3.14 Public Services

3.14.1 Introduction

This section describes the regulatory and environmental setting for public services, including fire protection, police enforcement, emergency medical services, and schools that operate within the study area of the Proposed Project and the Atwater Station Alternative. It also describes the impacts on public services that would result from implementation of the Proposed Project and the Atwater Station Alternative.

Additional considerations of public services are presented in Section 3.15, *Recreation,* which evaluates impacts on parks and other recreational facilities, and Section 3.16, *Safety and Security*, which addresses impacts on emergency response in the event of accident conditions involving trains. Cumulative impacts on public services, in combination with planned, approved, and reasonably foreseeable projects, are discussed in Chapter 4, *Other CEQA-Required Analysis.*

3.14.2 Regulatory Setting

This section summarizes federal, state, regional, and local regulations related to public services and applicable to the Proposed Project and the Atwater Station Alternative.

3.14.2.1 Federal

There are no federal regulations related to public services that are applicable to the Proposed Project and the Atwater Station Alternative.

3.14.2.2 State

California Department of Occupational Safety and Health

The California Division of Occupational Safety and Health (Cal/OSHA) protects the health and safety of workers throughout California. California Code of Regulations (Cal. Code Regs.), Title 8, establishes industrial safety standards for construction (California Division of Occupational Safety and Health 2018). Employers are required to have an effective Injury and Illness Prevention Program (IIPP), which includes training and instruction on safe work practices (California Division of Occupational Safety and Health 2005). Cal/OSHA conducts onsite inspections of construction sites and has the authority to fine or cite unsafe practices or incomplete IIPPs to ensure the practice of safe work environments (California Division of Occupational Safety and Health 2005).

3.14.2.3 Regional and Local

The San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission (SJRRC), a state joint powers agency, proposes facilities inside and outside of the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) right-of-way (ROW). The Interstate Commerce Commission Termination Act (ICCTA) affords railroads engaged in interstate commerce considerable flexibility in making necessary improvements and modifications to rail infrastructure, subject to the

requirements of the Surface Transportation Board (STB).[1] ICCTA broadly preempts state and local regulation of railroads, and this preemption extends to the construction and operation of rail lines. As such, activities in the UPRR ROW are clearly exempt from local building and zoning codes and other land use ordinances. However, facilities located outside of the UPRR ROW, including proposed stations, the proposed Merced Layover & Maintenance Facility, and the Atwater Station Alternative would be subject to regional and local plans and regulations. Though ICCTA does broadly preempt state and local regulation of railroads, SJRRC intends to obtain local agency permits for construction of facilities that fall outside of the UPRR ROW even though SJRRC has not determined that such permits are legally necessary, and such permits may not be required.

Appendix G of this EIR, *Regional Plans and Local General Plans*, provides a list of applicable goals, policies, and objectives from regional and local plans of the jurisdictions in which the Proposed Project and the Atwater Station Alternative would be located. Section 15125(d) of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines requires an environmental impact report (EIR) to discuss "any inconsistencies between the proposed project and applicable general plans, specific plans, and regional plans." These plans were considered during the preparation of this analysis and were reviewed to assess whether the Proposed Project and the Atwater Station Alternative would be consistent with the plans of relevant jurisdictions.[2] The Proposed Project and the Atwater Station Alternative would be generally consistent with the applicable goals, policies, and objectives related to public services identified in Appendix G.

3.14.3 Environmental Setting

This section describes the environmental setting related to public services associated with the Proposed Project and the Atwater Station Alternative. Public services considerations include fire protection, law enforcement, hospitals, and schools that operate within the jurisdictions where the Proposed Project and Atwater Station Alternative would operate. For the purposes of this analysis, the study area for public services is defined as follows.

- Fire protection, law enforcement, and hospitals within 0.5 mile of the footprint of the Proposed Project and the Atwater Station Alternative.
- Schools within 0.25 mile of the footprint of the Proposed Project and the Atwater Station Alternative.

Figures 3.14-1 through 3.14-5 illustrate the study area for fire protection, law enforcement, hospitals, and schools. Table 3.11-1 in Section 3.11, *Land Use*, presents the local jurisdictions in which the Proposed Project and the Atwater Station Alternative would be located. As shown in Table 3.11-1, the Proposed Project and the Atwater Station Alternative are located in the jurisdiction of two counties, including unincorporated areas and five incorporated cities.

Information for existing public services in the study area was obtained from the following sources.

- Background information from each jurisdiction in the corridor regarding emergency response capabilities, including general plans and general plan EIRs.

[1] Altamont Corridor Express (ACE) operates within a ROW and on tracks owned by UPRR, which operates interstate freight rail service in the same ROW and on the same tracks.

[2] An inconsistency with regional or local plans is not necessarily considered a significant impact under CEQA, unless it is related to a physical impact on the environment that is significant in its own right.

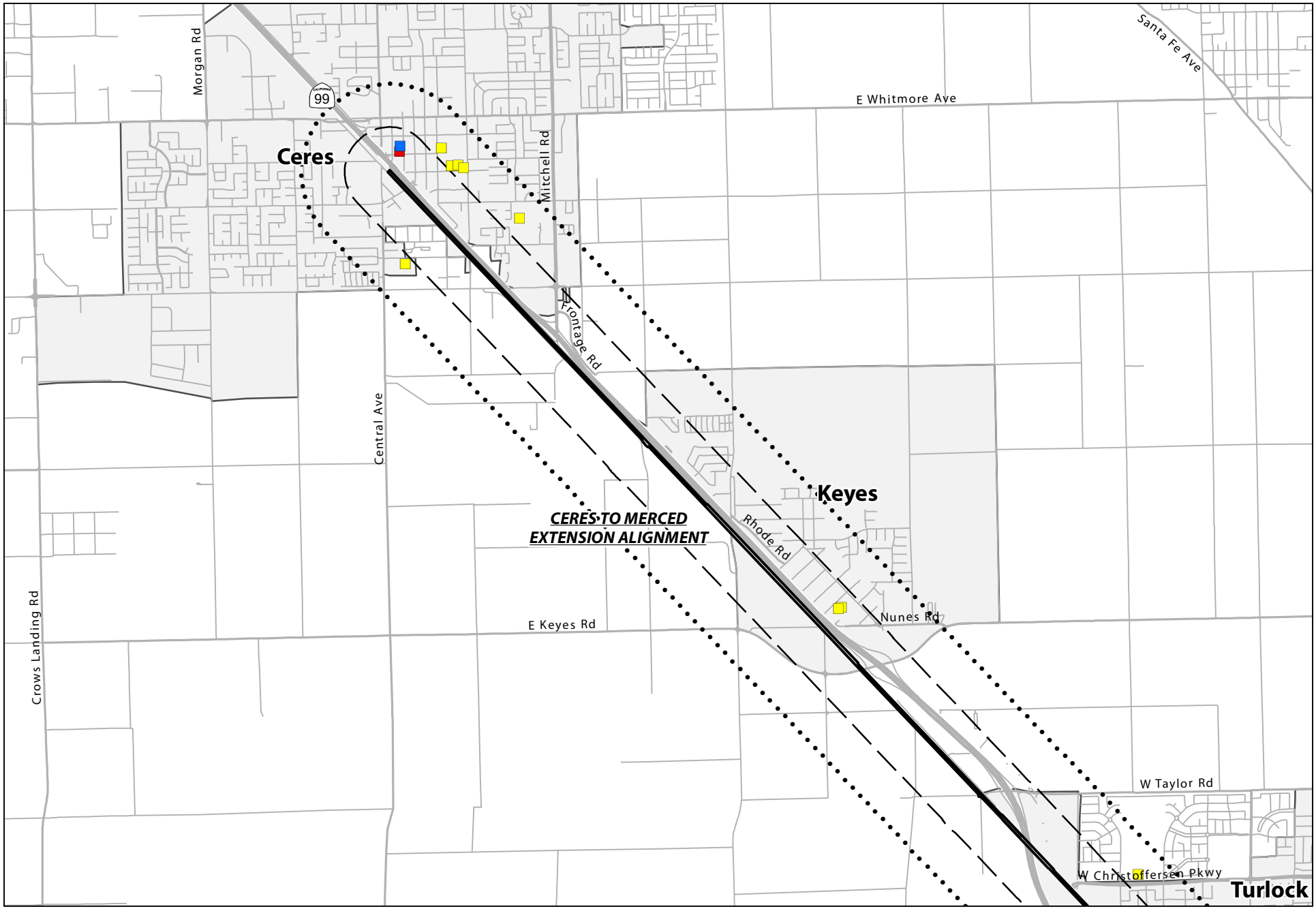
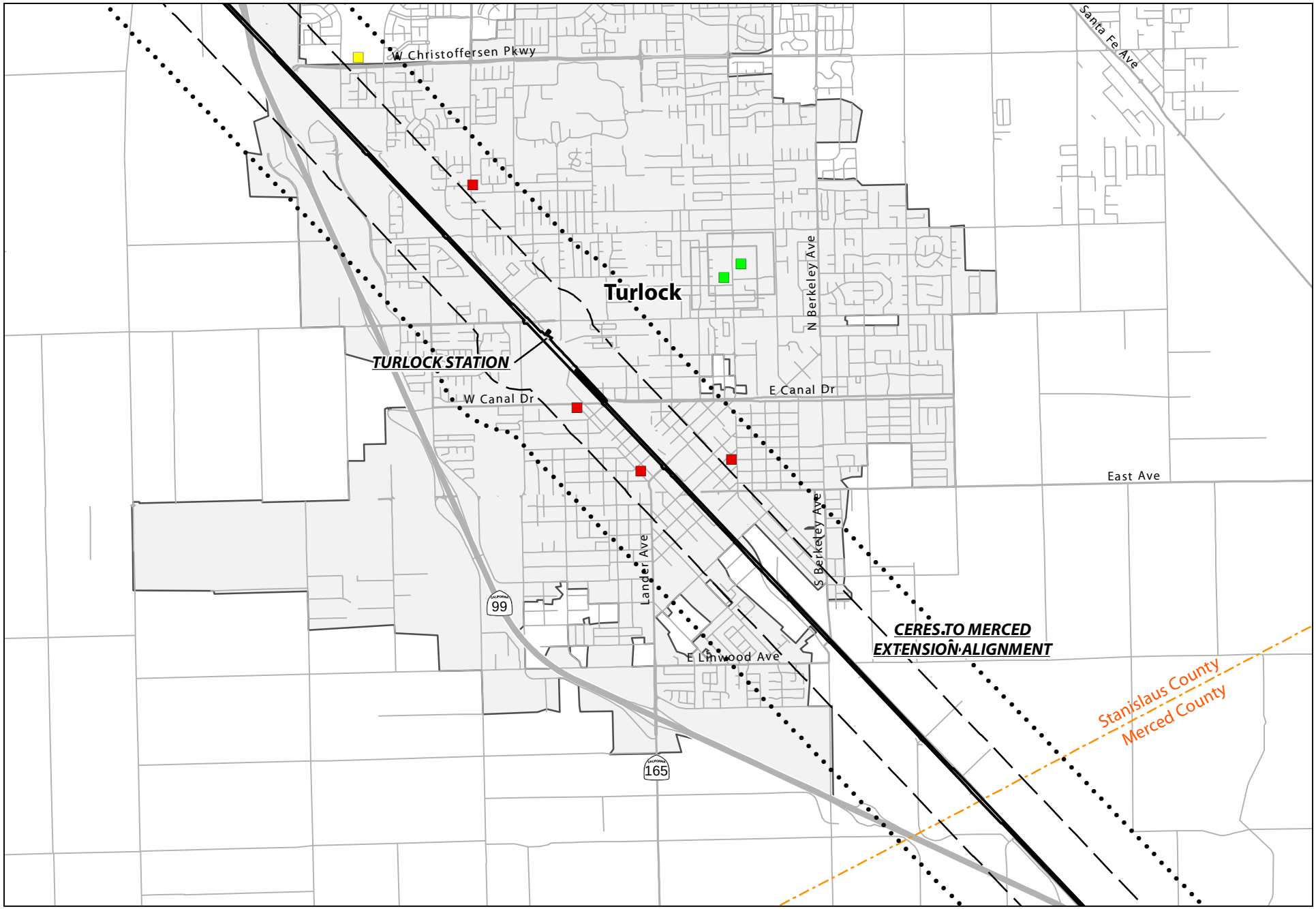


Figure 3.14-1
Public Services
ACE Ceres-Merced Extension Project



ACE
ALTAMONT CORRIDOR EXPRESS

N

0 2,000 4,000
Feet

Direct Impacts Study Area
Study Area (0.25-Mile Buffer)
Study Area (0.50-Mile Buffer)
School
Fire Services
Hospitals

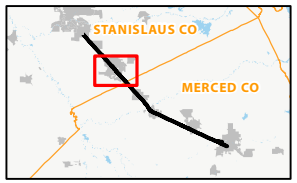


Figure 3.14-2
Public Services
ACE Ceres-Merced Extension Project

Figure 3.14-3
Public Services
ACE Ceres-Merced Extension Project

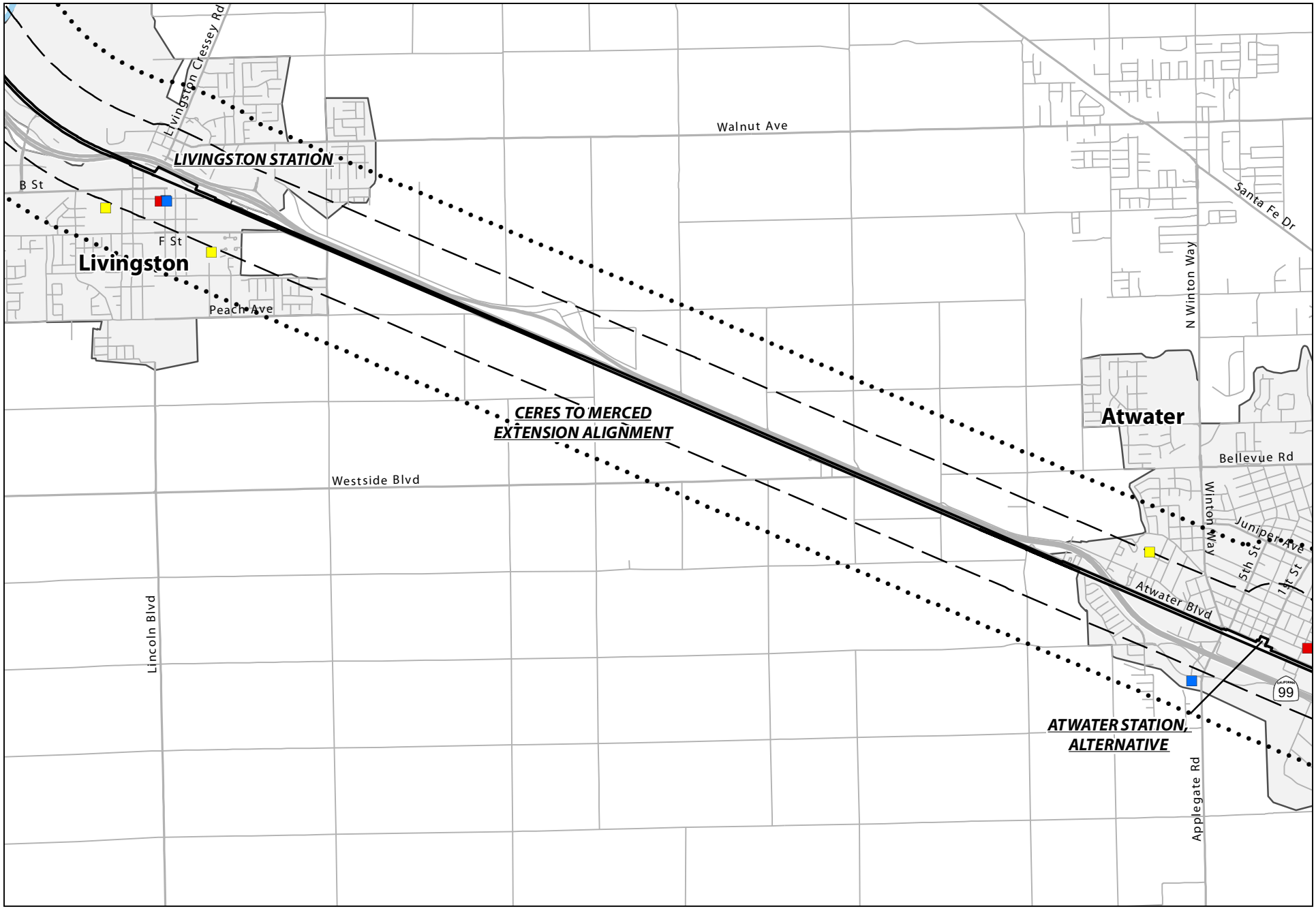


Figure 3.14-4
Public Services
ACE Ceres-Merced Extension Project

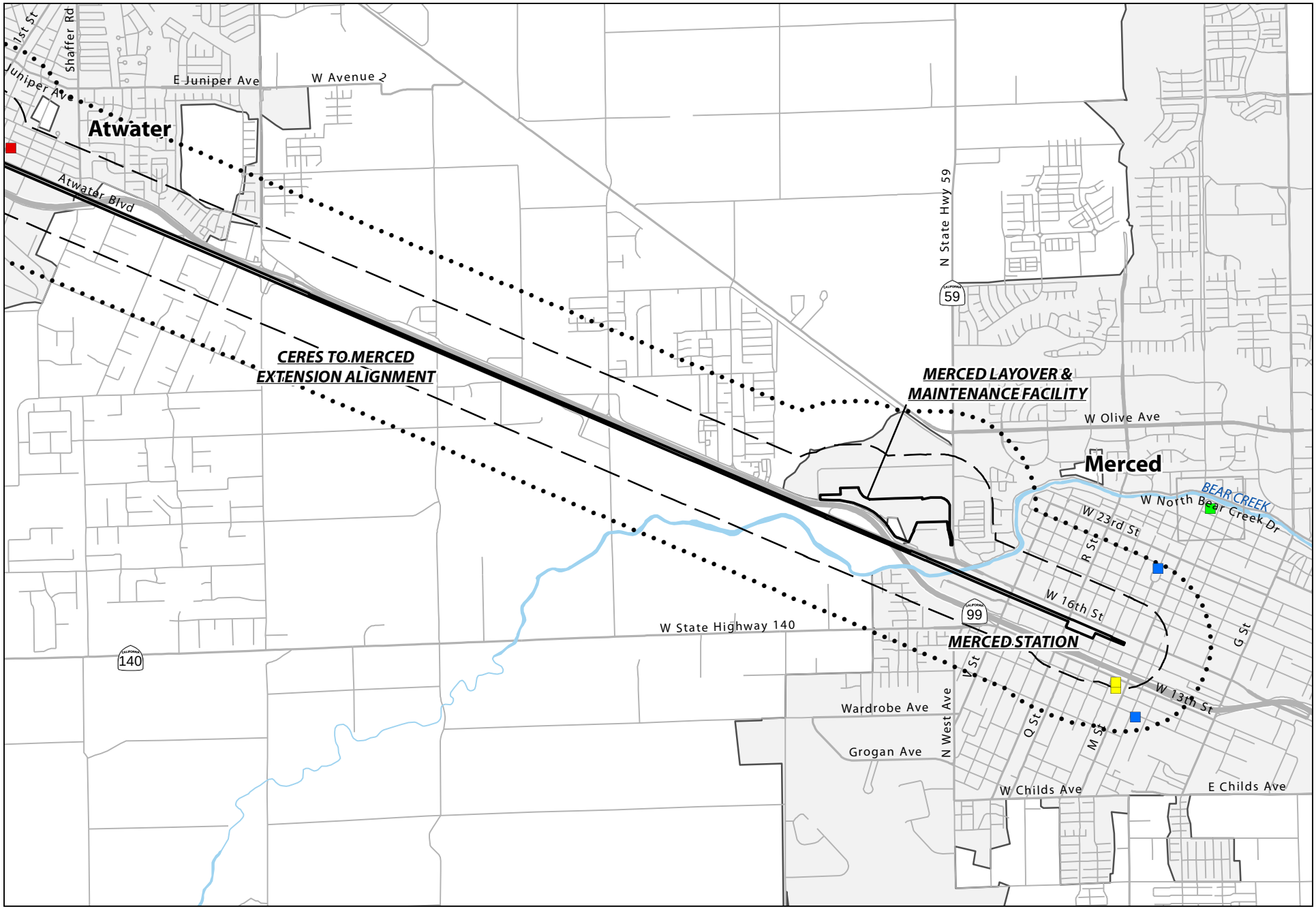


Figure 3.14-5
Public Services
ACE Ceres-Merced Extension Project

- Resources and access information for fire, police, and emergency medical teams, including general plans and general plan EIRs.
- School district maps identifying locations of schools.
- State of California, Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development, for information on hospitals that provide emergency medical services.

3.14.3.1 Fire Protection

Fire departments provide a range of services and programs aimed to protect lives and property from fire hazards, medical emergencies, exposure to hazardous materials, and other dangerous conditions. Table 3.14-1 provides a list of fire departments and stations in the study area, the types of services and equipment on hand, current staffing levels, and response times, if available. The identified fire stations are those that would serve the Proposed Project and/or the Atwater Station Alternative. A few cities have mutual aid agreements with county fire protection services and, in some cases, with another city, to provide concurrent, cooperative response and assistance during emergencies.

Table 3.14-1. Fire Departments Operating within the Study Area

Jurisdictions	Fire Department Information
Stanislaus County	**Services:** Stanislaus Consolidated Fire Protection District services 523 square miles. The district consists of 80 full-time personnel and provides full service emergency response. The district participates in operational partnerships with a joint training platform and emergency response with the City of Ceres and City of Turlock. **Stations in the study area:** There are no Stanislaus Consolidated Fire Protection District stations in the study area. **Current staffing level**: 80 full-time personnel **Response time goal:** 5 minutes response time in urban areas (in 90% of instances) and within 15 minutes in rural areas.
City of Ceres	**Services:** The Ceres Fire Department consists of 32 uniformed personnel, 5 engines, 1 truck, 1 rescue truck, 3 command vehicles, 1 utility vehicle, and 1 rescue boat. The department provides hazardous materials and technical rescue services and receives approximately 5,000 calls per year. **Stations in the study area:** • Station 1: 2755 3rd Street, Ceres **Current staffing level**: 32 firefighters. **Response time goal:** Strive to meet NFPA's National Response Time Standard of responding within 9 minutes of the dispatch notification in at least 90 percent of instances.
City of Turlock	**Services:** The Turlock Fire Department consists of 42 personnel, 4 stations, 7 engines (including 1 with a ladder), 1 ladder truck, 2 vehicles, and 1 hazardous materials pickup truck. The department received approximately 6,000 calls in 2013, and the 2013 average response time was under 5 minutes. **Stations in the study area:** • Fire Station 31: 540 East Marshall Street, Turlock • Fire Station 34: 2820 North Walnut Road **Current staffing level**: 42 firefighters.

Jurisdictions	Fire Department Information
	Response time goal: Turlock Fire Department lists on their website the NFPA 1710 Standard guidelines for response time, which sets the following standard: call receipt and processing time (one minute), turnout time (one minute), and travel time (four minutes).
Merced County	**Services:** Merced County Fire Department provides basic life support units, first responder medical, disaster planning, EMS, hazardous materials response, fire protection, and fire prevention. **Stations in the study area:** • Station 81: 735 Martin Luther King Jr. Way, Merced • Station 91: 16056 Acacia Street, Delhi • Station 96: 1430 C Street, Livingston **Current staffing level**: Each station is staffed by a full-time Fire Captain or Fire Apparatus Engineer, and there are over 300 paid call firefighters. **Response time goal:** Maintain fire department staffing levels and response times consistent with NFPA standards.
City of Livingston	**Services:** Service contract with Merced County Fire Department
City of Atwater	**Services:** Service contract with Merced County Fire Department
City of Merced	**Services:** The Merced Fire Department consists of 66 full-time employees (3 of which are support personnel) and 5 stations, 5 fire engines, and 1 ladder truck. In 2019, the department responded to 10,684 calls. **Stations in the study area:** • Station 51: 99 East 16th Street, Merced **Current staffing level***:* Minimum daily staffing levels include: 1 battalion chief, 5 captains, 6 engineers, and 7 firefighters. **Response time goal:** Response time of 4 to 6 minutes citywide in 90 percent of instances.

Sources: Stanislaus Consolidated Fire Protection District 2020; Stanislaus Local Agency Formation Commission 2016; Ceres Fire Department 2020; City of Ceres 2018; Turlock Fire Department 2020a, 2020b; City of Turlock 2012; Merced County Fire Department 2020a, 2020b; Merced County 2013; Merced Fire Department 2020; City of Merced 2017.
NFPA = National Fire Protection Association.
EMS = emergency medical services.
USAR = urban search and rescue.
ALS = advanced life support.
EMT = emergency medical technician.
BLS = basic life support.

3.14.3.2 Law Enforcement

Law enforcement departments have the primary responsibility to protect the life and property of citizens from criminal activities. Table 3.14-2 provides a list of law enforcement departments in the study area, staffing, services, and response times, if available. A few cities have mutual aid agreements with county sheriff services.

Table 3.14-2. Law Enforcement Operating within the Study Area

Jurisdictions	Police Department and Sheriff's Office Information
Stanislaus County	**Staffing:** The Stanislaus County Sheriff's Department is allocated for 188 sworn deputy sheriff positions. **Services:** Air support, bomb squad, K-9 unit, mounted unit, SWAT/HNT, and dive team **Headquarters/stations in the study area** There is no headquarters/station located in the study area. The Stanislaus County Sheriff's Department headquarters is located at 250 East Hackett Road, Modesto. **Service ratio goal:** None specified
City of Ceres	**Staffing:** The Ceres Police Department consists of 31 sworn officers. **Services:** K-9 Unit, SWAT/HNT, communications (Dispatch), traffic unit, street crimes unit, records, detective bureau, and code enforcement. **Headquarters/stations in the study area:** 2727 Third Street, Ceres **Service ratio goal:** 1.3 officers for every 1,000 citizens
City of Turlock	**Staffing:** The Turlock Police Department consists of 81 sworn officers. As of 2019, there are 1.10 officers per 1,000 citizens. **Services:** Patrol unit handcart/SWAT, traffic safety unit **Headquarters/stations in the study area:** 244 North Broadway Avenue, Turlock **Service ratio goal:** 1.5 officers for every 1,000 citizens
Merced County	**Staffing:** The Merced County Sheriff's Department consists of 124 sworn deputy sheriffs. **Services:** Aviation, dive team, K-9 unit, Special Emergency Response Team, search and rescue, SWAT, Sheriff Tactics and Reconnaissance Team, and Sheriff Enforcement Team. **Headquarters/stations in the study area:** 700 West 22nd Street, Merced **Service ratio goal:** Encourage optimal staffing levels for both sworn sheriff deputies and civilian support staff.
City of Livingston	**Staffing:** The Livingston Police Department consists of 18 sworn officers in the Operations Division; 34 total sworn staff. **Services:** Patrol (crime suppression and calls for service), school resource officer, animal services, police reserves, detective bureau, gang suppression, narcotics enforcement, and intelligence. **Headquarters/stations in the study area:** 1446 C Street, Livingston **Service ratio goal:** 1.5 officers for every 1,000 citizens.
City of Atwater	**Staffing:** The Atwater Police Department consists of 23 sworn officers. **Services:** Patrol unit, code enforcement, and field services **Headquarters/stations in the study area:** There is no headquarters/station located in the study area. The Atwater Police Department headquarters is located at 750 Bellevue Road, Atwater. **Service ratio goal:** None specified
City of Merced	**Staffing:** The Merced Police Department consists of 84 sworn officers **Services:** Patrol division, crime prevention, code enforcement, communications division, bomb unit, SWAT, K-9 unit, and bicycle patrol. **Headquarters/stations in the study area:** 611 West 22nd Street, Merced (Main Station) and 470 West 11th Street (South Station). **Service ratio goal:** 1.32 officers for every 1,000 citizens

Sources: Stanislaus County Sherriff's Office 2020; Sullivan pers. comm.; Ceres Police Department 2020; City of Ceres 2018; Clayton pers. comm; Turlock Police Department 2019; City of Turlock 2009; Merced County 2013; Livingston Police Department 2020; Atwater Police Department 2020; Salvador pers. comm; City of Merced 2017.
SWAT = special weapons and tactics.
HNT = Hostage Negotiation Team.

Crime

This section provides information on crime rates to understand the types of crimes committed and the number of incidents reported in the different jurisdictions of the Proposed Project and the Atwater Station Alternative. This information is useful in understanding the existing crime rates and demand for law enforcement in the study area. Table 3.14-3 identifies the number of violent crimes, highway crimes, property crimes, arson, and motor vehicle theft occurrences in California statewide, as well as by county and city where the Proposed Project and the Atwater Station Alternative would be located.

Table 3.14-3. 2018 Crime Incidents and Rates in the Study Area

Jurisdictions	Violent Crimes	Highway Crimes	Property Crimes	Arson	Motor Vehicle Theft[a]
State of California[b]	176,866	21,231	940,998	8,523	155,170
Stanislaus County	3,160	274	15,300	150	2,586
City of Ceres	228	10	1,452	9	335
City of Turlock	420	20	2,233	435	435
Merced County	1,548	69	6,761	100	1,299
City of Livingston	41	4	308	4	53
City of Atwater	179	4	910	16	186
City of Merced	465	48	2,219	62	428

Source: State of California Department of Justice 2018.
[a] Motor vehicle theft is a subset of property crimes.
[b] The crimes for the State of California is provided for context of overall crime in the State.

3.14.3.3 Emergency Medical Services

Typical first responders to emergency and medical incidents are fire protection and police enforcement services. A combination of local fire protection services, emergency medical service agencies, and independent ambulance services provide emergency medical services in the study area. There are no hospitals that provide emergency medical services within the study area.

Table 3.14-4 identifies the closest hospitals to the Proposed Project.

Table 3.14-4. Emergency Medical Services Hospitals Closest to the Proposed Project

Hospital	Address	Distance from Ceres to Merced Extension Alignment
Brandel Manor of Emanuel Medical Center	1801 North Olive Avenue, Turlock	1 mile
Emanuel Medical Center, Inc.	825 Delbon Avenue, Turlock	1.1 miles
Mercy General Hospital	2740 M St, Merced	1.0 mile

3.14.3.4 Schools

Table 3.14-5 identifies the public and private schools (kindergarten through 12th grade), located within the study area.

Table 3.14-5. Schools within the Study Area

School	Address	Proposed and Alternative Facilities within 0.25 mile of the School
Walter White Elementary	2904 Sixth Street, Ceres	Ceres to Merced Extension Alignment
Ceres Special Education	2503 Lawrence Street, Ceres	Ceres to Merced Extension Alignment
Endeavor Alternative, and Argus High (Continuation)	2555 Lawrence Street, Ceres	Ceres to Merced Extension Alignment
Lucas Elementary	3500 Rose Avenue, Ceres	Ceres to Merced Extension Alignment
Don Pedro Elementary	2300 Don Pedro Road, Ceres	Ceres to Merced Extension Alignment
Keyes Elementary	4400 Maud Avenue, Keyes	Ceres to Merced Extension Alignment
Keyes to Learning Charter	5709 Ninth Street, Keyes	Ceres to Merced Extension Alignment
John H. Pitman High	2525 West Christoffersen Parkway, Turlock	Ceres to Merced Extension Alignment
Stanislaus Academy	2513 Youngstown Road, Turlock	Ceres to Merced Extension Alignment
El Capitan Elementary	10115 Fifth Street, Delhi	Ceres to Merced Extension Alignment
Schendel Elementary	16114 Schendel Avenue, Delhi	Ceres to Merced Extension Alignment
Selma Herndon Elementary	714 Prusso Street, Livingston	Ceres to Merced Extension Alignment; Livingston Station
Campus Park Elementary	1845 H Street, Livingston	Ceres to Merced Extension Alignment
Aileen Colburn Elementary	2201 Heller Street, Atwater	Ceres to Merced Extension Alignment
Merced County Special Education, and Come Back Charter	632 West 13th Street, Merced	Ceres to Merced Extension Alignment

Source: California Department of Education 2020.

3.14.4 Impact Analysis

3.14.4.1 Methods for Analysis

This analysis evaluates potential impacts on public services that would result from implementation of the Proposed Project and the Atwater Station Alternative. The analysis of impacts from the construction and operations of the Proposed Project and the Atwater Station Alternative on public services in the study area were evaluated based on review of available literature and information from each city and county within the study area.

Construction impacts are those resulting from building and installing infrastructure required for the Proposed Project and the Atwater Station Alternative. Operations impacts would result from operation of ACE service between Ceres and Merced and ongoing, routine, and occasional maintenance activities associated with the extended Altamont Corridor Express (ACE) service.

For construction and operations-related impacts, significant impacts related to fire protection, law enforcement, emergency services, and schools may occur if acceptable service ratios and performance objectives are not met and the resultant increase in staffing and/or equipment requires the construction of new or altered facilities that could cause a significant physical impact on the environment. Not meeting service ratios is considered a social and/or economic impact; CEQA is concerned with the resultant physical impacts on the environment. Thus, a project may result in an increased demand for public services, but a significant impact under CEQA occurs only if that demand results in the need for new facilities, which ultimately creates an indirect physical impact on the environment that is significant. To determine impacts associated with construction and operations, this section conducts a qualitative assessment of whether implementation of the Proposed Project or the Atwater Station Alternative would result in a demand for public services that would be similar to or substantially different from existing conditions.

3.14.4.2 Thresholds of Significance

The CEQA Guidelines Appendix G (Cal. Code Regs. tit. 14, §§ 15000 et seq.) has identified significance criteria to be considered for determining whether a project could have significant impacts on public services. An impact would be considered significant if construction or operations of the Proposed Project or the Atwater Station Alternative would have any of the following consequences.

- Result in substantial negative physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities or a need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for any of the following public services:[3]
  - Fire protection
  - Police protection
  - Schools
  - Other public facilities

3.14.4.3 Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Impact PS-1	Construction and operations could increase fire protection, emergency responders and law enforcement service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives but would not result in the need for new or physically altered fire protection or law enforcement facilities.
Level of Impact	**Potentially significant impact**
Mitigation Measures	TR-4.1: Implement a construction road traffic control plan
Level of Impact with Mitigation	**Less than significant impact**

[3] Section 3.15, *Recreation*, addresses impacts on parks and other recreational facilities.

Impact Characterization and Significance Conclusion

Proposed Project

Construction

Construction of the Proposed Project could increase fire protection, law enforcement, and emergency response services in two primary ways.

- Construction activities occurring in roadways and streets could disrupt traffic and interfere with the response times for fire, police, and other emergency responders.
- Construction workers and areas where construction would occur could require additional fire, police, and other emergency responders' services.

Traffic Impacts

The Proposed Project would involve construction activities in local roadways and streets. The Ceres to Merced Extension Alignment would modify 10 existing undercrossings (see Table 2-1) and 28 existing at grade-crossings (see Table 2-2). In addition, the Ceres to Merced Extension Alignment would include the construction of a new bridge over SR-99. The Turlock Station would include the construction of a new pedestrian bridge over North Golden State Boulevard. These facilities could potentially disrupt traffic and interfere with fire, police, and other emergency responders during the construction period. Although, the Livingston Station, Merced Station, and Merced Layover & Maintenance Facility would not involve construction activities on local streets and roadways, construction equipment would need to use roadways to access these construction sites. As such, the Livingston Station, Merced Station, and Merced Layover & Maintenance Facility could potentially disrupt traffic and interfere with fire, police, and other emergency responders during the construction period.

Construction of the Proposed Project includes roadway and at-grade crossing modifications and new bridges crossing roadways, which could affect local roadways and streets and increase emergency response times. Modifications of at-grade crossings entail installing concrete crossing panels where the new main track crosses the roadway; relocating railroad crossing signals, guards/gates, and signal houses; and installing stop bars. Based on similar rail projects, construction associated with new or modified at-grade crossings would last approximately 7 to 15 days, with an average of 9 days. Roadway realignment and modifications, and construction of bridges over roadways, may last three to four months and could interfere with roadway access and disrupt traffic. Construction activities in streets and roadways could interfere with emergency response by increasing traffic congestion and vehicle wait time. This would be a potentially significant impact.

Impacts Due to Construction Personnel

In addition, during construction, accidents involving construction personnel and equipment may impose a demand for local emergency responders. Construction staging areas and construction areas that store construction equipment or materials could be susceptible to crime and vandalism. As a result, demand for law enforcement services could increase. In addition, relocated construction workers could increase the local population and the associated demand for fire protection services.

Accidents involving construction workers and equipment, and the increased potential for crime and vandalism at staging areas, could result in increased need for public services. In regards to construction safety and preventing construction accidents, California Division of Occupational Safety

and Health's Title 8 regulations require an emergency action plan that establishes protocol for any emergency scenarios and establishes safety measures to prevent and respond to medical emergencies (California Division of Occupational Safety and Health 2005). In addition, construction areas would include fencing and visual screening to deter trespassers from accessing the construction sites, which would decrease the likelihood of construction personnel involvement. Increases in construction labor would not result in a permanent increase in public service demand that could require new or altered facilities. Thus, construction of the Proposed Project would not result in the need for new or physically altered fire protection or law enforcement facilities, and the impact would be less than significant.

Operations

Operation of the Proposed Project could increase fire protection, law enforcement, and emergency response services in several ways.

- Additional ACE service operations could disrupt traffic due to additional gate downtime at at-grade crossings between Ceres and Merced, interfering with the response times for fire, police, and other emergency responders.
- Additional ACE service operations could induce population growth around station areas, resulting in additional demand for fire, police, and other emergency responders.
- New station parking areas could attract more crime at these locations, resulting in additional demand for fire, police, and other emergency responders.
- Accident conditions involving trains could require large-scale, coordinated response from fire, police, and other emergency responders.

The Proposed Project would introduce new ACE service between Ceres and Merced. Four trains would operate in the morning and four trains would operate in the evening between Ceres and Merced. The extension of ACE service to Merced would result in additional gate downtime at at-grade crossings between Ceres and Merced during the morning and evening peak hours, with at most one train operating during any peak hour (see Table 2-5 for the prototypical schedule). Gate downtimes usually have a duration of 45 seconds to 1 minute. As such, these gate downtowns are not expected to substantially affect emergency response times. Furthermore, despite localized traffic delays from gate downtimes, operations would substantially reduce overall vehicle miles traveled along the extension alignment and existing ACE corridor, which would generally reduce congestion and would result in a net improvement (compared with the No Project Alternative) in emergency response times. The potential for increased delays at crossings would not be expected to result in the need for substantial staffing increases that would warrant construction of new or altered facilities because municipalities would likely deploy their staff to maintain coverage on either side of the tracks or identify alternate routes for responders to use before constructing new or altered facilities.

While operation of the Proposed Project would introduce passenger rail service to new areas, substantial localized growth is not anticipated around existing and new station locations. As described in Section 3.13, the general plans of the municipalities in which these new stations are proposed support the establishment of these stations. Thus, growth in and around new station areas would not be substantial or unplanned. The resultant demand for public services is expected to be minor and would not require new or altered public services facilities to maintain performance objectives. In addition, with Proposed Project operations, new ACE service would be introduced

from Ceres to Merced, which is anticipated to result in an increase in ACE ridership system-wide, above existing levels. Operation of the Proposed Project is not anticipated to induce unplanned population growth in the vicinity of existing stations because these stations are located in urbanized and developed areas, no population-inducing improvements are proposed at the existing stations, and these stations are generally located where ACE riders would travel to (destination) for the purposes of their trips. Thus, it is unlikely that increased ACE ridership with Proposed Project operations would induce substantial or unplanned population growth in the vicinity of existing stations and require new or altered public services facilities to maintain performance objectives.

The design of the Proposed Project facilities at stations incorporates features to reduce opportunities for crime and increased demand for law enforcement would be minimized. These features include maintaining existing patrols, providing security lighting in parking and station platform areas, and using crime prevention techniques in the design of new and improved facilities, such as planning the siting of physical features, activities, and people in a way to maximize formal and informal surveillance of the facilities; selecting and siting lighting and landscaping to avoid blind spots or areas and to help identify pathways; and creating clear, visible pathways and entry points to the stations and parking facilities. These security features in parking lots and at station platforms are expected to reduce and deter criminal offenses.

Crime rates are not expected to be substantially different from existing crime levels of the surrounding communities as a result of Proposed Project operations. Although the introduction of new passenger rail service could increase crime, ACE already provides security measures, including closed circuit television, which provides a deterrent to crime. With increases in ridership, security operations on passenger trains would adhere to existing ACE practices, and include onboard security cameras, well-lit cabins, and presence of ACE staff. Although law enforcement would not patrol trains, they would respond to calls for service. It is not anticipated that crime on passenger trains would change substantially. Without a change in crime incidence, no substantial increase in law enforcement staffing is anticipated, and there would be no need for new or altered facilities.

In the event of an accident condition involving trains, substantial coordinated emergency response attention could be required. As described in Section 3.16*, Safety and Security,* the likelihood of accident conditions involving trains would be remote as a result of Proposed Project operations because of adherence to stringent federal and state protocols, regulations, and requirements. However, an accident could occur and require a large-scale, coordinated response by emergency responders. The probability of such an event is remote, and local public service providers would not increase staffing or expand or alter their facilities to deal with such an extreme event; rather, local agencies would coordinate with other service providers to assist with response. Thus, there would not be an increase in emergency services, and there would not be a need for additional fire, law enforcement, and emergency services facilities.

In summary, operation of the Proposed Project would not result in the need for new or physically altered fire protection or law enforcement facilities, the construction of which would cause physical impacts. As a result, impacts related to fire protection, law enforcement and emergency services would be less than significant.

Atwater Station Alternative

The Atwater Station Alternative would require the modification of Atwater Boulevard to allow vehicle access to the new parking lots. This modification could potentially disrupt traffic and interfere with fire, police, and other emergency responders during the construction period. Like the

Proposed Project, the Atwater Station Alternative could increase fire protection, law enforcement, and emergency response services during construction, resulting in a potentially significant impact.

For the same reasons listed above for operation of the Proposed Project, operation of Atwater Station Alternative**,** would not result in the need for new or physically altered fire protection or law enforcement facilities. As a result, impacts related to fire protection, law enforcement, and emergency services would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

Mitigation Measure TR-4.1 would apply to construction activities of the Proposed Project to mitigate potential disruptions to traffic and interference with fire, police, and other emergency responders during the construction period. Likewise, Mitigation Measure TR-4.1 would also apply to construction of the Atwater Station Alternative**.**

Mitigation Measure TR-4.1: Implement a construction road traffic control plan

Refer to measure description in Section 3.17, *Transportation*.

Significance with Application of Mitigation

Mitigation Measure TR-4.1 requires the preparation of a construction road traffic control plan that describes protocols for coordinating with local jurisdictions on emergency vehicle access and maintaining access for fire protection, law enforcement, and emergency service responders. The construction road traffic control plan would address temporary road closures, detour provisions, allowable routes, and alternative access. This mitigation measure would reduce such delays to a less than significant level. Because such disruptions would be temporary and local municipalities would be expected to adjust their staff and their deployment, substantial increases in staff would be unlikely. As a result, there would be no need for new or altered public service facilities. Construction activities associated with the Proposed Project would have a less-than-significant impact on public services with implementation of Mitigation Measure TR-4.1.

For the same reasons listed above, construction activities associated with Atwater Station Alternative would have a less-than-significant impact on public services with implementation of Mitigation Measure TR-4.1.

Comparison of the Proposed Livingston Station and Atwater Station Alternative

Implementation of the Atwater Station Alternative would require construction within a roadway (for the modifications to Atwater Boulevard). The proposed Livingston Station would not require construction within a roadway. Thus, the Atwater Station Alternative would have more of an impact on public services during construction than the proposed Livingston Station.

Impact PS-2	Construction and operations would not change service ratios and performance objectives or result in the need for new or physically altered schools or other public facilities.
Level of Impact	**Less than significant impact**

Impact Characterization and Significance Conclusion

Proposed Project

Construction

As described in Section 3.13, *Population and Housing,* construction of the Proposed Project would have the potential to induce local population growth temporarily through employment of workers during the construction period. Employment opportunities due to construction are anticipated to be filled by local workers who already reside in the Proposed Project vicinity and would not contribute to population growth. Regardless of the intensity and duration of construction activities, the employment opportunities created through construction would be temporary and would not be substantial. Thus, there would be no significant impacts on service ratios or other performance objectives for schools and other public services, such as libraries, post offices, or hospitals because construction would be temporary and would not result in a new permanent population that would require new or physically altered schools or other public services. Impacts would be less than significant.

Operations

Operation of the Proposed Project would entail new stations along the extension alignment between Ceres and Merced. Operation of a new passenger rail service could encourage population growth in the vicinity of station areas. However, as discussed above and in Section 3.13, *Population and Housing*, growth in and around new station areas would not be substantial or unplanned because the general plans of the municipalities where these new stations are proposed support the establishment of the stations. Thus, resultant demand for schools and other public services, such as libraries, post offices, or hospitals is expected to be minor and would not require new or altered facilities.

Once operational, new ACE service would be introduced from Ceres to Merced, which is anticipated to result in an increase in ACE ridership system-wide consisting of four additional trains running in the morning and evening. At existing stations, operation of the Proposed Project is not anticipated to induce unplanned population growth in the vicinity of existing stations because these stations are located in urbanized and developed areas, no population-inducing improvements are proposed at the existing stations, and these stations are generally located where ACE riders would travel to (destination) for the purposes of their trips. Thus, it is unlikely that increased ACE ridership with operation of the Proposed Project would induce substantial or unplanned population growth in the vicinity of existing stations and require new or physically altered schools or other public services. Impacts would be less than significant.

In addition, as shown in Table 2-10 of Chapter 2, *Project Description,* implementation of the Merced Station would require the acquisition of three parcels owned by the Merced City School District. No Merced City School District schools would be altered by implementation of the Merced Station. However, there is currently a warehouse owned by the Merced City School District, which would be demolished in order to implement the Merced Station. Although this warehouse would be demolished, there are other areas within the City of Merced that could be used by the Merced City School District to replace the function of the warehouse. The demolition of this warehouse would not result in the need of new or physically altered schools and the impact from the Merced Station would be less than significant.

Atwater Station Alternative

For the same reasons listed above, construction and operation of the Atwater Station Alternative would not result in the need for new or physically altered schools or other public services. Thus, construction and operation of the Atwater Station Alternative would result in the same less-than-significant impact as the Proposed Project. There would be no difference in impact between the proposed Livingston Station and the Atwater Station Alternative.

3.14.4.4 Overall Comparison of the Proposed Livingston Station and Atwater Station Alternative

The Atwater Station Alternative would have a slightly greater impact on public services during construction than the proposed Livingston Station because construction could occur within Atwater Boulevard. Overall, there would be no substantial difference in public services impacts between implementation of the Atwater Station Alternative or the proposed Livingston Station (both are expected to result in less than significant impacts after mitigation).