

## 3.15 Parks, Recreation, and Open Space

This section discusses parks, recreation, and open space resources because of their importance to the quality of life in communities where they are found. The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires consideration of environmental effects on parks, recreation, and open space. This section describes the regulatory setting, the affected environment, and the environmental consequences that would likely result from the Fresno to Bakersfield Locally Generated Alternative (F-B LGA), as well as mitigation measures that would reduce project environmental consequences on parks, recreation, and open space.

This Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS) compares the F-B LGA to the complementary portion of the Preferred Alternative that was identified in the *Fresno to Bakersfield Section California High-Speed Train Final Project Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement* (Authority and FRA 2014). As discussed in Section 1.1.3 of this Draft Supplemental EIR/EIS, the complementary portion of the Preferred Alternative consists of the portion of the Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railway (BNSF) Alternative from Poplar Avenue to Hageman Road and the Bakersfield Hybrid from Hageman Road to Oswell Street (further referenced as the “May 2014 Project” in this Draft Supplemental EIR/EIS). Since the Fresno to Bakersfield Section Final EIR/EIS does not evaluate the May 2014 Project as a discrete subsection of the Fresno to Bakersfield Project (as it did for the Allensworth Bypass, for example), affected environment and impact summary discussion included in this section for the May 2014 Project has been extrapolated from the available information contained in the Fresno to Bakersfield Section Final EIR/EIS.

The following sections of this Draft Supplemental EIR/EIS provide additional information about issues related to potential impacts on parks, recreation, and open space: Section 3.2, Transportation; Section 3.3, Air Quality and Global Climate Change; Section 3.4, Noise and Vibration; Section 3.11, Safety and Security; Section 3.16, Aesthetics and Visual Resources; and Section 3.18, Regional Growth describe mitigation measures that would reduce the significance of potential impacts on parks, recreation, and open space resources at the same time that they reduce the significance of impacts in the specified issue area. Relevant mitigation measures are discussed in Section 3.15.6, Mitigation Measures.

### 3.15.1 Regulatory Setting

This section identifies the federal, state, regional, and local regulations, laws, and orders that apply to parks, recreation, and open space. As described in the Fresno to Bakersfield Section Final EIR/EIS, the project would comply with all federal and state regulations. The F-B LGA would be compatible with local plans and policies, where policies allow conversion of public park land to transportation uses with appropriate replacement of converted land or other compensation consistent with the California Public Park Preservation Act.

#### 3.15.1.1 Federal

Please see pages 3.15-1 through 3.15-3 in Section 3.15.2.1 of the Fresno to Bakersfield Section Final EIR/EIS for a discussion of applicable federal regulations, including Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966 (Section 4(f)) and Section 6(f) Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965. Those regulations are also discussed on pages 4-5 through 4-7 in Chapter 4 of the Fresno to Bakersfield Section Final EIR/EIS. The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) evaluation of Section 4(f) properties for the F-B LGA incorporates information from this section with information in Section 3.17, Cultural Resources, in Chapter 4 of this Draft Supplemental EIR/EIS. Chapter 4 will support the FRA’s Section 4(f) determination in its Record of Decision. Because only publically owned parks and recreational areas are protected (with some limited exceptions), the analysis of recreational opportunities provided in Section 3.15.4 focuses on publicly owned and accessible resources. However, in order to fully characterize parks and open spaces in the project area, the analysis also identifies private resources associated with school and church facilities.

Applicable federal laws and regulations relevant to parks, recreation, and open space include the following:

- Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act (49 U.S.C. Section 303)
- Section 6(f) Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965 (Public Law 88-578, 16 U.S.C. Section 4601-4 to 4601-11)
- National Park Service Organic Act (16 U.S.C. Sections 1–4)

### **3.15.1.2 State**

Please see Section 3.15.2.2 (page 3.15-4) of the Fresno to Bakersfield Section Final EIR/EIS for a discussion of applicable state regulations. Applicable state laws and regulations relevant to parks, recreation, and open space include the following:

- California Public Park Preservation Act (California Public Resources Code Sections 5400–5409)
- California Department of Fish and Wildlife Ecological Reserves (California Fish and Game Code Section 1580 et seq.), Title 14 California Code of Regulations Division 1, Chapter 11, Section 630
- California Public Resources Code Section 5006.10

### **3.15.1.3 Regional and Local**

Please see pages 3.15-3 and 3.15-4 in Section 3.15.2.3 of the Fresno to Bakersfield Section Final EIR/EIS for a discussion of applicable regional and local regulations. Applicable regional and local laws and regulations relevant to parks, recreation, and open space include the following:

- Kern County General Plan, Land Use/Conservation/Open-Space Element
- Kern County Code of Ordinances
- City of Shafter General Plan
- City of Shafter Code of Ordinances
- Metropolitan Bakersfield General Plan, Open-Space Element and Parks Element
- Bakersfield Recreation and Parks Master Plan
- Bakersfield Municipal Code

## **3.15.2 Methods for Evaluating Impacts**

Data collection for parks, recreation, and open space consisted of a review of plans and policies, the use of geographic information system (GIS) data banks, and field verifications. The study area assesses parks, recreation, and open space properties within 1,000 feet of the centerline and road improvements, 0.5 mile of the maintenance of infrastructure facility (MOIF), and 0.5 mile of the passenger station. As described in the Fresno to Bakersfield Section Final EIR/EIS (page 3.15-7), construction within 300 feet of a park, recreation, or open space resource or a school district play area and recreational facility would have the greatest impact due to noise, dust, and visual effects, depending on the construction type and activity. Parks located more than 300 feet from construction are sufficiently remote to remain comparatively unaffected by most activities, due to the attenuation of noise and dust associated with construction activities, and the distance from visual effects associated with construction. Noise-related effects are further discussed in Section 3.4 of this Draft Supplemental EIR/EIS. Visual-related effects, including detailed discussion of key viewpoints, are further discussed in Section 3.16, Aesthetics and Visual Resources.

Construction impacts to parks and recreational resources were determined using the following methods:

- GIS spatial analysis to determine the distance of parks, recreation, and open space facilities from the project; the amount of park, recreation, or open space land that would be required; and facilities and functions that would be affected as a result of project construction.

- Review and analysis of the proposed footprint and study area (1,000 feet on either side of the centerline, and 0.5 mile around the MOIF in Shafter and the station area in Bakersfield) to determine if there are temporary changes to access and a reduction in parking capacity for parks, recreation, and open space resources.
- Examination of the potential disruption of established community and visitor use of parks, recreation, and open space resources because of temporary construction easements and general construction activity.
- Review and analysis of other EIR/EIS sections, including Section 3.2, Transportation; Section 3.3, Air Quality and Global Climate Change; Section 3.4, Noise and Vibration; Section 3.11, Safety and Security; and Section 3.16, Aesthetics and Visual Resources, to determine if there would be any indirect impacts on parks, recreation, and open space resources as a result of project construction.

The project impacts of the proposed F-B LGA were determined using the following methods:

- Review and analysis of the design and location of project elements to determine if any barriers to park access and use would be created or if changes in access and parking for parks, recreation, and open space resources would occur.
- GIS analysis to determine the distance of park, recreation, and open space facilities from the project and the amount of land that would be required, as well as facilities and functions that would be permanently affected.
- Review and analysis of the other EIR/EIS sections, including Section 3.3, Air Quality and Global Climate Change; Section 3.4, Noise and Vibration; and Section 3.16, Aesthetics and Visual Resources, to determine if there would be any indirect impacts on parks, recreation, and open space resources as a result of project operation.
- Review and analysis of Section 3.13, Station Planning, Land Use, and Development, and Section 3.18, Regional Growth, to determine if there would be any project increase or decrease in the use of parks, recreation, and open space resources such that substantial physical deterioration of the resource would occur or be accelerated.

As noted, project construction and operation would have the most impacts on parks located within 300 feet of the project, as measured from the proposed centerline, with the most intensive impacts on those parks located within 100 feet of the proposed centerline. In total, two park, recreation, and open space resources are located within 300 feet of the project centerline, no resources are located within 300 feet of the MOIF, and four resources are within 300 feet of the proposed station location.

### **3.15.2.1 Methods for Evaluating Effects under NEPA**

In the Fresno to Bakersfield Section Final EIR/EIS, analysts applied specified thresholds for each resource topic to assess whether the intensity of each impact is negligible, moderate, or substantial for the Build Alternatives, and provided a conclusion of whether the impact was “significant.” Since the Fresno to Bakersfield Section Final EIR/EIS does not evaluate the May 2014 Project as a discrete subsection of the Fresno to Bakersfield Project (as it did for the Allensworth Bypass, for example), it does not provide conclusions using intensity thresholds for the May 2014 Project. Therefore, intensity thresholds are not used for the F-B LGA. Instead, the evaluation of impacts under NEPA in this Draft Supplemental EIR/EIS focuses on a comprehensive discussion of the project’s potential impacts in terms of context, intensity, and duration and provides agency decision makers and the public with an apples-to-apples comparison between the May 2014 Project and the F-B LGA.

### **3.15.2.2 CEQA Significance Criteria**

CEQA significance criteria define a project effect as significant if the project:

- Prevents the use of an established or planned park, recreation, or open space.
- Acquires an open space resource that would result in a diminished capacity to use that resource or a substantially reduced value of that resource.
- Creates a physical barrier (or a perceived barrier) to access to or established use of any park, recreation, or open space areas.
- Results in acquisition of a recreation resource that would result in a diminished capacity to use the resource for specific and defined recreational activities. Thresholds of significance for indirect impacts on community facilities are defined in other sections, such as Section 3.2, Transportation; Section 3.4, Noise and Vibration; and Section 3.16, Aesthetics and Visual Resources.
- Increases the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreation facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated.
- Results in the physical alteration of the existing facilities or a need to provide new parks or other recreational facilities—the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts—to maintain acceptable service ratios or other performance objectives.

### 3.15.3 Affected Environment

The study area for this resource in the cities of Shafter and Bakersfield, as well as Kern County, encompasses parks (including school recreational facilities), recreational facilities, and open space, all of which vary in size, type, and function. The study area for parks, recreational facilities, and open space is defined as 1,000 feet on either side of the centerline and 0.5 mile around the MOIF in Shafter and the station area in Bakersfield.

On-street bicycle routes are not included in the analysis provided in this section because they are considered transportation facilities. Section 3.2, Transportation, covers the impacts on these facilities.

Resources identified within the study area include properties used for recreation, and include the following: public parks and open spaces, including greenbelts, pedestrian and bicycle trails, playfields, and school recreational facilities available for public use during non-school hours. Other than the school district properties, Shafter, Bakersfield, and Kern County own or operate the remaining properties.

Private recreational facilities (such as those associated with private schools) are generally not included in the impact analysis because public recreational opportunities are not present. As discussed below under “School District Play Areas and Recreation Facilities within 1,000 feet of the centerline,” the Free Will Christian Academy is included in this analysis because, although a private school, it is part of the publicly accessible Shafter Free Will Baptist Church and therefore may present public recreation opportunities. This site is well within the 1,000-foot study area and is therefore included in this analysis in order to provide a full characterization of potential impacts. As described in Section 3.15.1.1, Section 4(f) protects recreational resources that are publicly owned and accessible to the general public. Therefore, although this analysis identifies recreational resources associated with private facilities such as schools and churches, for the purposes of characterizing impacts, this analysis focuses on publicly available resources.

#### 3.15.3.1 Summary of the May 2014 Project Affected Environment

Park resources include neighborhood and community recreational facilities, publicly-accessible school recreational facilities, and the Kern River Parkway. School districts along the May 2014 Project allow public use of recreational facilities on school property after hours or with permission.

Table 8-A-48 shows the parks, recreation, and open space resources in the study area of the May 2014 Project, including within 1,000 feet of the centerline as well as within 0.5 mile of the Truxtun Avenue Station. As shown, there are eight parks, recreation, and open space resources located within 1,000 feet of the May 2014 Project centerline. Of these, five are located within 300 feet of the centerline and three of those are within 100 feet of the centerline. As noted, resources

within 100 feet would experience the most intense effects, largely associated with noise, dust, and visual effects. In addition, two resources are located within 0.5 mile of the Truxtun Avenue Station.

Table 8-A-49 shows the school district play areas and recreation facilities in the study area of the May 2014 Project, including within 1,000 feet of the proposed centerline as well as 0.5 mile of the Truxtun Avenue Station. Eight school district play areas and recreation facilities are within 1,000 feet of the May 2014 Project centerline, including two in Shafter (Redwood Elementary School/Richland Junior High and Free Will Christian Academy) and six in Bakersfield (Franklin Elementary, Bakersfield High School, Kelly F. Blanton Education Center, Owens Intermediate School, Ramon Garza Elementary School, and Sierra Middle School). In addition, one school district play area and recreation facility is located within 0.5 mile of the Truxtun Avenue Station (Rafer Johnson Elementary School).

### **3.15.3.2 Fresno to Bakersfield Locally Generated Alternative**

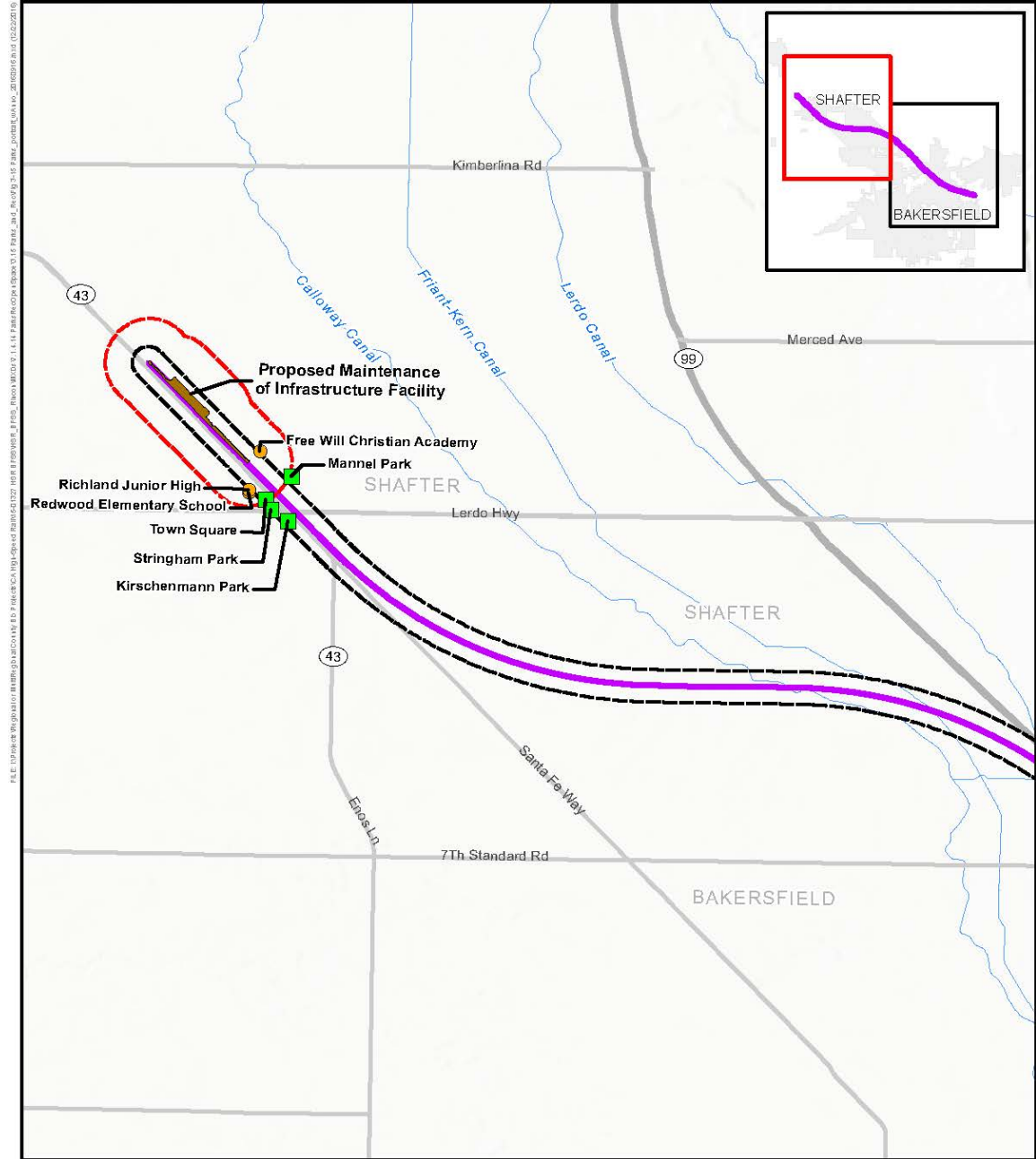
This section describes the parks, recreation, and open space resources and school recreation facilities in the study area for the F-B LGA. Figure 3.15-1 and Figure 3.15-2 on the following pages depict the locations of parks, recreation, and open space resources in the study area. It is important to note that some of these parks identified are large areas, and the points shown on these figures do not necessarily represent the closest park boundary to the proposed centerline. Distances between the nearest park boundaries and the proposed centerline are identified in Table 3.15-1. Table 3.15-1 identifies the parks, recreation, and open space resources within 1,000 feet of the F-B LGA centerline, and Table 3.15-2 identifies school district play areas and recreational facilities available for public use during non-school hours in the study area potentially affected by the F-B LGA. Table 3.15-3 identifies parks, recreation, open space, and school district play areas and recreational resources in the study area of the proposed MOIF location in Shafter. Table 3.15-4 identifies the resources in the study area of the proposed station location in Bakersfield.

#### **Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Resources within 1,000 feet of the Centerline**

Table 3.15-1 lists 10 parks, recreation, and open space resources situated within 1,000 feet of the project centerline:

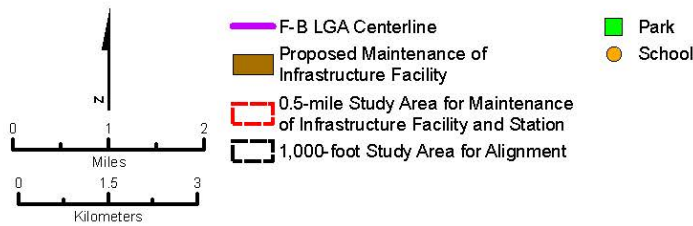
- Three parks in Shafter
- One in unincorporated Kern County
- Six parks in Bakersfield

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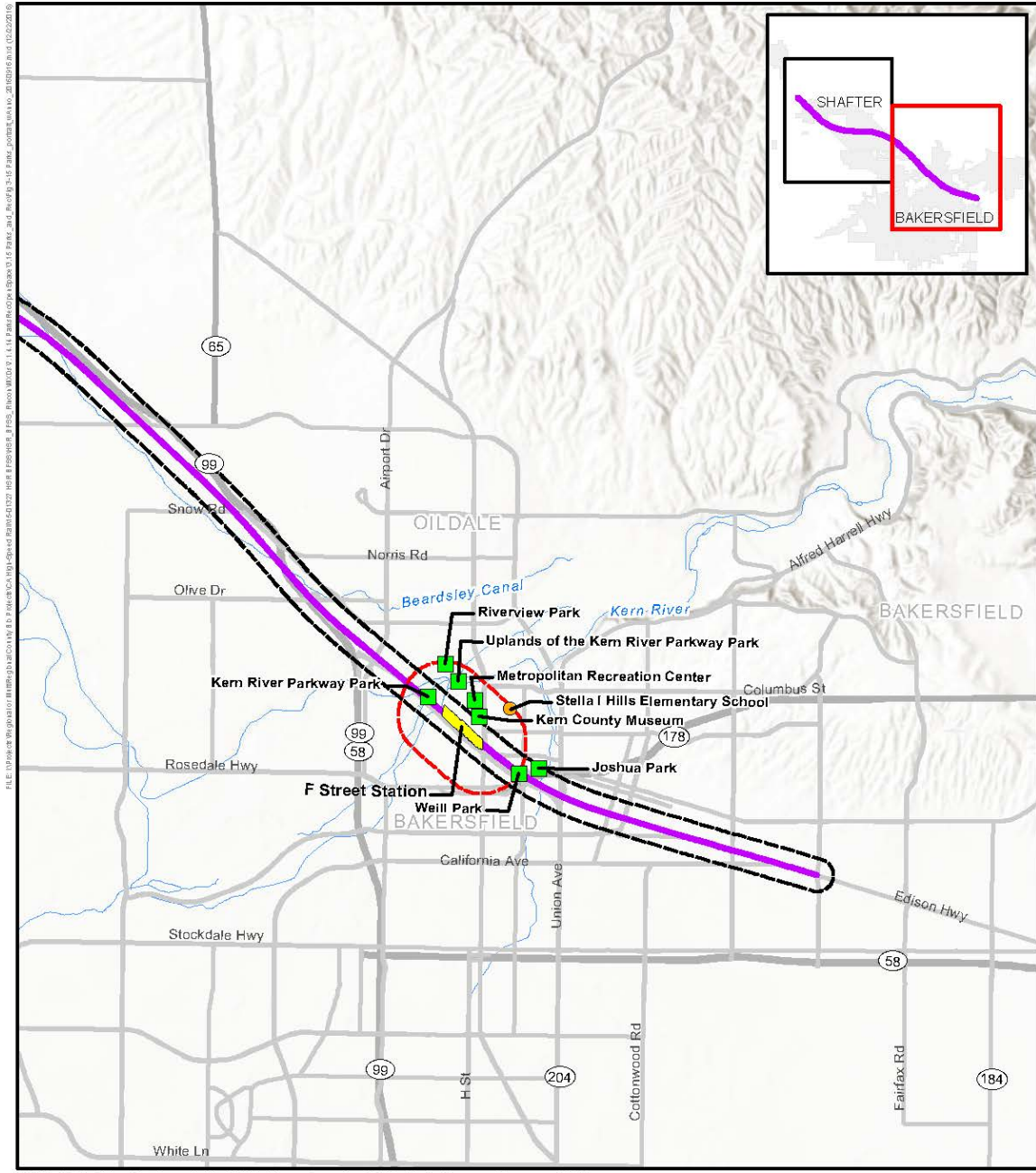


SOURCE: City of Bakersfield, 2015; Kern County, 2015; U.S. Census Bureau, 2014; CPAD 2015 - www.calands.org; USGS 30m Hillshade, 2015; National Hydrography Dataset USGS, 2015; ESRI, 2015; CHSRA, 2017.

January 13, 2017



**Figure 3.15-1 Shafter Area: Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Resources and School District Play Areas and Recreation Facilities in the Project Study Area**



SOURCE: City of Bakersfield, 2015; Kern County, 2015; U.S. Census Bureau, 2014; CPAD 2015 - www.calands.org; USGS 30m Hillshade, 2015; National Hydrography Dataset USGS, 2015; ESRI, 2015; CHSRA, 2017. January 13, 2017

  	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="color: purple;">—</span> F-B LGA Centerline</li> <li><span style="background-color: yellow; border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Proposed Station</li> <li><span style="border: 2px dashed red; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; margin-right: 5px;"></span> 0.5-mile Study Area for Maintenance of Infrastructure Facility and Station</li> <li><span style="border: 2px dashed black; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; margin-right: 5px;"></span> 1,000-foot Study Area for Alignment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="color: green;">■</span> Park</li> <li><span style="color: orange;">●</span> School</li> </ul>
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**Figure 3.15-2 Bakersfield Area: Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Resources and School District Play Areas and Recreation Facilities in the Project Study Area**



**Table 3.15-1 Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Resources within 1,000 feet of the F-B LGA Centerline<sup>1</sup>**

Resource Name	Owner	Amenities	Total Size	Amount of Resource in Study Area	Distance from Project Centerline
Town Square	City of Shafter	Grass areas, water fountain, and special events stage.	0.4 acre	0.4 acre (100%)	560 feet
Stringham Park	City of Shafter	Grass areas, playground, picnic tables, and benches.	1.0 acre	0.8 acre (80%)	895 feet
Kirschenmann Park	City of Shafter	Grass areas and baseball field.	5.5 acres	5.3 acres (96%)	480 feet
Weill Park	City of Bakersfield	Grass area	1.6 acres	1.6 acres (100%)	0 feet
Kern River Parkway	City of Bakersfield	32-mile linear community park with bike path, pedestrian and equestrian facilities, fishing pond, fitness par course, horseshoe pit, skate park, and picnic tables	1,133.2 acres	96.9 acres (9%)	0 feet
Uplands of the Kern River Parkway Park	City of Bakersfield	Overlook platforms, equestrian trail, and natural walking paths.	23.3 acres	19.7 acres (85%)	515 feet
Kern County Museum	Kern County Museum Foundation	Includes the Lori Brock Children's Museum, Pioneer Village, and the Kern County Museum	19.5 acres	19.5 acres (100%)	411 feet
Riverview Park	North of the River Recreation and Parks District	Community center, gym, gymnastics room, rock climbing gym, baseball field, grass area, disc golf course, basketball court, volleyball court, horseshoe pits, picnic tables, water play area, community learning center	20.0 acres	17.8 acres (89%)	985 feet
Metropolitan Recreation Area	Kern County	Dave Frye Softball Fields, equestrian facilities (Gymkhana) <sup>3</sup> , recreational center, Sam Lynn Ballpark, softball fields, Stramler Picnic Area, and park supervisor's office	65.9 acres	65.9 acres (100%)	490 feet
Joshua Park	City of Bakersfield	Grass area	0.8 acre	0.8 acre (100%)	625 feet
<b>Total within 1,000 feet of Centerline (project study area)<sup>2</sup></b>					<b>10 Parks</b>
<b>Total within 300 feet of Project Centerline</b>					<b>2 Parks</b>
<b>Total within 100 feet of Project Centerline</b>					<b>2 Parks</b>

Sources: Authority and FRA, 2016; City of Bakersfield, 2007

<sup>1</sup> The study area for Parks, Recreation, and Open Space includes a 1,000-foot buffer on either side of the project centerline, as well as a 0.5-mile buffer around the MOIF in Shafter and the passenger station in Bakersfield. This table is specific to parks resources within 1,000 feet of the project centerline.

<sup>2</sup> In the F-B LGA EIR/EIS (page 3.15-15), Table 3.15-2 identified the values shown in summary rows as distances from the "project study area." For the purposes of clarity, this Draft Supplemental EIR/EIS identifies the values shown in summary rows as distances from the project centerline, which defines the study area.

<sup>3</sup> Gymkhana is an equestrian event consisting of races and games for children.

**Table 3.15-2 School District Play Areas and Recreation Facilities within 1,000 feet of the Centerline for the F-B LGA**

Resource Name	School District	Amenities	Total Size	Amount of Resource in Study Area	Distance from Project Centerline
Redwood Elementary School / Richland Junior High <sup>2</sup>	Richland School District	Grass fields, basketball courts, playground equipment, swimming pool	28.1 acres	28.1 acres (100%)	765 feet
Free Will Christian Academy	Free Will Baptist Church	Grass field	4.4 acres	4.4 acres (100%)	660 feet

Source: Authority and FRA, 2016

<sup>1</sup> The Valley Oaks Charter School, located at 3401 Chester Avenue in Bakersfield, is adjacent to a proposed roadway realignment associated with the F-B LGA. This school includes a recreational use area, but is a privately owned resource and the recreational area is not available for public use. Therefore, the Valley Oaks Charter School is not included in this analysis.

In addition, Section 3.10, Hazardous Materials and Wastes, quantifies all educational facilities located within 0.25 mile of the project's construction footprint. That section lists substantially more facilities than are listed in this analysis for Parks, Recreation, and Open Space, because this analysis is a) specific to a smaller study area (1,000 feet from the project centerline), and b) specific to educational facilities with play areas and facilities that are available to the public outside of regular school hours.

<sup>2</sup> Redwood Elementary and Richland Junior High School share a campus and have been counted as one resource.

**Table 3.15-3 Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Resources and School District Play Areas and Recreation Facilities in the Study Area for the Shafter Maintenance of Infrastructure Facility<sup>1</sup>**

Resource Name	Amenities	Total Size	Amount of Resource in Study Area	Approximate Distance from MOIF
<b>Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Resources</b>				
Town Square Park	Grass areas, water fountain, and special events stage.	0.4 acre	0.4 acre (100%)	2,400 feet
Mannel Park	Shade trees, picnic areas, playground equipment, gazebo for special events, open green areas.	4.5 acres	0.6 acre (13%)	2,500 feet
<b>School District Play Areas and Recreation Facilities<sup>1</sup></b>				
Redwood Elementary School/Richland Junior High <sup>2</sup>	Grass fields, basketball courts, playground equipment, swimming pool	28.1 acres	28.1 acres (100%)	1270 feet
Free Will Christian Academy	Grass Field	4.4 acres	4.4 acres (100%)	515 feet

Source: Authority and FRA, 2016

<sup>1</sup> The study area for the MOIF location includes a 0.5-mile buffer around the MOIF footprint.

<sup>2</sup> Redwood Elementary and Richland Junior High School share a campus and have been counted as one resource.

**Table 3.15-4 Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Resources and School District Play Areas and Recreation Facilities in the Study Area for the Bakersfield Station Location<sup>1</sup>**

Resource Name	Amenities	Total Size	Amount of Resource in Study Area	Approximate Distance from Station
<b>Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Resources</b>				
Kern River Parkway	32-mile linear community park with bike path, pedestrian and equestrian facilities, fishing pond, fitness par course, horseshoe pit, skate park, and picnic tables	1,033.2 acres	56.4 acres (5%)	180 feet
Riverview Park	Community center, gym, gymnastics room, rock climbing gym, baseball field, grass area, disc golf course, basketball court, volleyball court, horseshoe pits, picnic tables, water play area, community learning center	20.0 acres	17.8 acres (89%)	1,700 feet
Metropolitan Recreation Area	Dave Frye Softball Fields, equestrian facilities (Gymkhana) <sup>3</sup> , recreational center, Sam Lynn Ballpark, Softball Fields, Stramler Picnic Area, and park supervisor's office	65.9 acres	65.9 acres (100%)	160 feet
Weill Park	Grass area	1.6 acres	0.25 acre (16%)	2,525 feet
Kern County Museum	Lori Brock Children's Museum, Pioneer Village, and the Kern County Museum	19.5 acres	9.7 acres (50%)	100 feet
Uplands of the Kern River Parkway Park	Overlook platforms, equestrian trail, and natural walking paths	23.3 acres	19.7 acres (85%)	280 feet
<b>School District Play Areas and Recreation Facilities<sup>2</sup></b>				
Stella Hills Elementary School	Running track, basketball courts, grass area, playground equipment	10.2 acres	6.0 acres (59%)	1,960 feet

Source: Authority and FRA, 2016

<sup>1</sup> The study area for the Bakersfield Station location includes a 0.5-mile buffer around the station footprint.

<sup>2</sup> The Valley Oaks Charter School, located at 3401 Chester Avenue in Bakersfield, is adjacent to a proposed roadway realignment associated with the F-B LGA. This school includes a recreational use area, but is a privately owned resource and the recreational area is not available for public use. Therefore, the Valley Oaks Charter School is not included in this analysis.

<sup>3</sup> Gymkhana is an equestrian event consisting of races and games for children.

Three City-owned parks are in the F-B LGA study area in Shafter. Town Square is on Central Avenue and provides shaded seating and a stage for special events. Stringham Park provides tables, benches, tot lots, and an open grass area. Kirschenmann Park functions mainly as a baseball field with stadium seating and night lighting, but this park also provides a large grass area for other recreational activities. Town Square, Stringham Park, and Kirschenmann Park would be separated from the F-B LGA by the existing BNSF right-of-way (ROW) and State Route (SR) 43 (Central Valley Highway).

In Bakersfield, the F-B LGA would cross over the Kern River Parkway, a 1,033-acre, 32-mile linear community park with bike path, pedestrian, and equestrian facilities. The parkway connects several City parks along the Kern River. Other recreational facilities in the park, although not in the study area, include a fishing pond, fitness parcourse, horseshoe pit, skate park, and picnic tables. The park facility at the proposed crossing consists of an asphalt bike path located on top of an earthen levee and a pedestrian footpath. The F-B LGA would also cross over Weill Park, which is a 1.6-acre park with grass areas and trees. Weill Park does not contain recreational facilities or benches. A 23-acre park, Uplands of the Kern River Parkway, provides overlook platforms, an equestrian trail, and natural walking paths. The Kern County Museum is a 20-acre private museum that includes the Lori Brock Children's Museum, Pioneer Village, and the Kern County Museum. Riverview Park is 20 acres and contains a community center, gym, community learning center, and outdoor recreation areas. The Metropolitan Recreation Area is 66 acres and contains softball fields, a recreational center, Sam Lynn Ball Park, a picnic area, and park offices. Joshua Park is a 0.8-acre grass park.

### **School District Play Areas and Recreation Facilities within 1,000 feet of the Centerline**

In addition to the resources described above, this analysis assesses school district play areas and recreation facilities that are available for public use outside of regular school hours, as discussed below. Table 3.15-2 identifies the two school district play areas and recreational facilities located within 1,000 feet of the centerline, both in Shafter. Redwood Elementary School and Richland Junior High School are located directly adjacent to each other and are counted as one resource. The campuses provide grass fields, basketball courts, playground equipment, and a swimming pool. Free Will Christian Academy is a private school located northeast of the alignment, which includes a grass field with a baseball diamond. These schools are also shown on Figure 3.15-1. In addition to the schools in Table 3.15-2, Figure 3.15-2 indicates that Stella Hills Elementary School is also located in the study area for the Bakersfield passenger station (within 0.5 mile of the proposed F Street Station). This facility is identified in Table 3.15-4 and the associated text.

### **Parks and School District Play Areas and Recreation Facilities within 0.5 mile of the MOIF**

The study area for parks, recreation, and open space resources includes a 0.5-mile buffer around the MOIF in Shafter. Table 3.15-3 describes the two parks, recreation, and open space resources, as well as two school district play areas in the study area for the proposed MOIF location in Shafter. Figure 3.15-1 shows the locations of these resources in that study area.

As shown in the table above, there are no parks or play areas located within 300 feet of the proposed MOIF in Shafter.

### **Parks and School District Play Areas and Recreation Facilities within 0.5 mile of the Bakersfield F Street Station**

As noted, the study area for parks, recreation, and open space resources includes a 0.5-mile buffer around the passenger station footprint in Bakersfield. Table 3.15-4 describes the six parks, recreation, open space resources, and one school district play area in the study area for the proposed Bakersfield F Street Station location. Figure 3.15-2 shows the locations of these resources in that study area. All six parks plus the school recreation facilities (seven total recreational resources) have pedestrian and vehicle access.

### 3.15.4 Environmental Consequences

This section describes the construction and project impacts associated with the F-B LGA as they relate to parks, recreation, and open space. Impacts to parks are considered in terms of physical changes to the park, and changes in park character that would affect park users.

#### 3.15.4.1 Summary of Analysis for the May 2014 Project

This section provides a summary of the effects of the May 2014 Project using information from the Fresno to Bakersfield Final EIR/EIS. Specific to the May 2014 Project, 10 parks, recreation, or open space resources are within 1,000 feet of the centerline and 0.5 mile of the MOIF or passenger station. These include three in Shafter (Town Square, Stringham Park, and Kirschenmann Park), one just south of Shafter (Austin Creek Park), and six in Bakersfield (Kern River Parkway, Yokuts Park, Jastro Park, McMurtrey Aquatic Center, Amtrak Station Playground, and Mill Creek Linear Park). In addition, seven school district play areas and recreation facilities are within 1,000 feet of the May 2014 Project, including two in Shafter (Redwood Elementary School/Richland Junior High, and Free Will Christian Academy), and six in Bakersfield (Franklin Elementary, Bakersfield High School, Kelly F. Blanton Education Center, Owens Intermediate School, Ramon Garza Elementary School, and Sierra Middle School).

The May 2014 Project would pass over the Kern River Parkway on an elevated guideway within 100 feet of the McMurtrey Aquatic Center, the Mill Creek Linear Park, and Bakersfield High School. Adverse effects from construction of the May 2014 Project would include noise and dust exposure. The construction of the May 2014 Project would also result in temporary closures for portions of these facilities for three to six months (access to parks and recreational resources would occur on a site-specific basis, when construction activities are present; i.e. not for the duration of the entire project construction period). The May 2014 Project would result in temporary construction impacts that would be less than significant under CEQA because access to and through the parks would be maintained, or alternative routes or temporary trail rerouting would be provided to avoid disruption to the value and function of these recreational resources. The May 2014 Project would pass above areas of the Kern River Parkway and Mill Creek Linear Park and would require permanent footings to be placed in those park areas, which are used by pedestrians and recreationists. The guideways would cross perpendicularly on an elevated structure above the Kern River Parkway bike path and the portion of the Mill Creek Linear Park that straddles Kern Island Canal south of the existing BNSF ROW, requiring a permanent 90-foot-wide maintenance easement. The areas under the structures would remain open for use, but the operation of the project would result in a periodic increase in noise exposure as well as aesthetic changes to the area. These changes may be substantial in comparison to present conditions; however, due to the periodic nature of such occurrences, the potential impact of increased noise on the character or quality of parks and open space resources would be less than significant.

As described in the Fresno to Bakersfield Section Final EIR/EIS (page 3.15-25), temporary construction effects and impacts, such as small, temporary property use noise, dust, and visual degradation associated with the HSR alternatives that do not diminish capacity, are considered an impact with moderate intensity under NEPA, and less than significant under CEQA, depending on the park's or school district facility's location and features. Full park resource closures during the construction period are considered impacts with substantial intensity under NEPA and less than significant under CEQA, depending on the park's or school district facility's location and features..

Noise impacts related to construction would be less than significant under CEQA because noise from construction activities would be temporary, creating impacts for up to six months, and would be reduced by the implementation of noise mitigation measures. Noise impacts from operation may be significant prior to the implementation of mitigation measures, but would be reduced to a negligible intensity through the implementation of noise mitigation measures described in Section 3.4 of this Draft Supplemental EIR/EIS. Where the May 2014 Project would pass through or adjacent to an existing park facility, impacts associated with visual effects would be significant under CEQA because the visual character of the affected parks would be permanently altered. Although parks in the study area are currently subject to visual impacts consistent with the

urbanized area, and existing freight and passenger rail service currently occurs through the area, this impact could not be reduced through implementation of mitigation.

#### **3.15.4.2 Fresno to Bakersfield Locally Generated Alternative**

The following sections evaluate direct and indirect impacts of the F-B LGA.

In total, the F-B LGA, including the alignment, passenger station, and MOIF, would result in temporary impacts to 10 parks and three schools. Impacts relate to access, noise, dust, and visual quality degradation as described for the May 2014 Project in Section 3.15.3.1. As described in Section 3.15.2, construction within 300 feet of a park, recreation, or open space resource or a school district play area and recreational facility would have the greatest impact due to noise, dust, and visual resources, while resources located more than 300 feet from construction activities are sufficiently remote to remain comparatively unaffected by most activities, due to the attenuation of noise and dust associated with construction activities and the distance from visual effects associated with construction (as described in the Fresno to Bakersfield Section Final EIR/EIS, page 3.15-7). As shown in Table 3.15-1 and Table 3.15-2, there are two parks, open space areas, and recreational facilities (including school facilities) within 300 feet of the project centerline. As noted above, these resources may be subject to noise, dust, and visual resource impacts associated with project construction that would not be experienced by resources located more than 300 feet away.

Temporary construction impacts, such as property use, noise, dust, and visual degradation associated with the F-B LGA that do not diminish capacity or prohibit use, are considered less than significant under CEQA. The characteristics of specific impacts would depend upon the park's or school district facility's location and features. For instance, outdoor play areas located within 300 feet of the project would experience more impacts than similar resources located farther away. As noted above, parks located more than 300 feet from the project centerline would be relatively unaffected by construction activities, due to the attenuation of noise and dust, as well as the distance from visual effects of construction vehicles and equipment. Full park resource closures during the construction period are temporary; as described above, closures would occur for up to three to six months at individual resource locations, with closures only extending as long as site-specific construction activities. Impacts would therefore be less than significant under CEQA. This impact is discussed in detail below, under "Construction Period Impacts", and would be mitigated through the provision of alternate access points, where applicable.

Permanent impacts include the acquisition of park lands for placement of infrastructure (e.g., viaduct footings). In addition, the project would require acquisition of easements along the alignment, but in viaduct areas these would be accessible for use by the public. The F-B LGA would require the acquisition of varying amounts of land. Project construction would require the permanent acquisition of approximately 0.099 acre of Weill Park, along with a 0.6-acre easement. Project construction would also require permanent acquisition of 0.66 acre of Kern River Parkway, along with a 2.6-acre easement for the area spanning the Kern River Parkway. The areas and percentage of the parks that would be permanently acquired are shown below in Table 3.15-5. Permanent effects from acquisition for footing placement, depending on the size of the acquisition, would be significant under CEQA. These impacts are analyzed further under Impact PK#2.

**Table 3.15-5 Permanent Acquisition Acreage of Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Resources**

Resource Name	Easement Acquisition	Permanent Acquisition	Total Park Area	Area of Park to be Permanently Acquired
Kern River Parkway	2.6 acres	0.66 acre	1,033 acres	0.064%
Weill Park	0.6 acre	0.099 acre	1.6 acres	6%

Source: Authority and FRA 2016

As discussed below in Sections 3.15.5, Avoidance and Minimization Measures, and 3.15.6, Mitigation Measures, the *Fresno to Bakersfield Section Mitigation Monitoring and Enforcement Plan* (Authority and FRA 2014: 1-50) describes measures that were previously approved under the Fresno to Bakersfield Section Final EIR/EIS (FRA Record of Decision June 2014) and would be implemented as part of the F-B LGA. These measures would be implemented during the pre-construction, construction, and post-construction/operational phases of the project as applicable. Primary requirements addressing potential impacts to parks and recreational resources include the provision of alternate access to parks and recreational sites that would be temporarily restricted during project construction, and the implementation of compensation plans for permanently affected areas.

### **Construction Period Impacts**

#### ***Impact PK#1 – Construction Impacts on Parks, Recreation, Open Space and School District Recreation Facilities***

Section 2.8.1 in Chapter 2 of the Fresno to Bakersfield Section Final EIR/EIS describes the duration and types of temporary construction activities anticipated, as well as the location of the proposed construction staging areas.

As discussed below, temporary (construction-related) disturbances to parks, recreation, open space, and school district facilities would be of short duration, limited to specific days during the construction period. Multiple construction-related factors affect these resources, including but not limited to noise, aesthetics, and access restrictions. Resources located beyond 300 feet from construction activities are less likely to be affected by factors such as noise, depending on the construction type and activity. Also as discussed below and in Section 3.15.6.1 and Table 3.15-6, mitigation that was previously approved under the Fresno to Bakersfield Section Final EIR/EIS includes PP-MM#1 (Temporary Closures of Park Property During Construction), which includes requirements to maintain access to existing or alternate recreational resources during project construction, thereby minimizing the effects of potential impacts from temporary closures or access restrictions during construction. The impact analysis provided below addresses potential temporary (construction-related) access restrictions and park activity disruptions for resources located within 1,000 feet of the F-B LGA centerline, within 300 feet of the F-B LGA centerline, within 0.5 mile of the Shafter MOIF site, and within 0.5 mile of the Bakersfield F Street passenger station site, as well as for specific resources within these areas.

Although the study area includes parks within 1,000 feet of the project centerline and 0.5 mile of the MOIF and station, for the purposes of identifying the potential indirect impacts, this analysis focuses on those resources within 300 feet of the F-B LGA centerline, the MOIF, and the passenger station. The distance of 300 feet was chosen for consistency with the Fresno to Bakersfield Section Final EIR/EIS (page 3.15-26), which identified 300 feet as the appropriate screening distance for determining indirect impacts that result from dust, noise/vibration, and visual changes. All resources located within 1,000 feet of the project centerline and 0.5 mile of the MOIF and station are identified in Table 3.15-1 through Table 3.15-4. Potential noise effects of project construction on parks and recreational resources are expected to attenuate by approximately 8 dBA at 300 feet when construction activities are measured at a distance of 50 feet.

Noise levels of 62 to 72 dBA may be considered moderately high after an attenuation of eight dBA from typical construction noise (approximately 70 to 80 dBA at a distance of 50 feet). Pile driving would result in noise levels of approximately 87 dBA from a distance of 300 feet, or approximately 95 dBA at a distance of 50 feet. If pile driving is conducted during construction and within 300 feet of parks, recreation, and open space resources, recreationists would be exposed to these elevated noise levels. Such occurrences would be temporary and of short duration, limited to specific days during the construction period. Resources located beyond 300 feet from construction activities are less likely to be affected by factors such as noise, depending on the construction type and activity.

The environmental issue areas that could affect parks and open space resources within 300 feet of the project centerline are addressed in other sections of this Draft Supplemental EIR/EIS, including Section 3.2, Transportation; Section 3.3, Air Quality and Global Climate Change; Section 3.4, Noise and Vibration; Section 3.11, Safety and Security; Section 3.16, Aesthetics and Visual Resources; and Section 3.18, Regional Growth. For visual impacts, key viewpoints include Kern River Parkway (Key Viewpoint #7; Figure 3.16-29), which would be traversed by the F-B LGA. As discussed in Section 3.16, the project's elevated viaduct and high-speed rail (HSR) station would be visible from the Kern River Parkway Bike Trail, and would reduce the intactness of the visual environment.

Parks within 300 feet of the project centerline would potentially experience the greatest effects because of the proximity of construction activities. Noise, dust, and visual effects within the buffer area of 300 feet would not have sufficiently attenuated to avoid indirect impacts to park facilities in this area. Construction activities for the F-B LGA, including the proposed station and MOIF, would occur within 1,000 feet of 10 parks and within 300 feet of two parks. The project alignment would also pass within 1,000 feet of two schools, but would not pass within 300 feet of any schools. In addition, there are two schools within 0.5 mile of the proposed MOIF and one school within 0.5 mile of the passenger station, but no schools within 300 feet of either of these locations. As discussed in Section 3.4, ambient noise level measurements were conducted at representative noise-sensitive receiver locations within 2,500 feet of the proposed rail line to document the existing noise environment for project noise impact assessment, and these measurements were then compared against modeled noise levels that would occur under the project. The analysis provided under Impact N&V#1 (Construction Noise) describes that sensitive receptors in vicinity of the project would be subject to temporary noise levels that are greater than the recommended FRA construction noise criteria. However, there are no construction noise thresholds specific to parks, recreation, and open space resources. Despite elevated noise levels during construction, the temporary duration of construction activities would reduce noise-related impacts on parks, recreation, and open space resources to less than significant under CEQA.

As discussed above and in Section 3.15.6.1 and Table 3.15-6, mitigation that was previously approved under the Fresno to Bakersfield Section Final EIR/EIS includes PP-MM#1 (Temporary Closures of Park Property During Construction). This mitigation would be implemented as part of the F-B LGA and includes requirements to maintain access to existing or alternate recreational resources during project construction, including through the use of lights and signage, in order to facilitate the continuation of recreational activities during project implementation. In addition, as discussed in the Constructability Assessment Report (Authority and FRA 2016: page 6-2), as the alignment passes through Shafter and Bakersfield, pedestrian detouring and access will be required. The following provides a description of the direct and indirect impacts from construction on each of the parks within 1,000 feet of the project centerline and within 300 feet of the project centerline.

#### **Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and School District Recreation Facilities within 1,000 feet of the F-B LGA Centerline**

As discussed, the study area for Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and School District Recreation Facilities includes a 1,000-foot buffer around the project centerline. Three City-owned parks are situated west of the F-B LGA in Shafter: Town Square on Central Avenue, Stringham Park at James Street and Lerdo Highway, and Kirschenmann Park north of Euclid Avenue. All three parks are located more than 300 feet from the F-B LGA centerline and would be separated from the F-B LGA by the existing BNSF ROW and SR 43 (Central Valley Highway). Due to the distance from the centerline and separation by a major transportation corridor, effects of construction activities on these parks would be minor and less than significant under CEQA.

Redwood Elementary/Richland Junior High in Shafter are located 765 feet from the proposed F-B LGA, and Free Will Christian Academy is located approximately 660 feet from the proposed F-B LGA. As discussed above, parks and recreational facilities located more than 300 feet from construction activities would be unlikely to experience indirect impacts due to the attenuation of



noise, dust, and visual effects. Therefore, because of the distance from construction activities, effects on the noted facilities would be minor and less than significant under CEQA.

Similarly, Riverview Park in Bakersfield is located 985 feet from the F-B LGA, separated from the alignment by existing railroad tracks, and Joshua Park is located 625 feet from the centerline. Due to this distance and separation from the alignment by a major transportation corridor, effects from construction activities would be minor and less than significant under CEQA.

### **Parks, Recreation, Open Space and School District Recreation Facilities within 300 feet of the F-B LGA Centerline**

Parks, recreation, open space, and school district recreation facilities within 300 feet of the F-B LGA are also measured from the project centerline, and assessed for potential impacts associated with disturbance factors such as noise, dust, and visual effects. Resources located within 300 feet of the project centerline are described below.

#### **Weill Park (Bakersfield)**

The F-B LGA would pass over Weill Park on an elevated guideway of 75 feet (visual effects are addressed below, under Impact PK#4). Weill Park consists of open grass areas and trees. Construction activities would require temporary closure of the park for approximately three to six months. After completion of construction activities, Weill Park would be reopened to the public. Due to the duration of park closure and the loss of access to the public during construction activities, impacts to parks and recreation would be significant under CEQA, prior to mitigation. In accordance with mitigation approved under the Fresno to Bakersfield Section Final EIR/EIS (Mitigation Measure PP-MM#1, listed in Table 3.15-6), the selected contractor for project construction will provide detour signage and lighting as necessary to minimize disruptions to recreational activities by directing recreationists to alternate pedestrian and bicycle access areas. In addition, Impact Avoidance and Minimization Measures NV-IAMM#1 and AQ-IAMM#2 would address temporary noise and air quality impacts, respectively, to minimize adverse effects associated with construction activities (see Section 3.15.5). Therefore, potential impacts would be less than significant under CEQA.

Construction activities would occur within the Weill Park boundaries, but because the park would be closed during construction and recreationists would therefore not be present to experience impacts of project construction, there would be no indirect impact to park users. The park would be re-opened following the completion of construction activities.

#### **Kern River Parkway (Bakersfield)**

The F-B LGA would pass over the Kern River Parkway on an elevated guideway with a soffit elevation of approximately 45 feet above ground level (visual effects are addressed below, under Impact PK#4). The Kern River Parkway at this location consists of an asphalt bike path on an earthen levee and an unimproved pedestrian footpath. The bike path and footpath separate approximately 200 feet north of the proposed bridge. Both paths cross underneath SR 204 in separate locations, then meet up again south of SR 204. Construction activities would require the temporary detour of the bike path and the footpath. The detour would be necessary for approximately three to six months and would be directed so that connectivity is maintained during construction. Connectivity would be maintained during construction by temporarily closing one element of the Kern River Parkway while the other remains open. Each pathway closure would be approximately 600 feet in length. Access to other parkway facilities would not occur. After completion of construction activities, the pathway would be restored to pre-construction condition or better. Due to the duration of park closure, and the loss of access to the public during construction activities, impacts to parks and recreation associated with access, noise, and dust would be significant under CEQA prior to mitigation. In accordance with mitigation approved under the Fresno to Bakersfield Section Final EIR/EIS (Mitigation Measure PP-MM#1, listed in Table 3.15-6), existing pedestrian and bicycle access around and/or through the park would be maintained during temporary closures associated with construction, and the selected contractor for project construction will provide signage and lighting as necessary to minimize disruptions to recreational activities by identifying alternate pedestrian and bicycle access areas. In addition, Avoidance and Mitigation Measures NV-IAMM#1 and AQ-IAMM#2 would address temporary

noise and air quality impacts, respectively, to minimize adverse effects associated with construction activities (see Section 3.15.5.2). Therefore, following the implementation of mitigation measures, potential impacts associated with access, noise, and dust would be less than significant under CEQA.

Construction activities would occur within the Kern River Parkway boundaries and would generate an increase in noise exposure for cyclists, pedestrians, and other park users. Construction activities within the park area would require temporary park closures, limiting park use during the construction period. No indirect impact to park users associated with construction activities would occur because those areas of the park where construction activities occur would be temporarily restricted to recreationists, and recreationists would therefore not be present to experience impacts. The restrictions would create a physical barrier between users and increased noise exposure.

#### **Parks, Recreation, Open Space and School District Recreation Facilities within 0.5 Mile of the Shafter Maintenance of Infrastructure Facility Site**

As shown in Table 3.15-3, the proposed MOIF in Shafter is not located within 300 feet of any parks, recreation, open space resources, or school district play areas. There are two parks and two school play areas located within 0.5 mile of the proposed MOIF. Access restrictions associated with project construction are not expected to occur because existing resources are located more than 300 feet from the MOIF. Potential impacts associated with noise and dust would be addressed through implementation of Avoidance and Minimization Measures described below in Section 3.15.5. These measures include requirements for construction noise mitigation (NV-IAMM#1) that would minimize noise effects and for fugitive dust (AQ-IAMM#2) to minimize the generation and presence of dust associated with ground-disturbing activities. Furthermore, potential disturbances to recreationists would be temporary in nature, and would cease once construction is completed. Therefore, effects would be less than significant under CEQA.

#### **Parks, Recreation, Open Space and School District Recreation Facilities within 0.5 Mile of the Bakersfield F Street Station Site**

Station construction would occur adjacent to the Kern River Parkway, and within 100 feet of the Kern County Museum. The Metropolitan Recreation Area would be located approximately 160 feet from station construction. Weill Park would be located approximately 2,525 feet (0.48 mile) to the southeast of the station (adjacent to the alignment and beneath the guideway). Uplands of the Kern River Parkway would be located approximately 280 feet from station construction.

During construction, access around or through affected park and recreation areas would be maintained via alternate routes. Signage and lighting would be provided as needed to maintain access to and availability of recreational opportunities. Also during construction, users of the park and recreation areas would be subjected to noise and dust from the construction activities. These effects would be more intense at outdoor recreational resources, such as parks and play areas along the project alignment (including the Metropolitan Recreation Area and the outdoor areas of the Kern County Museum, located approximately 160 feet and 100 feet from the Bakersfield passenger station, respectively), than at indoor recreational resources where recreationists would be shielded from the effects of construction noise and dust by nature of being indoors (impacts associated with noise are discussed in detail in Section 3.4, Noise and Vibration). However, indoor recreationists may be more sensitive to elevated levels of noise due to the expectation of low noise levels at indoor recreational opportunities. Such opportunities in the F-B LGA study area include certain indoor resources available at the Kern County Museum, located approximately 100 feet from the passenger station in Bakersfield.

Transmission line modifications that would be required during construction of the project are described in Section 3.6, Public Utilities and Energy, and would include activities such as raising the overall height of existing towers, modifying existing steel lattice towers or steel truss tower, replacing existing timber poles with taller poles, replacing timber poles with tubular steel poles, and horizontal relocation of existing poles to provide viaduct clearance (see Impact PU&E#1, Temporary Interruption of Utility Service). As discussed under Impact PU&E#1, transmission line

modifications would be required adjacent to Sam Lynn Ball Park, located within the Metropolitan Recreation Area. At this location, existing 110-foot-tall transmission towers would be raised to provide clearance for the F-B LGA. Temporary construction effects associated with noise, air quality, and visual effects may be experienced by recreationists in the vicinity of utility modifications. In addition, as discussed above, in accordance with mitigation approved under the Fresno to Bakersfield Section Final EIR/EIS (Mitigation Measure PP-MM#1, listed in Table 3.15-6), the selected contractor for project construction will provide detour signage and lighting as necessary to minimize disruptions to recreational activities by directing recreationists to alternate pedestrian and bicycle access areas during the temporary construction period.

Impact Avoidance and Minimization Measures described in Section 3.15.5 include requirements to minimize construction noise (NV-IAMM#1). In addition, measures addressing fugitive dust (AQ-IAMM#2) would also be implemented to minimize the generation and presence of dust associated with ground-disturbing activities, such as by covering trucks and watering disturbed areas. Furthermore, potential disturbances to recreationists at parks in the project study area would be temporary in nature, and would cease once construction is completed. Therefore, effects would be minor and less than significant under CEQA.

### **Project-Period Impacts**

#### ***Impact PK #2 – Project Acquisition of Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Resources***

The F-B LGA would result in the permanent acquisition of 0.76 acre of parkland. Parkland acquisition would have a significant effect if the acquisition were to result in a diminished capacity to use that resource, substantially reduce the recreational value of that resource, or if replacement acreage could not be obtained for the acquired parkland. Where feasible, the F-B LGA would be located along existing vehicle and rail transportation corridors to minimize potential impacts on adjacent properties, including parks, recreation, and open space resources. The F-B LGA would require the acquisition of 0.66 acre of land at Kern River Parkway and 0.099 acre at Weill Park.

At Kern River Parkway, the F-B LGA would cross over areas used by pedestrians and recreationists. Footings for the columns supporting the elevated guideway would be constructed in the Kern River Parkway, but the completed guideway would span perpendicularly over the bike path of the Kern River Parkway, thereby avoiding permanent restrictions to access and use. The park lands underneath the elevated guideways would remain available for park use in accordance with the Authority's policies. As such, the recreational activities that are currently available in this section of the Kern River Parkway will continue to be available once the elevated guideways are installed. The placement of footings would not substantially impair the features of the Kern River Parkway because they would not permanently restrict access to the bike path and surrounding recreational area or change the recreational use of the area crossed by the guideway, thereby allowing for the same recreational activities to continue around the footings.

As noted, at Weill Park, the F-B LGA would require acquisition of 0.099 acre. The F-B LGA would pass over Weill Park on an elevated guideway, removing access to the northern portion of the park. Combined with the land to be acquired at Kern River Parkway, permanent acquisition of parklands for the F-B LGA totals approximately 0.76 acre, as shown in Table 3.15-5. Although this is a minimal area (compared to the total recreational areas available in the study area), due to the permanent loss of recreational areas and opportunities in the study area, impacts would be significant under CEQA, prior to mitigation.

Mitigation discussed below in Section 3.15.6 includes requirements for the Authority to work with the affected jurisdiction (City of Bakersfield) and will provide appropriate compensation for permanently acquired park lands. In addition, the proposed Bakersfield F Street Station would include new park space that would at least partially offset the parkland that would be acquired for the project, and would be located in generally the same area as the parkland being acquired. The F-B LGA is not anticipated to result in a substantially diminished capacity to use park resources or substantially reduce the recreational value of that resource, and replacement acreage would be provided for the acquired parkland. Therefore, due to the small area of parks to be acquired

(0.76 acre), the implementation of mitigation to require compensation for acquired park lands, and the new park area at the Bakersfield F Street Station, in approximately the same area as the acquired park area, potential impacts would be less than significant under CEQA.

### ***Impact PK #3 – Project Acquisition of School District Play Areas and Recreation Facilities***

The F-B LGA centerline would not be located within 100 feet of any school district play areas or recreational facilities. Table 3.10-2 (Educational Facilities within 0.25 Mile of the Construction Footprint) in Section 3.10, Hazardous Materials and Wastes, of the Draft Supplemental EIR/EIS indicates that two educational facilities are located adjacent to the project footprint (Free Will Christian Academy and Valley Oaks Charter School), and 14 other educational facilities are located within 0.25 mile of the project footprint. Table 3.15-2 (School District Play Areas and Recreation Facilities within 1,000 feet of the Centerline for the F-B LGA) further indicates that no school district play areas are located within 100 feet of the project centerline. Implementation of the F-B LGA would not require the acquisition of school district play areas or recreation facilities. Therefore, no project-period impact would occur on school district play areas or recreational facilities under CEQA as a result of acquisition.

### ***Impact PK #4 – Project Changes to Park Character***

During operation and maintenance of the F-B LGA, changes to park character could occur as a result of noise and/or visual changes associated with the F-B LGA that disrupt recreational activities or opportunities at parks in the study area.

### **Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and School District Recreation Facilities within 1,000 Feet of the F-B LGA**

As described under Impact PK#1, three City-owned parks are situated in the project study area in Shafter, including a 1,000-foot-wide buffer on either side of the proposed centerline. As shown in Table 3.15-1, the three City-owned parks within the project area in Shafter include Town Square on Central Avenue, Stringham Park at James Street and Lerdo Highway, and Kirschenmann Park north of Euclid Avenue. All three parks are more than 300 feet from the F-B LGA centerline and would be separated from the F-B LGA by the existing BNSF ROW and SR 43 (Central Valley Highway). Due to the distance from the centerline to the parks, and separation by a major transportation corridor, noise and visual changes introduced by operation and maintenance of the F-B LGA would be minor result in impacts that would be less than significant under CEQA. Parks located within 300 feet of the centerline are discussed below.

Redwood Elementary/Richland Junior High in Shafter is located approximately 765 feet from the proposed F-B LGA, Free Will Christian Academy is located approximately 660 feet from the proposed F-B LGA, Riverview Park in Bakersfield is located 390 feet from the F-B LGA, and Joshua Park is located 575 feet from the F-B LGA centerline. These facilities may have a view of the proposed F-B LGA facilities. However, due to being located more than 300 feet from the project centerline, the distance within which noise and visual effects are expected to attenuate, operational impacts associated with noise and visual effects from the F-B LGA would be minor and impacts would be less than significant under CEQA.

### **Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and School District Recreation Facilities within 300 feet of F-B LGA Centerline**

#### **Weill Park (Bakersfield)**

The F-B LGA would pass over Weill Park on an elevated guideway, removing access to the northern portion of the park during project construction. As described under Impact PK#1, implementation of the project would require the permanent acquisition of 0.099 acre (six percent) of the 1.6-acre park, which consists of open grass areas and trees. Views from within the park would be altered by the intrusion of the elevated rail line into middle ground views and the removal of vegetation currently present in foreground views. The park is surrounded by existing development, including a recycling center, SR 178, and commercial development. The removal of vegetation would increase views of surrounding development from the park. Although the F-B LGA would alter views for recreational users within the park, it would not degrade the visual

quality of the surrounding area, which has limited aesthetic value due to the nature of being commercial and industrial development. Also, as described in Section 3.15.6, Mitigation Measures, following the completion of construction, the Authority would develop and implement an agreement with the City of Bakersfield for compensation associated with the portion of Weill Park that would be acquired for the project. Therefore, the project would have a less than significant impact under CEQA.

Operational noise from the F-B LGA would increase noise exposure for users of Weill Park. Section 3.4.4.2 provides detailed discussion of noise-related impacts associated with the F-B LGA. Noise-sensitive receptors, such as recreationists utilizing parks and open space resources along the project alignment, would experience annoyance and/or startling effects associated with the passing by of HSR trains. This includes Weill Park, located within the project footprint. This resource is currently located in an existing rail transport corridor, subject to trains passing through the area intermittently (as opposed to introducing a new constant sound). Therefore, the context of the ambient noise environment would remain substantially the same, as existing and operational noise impacts would be less than significant under CEQA.

#### **Kern River Parkway (Bakersfield)**

The F-B LGA would pass over the Kern River Parkway on an elevated guideway. The Kern River Parkway at this location consists of an asphalt bike path on top of an earthen levee and an unimproved pedestrian footpath. Presence of the F-B LGA would alter existing views in this area of the Kern River Parkway by introducing HSR infrastructure where it is currently not present. The visual quality of the surrounding park area would not be altered. However, views from the bike path and the pedestrian footpath would be modified due to the presence of the HSR elevated guideway. As shown in Table 3.16-2, Summary of Visual Quality Changes and Impacts at Key Viewpoints, in Section 3.16, Aesthetics and Visual Resources, the current visual quality of the Kern River Parkway Bike Trail is “moderately high”, and would be reduced to “moderate” following implementation of the F-B LGA. Given a viewer response rating of “high”, this change would result in a significant impact to visual resources under CEQA. However, as discussed in the introduction to this impact analysis, the potential for Impact PK#4 (Project Changes to Park Character) to occur depends upon multiple factors that may disrupt recreational activities or opportunities, including but not limited to factors such as increased noise and altered visual character.

Operational noise from the HSR project would increase noise exposure for users of the parkway and facilities, particularly within 90 feet of the proposed alignment. As described in Section 3.4, projected operational noise levels were calculated at strategic locations along the proposed alignment using operational assumptions provided in Table 3.4-8, HSR Operational and Geometric Assumptions. Table 3.4-9, Noise Impact Summary, indicates that six parks would experience “severe” noise and four parks would experience “moderate” noise during project operations. This area is presently subject to transportation-related noise, as the park is in an existing rail transport corridor. Additionally, trains on the F-B LGA centerline would pass through the area intermittently (as opposed to introducing a new constant sound), and mitigation introduced in Section 3.4 would require the use of sound barriers/insulation or purchase of noise easements to minimize potentially adverse noise impacts. As discussed in Section 3.4, Mitigation Measure N&V-MM#3 (Implement Proposed California High-Speed Train Project Noise Mitigation Guidelines) would be implemented and would result in the placement of noise barriers to protect receptors from operational noise associated with the project, including resulting from elevated portions of the HSR system that would be adjacent to the existing BNSF railway. These barriers may be at-grade or on the elevated portions of the project; the most effective noise barrier structure(s) will be selected based upon reasonableness and final engineering and design.

Also as discussed herein, multiple factors affect park character, including, but not limited to, factors such as increased noise and altered visual character; as such, where a significant impact may result from project-generated noise based upon the criteria presented in the noise analysis, such impact would not necessarily result in a direct impact to park character. Therefore, operation and maintenance of the F-B LGA would result in less than significant impacts associated with changes to park character, due to the existing visual character of the surrounding area as being

largely urban in nature; restoration of the affected pathway section to pre-construction conditions or better; the intermittent nature of operational noise associated with the project; the location of the affected parks within an existing rail transport corridor; and the implementation of mitigation measures to minimize operational noise and visual effects. Potential impacts would be less than significant under CEQA.

#### **Parks, Recreation, Open Space and School District Recreation Facilities within 0.5 Mile of the Shafter Maintenance of Infrastructure Facility Site**

The proposed MOIF in Shafer is located within 0.5 mile of four recreational resources, including two public parks and two public school play areas. These resources, including Town Square Park, Mannel Park, Redwood Elementary School/Richland Junior High, and Free Will Christian Academy, are discussed in Section 3.15.3 and above under Impact PK#1. The presence of the MOIF would not substantially change views from these resources, due to existing development in the area as well as the distance of more than 300 feet between the proposed MOIF location and the identified sites.

Similarly, as discussed above, operational noise associated with the F-B LGA would not result in a significant impact to recreational users of parks, open space, and recreation facilities due to the intermittent nature of operational noise, the location of the affected parks within an existing rail transport corridor, and the implementation of mitigation measures to minimize operational noise.

The project would therefore not substantially degrade the existing character or quality of these recreational resources and their surroundings, and the project would have a less than significant impact under CEQA.

#### **Parks, Recreation, Open Space and School District Recreation Facilities within 0.5 Mile of the Bakersfield F Street Station Site**

Weill Park would be located approximately 2,525 feet (0.48 mile) from the station. The Kern River Parkway would be located approximately 180 feet from the station. The Kern County Museum would be located approximately 100 feet from the station. The Metropolitan Recreation Area would be located approximately 160 feet from the station. Uplands of the Kern River Parkway would be located approximately 280 feet the station.

##### **Weill Park (Bakersfield)**

The proposed Bakersfield F Street Station is located over 2,000 feet from Weill Park and would not result in an increase in usership for the park. As discussed previously under Impact PK#1, for the resources located within 300 feet of the F-B LGA centerline, the F-B LGA alignment would pass over Weill Park on an elevated guideway, removing 0.099 acre of the northern portion of the park (6 percent of the total park area) from recreational uses. The southern portion of the park, located just northwest of Q Street and Golden State Avenue, would remain available for public use with recreational resources consisting of grass areas and trees. The Bakersfield F Street Station would not remove land or resources from Weill Park. Therefore, the station would have a less than significant impact under CEQA.

Operational noise from the HSR project would increase noise exposure for users of Weill Park. As discussed, Weill Park is located within 300 feet of the project alignment, but is more than 2,000 feet from the proposed Bakersfield F Street Station. Therefore, operational noise experienced by recreationists at Weill Park would be associated with trains passing on the alignment rather than activities at the passenger station. Therefore, noise impacts from the station would be less than significant under CEQA.

##### **Kern River Parkway (Bakersfield)**

The proposed Bakersfield F Street Station would be located adjacent to and through the Kern River Parkway. The F-B LGA would increase the number of people in the area of the station and could, therefore, result in an increase in use for the park and its associated bike trail. This effect would not occur at Weill Park due to its location of more than 2,000 feet from the Bakersfield F Street Station. Given the regional nature of the Kern River Parkway, the potential increase in use

associated with more recreationists being in the area due to the location of the Bakersfield F Street Station would not result in degradation of the overall resource.

As noted, the Bakersfield F Street Station would be adjacent to the Kern River Parkway. As such, intactness and unity of views of the river and parkway from inside the Kern River Parkway would be altered by the introduction of the station into the middle ground views. As discussed in Section 3.16, Aesthetics and Visual Resources, changes in the visual environment that would occur as a result of implementation of the F-B LGA would result in a significant impact to visual resources under CEQA. This determination is consistent for both proximity to the centerline and proximity to the passenger station. However, as discussed above with respect to recreational facilities and opportunities located within 300 feet of the F-B LGA centerline, the potential for Impact PK#4 (Project Changes to Park Character) to occur depends upon multiple factors that may disrupt recreational activities or opportunities, including but not limited to factors such as increased noise and altered visual character.

Operational noise from the HSR project associated with the Bakersfield F Street Station would increase noise exposure for users of the parkway and facilities. The project would create operational noise impacts, but no sensitive vibration receivers would be impacted by project operations, and noise-related impacts would be less than significant following noise-related construction mitigation (NV-IAMM#1) that would minimize these effects through requirements such as the installation of sound barriers and special track work at crossovers and turnouts. Additionally, Kern River Parkway is located inside an existing rail transport corridor, and is therefore already subject to noise associated with railway activities. Therefore, due to the lack of sensitive vibration receivers and the location of Kern River Parkway inside an existing rail transport corridor, operational noise impacts on users of the parkway and facilities would be less than significant under CEQA.

Operation and maintenance of the F-B LGA would result in less than significant impacts associated with changes to park character, due to the existing visual character of the surrounding area as being largely urban in nature, restoration of the affected pathway section to pre-construction conditions or better, the intermittent nature of operational noise associated with the project, the location of the affected parks inside an existing rail transport corridor, and the lack of sensitive vibration receivers. Potential impacts would be less than significant under CEQA.

#### **Kern County Museum**

As noted above, the Kern County Museum includes the Lori Brock Children's Museum, Pioneer Village, and the Neon Courtyard. The Bakersfield F Street Station would be located approximately 100 feet from the Kern County Museum. This could increase visitation to the museum, and introduce operational noise to visitors of the museum. Access to the museum is restricted to the purchase of entry tickets, which ensures that the potential for increased visitation would not degrade the existing museum facilities or resources because only as many visitors as could be accommodated would be admitted. Therefore, the potential for increased visitation to result in impacts associated with changes to the character of the Kern County Museum would be less than significant under CEQA. The proximity of the station would also have potential to introduce a new source of noise to visitors of the Kern County Museum. However, the project is located in an existing rail corridor and is presently subject to noise similar to that associated with station operations. Section 3.4, Noise and Vibration, includes discussion of operational noise impacts to stationary facilities, including the Kern County Museum, under Impact N&V#7, Noise from HSR Stationary Facilities. As discussed under that impact analysis, potential impacts associated with operational noise would be less than significant due to the implementation of mitigation measures including noise barriers to reduce operational noise. Therefore, potential impacts associated with project-related changes to park character would be less than significant under CEQA.

#### **Uplands of the Kern River Parkway (Bakersfield)**

The proposed Bakersfield F Street Station is located approximately 280 feet from the edge of the Uplands of the Kern River Parkway. However, this park is located on the opposite side of the Kern River from the station, making it unlikely that the station would increase use of the park.

Additionally, because views to the west of the river of natural terrain would not be blocked by the Bakersfield F Street Station, the F-B LGA would not degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings. Therefore, the project impact would be less than significant under CEQA.

Operational noise from the Bakersfield F Street Station would increase noise exposure for users of the parkway and facilities. As described above, potential noise impacts would be mitigated (see Section 3.4.5 for noise-specific mitigation measures). Additionally, the park is in an existing rail transport corridor, and operational noise impacts would therefore be less than significant under CEQA.

#### **Metropolitan Recreation Area (Bakersfield)**

The proposed Bakersfield F Street Station is located approximately 160 feet from the edge of the Metropolitan Recreation Area. As discussed under Impact PK #1, the Metropolitan Recreation Area includes public softball fields, baseball fields, a recreational center, a picnic area, and a horse riding area, and is adjacent to Sam Lynn Ball Park. Access to Sam Lynn Ball Park is restricted by fencing, and granted either through purchase of a ticket for a baseball game or payment of fees to reserve the baseball fields. While the park is owned by the Kern County Parks and Recreation Department, the fields are not open for free public use. Therefore, increases in use related to the Bakersfield F Street Station would not result in degradation of this facility. The remainder of the Metropolitan Recreation Area is open for public use, and may be visited by riders of the HSR who travel to the area specifically to utilize recreational facilities. However, the proposed station would include a park, and riders of the HSR who are not traveling to the area to specifically utilize the nearby recreational facilities would be more likely to use the park onsite before walking to the Metropolitan Recreation Area. Therefore any increase in use would be incremental and would not result in degradation of the facility.

The presence of the Bakersfield F Street Station under the F-B LGA would change views from inside the Metropolitan Recreation Area due to the proximity of the station to the west/southwest of the park. Views of Kern River, located to the west/northwest of the Metropolitan Recreation Area, would not be blocked by the project. Views to the north and east from the park area would also remain unobstructed. The F-B LGA would therefore not degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings, and potential impacts to visual character would be less than significant under CEQA.

Operational noise from the HSR project would increase noise exposure for users of the parkway and facilities. As discussed above for the Kern County Museum, operational noise impacts to existing parks and recreational facilities are addressed in Section 3.4, Noise and Vibration, and potential impacts would be mitigated through implementation of noise barriers. Additionally, uses of the Metropolitan Recreation Area include sports and other activities that generate and are subject to outdoor noise levels, and the recreation area is located in an existing rail transport corridor that is subject to noises, such as those that would be introduced by the project. Therefore, operational noise impacts to the Metropolitan Recreation Area resulting from the Bakersfield F Street Station would be less than significant under CEQA.

### **3.15.5 Avoidance and Minimization Measures**

All of the Avoidance and Minimization Measures (referred to as project design features in Section 3.15.6 of the Fresno to Bakersfield Section Final EIR/EIS) identified in the *Fresno to Bakersfield Section Final EIR/EIS* are applicable to the F-B LGA. Section 3.15.6 of the Fresno to Bakersfield Section Final EIR/EIS (pages 3.15-47 and 3.15-48) discusses that measures identified in other issue area sections are applicable to Parks, Recreation, and Open Space, and would be implemented to minimize or avoid potentially adverse impacts. These issue areas include Noise and Vibration (Section 3.4), Air Quality and Climate Change (Section 3.3), and Aesthetics and Visual Resources (Section 3.16). The applicable list is provided in Technical Appendix 2-G Mitigation Monitoring and Enforcement Plan. Technical Appendix 2-H describes how implementation of these measures would reduce adverse effects on their respective impact areas. The following Avoidance and Minimization Measures would be applicable to the May 2014 Project as well as the F-B LGA:



- PRO-IAMM#1: Design Standards:** This measure will reduce potential impacts on parks, recreation, and open space by requiring the Contractor to incorporate design features into HSR design that provide for safe and attractive access to present park and recreation facilities. It also requires the Contractor to provide sufficient separation of the HSR guideway system to maintain the intended user experience (passive or active recreation or wilderness experience) to the extent feasible.

Avoidance and Mitigation Measure PRO-IAMM#1 ensures that the project would be designed to protect and maintain recreational opportunities and resources in the study area, including by providing separation between the HSR facilities and existing recreational resources/opportunities. This measure also requires the protection of safe and attractive access to existing recreational resources. Therefore, implementation of this measure will reduce impacts to Parks, Recreation, and Open Space associated with access and quality of the recreational experience.

- NV-IAMM#1: General Construction Guidelines – Noise and Vibration:** This measure will reduce potential noise and vibration impacts from construction by requiring the Contractor to document how federal guidelines for minimizing noise and vibration will be employed when construction is occurring near sensitive receptors (such as hospitals, residential neighborhoods, and schools).

The Noise and Vibration section of the Fresno to Bakersfield Section Final EIR/EIS (page 3.4-55) describes that guidelines for minimizing noise and vibration impacts at sensitive receptors would be applied during project construction, and that project infrastructure would be designed to minimize operational noise, such as through the use of continuous welded rail to reduce the sounds of the steel wheels on rail gaps, and cowlings (streamlined coverings) to reduce aerodynamic noise. This measure is applicable to Parks, Recreation, and Open Space because it would minimize construction and operational noise that could otherwise diminish the quality of recreational opportunities available at local parks and open space areas.

- AQ-IAMM#2: Fugitive Dust Emissions:** This action reduces construction-related air quality emissions by requiring the preparation of a fugitive dust control plan. This plan identifies the minimum features that will be implemented during ground disturbing activities. Examples of these include covering all materials (truck beds) transported on public roads, watering exposed graded surfaces, limiting vehicle speed on the construction site, suspending operations during high wind events, stabilizing all disturbed graded areas, wetting of exterior surfaces of structures during demolition, and removing any accumulation of mud or dirt from adjacent public streets. These types of construction best management practices are proven methods of minimizing fugitive dust generation associated with ground disturbing and demolition construction activities. Each air district traversed by the HSR has adopted rules and/or regulations requiring dust control plans for construction activities. These dust control plans are a part of each district’s overall strategy for compliance with federal and state air quality standards.

The Air Quality and Climate Change section of the Fresno to Bakersfield Section Final EIR/EIS (pages 3.3-85 and 3.3-86) identifies an avoidance and minimization measure to address fugitive dust, minimize the potential for fugitive dust to occur, and ensure that disturbed areas are stabilized to avoid erosion or migration of dust. This measure is applicable to Parks, Recreation, and Open Space because it minimizes the impact of fugitive dust associated with construction activities and prevents it from diminishing recreational opportunities at local parks.

- AVR-IAMM#1: Design Standards:** This measure reduces the aesthetic and visual impacts of the HSR infrastructure components, including stations and elevated guideways, by applying design approaches to integrate structures within a community and to reduce the intrusiveness of large, elevated structures. It will also provide some consistency in the HSR design throughout the program.

This action reduces the aesthetic and visual impacts of the HSR by providing urban design guidelines to be evaluated and applied increasing the compatibility of the HSR infrastructure within an existing, specific local design context.

The Aesthetics and Visual Resources section of the Fresno to Bakersfield Section Final EIR/EIS (page 3.16-140) describes that the Authority has adopted design standards and guidelines for aesthetic quality associated with long-lasting infrastructure, including principles for “context-sensitive solutions” to guide the design of stations and elevated guideways. These measures will reduce impacts to Parks, Recreation, and Open Space by ensuring that the introduction of permanent HSR infrastructure would not substantially diminish the visual quality of the existing environment at local parks resources, or the availability of high-quality views from local parks and open spaces.

### 3.15.6 Mitigation Measures

#### 3.15.6.1 *Mitigation Measures Identified in the Fresno to Bakersfield Section Final EIR/EIS*

During project design and construction, the Authority and FRA would implement measures to reduce impacts on parks and recreational resources. The following mitigation measure in Table 3.15-6 was approved under the *Fresno to Bakersfield Section Mitigation and Monitoring Enforcement Plan* (Authority and FRA 2014: 1-50). Mitigation Measure PP-MM#1 is applicable to the F-B LGA.

**Table 3.15-6 Mitigation Measure Applicable to the F-B LGA**

Number	Description
PP-MM#1	Temporary Closures of Park Property During Construction. Alternate pedestrian and bicycle access shall be provided during any required temporary closures of parks or portions of park properties during construction. Detour signage and lighting will be provided.

Source: Authority and FRA 2016

<sup>1</sup> The *Fresno to Bakersfield Section Final EIR/EIS* (page 3.15-49) also identified Mitigation Measure PP-MM#2, Avoidance of Colonel Allensworth State Historic Park, which specified that final design of the project shall minimize ROW impacts in Colonel Allensworth State Historic Park. This mitigation measure is not applicable to the May 2014 Project because the Colonel Allensworth State Historic Park is located in the community of Allensworth in southwestern Tulare County, which is outside of the study area for the May 2014 Project.

Mitigation Measure PP-MM#1 addresses closures of park properties resulting from the project. Although titled “during construction,” this measure is applicable to all phases of the project. During pre-construction and construction, the design-build contractor will be responsible for ensuring that connections to unaffected park portions or nearby roadways are maintained. For linear park closures where connectivity would be restricted by the project, the contractor will provide alternate pedestrian and bicycle access to minimize disruptions to recreational activities. Under the same mitigation measure, during post-construction and operational activities the Authority is responsible for ensuring the same measures are implemented to minimize adverse impacts. During all project phases (pre-construction, construction, and post-construction/operation), the responsible implementing party (design-build contractor and/or Authority) will coordinate with the official that has jurisdiction (City of Bakersfield and Kern County) to develop a staging plan and a plan to provide alternative access for impacted properties.

Mitigation Measure PP-MM#1 will require installing detour signage and lighting for alternative pedestrian and bicycle routes. These activities will result in negligible impacts on the physical environment, while improving overall park access and public safety (through the provision of clear direction and lighting). The impacts of this mitigation measure would be less than significant under CEQA.

**3.15.6.2 Mitigation Measures Specific to F-B LGA**

With the implementation of Mitigation Measure PP-MM#1, described above, adverse effects associated with temporary access restrictions to park areas would be mitigated by providing alternate access for temporarily affected park areas. Further, this mitigation measure identifies responsible parties (design-build contractor and the Authority) for each project phase (pre-construction, construction, and post-construction/operation), to ensure that the requirements are appropriately implemented.

In addition, to ensure appropriate compensation for the acquisition of 0.76 acre of parklands in the study area (including 0.66 acre at Kern River Parkway and 0.099 acre at Weill Park), Mitigation Measure PP-MM#3 in Table 3.15-7 would also be implemented. This mitigation measure was previously approved as described in the Fresno to Bakersfield Section Mitigation and Monitoring Enforcement Plan (Authority and FRA 2014: 1-50), but has been revised for applicability to resources affected by the F-B LGA, specifically the Kern River Parkway (0.66 acre) and Weill Park (0.099 acre). In accordance with this mitigation measure, compensation would be provided for permanently acquired park lands, therefore effectively minimizing or avoiding significant adverse impacts to parks and recreation facilities resulting from the project.

**Table 3.15-7 Mitigation Measures Specific to the F-B LGA**

Number	Description
PP-MM#3	Collect Additional Maintenance Funds. The Authority will consult with the <del>City of Bakersfield and Amtrak affected jurisdictions</del> to identify its share of funding to provide additional maintenance, labor, and repairs for the existing <del>Bakersfield Amtrak playground park areas</del> to remedy any potential degradation of existing facilities that may result from increased facility use. Prior to <del>the opening of passenger service project construction</del> , the Authority will enter into an agreement with the <del>city and Amtrak affected jurisdictions (City of Bakersfield and Kern County)</del> that establishes the funding share and describes the relative roles of the Authority and the <del>Authority, the City of Bakersfield, and Amtrak affected jurisdictions</del> in providing continuous maintenance of <del>the existing playground areas, or compensation for play areas acquired in order to accommodate the project.</del>

Source: Authority and FRA, 2016

In accordance with Mitigation Measure PP-MM#3, where parks or recreation areas would be permanently affected by the project, the Authority will work with the affected jurisdictions (City of Bakersfield and Kern County) to prepare and execute an agreement to provide compensation for the affected areas. These requirements ensure that closures of park and recreation areas resulting from implementation of the project would not result in significant adverse impacts, because alternate access will be provided for temporary impacts, or compensation will be provided for permanent property acquisition, and parties responsible for implementation have been identified. Implementation of this mitigation measure would result in parks, recreation, and open space impacts that are less than significant under CEQA.

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