983a) and the *Le Grand Community Specific Plan* (Merced County 1983b). Because of the age of the documents, there are no goals and policies pertinent to the HST Project.

Table 3.13A-1 summarizes goals and policies relevant to the project.

1.3.3 2011 Regional Transportation Plan for Merced County

The *2011 Regional Transportation Plan for Merced County* (Merced County Association of Governments 2010) provides a comprehensive long-range view of transportation needs and opportunities for the county's transportation system over a 20- to 25-year period. The plan discusses problems related to the movement of goods and people by means of automobile, truck, bus, train, airplane, bicycle, and walking. The plan includes information regarding (1) specific policies, projects, and programs needed to maintain,

manage, and improve the transportation system, (2) the actions needed to achieve the goals; and (3) funding and options to implement the actions addressed in the plan.

Table 3.13A-1 summarizes goals and policies relevant to the project.

1.3.4 Merced Vision 2015 General Plan

The *Merced Vision 2015 General Plan* (City of Merced 1997) is the guiding document for the city's future growth and development. The plan includes the following goals:

- Accommodate and plan for anticipated future growth.
- Preserve prime agricultural land surrounding the city.
- Plan for expansion of the University of California campus.
- Support future economic development.
- Improve the existing circulation system to accommodate all modes of transportation.
- Develop mixed-use, transit-oriented development and pedestrian-friendly urban villages with access to commercial centers and surrounding neighborhoods, with higher densities along transit corridors.
- Accommodate diverse housing types, including affordable housing.
- Support sustainable development practices.

Table 3.13A-1 summarizes goals and policies relevant to the project.

1.3.5 Merced Vision 2030 General Plan (Draft)

The *Merced Vision 2030 General Plan* (City of Merced 2010) is currently going through the review process; once adopted, it would become the new guiding document for the city's future growth and development. Many of the guiding principles of the plan remain consistent with those identified above for the Vision 2015 General Plan. The draft plan includes some new guiding principles, including:

- Planning and providing for infrastructure prior to development of any new research parks and industrial/business parks.
- Quality education and parks and recreation to encourage and maintain Merced's high quality of life.

The goals and policies summarized in Table 3.13A-1 for the Vision 2015 General Plan remain the same for the Vision 2030 General Plan draft. Table 3.13A-1 summarizes new goals and policies regarding the HST System.

1.3.6 Prosper Merced Economic Development Strategy

Prosper Merced Economic Development Strategy (City of Merced 2006) provides a vision for Merced's economy that includes a vibrant, growing, diverse community with balanced economic opportunities, attractive neighborhoods, and high-quality development. Merced is the center of trade, services, and government for the region. The presence of University of California Merced "balances" the city's economy by providing higher-wage jobs that complement the large number of lower-wage agricultural and manufacturing jobs. Merced's population is diverse and one of the youngest in the nation. The Merced economy is characterized by low incomes, high unemployment, and low educational levels; however, Merced is in rapid transition and in 2006, Merced experienced its lowest rate of unemployment in 20 years.

Table 3.13A-1 summarizes goals and policies relevant to the project.

1.3.7 2007 Downtown Strategy

The *2007 Downtown Strategy* (City of Merced 2007a) outlines the vision and goals for Downtown Merced over the next 5 to 7 years. Guided by a 22-member task force of citizens, business owners, property owners, and downtown residents appointed by the Merced City Council, the *2007 Downtown Strategy* builds on the existing assets in Downtown Merced and addresses the issues and actions needed to further enhance the downtown area as a destination and guide it into the next stage of development. The *2007 Downtown Strategy* focuses on six actions, listed in Table 3.13A-1, to reinforce and expand the downtown area as the arts, entertainment, and cultural center of Merced.

Table 3.13A-1 summarizes goals and policies relevant to the project.

1.3.8 University Community Plan

The *University Community Plan* (Merced County 2004) guides development of resources to support the growth of the University of California Merced campus in Merced County. The plan focuses primarily on campus grounds and facilities. The planned community would bring new users and cultures to the campus, while preserving the local history and environment in Merced that distinguishes it from other campus communities. The *University Community Plan* provides guidance on the full range of uses and services needed to support full enrollment and employment of the University of California campus. At buildout, the community will occupy 2,133 acres of land and include 11,616 residential units; 716,000 square feet of retail; 1.3 million square feet of office space, research and development facilities, cultural and entertainment facilities; and seven public schools.

The *University Community Plan* envisions multimodal transportation corridors connecting to the Downtown Transit Center and a future HST station to serve the university community. HST service would provide a fast, convenient link for faculty and students to reach the campus from surrounding cities and regions.

Table 3.13A-1 summarizes goals and policies relevant to the project.

1.3.9 South Merced Community Plan

The *South Merced Community Plan* (City of Merced 2007b) addresses a 2,052-acre area in South Merced, immediately south of Downtown Merced and the proposed HST station. The plan was adopted to guide future development in the southern portion of the City of Merced, which is primarily composed of single-family residences and agricultural fields and bordered by the Merced Municipal Airport/Macreedy Field to the west. The *South Merced Community Plan* includes strategies for protecting the agricultural land adjacent to the airport and supports a variety of neighborhood and regional commercial uses; business park and professional office uses; some industrial uses; schools; parks and open spaces; and low-density, medium-density, and village residential uses. The plan includes policies regarding transportation; however, these generally address internal circulation and local streets. The plan does not include policies or actions that address transit in the area.

Table 3.13A-1 summarizes goals and policies relevant to the project.

1.3.10 Madera County General Plan

The *Madera County General Plan* (Madera County 1995) provides a land use diagram (map) and describes the allowable uses and standards for the land use designations in the diagram. The plan also describes the circulation plan diagram and the standards for the roadway classification system used for the circulation plan diagram. The circulation plan diagram supports the land uses depicted on the land use diagram.

Table 3.13A-1 summarizes goals and policies relevant to the project.

1.3.11 Madera County 2011 Regional Transportation Plan

The *Madera County 2011 Regional Transportation Plan* (Madera County Transportation Commission 2010) provides a comprehensive long-range view of transportation needs and opportunities for the county's transportation system to the year 2035. The plan's policies and programs are aimed at safely and efficiently accommodating anticipated population growth within the cities of Chowchilla and Madera, as well as Madera County, through 2035. The plan does not include goals or policies relevant to the project.

1.3.12 Draft Chowchilla 2040 General Plan Update

The *Draft Chowchilla 2040 General Plan Update* (City of Chowchilla 2009) serves as the city's blueprint for community growth, development, and redevelopment over the next 30 years. This General Plan Update, which supersedes the previous General Plan adopted in 1986, is directed at expanding and diversifying the city's economic base. The city recognizes that residential growth is beneficial, but must be balanced with local employment opportunities, city services, and increased sales tax revenues to support continued city services. The plan update addresses the need for master planning of the local infrastructure to accommodate growth. The city is committed to reducing its carbon footprint and minimizing new development contributions to global warming. The city encourages innovative approaches to residential development as a way of providing a range of housing types, decreasing water demand, reducing encroachment on prime agricultural land, and providing more efficient public services.

Table 3.13A-1 summarizes goals and policies relevant to the project.

1.3.13 City of Madera General Plan Update

The *City of Madera General Plan Update* (City of Madera 2009) reflects the city's long-range aspirations for physical form and amenities. Citizen participation was important in the development of the General Plan Update, which provides a broad framework for planning the future of the city. The plan is the official policy statement of the City Council to guide private and public development of the city, as well as the city's own operations and decisions.

Table 3.13A-1 summarizes goals and policies relevant to the project.

1.3.14 Fairmead Colony Area Plan (Draft)

The *Fairmead Colony Area Plan* (Madera County May 2011) addresses critical infrastructure needs in the unincorporated community of Fairmead. ... The plan provides information on the expansion of Fairmead and the needed infrastructure, emergency services, and community facilities to allow for the planned growth. The boundaries of Fairmead would expand to over 9,600 acres in all directions around the community, but the majority of the growth would be focused to the west and north. The plan identifies a village core and commercial and industrial development. The City of Chowchilla is located approximately 3 miles to the northwest, along SR 99. The City of Madera is located approximately 8 miles to the southeast, along SR 99.

Table 3.13A-1 summarizes goals and policies relevant to the project.

1.3.15 Fresno County General Plan

The *Fresno County General Plan* (Fresno County 2000) contains policies, programs, and standards that apply to the physical characteristics, natural and built environments, and social and economic characteristics of the county.

Table 3.13A-1 summarizes goals and policies relevant to the project.

1.3.16 2011 Regional Transportation Plan – Long-Range Transportation Vision for the Fresno County Region for the Years 2010 to 2035

The *2011 Regional Transportation Plan – Long Range Transportation Vision for the Fresno County Region for the Years 2010 to 2035* (Council of Fresno County Governments 2010) provides a comprehensive long-range plan for all forms of transportation in Fresno County. The plan identifies the needs for travel and movement of goods until the year 2035. The plan includes four elements: (1) the Policy Element provides information on the transportation goals, policies, and objectives; (2) the Action Element identifies how to achieve the goals; (3) the Air Quality Element addresses air quality issues (this is a new element in for this plan); and (4) the Financial Element provides information regarding funding for the actions identified in the Action Element. The plan also provides information regarding the HST Project.

Table 3.13A-1 summarizes goals and policies relevant to the project.

1.3.17 2025 Fresno General Plan

The *2025 Fresno General Plan* (City of Fresno 2002a) guides development and investment for public infrastructure. One of the most fundamental responsibilities of the city is to ensure provision of adequate public facilities that will support the city, including projected growth. Public facilities and services that would be affected by population growth and urban development include circulation and public transportation; sewage collection and treatment facilities; public water supply, storm water drainage, and flood control facilities; law enforcement and fire protection; parks and recreation; schools; and solid waste disposal. These elements are addressed through regional and intergovernmental efforts and in the General Plan.

In addition, the following plans for communities and neighborhoods within the land use study area were reviewed:

- *2025 West Area General Plan* (City of Fresno 2002b)
- *Highway City Neighborhood Specific Plan* (City of Fresno 1998)
- *Fulton/Lowell Specific Plan* (City of Fresno 1996)
- *Tower District Specific Plan* (City of Fresno 1991)
- *Central Area Community Plan* (City of Fresno 1989)
- *Bullard Community Plan* (City of Fresno 1988)
- *Edison Community Plan* (City of Fresno 1977a)
- *Fresno High/Roeding Community Plan* (City of Fresno 1977b)

None of the goals and policies in these plans is relevant to the HST Project; therefore, they are not included in Table 3.13A-1.

Table 3.13A-1 summarizes goals and policies relevant to the project. Additionally, in early 2010, the City of Fresno initiated preparation of new plans for the Downtown Fresno neighborhoods. A specific plan for the Fulton corridor and a downtown neighborhoods community plan will include information related to an HST station in the City of Fresno and the attraction and expansion of businesses as a result of the project. These plans are anticipated to be adopted in mid 2012. The two plans will cover approximately 7,000 acres in Downtown Fresno, including several districts and neighborhoods.

1.3.18 San Joaquin Valley Blueprint Roadmap Summary – Public Review Draft Report

The Blueprint Planning Program was created by the California Department of Transportation to assist councils of government and metropolitan planning offices in conducting regional planning efforts. The Blueprint calls for less planned land development, more preservation of resources for future generations, enhancement of distinctive communities, and additional travel choices for the public.

The San Joaquin Valley Blueprint Planning Project brought together eight local agencies to work together to develop a guide for growth in the Valley over the next 50 years. The Blueprint process involved seven councils of government and one regional transportation planning agency:

- Council of Fresno County Governments
- Kern Council of Governments
- Kings County Association of Governments
- Madera County Transportation Commission
- Merced County Association of Governments
- San Joaquin Council of Governments
- Stanislaus Council of Governments
- Tulare County Association of Governments

During the Blueprint process, agency representatives identified and evaluated several growth scenarios, including one that assumes a HST system, selected a preferred scenario, and adopted 12 Smart Growth Principles. The preferred scenario includes a HST system. The 12 Smart Growth Principles represent the core values of the San Joaquin Valley and reflect the regional outlook:

1. Create a range of housing opportunities and choices
2. Create walkable neighborhoods
3. Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration
4. Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place
5. Make development decisions predictable, fair, and cost effective
6. Mix land uses
7. Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty, and critical environmental areas
8. Provide a variety of transportation choices
9. Strengthen and direct development toward existing communities
10. Take advantage of compact building design
11. Enhance the economic vitality of the region
12. Support actions that encourage environmental resource management

The next steps in implementing the Valley Blueprint include developing an implementation program, preparing a schedule and set of milestones, and preparing a Planners Toolkit that will provide the Valley's cities and counties with strategies and tools to allow them to incorporate the Smart Growth Principles and move toward the preferred scenario. In 2010, the Fresno Council of Governments began preparing the Valley Blueprint Roadmap Summary (Harnish 2010), which will act as a policy guide on implementing the Valley Blueprint.

Table 3.13A-1
Regional and Local Plan Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Goals and Policies		Discussion
1. City of Atwater General Plan		
Land Use		
Goal LU-7: Ensure that long-term economic and social benefits, such as employment, are maximized through reuse of the former Castle Air Force Base.	Locating the maintenance facility at the former Castle Air Force Base would support reuse of the site.	
2. Merced County General Plan		
Land Use		
Goal 5: Sufficient opportunity exists to accommodate the specialized needs of the traveling public balanced with circulation and other county needs.	HST alternatives would not interfere with existing or planned future circulation in the county.	
Goal 12: Long-term economic and social benefits such as employment are minimized through the reuse of the former Castle Air Force Base.	Locating the maintenance facility at the former Castle Air Force Base would support reuse of the site.	
Circulation		
Goal 2: A circulation system that provides for a variety of transportation modes for the safe and efficient movement of people and goods throughout the county.	The HST would be an additional mode of transportation in Merced County.	
3. 2011 Regional Transportation Plan for Merced County		
Vision – Themes and Goals		
Support orderly and planned growth that enhances the integration and connectivity of various modes of transportation. • Provide a variety of transportation choices that strengthen and direct development towards existing communities, thus preserving open space, farmland, natural beauty, and critical environmental areas. • Coordinate future land use patterns and transportation systems (aviation, rail, light rail, high speed rail, transit, bike and pedestrian paths, and roads) to foster economic prosperity, environmental protection and mitigation, trip reduction, and the creation of efficient, integrated mixed-use communities. • Encourage land use and growth patterns that enhance the livability of our communities and maximize the productivity of transportation investments.	Consistent. The HST would add a new transportation choice and direct development near the Downtown Merced Station. The HST station area would allow compact development with a mix of uses.	

Goals and Policies	Discussion
Passenger Rail	
Goal: A rail system that provides safe and reliable service for passengers. Objective 3.2. Establish a High Speed Rail system connecting Merced and Los Banos to Sacramento and the Bay Area. Policy/Action 3.2.1. Support the High Speed Rail planning process and actively provide comments and input.	Consistent. The HST System would provide safe and reliable service connecting Merced with the region, including service to the San Francisco Bay Area and Los Angeles during Phase I of development. During Phase II, service would be provided to Sacramento.
4. City of Merced Vision 2015 General Plan	
Land Use	
Policy L-1.1: Promote balanced development which provides jobs, services, and housing.	An HST station in Downtown Merced would indirectly support the city's effort to promote balanced development by providing a regional transportation facility within the city.
Policy L-1.7: Encourage the location of multifamily developments on sites with good access to transportation, shopping, and services.	An HST station in Downtown Merced would provide access to transportation, which, in addition to existing shopping and service opportunities, would indirectly support the location of multifamily developments in the downtown area.
Policy L-2.8: Encourage a mixture of uses and activities that will maintain the vitality of the downtown area.	An HST station in Downtown Merced would indirectly support a mix of uses and activities in the downtown area.
Policy L-3.1: Create land use patterns that will encourage people to walk, bicycle, or use public transit for an increased number of their daily trips.	An HST station in Downtown Merced would provide convenient access to the HST, which would support land use patterns focused around public transit.
Policy L-3.2: Encourage infill development and a compact urban form.	An HST station in Downtown Merced would support infill development and a compact urban form by providing convenient access to public transit and a statewide transportation system.
Policy L-3.3: Promote site designs that encourage walking, cycling, and transit use.	An HST station in Downtown Merced would provide convenient access to the HST, which would support site designs that encourage the use of public transit.
Transportation and Circulation	
Policy T-2.2: Support and enhance the use of public transit.	An HST station in Downtown Merced would support and enhance the use of public transit.
Policy T-3.4: Reduce rail system impacts on circulation within the urban area.	The HST guideway would not result in circulation impacts in urban areas. Existing access points would be maintained.
Urban Expansion	
Policy UE-1.2: Promote a compact urban form. Implementation Actions 1.2.a Encourage development on in-fill sites by amending the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances to better accommodate	An HST station in Downtown Merced would reinforce compact urban form and efficient urban expansion.

Goals and Policies	Discussion
such requests. 1.2.d Promote higher residential densities within the Merced urban area.	
Sustainable Development	
Policy SD-1.3: Integrate land use planning, transportation planning, and air quality planning for the most efficient use of public resources and for a healthier environment.	The HST, particularly the Downtown Merced Station, would enhance accessibility and mobility of the existing public transit systems, reinforcing the integrated land use plans and transportation plans, which would result in air quality benefits.
5. City of Merced Vision 2030 General Plan (Draft)	
Policy L-3.5: Develop a Transit-Oriented Development Overlay Zone Adjacent to the Planned High Speed Rail Station in Downtown Merced. Implementing Actions 3.5.a – Develop a “Transit-Oriented Development” Overlay Zone for the area adjacent to the planned High Speed Rail Station in Downtown Merced. 3.5.b – Review and update as necessary the Downtown Strategy, Economic Development Strategy, and other planning documents after the selection of the High Speed Rail Station location to reflect the City’s development goals adjacent to this important facility. 3.5.c – Consider changes to the City’s Urban Village Concept in order to better reflect its status as “Transit Ready Development” instead of “Transit Oriented Development”.	An HST station in Downtown Merced would encourage and act as a catalyst for transit-oriented development. The City of Merced would determine the types of uses that would be allowed with the overlay zone.
Policy T-3.5: Support enhanced railroad passenger service for Merced. Implementing Actions: 3.5.b – Support efforts to provide high speed rail passenger service to the Central Valley including a stop in Merced. Work with the High Speed Rail Authority to determine the appropriate location for the Merced Station.	The HST System, particularly the Downtown Merced Station, would support enhanced railroad passenger service.
6. Prosper Merced Economic Development Strategy	
Strategy One: Keep Merced as the center. Protect and build Merced’s role as the region’s center for retail trade, education, and professional and medical services. Action 1.6: Incorporate into all economic development efforts the vision of Merced as a “go-to” city, instead of a “go-through” community.	An HST station in Downtown Merced would reinforce the city’s role as a regional center.
Strategy Three: Build community quality. Maintain and encourage high community standards for Merced’s services, infrastructure, and private development. Action 3.1: Raise standards for all new development projects in the City of Merced with attention to “quality of place” and balancing development benefits with community impacts. Action 3.5: Continue to support Downtown Merced’s development as the city’s center for dining, entertainment, arts, and culture.	Locating a station in Downtown Merced would be consistent with the city’s vision for the future.

Goals and Policies	Discussion
Strategy Six: Connect the dots. Deliberately integrate all of Merced's economic development efforts. Action 6.1: Assure that the City of Merced's economic development efforts are coordinated with and supported by the city's financial support for visitor services, downtown promotion, and regional economic development.	An HST station in Downtown Merced would support the city's economic development efforts and provide opportunities for development in the downtown area.
7. 2007 Downtown Strategy	
Action 1: Create a superior ambiance	A public survey reported the area surrounding the HST station is in need of revitalization. The project would support development of restaurant, retail, and entertainment uses in the downtown area.
Action 2: Create exceptional downtown residential neighborhoods	The Downtown Strategy identifies the HST station area as the gateway to the downtown district. An HST station in this area would reinforce the district as a gateway to residential neighborhoods.
Action 3: Build a distinguished downtown	The HST station would be a high-quality, distinguishing feature in the downtown.
Action 4: Solidify the downtown's role as the arts, entertainment and dining destination	The HST station would attract people to the downtown area from the city and the region, reinforcing the downtown's role as an arts, entertainment, and dining destination.
Action 5: Adopt and enforce policies to protect and enhance downtown	The HST station is generally consistent with City of Merced plans, policies, and economic strategies. Station would act as a catalyst for development in the station area that would attract new businesses and residential development.
Action 6: Connect downtown	The HST station would reinforce local transit connections and the grade separation between the project and the roadways in downtown Merced, would not affect existing downtown connectivity.
8. University Community Plan	
Plan Element: A compact, pedestrian-oriented campus that features a compact, pedestrian-oriented 815-acre campus with an Academic Core based on a classic grid oriented to maximize rooftop solar power collection. An adjacent mixed-use University Community is proposed to accommodate faculty and additional student housing, a research and development "Gateway District," a performing arts center, and commercial needs.	The HST station would reinforce local transit systems and support non-motorized travel goals expressed in the plan. HST would be located near existing transit stations and people would choose to ride the HST and access the stations using alternative modes or choose to live near the stations and walk to work or businesses.
Plan Element: Multimodal circulation system that is designed for pedestrians and bicycles. A regional multimodal transit center will be sited to optimize regional access to the Academic Core, the Gateway District, and the town center, and to minimize traffic impacts.	The HST station would reinforce local transit systems and supports non-motorized travel goals expressed in the plan. HST would be located near existing transit stations and people would choose to ride the HST and access the stations using alternative modes or choose to live near the stations and walk to work or businesses.

Goals and Policies	Discussion
Circulation/Transit Access: References HST connecting northern and southern California through the Central Valley. Element acknowledges the proposed alignment station the City of Merced.	The HST station would reinforce local transit systems and support non-motorized travel goals expressed in the plan. HST would be located near existing transit stations and people would choose to ride the HST and access the stations using alternative modes or choose to live near the stations and walk to work or businesses.
9. South Merced Community Plan	
Transportation and Circulation: Plan calls for an off-street bicycle path, and provides a concept to serve as a design schematic for transportation improvement and does not necessarily represent a final alignment.	The HST station would support nonmotorized travel as more people choose to ride the HST instead of drive or live near the stations and walk to work or nearby businesses.
10. Madera County General Plan	
Land Use	
Goal 1.A: To promote the wise, efficient, and environmentally sensitive use of Madera County land to meet the present and future needs of Madera County residents and businesses. Policy 1.A.4 The County shall encourage infill development and development contiguous to existing cities and unincorporated communities to minimize premature conversion of agricultural land and other open space lands.	The UPRR/SR 99 Alternative would traverse through the existing developed areas in the City of Madera. Although, the BNSF and Hybrid alternatives would convert agricultural land and open space, the amount of conversion would be minimal compared to the total area of the county and the resulting land use would not prohibit continued agricultural activities.
Interjurisdictional Coordination	
Goal 1.J: To foster cooperative planning and to address regional concerns on a regional basis. Policy 1.J.1: Madera County will coordinate land use infrastructure and public facility planning with cities in the county regional planning agencies neighboring jurisdiction and state and federal agencies and shall comment on land use and transportation plans concerning Madera County.	The HST Project is a regional, as well as statewide, transit project that includes outreach to Madera County.
Transit	
Goal 2.B: To promote a safe and efficient mass transit system, including both rail and bus, to reduce congestion, improve the environment, and provide viable nonautomotive means of transportation in and through Madera County. Policy 2.B.2: Madera County shall consider the need for future transit right-of-way in reviewing and approving plans for development and roads and highways. Planning for new growth areas should incorporate features to encourage transit and should reserve rights-of-way for future transit access. Rights-of-way may either be exclusive or shared with other vehicles.	Although no HST station would directly serve the Madera County, the project would provide county residents with a viable non-automotive transportation to access other parts of the region.

Goals and Policies	Discussion
11. Draft Chowchilla 2040 General Plan Update	
Circulation Element	
California High Speed Train: No specific goal or policies in the Circulation Element; however, this section identifies the project and includes information about the City of Chowchilla opposing the UPRR corridor because of the impacts on the downtown area and the circulation impacts for the rest of the city. The city believes the project should be located on the south side of SR152. In addition, the general plan includes the following information: While a final determination has not been made as to the precise corridor alignment for the HST, conceptual plans for the rail corridor and rail stations indicate that HSTs en route between the major metropolitan centers of Sacramento, Los Angeles, and San Francisco will pass through the City of Chowchilla via the SR 99/UPRR corridor, or north of Chowchilla, or east of the general plan area via the BNSF Railway corridor. The city vehemently opposes the UPRR corridor as it would decimate the Chowchilla downtown, and would have substantial circulation impacts for the balance of the city. The city has taken a strong position that the corridor needs to be on the south side of SR152 so as not to substantially impact the proposed land use and circulation systems in the general plan. Failure to plan a corridor south of SR152 would “box” the city into an unmanageable triangle between transportation facilities. The 2040 General Plan supports the possible siting and implementation of a heavy maintenance facility for the HST. The locations identified within the plan area are consistent with the California High Speed Rail Authority preliminary guidelines for locating and designing HST maintenance facilities.	The UPRR/SR 99 Alternative includes an elevated guideway through Chowchilla and adjacent to SR 99; there would be no circulation impacts because no existing street would be severed.
Open Space and Conservation Element	
Policy OS 13.11: The City of Chowchilla shall maintain a no net loss of wetlands on a project-by-project basis. For the purpose of identifying wetlands, the city will accept a map delineating wetlands which has been accepted by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act of 1972. No net loss may include mitigation implementation through participation in an offsite mitigation bank or similar mitigation mechanism acceptable to the city and permitting agencies.	A wetlands/biological resources report being completed for the project will identify any wetlands that would be affected by the project and ensure no net loss of wetlands by implementing mitigation measures. A Section 404 permit will be obtained as part of the project.
Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Climate Change	
Objective OS 23: To Implement and enforce state and regional regulations pertaining to greenhouse gas emissions and climate change.	The project would reduce vehicle-miles-traveled and, therefore, lower greenhouse gas emissions
Policy OS 23.1: The city supports local, regional, and statewide efforts to reduce the emission of greenhouse gases linked to climate change.	The project would reduce vehicle-miles-traveled and, therefore, lower greenhouse gas emissions.

Goals and Policies	Discussion
Noise Element	
HST planned for the San Joaquin Valley may travel near the city. This facility will not have any grade crossing where horns will be sounded. The train will be powered by electric motors taking current from the grid. According to preliminary environmental documentation, the noise generated by these trains will be very low. Objective N 3: Minimize ground transportation-related noise impacts through proper land use planning. Policy N 3.1: Ensure that noise impacts generated by vehicular sources are minimized through the use of noise reduction features (e.g., earthen berms, buffers, landscaped walls, etc.). Policy N 3.2: Investigate and pursue innovative approaches to reducing noise railroad sources. Policy N 3.3: Identify and aggressively pursue funding sources to provide grade separations and sound walls along the UPRR Railway corridor as noise attenuation measures. Policy N 3.10: Provide for spatial separation and necessary noise barriers between railroads and residential or other noise-sensitive uses.	A noise analysis is being completed as part of the project. In areas where noise exceeds the criteria identified in the Noise Element, mitigation measures would be implemented to reduce noise to levels below the criteria. The HST trackway would be grade-separated, and there would be no need for horns on the HSTs.
12. City of Madera General Plan	
Community Design Element	
Goal CD 8: A downtown that is the center of the city, linking all parts of the community together with a vibrant, rich mix of uses that attracts residents, workers, and visitors. GOAL CD-9: Preserve the historic character of the downtown. GOAL CD-10: Revitalize the downtown by strengthening its urban design character.	The elevated HST guideway would not sever links that bind of the community together and does not conflict with the city's revitalization efforts. Although the city is built up around the UPRR tracks, the elevated HST guideway could influence development in the downtown area. The elevated guideway might not preserve the historical character of the downtown area, and the trackway might negatively affect the revitalization of the urban design character of the downtown area.
Circulation and Infrastructure Element	
Policy CI-39: The City supports the development of the statewide high speed rail system with the following attributes: - The high speed rail system through (or in the vicinity of) the General Plan Planning Area should be established within a rail corridor which is located west of the city limits. To the extent such an alignment is determined to be infeasible and an alternative alignment must be utilized, the High Speed Rail project should specifically avoid the placement of facilities adjacent to the Union Pacific (UP) tracks which bisect the City. - The design and final alignment of the high speed rail system through the General Plan Planning Area should take into consideration, and reflect the need for, compatibility with existing and planned land uses and circulation features.	Although the city supports the development of the HST Project, locating the alignment adjacent to the UPRR tracks (the UPRR/SR 99 Alternative) would conflict with city policy. The proposed project does not affect circulation within the city because the guideway would be elevated and would take into consideration future crossings of the UPRR tracks.

Goals and Policies	Discussion
The construction of the HST System through the General Plan Planning Area should include all necessary features to ensure the operability of all existing and planned transportation corridors as called for in the General Plan Circulation Element.	
13. Draft Fairmead Colony Area Plan (Madera County)	
Land Use	
Policy 8: Sound walls must be incorporated as development and other improvements occur within the highway corridors. Sound walls must offer aesthetic features that reflect the local identity of Fairmead or Madera County, or landscaping may be incorporating to discourage graffiti. In particular, Fairmead Boulevard will feature a sound wall along the western boundary of the street, from the northern boundary to the Avenue 21½ interchange in the south.	The UPRR/SR 99 Alternative alignment will be adjacent to UPRR and SR 99 and sound barriers would be included as a potential mitigation measure. The BNSF Alternative and Hybrid Alternative with the Ave 24 Wye do not travel through the community of Fairmead.
Circulation	
Objective C-3: Ensure that project-specific impacts upon the transportation system are alleviated by the developer.	There would be an elevated guideway through Fairmead and adjacent to SR 99 and there would be no circulation impacts because no existing street would be severed. Any existing roadway closures as a result of the at-grade alignments associated with the alternatives would be mitigated as part of the HST project.
Policy 5: More specific project impacts will be analyzed in proportion to each project's impacts to the planning area's circulation system and impacts to the state highway system. Project specific mitigations will then be incorporated as appropriate.	There would be an elevated guideway through Fairmead and adjacent to SR 99 and there would be no circulation impacts because no existing street would be severed. Any existing roadway closures as a result of the at-grade alignments associated with the alternatives would be mitigated as part of the HST project. The EIR/EIS provides analysis on the roadway closures and mitigation.
Policy 6: Project specific impacts relating to adjacent state facilities will be assessed and must comply with all necessary mitigation measures as addressed by the Department of Transportation.	Any existing roadway closures as a result of the at-grade alignments associated with the alternatives would be mitigated as part of the HST project. The EIR/EIS provides analysis on the roadway closures and mitigation.
14. Fresno County General Plan	
Land Use	
Goal LU-A: To promote the long-term conservation of productive and potentially productive agricultural lands and to accommodate agricultural-support services and agriculturally related activities that support the viability of agriculture and further the county's economic development goals.	The alignment through Fresno County is zoned for agriculture, but the project is compatible with this land use.
Goal LU-F: To encourage mixed-use pedestrian and transit-oriented development and to establish development standards for residential, commercial, and industrial development in urban and urbanizing areas.	An HST station in the City of Fresno would indirectly support this policy based on the type of induced growth expected from the project.

Goals and Policies	Discussion
Transportation	
Goal TR-B: To promote a safe and efficient mass transit system that provides service to residents without access to automobiles and, in urban areas, helps to reduce congestion, improves the environment, and provides viable nonautomotive means of transportation.	An HST station in the City of Fresno would help support the county's goals of providing safe and efficient mass transit, reducing congestion, and improving the environment in urban areas.
15. 2011 Regional Transportation Plan – Long Range Transportation Vision for the Fresno County Region for the Years 2010 to 2035	
Rail Goals and Policies Goal: Develop a safe, efficient and convenient rail system which serves the passenger and freight needs of the region and which is integrated with and complementary to the total transportation system. Objective: Promote the growth of rail passenger and freight usage. Support the planning and construction of a High Speed Rail System in the San Joaquin Valley which directly connects the major population centers within the Valley.	Consistent. The HST would provide safe and reliable service connecting Merced with the region including the San Francisco Bay Area and Los Angeles.
16. City of Fresno General Plan	
Goal 1: Enhance the quality of life for the citizens of Fresno and plan for the projected population within the moderately expanded Fresno urban boundary in a manner which will respect physical, environmental, fiscal, economic, and social issues.	An HST station in downtown Fresno would enhance the quality of life for the citizens of Fresno by providing access to regional and statewide transit systems and opportunities for economic growth in Fresno.
Goal 3: Preserve and revitalize neighborhoods, the downtown, and historical resources.	The proposed HST station location and design are consistent with this goal because it would be located in area where land uses include underutilized parcels.
Goal 6: Coordinate land uses and circulation systems to promote a viable and integrated multimodal transportation network.	The Downtown Fresno Station would act as a catalyst for development in an area that could promote and encourage modes of transportation other than the automobile
Goal 9: Provide activity centers and intensity corridors within plan areas to create a mix of land uses and amenities to foster community identity and reduce travel.	An HST station in Downtown Fresno would indirectly support the city's goal of creating mixed-use developments, fostering community identity, and reducing travel by providing access to a regional and statewide transit system.
Goal 13: Plan for a healthy business and diversified employment environment and provide adequate timely services to ensure that Fresno is competitive in the marketplace.	An HST station in Downtown Fresno would indirectly support economic development in the city. The station would act as a catalyst for infill and new development attracting new businesses to the area.
Regional Cooperation	
Objective B-2: Encourage coordination with adjacent jurisdictions in providing public services' infrastructure capacities and cooperative economic development.	The HST is a regional and statewide transit project that requires regional coordination.

Goals and Policies	Discussion
Urban Form	
Policy C-3-b: Conduct a comprehensive update of the zoning ordinance to facilitate the implementation of intensity corridors. These zoning ordinance amendments should address mixed uses, expedited administrative zoning procedures, shared parking, underground and multistory parking structures incorporated into buildings, transit facilities, open space, and aesthetic considerations.	The likely upcoming zoning amendments identified would allow for an HST station in Downtown Fresno.
Objective C-8: Facilitate the development of mixed uses to blend residential, commercial, and public land uses on one site.	An HST station in Downtown Fresno would indirectly support a mix of uses and activities in the downtown area. The station would act as a catalyst for infill and new development attracting new businesses to the area.
Policy C-16-a The City shall review its planning principles, development regulations, and public service, transit and infrastructure policies and programs to incorporate "Transit Oriented Development" and "Traditional Neighborhood Development" approaches.	An HST station in Downtown Fresno would indirectly support a mix of uses and potentially transit-oriented development. The station would act as a catalyst for infill and new development attracting new businesses to the area.
Objective C-17: Encourage and facilitate urban infill by building and upgrading community and neighborhood public infrastructure and services that will enhance public health and convenience and the overall experience and quality of city living. Policy C-17-b The City shall identify and pursue measures to lower auto-dependence and encourage public transit (including pursuit of fixed guideway systems such as a monorail or people mover), bicycle use, and walking consistent with other transit-oriented development concepts and principles.	An HST station in Downtown Fresno would indirectly encourage urban infill by providing access to a regional and statewide transit system, as well as potentially supporting transit-oriented development concepts and principles.
Economic Development	
Objective D-3: Promote the growth of regional business clusters in the San Joaquin Valley.	HST stations in Downtown Merced and Downtown Fresno would allow for more convenient travel and would bring the larger markets in the Bay Area and Los Angeles closer to the Central Valley and would be a catalyst for the development of regional business clusters.
Public Facilities	
Objective E-5: Promote continued growth of rail passenger and freight travel through safe, efficient, and convenient rail system that is integrated with, rather than conflict with, other modes of travel.	The HST would provide new passenger service that would be grade separated from other modes of travel.

Goals and Policies	Discussion
Objective E-7: Serve future population concentrations with feasible alternative transportation modes that are efficient and safe, and that minimize adverse environmental impacts. Policy E-7-c: Pursuant to resolution of the City Council of December 18, 2001, support the planning and construction of HST in the San Joaquin Valley using the UPRR Railway alignment, which would directly connect the major population centers within the valley and include a station stop in Downtown Fresno. Policy E-7-d: Support the development of a multimodal transportation terminal facility in or in close proximity to the Central Area.	The HST would serve future population concentrations and would provide a safe, feasible alternative transportation mode.
Policy E-9-aa: Support the HST corridor in the vicinity of the UPRR Railway corridor connecting Los Angeles and the San Francisco Bay Area.	The HST would provide safe and reliable service connecting Merced to the region including the San Francisco Bay Area and Los Angeles.