

# SAN JOSE TO MERCED PROJECT SECTION FINAL EIR/EIS DAY 2 PRESENTATION

**Serge Stanich**

*Director of Environmental Services*

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*Northern California Regional Director*

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April 28, 2022

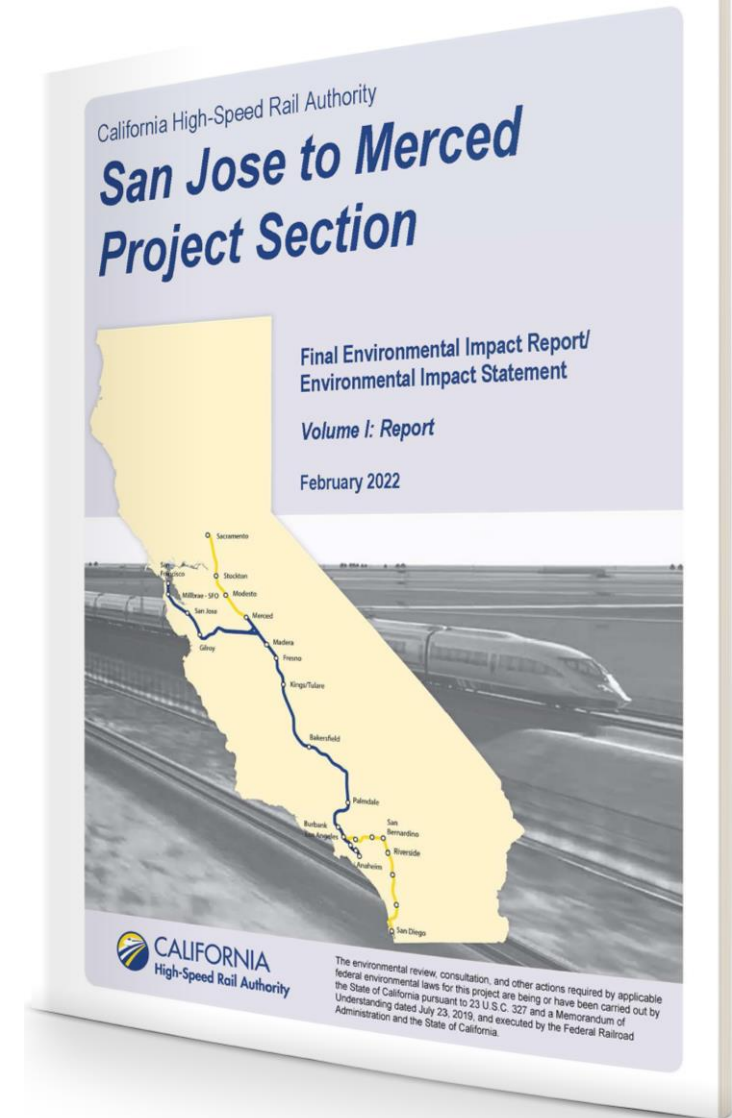


# NEXT STEPS

## PRIOR TO BOARD DELIBERATION AND ACTION

### TODAY

- Staff presents on issues identified by Board
- Counsel remarks to the Board for consideration of the approval documents
- Board deliberation and proposed action:
  - » Certification of the Final EIR/EIS as CEQA Lead Agency
  - » Approve the Preferred Alternative and related CEQA decision documents
  - » Direct the Authority CEO to issue the Record of Decision under the Authority's NEPA Assignment



# SAN JOSE TO MERCED

## AGENDA

- 1. Gardner Community**
- 2. City of Morgan Hill**
- 3. Vierra Ranch Property**
- 4. Grasslands Ecological Area**



# GARDNER COMMUNITY



# GARDNER OUTREACH & COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENTS

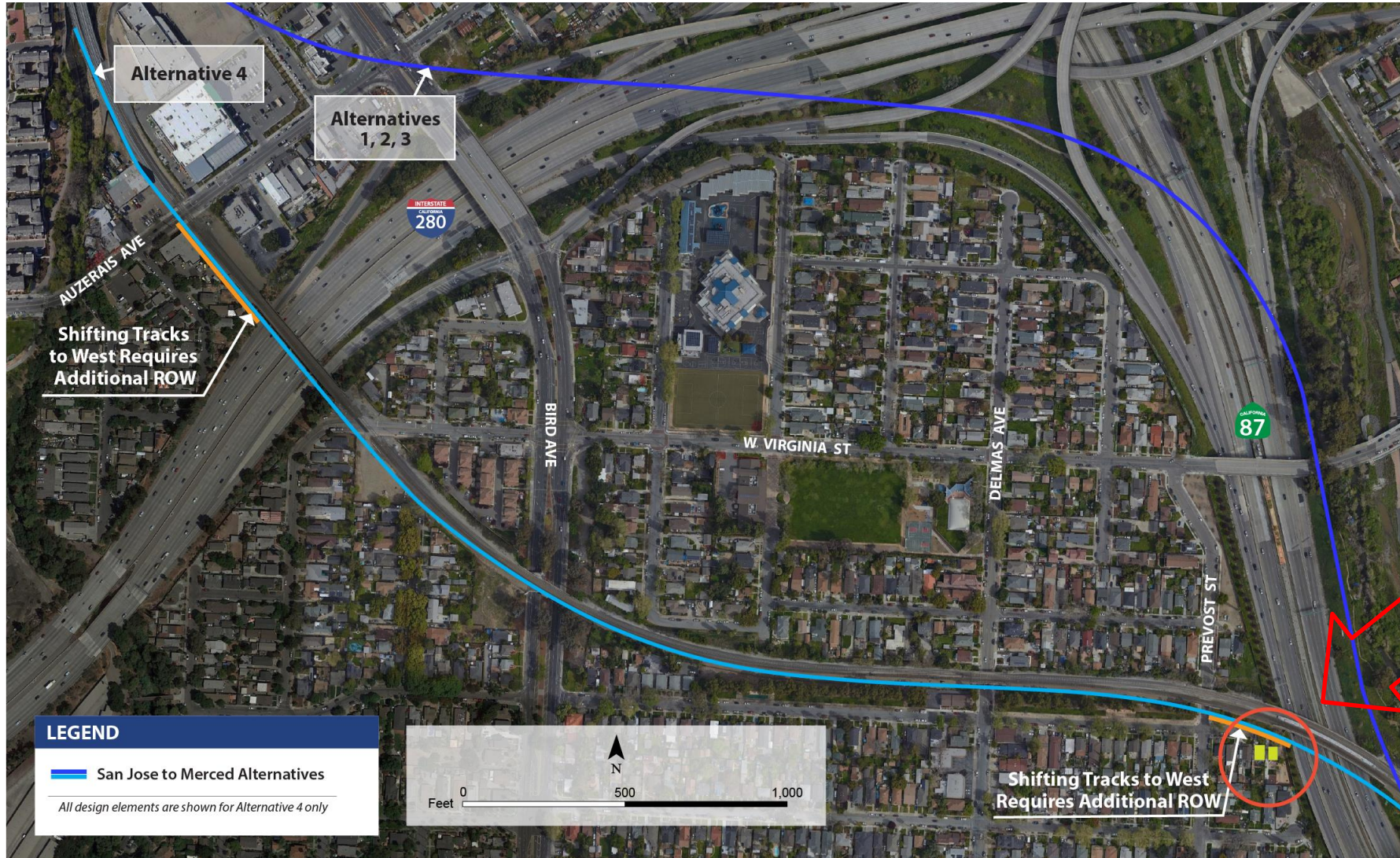
## ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ENGAGEMENT

### MULTILINGUAL ENGAGEMENT INCLUDING:

- Gardner Neighborhood Association Meetings
- School Parent Group
- School Administrators
- School Family Services
- Community Walks
- Canvassing
- Gardner Flea Market
- Word of Faith Church
- Community Working Groups
- Individual stakeholder meetings



# RESIDENTIAL DISPLACEMENTS IN GARDNER



2 residential displacements at the end of Fuller Avenue due to the additional track over SR-87

# GARDNER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL NOISE TREATMENTS

- Adversely affected by existing I-280 noise to the north
- School expressed concern about existing noise
- Offsetting Mitigation Measure:
  - » Sound wall barrier on the north side of the school; OR
  - » Building and window insulation improvements to the buildings and walls



# FULLER PARK RECREATIONAL ENHANCEMENTS

- Fuller Park is a key feature of the community.
- Park improvement was highest rated project and had strong community support.
- Renovation of Fuller Park could include children's play areas with equipment, picnic benches, fitness equipment, bicycle racks, or other similar amenities.





# CITY OF MORGAN HILL



# CITY OF MORGAN HILL COMMENT LETTERS



DEVELOPMENT SERVICES CENTER

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Website Address: [www.morgan-hill.ca.gov](http://www.morgan-hill.ca.gov)

April 11, 2022

Boris Lipkin, Northern California Regional Director  
Audrey, Van Deputy Project Manager of San Jose to Merced  
California High Speed Rail Authority  
100 Paseo De San Antonio, #206  
San Jose, CA 95113

**RE: CHSRA REVISED DRAFT 2022 BUSINESS PLAN**

Dear Mr. Lipkin,

Thank you for the opportunity to review and provide comments on the 2022 Draft Business Plan. As the project advances through the environmental process, the City continues to request the Authority select the Alternative with the least impacts on the City and budget for City specific projects to successfully mitigate the impacts.

Alternative 4 is identified as the Preferred Alternative within the Final EIR for the San Jose to Merced Segment and may ultimately be selected for implementation. If Alternative 4 is selected, the Authority should budget to incorporate the necessary grade separations to properly mitigate the Safety Impacts identified within the Final EIR. The draft 2022 Business Plan identifies grant opportunities that include Safety enhancements such as grade separations. Priority of funding should be dedicated to communities with significant safety impacts such as Morgan Hill where the alignment bisects the community causing delay in Police and Fire response times. The City asks that the Authority take the lead on those grant opportunities to further enhance their rail project and reduce impacts to our City. In addition, the Business Plan should:

- Prioritize negotiations with Union Pacific Railroad that would allow the HSR to operate mostly within the existing right-of-way and provide electrified tracks from San Jose to Gilroy.
- Prioritize identification of funding for the electrification of the tracks from San Jose to Gilroy to ensure future rail service for South County.

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CITY ATTORNEY

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April 26, 2022

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

Boris Lipkin, Northern California Regional Director  
Audrey, Van Deputy Project Manager of San Jose to Merced  
California High Speed Rail Authority  
100 Paseo De San Antonio, #206  
San Jose, CA 95113

**RE: FINAL EIR/EIS FOR THE SAN JOSE TO MERCED PROJECT SECTION – MORGAN HILL**

Dear Mr. Lipkin,

Thank you and your team for taking the time to meet with us to go over the Final EIR's proposed mitigations and specific responses to City comments from the Draft EIR. We particularly appreciate the collaborative approach you have taken. However, we continue to have concerns about the impact of the High Speed Rail project on public safety response times.

The City previously identified specific concerns related to safety and the unique impacts the Authority Preferred Alternative introduces to South County. As noted in the Draft and Final EIR, the Authority Preferred Alternative (Alternative 4) utilizes the existing Union Pacific Rail Road (UPRR) right-of-way, with at-grade crossings throughout Morgan Hill. This Alternative, without grade separations, will bisect the City's circulation and connectivity from the east to the west, impeding the ability of our Police Department, Fire Department and Emergency Medical Services from maintaining acceptable emergency response times and adequately serving our community. City comments on the Draft EIR stressed the Safety impacts an at-grade crossing only rail system through Morgan Hill would have on our community. We don't believe those comments have been adequately addressed.

Section 3.11 *Safety and Security* within the EIR includes information on Morgan Hill Fire Department response times from the year 2015. As part of our comments to the Draft EIR, the City provided an updated study titled *Standards of Coverage Assessment* prepared for Morgan Hill and Gilroy by Citygate Associates, LLC. This study provides updated emergency response information from 2019. That study identifies the goals for First Due Travel Time to arrive onsite in 4-minutes and Call to Arrival Performance (team onsite) in 8-minutes. As of 2019, the Morgan Hill First Due Travel Time to arrive is 6-minutes 26-seconds and Call to Arrival Performance is 9-



# EMERGENCY VEHICLE RESPONSE

## ASSESSING AT-GRADE CROSSING IMPACTS

### Impact Assessment:

- » Final EIR/EIS analyzes potential delay in emergency vehicle response time due to increased gate-down time from additional train crossings of at-grade crossings with Alternative 4
- » Final EIR/EIS analysis is based on the worst-case assumption of all at-grade crossings being closed during an individual emergency vehicle response
- » This is a potentially significant impact on emergency vehicle response times, and accordingly the Authority has proposed mitigation



# EMERGENCY VEHICLE RESPONSE DELAY

## OVERVIEW OF MITIGATIONS

### Mitigation:

#### Monitoring and Data Collection

For the locations where the EIR/EIS identified there may be significant delays to emergency vehicle response times, the Authority would conduct a baseline monitoring study to determine baseline conditions for travel times without HSR operations. Thereafter, the Authority would conduct monitoring approximately 6 months after initial HSR operations and annually thereafter for 3 years. Since full operations may not occur for years, the EIR/EIS has been clarified to require this regime of monitoring after increases in HSR operations up to the full operation levels noted for 2040 in the EIR/EIS.

**Travel time data will be collected at the following grade crossings in Morgan Hill:**

- East Main Street
- East Dunne Avenue
- Tennant Avenue
- San Pedro Avenue
- East Middle Avenue



# EMERGENCY VEHICLE RESPONSE DELAY

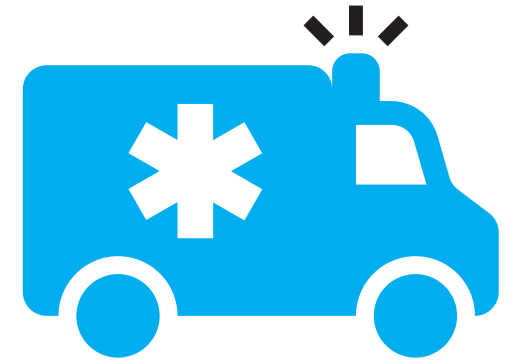
## OVERVIEW OF MITIGATIONS

### Mitigation:

#### Prepare Emergency Vehicle Priority Treatment Plan

This may include a range of mitigations including but not limited to:

- Emergency vehicle preemption equipment at traffic signals
- Route-based traffic signal priority control systems
- Emergency vehicle and transit queue bypass lanes at roadway intersections
- Roadway capacity/operational improvement for routes parallel to rail line
- Additional response equipment at existing fire stations to better address multiple response calls
- Construction of new fire stations to reduce fire station response times in affected area
- Increase in contracted first responder ambulance services



# EMERGENCY VEHICLE RESPONSE DELAY

## OVERVIEW OF MITIGATIONS

### Mitigation:

#### Alternative to Priority Treatment Strategies

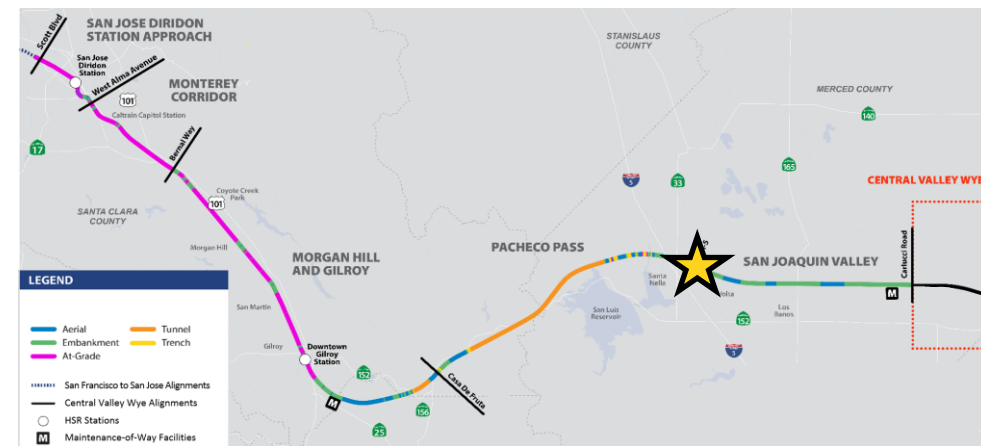
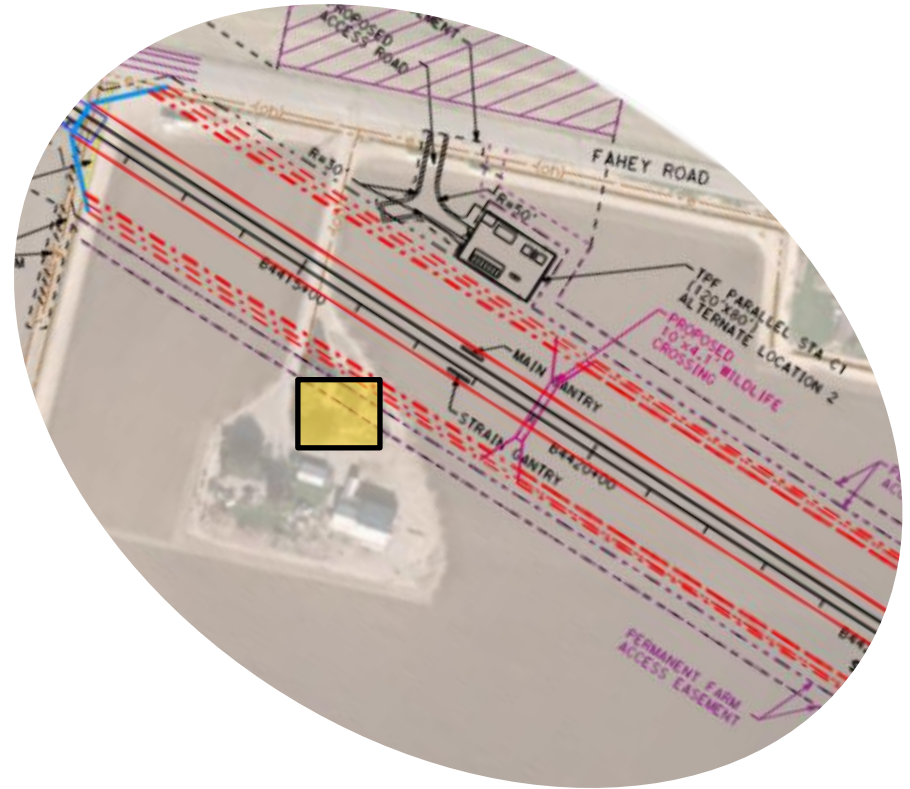
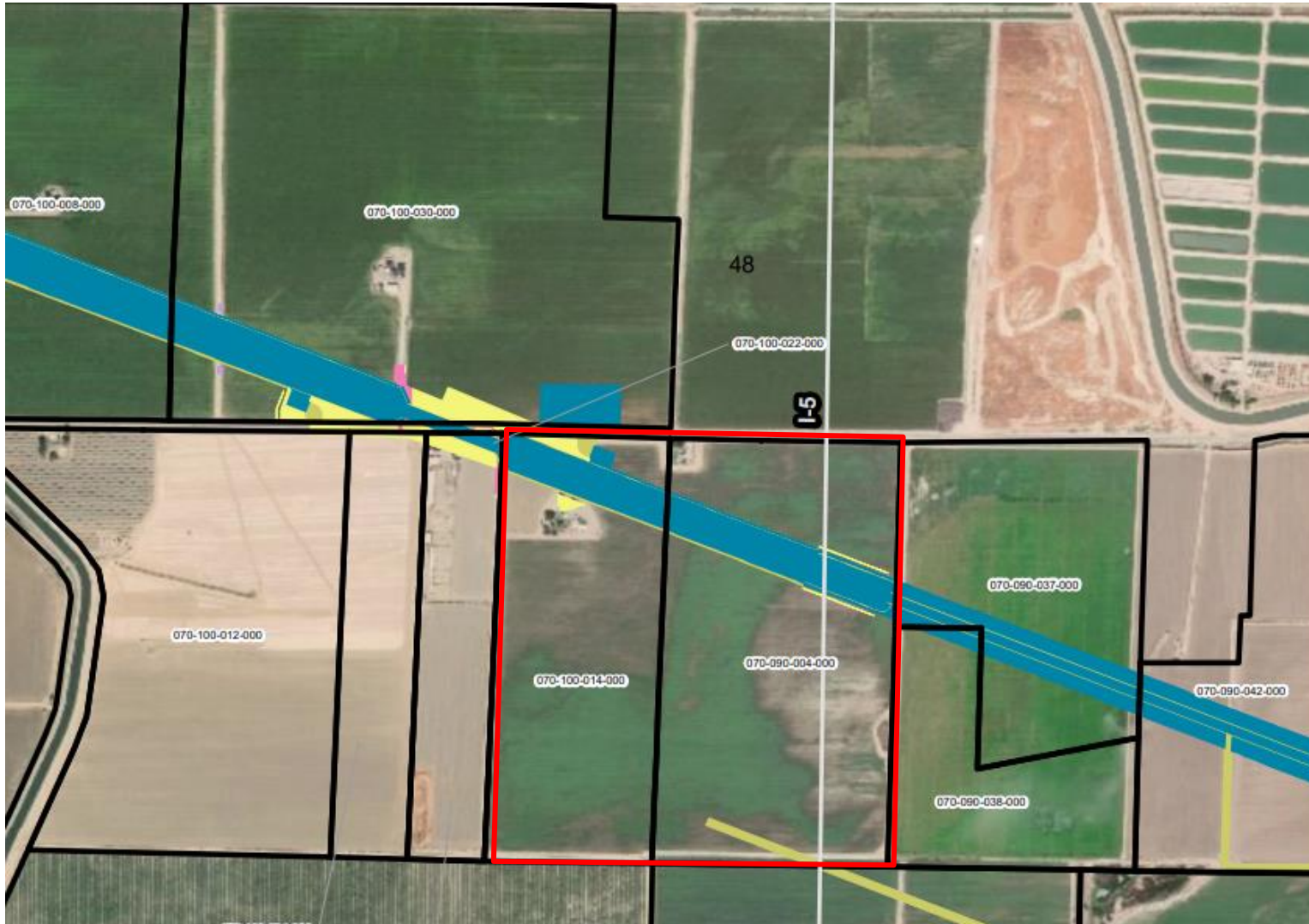
- The Authority and a local agency may reach a mutual agreement to have the Authority make an in-lieu payment toward other infrastructure projects including nearby grade separation projects.
- The in-lieu payment would be the capital contribution that the Authority would have otherwise made to one or more of the above emergency vehicle priority treatment strategies.
- Board Resolution



# VIERRA RANCH PROPERTY



# VIERRA RANCH PROPERTY





# PROPERTY DISPLACEMENT MITIGATIONS

## Relocation Assistance

- **Authority Tools to Provide Assistance to the Impacted Occupants (Owner/Tenant)**
  - Uniform Relocation Act
  - CA Relocation Assistance Law
- **Relocation Planning and Community Engagement**
  - Outreach to Impacted Communities, Property Owners and Occupants
  - Coordination with State and Local Housing Assistance Entities
- **Individualized Relocation Advisory Services**
- **Relocation Payments**

### Relocation Assistance for Residential Occupants

- Advisory Services with Dedicated Relocation Advisor
- Assistance with Household Moving Costs
- Replacement Housing Payments

### Excerpt from SO-MM#1

in areas with inadequate relocation availability in reasonable proximity to displacements, the Authority will make efforts to locate suitable replacement properties that are comparable to those currently occupied by these residents and/or support the construction of suitable replacement facilities, if necessary.

# GRASSLANDS ECOLOGICAL AREA



# THE GRASSLANDS ECOLOGICAL AREA CONSISTS OF BOTH NATURAL LANDSCAPES AND IRRIGATED FARMLAND

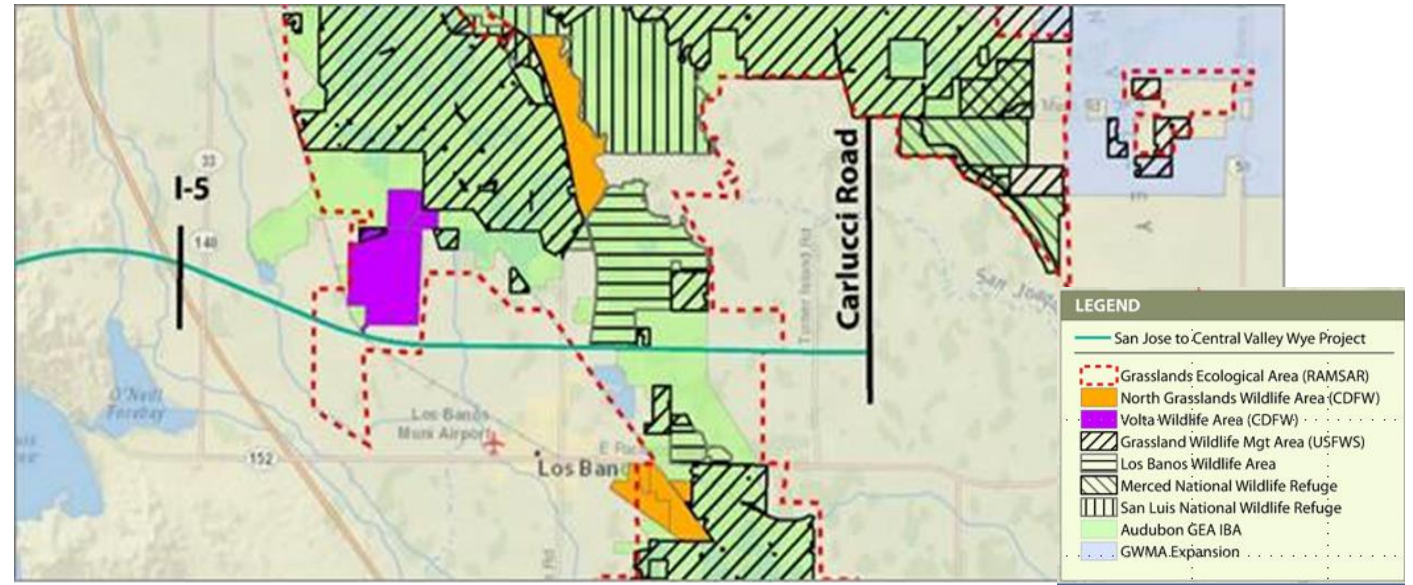


**Alkali Marsh along Henry Miller Road and Typical View of Irrigation Canal**

# GRASSLANDS ECOLOGICAL AREA

The GEA is a mosaic of wetlands and farmland and important habitat for waterfowl, other birds, and terrestrial wildlife.

- The FEIR/FEIS recommends the Authority to preserving 10,000 acres of open space.
- 3.4 miles of guideway enclosure and 1.5 miles of sound wall will protect recreation and wildlife species in the region, including giant garter snake.
- Dedicated wildlife undercrossings and viaduct sections ensure wildlife permeability.



# COORDINATION IN GRASSLANDS ECOLOGICAL AREA

## Implementation Agreements:

- The Authority is prepared to partner and execute agreements with Stakeholders such as the Grasslands Water District and others committed to natural resource preservation.
- The Grasslands Water District is a critical utility provider in the San Joaquin Valley providing water to numerous agricultural and conservation groups. The Authority is keenly interested in a successful working relationship.

## Implementation of Mitigation Measures:

- Mitigation measures are clearly defined in the Final EIR/EIS and MMEP, and identify specific actions, the entity to implement them, and a schedule.
- The Authority is committed to coordinating with the Grasslands Water District and other stakeholders in the region regarding the implementation of mitigation measures to ensure accountability and successful working relationship.

## Impacts to Recreation:

- The sound wall and enclosure will reduce effects to hunting, wildlife viewing, and trail use.
- Authority staff have carefully reviewed Grasslands' use comments regarding recreational uses and have not identified anything that undermines the analysis in the Final EIR/EIS.

# FEEDBACK FROM WILDLIFE STAKEHOLDERS

“ We commend CHSRA for the extensive proactive coordination that has occurred with local conservation organizations on project design changes and mitigation measures to ensure hydrological and ecological connectivity is maintained through Coyote Valley, the Soap Lake Floodplain, Pacheco Pass, and the Grasslands Ecological Area. ”

–Environmental Protection Agency



“ In a win for the CEQA/NEPA public engagement process, appropriate mitigation for cumulative impacts to wildlife movement and landscape connectivity was identified and consensus was reached for continued collaboration on this increasingly important issue. ”

– Santa Clara Valley Habitat Agency

“ We appreciate the effort that has gone into the FEIR/EIS to address the Project’s impacts to wildlife connectivity and biodiversity and applaud the Authority’s commitment to partner with our organizations to build a wildlife overcrossing in the Pacheco Pass segment of the Project in advance of Project impacts. ”

– Peninsula Open Space Trust, Open Space Authority, and Santa Clara Valley Habitat Agency, The Nature Conservancy



### Headquarters

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