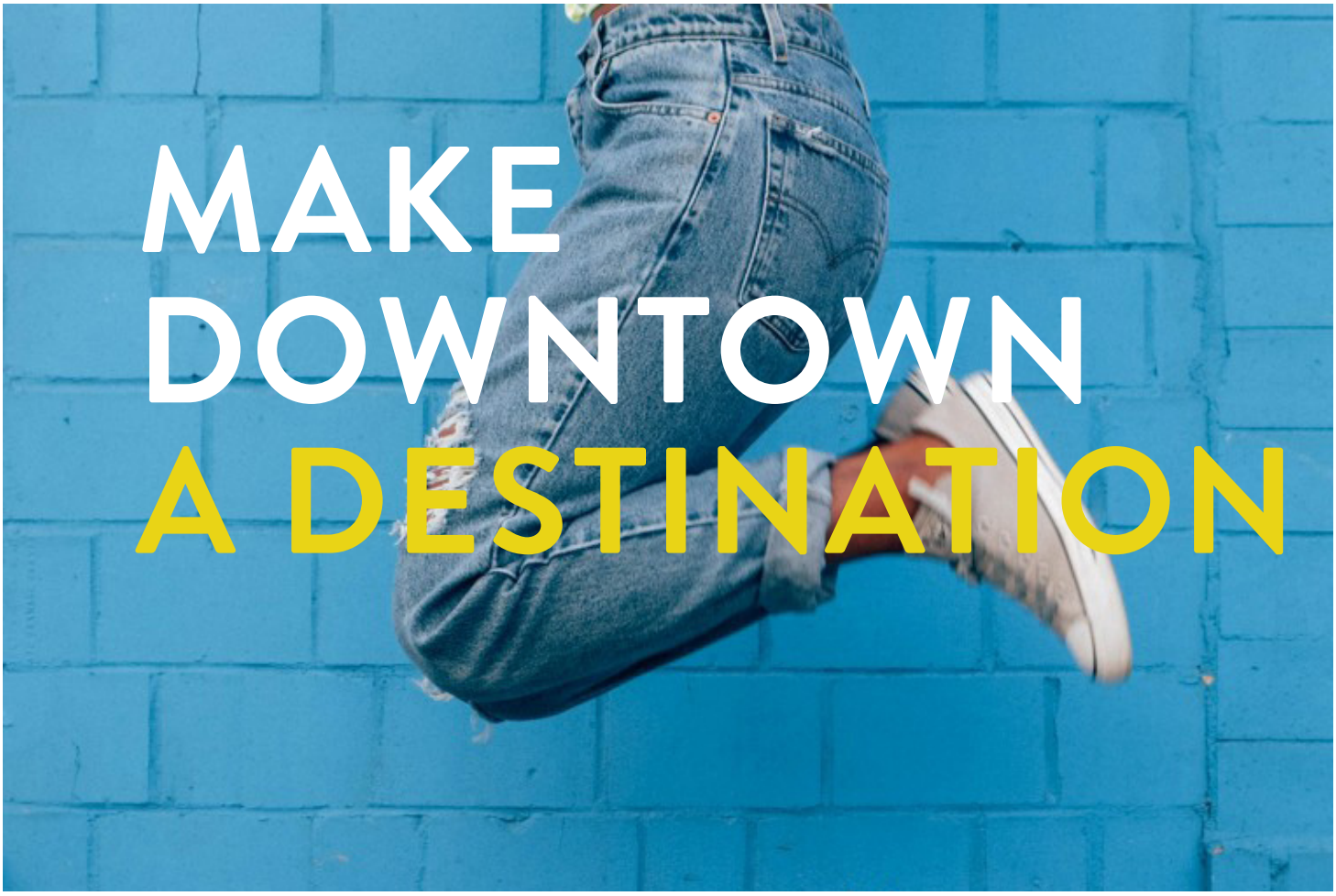

MAKING
DOWNTOWN
BAKERSFIELD

MAKING DOWNTOWN BAKERSFIELD
EXISTING CONDITIONS REPORT

JUNE 01 2016

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Market Analysis Report
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MAKING DOWNTOWN BAKERSFIELD SOM

FOREWORD

The City of Bakersfield, in partnership with and grant funding from the California High-Speed Rail Authority, has undertaken Station Area Planning adjacent to the planned High-Speed Rail (HSR) station locations in Downtown Bakersfield. The project area, which is a subset of Downtown, includes both proposed HSR station locations, and is generally bounded by F Street to the West, 38th Street to the North, Union Avenue to the East and California Avenue to the South.

This Existing Conditions Report is based on available data collected from the City and other agencies, and includes a synthesis of the information that together with public input and other facts and figures will inform the development of alternative scenarios for Downtown that include various urban design, transportation and economic development strategies and interventions. The City is in the process of developing this plan to serve as a vision document for the community and guide the future development of Downtown Bakersfield in order to both continue current revitalization efforts and guide investments in preparation for the proposed HSR station and the increment of economic growth above the base line that it is projected to induce.

The HSR station locations together with the robust baseline growth projected for the region provide substantial opportunities for Downtown infill development, the revitalization of existing buildings, new job creation, enhanced access within and to Bakersfield's historic urban core, and the development of transit-oriented, mixed-use projects that Senate Bill 375 requires to facilitate the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions through complimentary land use and transportation strategies. Most importantly, this process provides the opportunity for all stakeholders to shape a unified vision of their future, and in so doing potentially transform the perception and definition of Downtown Bakersfield

INTRODUCTION
STUDY AREA BACKGROUND

MAKING DOWNTOWN BAKERSFIELD

VISION STATEMENT
WHAT WE HEARD

Top to bottom:
April 7, 2016 Planning Commission
March 29, 2016 Senior Center
March 10, 2016 Stakeholder Committee

Imagination is a fundamental planning tool. The power of Bakersfield lies not only within its existing strengths, but most importantly in the imaginations of its residents, business owners and other stakeholders. As one of the most readily accessible assets, imagination allows people to discover what's possible, shape their future, and to build a relationship with themselves and their communities. Based on the initial round of outreach described in more detail below, the following is a Vision Statement for Downtown that is expected to evolve with the progress of this planning process:

"Downtown is where the community comes together to celebrate its heritage, businesses cluster to share ideas and grow, and a diversity of people live to be in proximity to services, amenities and opportunity. Making Downtown Bakersfield the physical, cultural and economic center of the region means empowering local entrepreneurship, expanding stakeholder capacity and enhancing connectivity in an effort to create a truly unique, walkable and regenerative place."

In the spring of 2016, Making Downtown Bakersfield completed its first of several rounds of outreach with the community. As a critical component of this planning process, the stakeholders that designed and then voiced their ideal Downtown Bakersfield at these workshops both raised awareness and elevated the public discourse about what Downtown could and should be in the future. Approximately 150 Bakersfield residents, business and property owners, and other stakeholders participated in eleven different Vision Workshops in a process that leveraged each participant's imagination to develop a shared vision of Downtown's future.

Through the language of design, these Vision Workshops allowed participants to articulate their aspirations and values, and several common themes began to emerge across the diverse group of interests. The common values that were developed for Downtown included:

- Connectivity
- Vibrancy
- Compact Development
- Diversity
- Open Space
- Iconicity
- Livability
- Safety
- Prosperity
- Equity
- Culture
- Convenience

COMMUNITY PROFILE
WHAT WE KNOW

"We need to bring Bakersfield back to life again."

-Vision Workshop participant

Overview

Located near the southern end of the San Joaquin Valley in Kern County, the City of Bakersfield is the southern gateway to the Central Valley and is widely recognized as one of the fastest growing regions in the State and nation. Ranked as the 9th most populous city in California with 379,110 residents as of 2016, Bakersfield is projected to continue its rapid rate of growth with or without High-Speed Rail (HSR). Bakersfield is also the 9th fastest growing city in the United States with a population over 100,000, and the fastest growing city in the United States with a population over 250,000.

The Downtown Bakersfield HSR Station Area Plan study area encompasses approximately three to five miles around the proposed HSR station locations and includes the parallel alignments of the Union Pacific Rail Road (UPRR) and Golden State Expressway (SR 204), and Golden Empire Transit (GET) bus facilities at the locally generated alternative station location, and the parallel alignments of the Burlington Northern (BN) and Truxtun Avenue, and the existing Amtrak station at the hybrid location. A variety of land uses are present at both locations, including single-family and multi-family residential, office and general commercial uses, light industrial, medical offices and hospitals, regional parks, schools, governmental facilities and vacant parcels.

While there are many definitions and defined areas that could be considered "Downtown Bakersfield", the study area for this planning process was developed by the City based on its Central City area and extrapolated to include both potential HSR station locations and their immediate adjacencies. This report and future analyses and proposals must and will look outside the study area to optimize connectivity and create a more comprehensive Vision Plan.

Economic Setting

The City's economy is centered on several primary industries, including agriculture, healthcare, oil, government and distribution. The largest employers include Nestlé, Frito-Lay, State Farm, Aera Energy, Chevron and Occidental Oil & Gas. The City's location is attractive to residents and various industries due to its central and affordable location that's accessible to 90% of California's population within a four hour drive.

More detailed information regarding the state of the Metro Bakersfield economy, as well as future projection with or without HSR can be found in the Market Analysis Report in the Appendix.

"We need to build on what we already have, capture the attention and then keep people in Downtown."

-Vision Workshop participant

Transportation Setting

The major arterial providing immediate access to the study area is Highway 204 and Highway 178, which connects to Highway 99 and Highway 58. Rapid increases in automobile travel have brought higher levels of traffic congestion. According to the 2004 Kern Council of Governments Regional Transportation Plan (Kern COG RTP), many Bakersfield streets currently operate at or above their design capacity, resulting in slow-moving traffic and delays at intersections. Key arterials in the study area include Chester, Truxtun and California Avenues.

More detailed information about transportation can be found in the Access Study section of this report.

Environmental Setting

For the purposes of the program level Environmental Impact Report (EIR) being developed as a part of this Vision Plan, the study area will serve as the project boundary.

Biological Resources Originally, the Metropolitan Bakersfield area was a region of broad arid plains, often with an extensive cover of saltbush. However, as a result of the past 140 years of human activity, the plant and animal communities that now exist within the region are either highly modified (but still recognizable) remnants of native communities or have been almost completely altered from their original state. Construction of Isabella Dam on the Kern River for municipal use and other agriculture related diversions, in addition to groundwater pumping, has severely lowered the water table and consequently, very little river water reaches the main valley area to support wetland habitats. However, the Kern River, which is located adjacent to the northwest portion of the study area still supports areas of stream bank vegetation, is considered a scenic resource, and still functions as a wildlife corridor. Although alteration and disruption to the biological environment has occurred as a result of development, Bakersfield still retains significant plant and animal communities, some of which are considered sensitive. As a result, the Metropolitan Bakersfield Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) was adopted and encompasses 408 square miles of the southern portion of the San Joaquin Valley, including the study area and surrounding environs to mitigate impacts caused by urban development.

Some of the notable species protected by the HCP include the Bakersfield cactus, Bakersfield saltbush, California jewelflower, San Joaquin kit fox, blunt-nosed leopard lizard, Tipton kangaroo rat, and giant kangaroo rat.

Mineral Resources The Bakersfield region is a major oil-producing area, with substantial oil and gas fields—the Kern River oil field that lies partially under the Bakersfield Metropolitan area is the fourth largest oil field in the lower 48 states. Sand and gravel areas are concentrated primarily along the

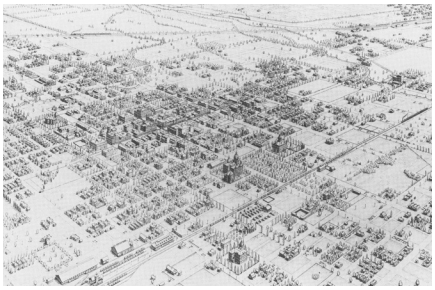
floodplain and alluvial fan of the Kern River. Sand and gravel are an important resource for construction related activities.

Hazards Potential seismic hazards existing in the study area include strong ground shaking, fault rupture, liquefaction, earthquake induced landslides and potential inundation from the failure of Lake Isabella dam. Other geologic hazards in the planning area include flooding, landslides and subsidence.

The principal seismic hazard affecting the study area is the potential for strong ground shaking from any of the four major faults in the region. The most vulnerable structures in an earthquake are the unreinforced masonry buildings in Metropolitan Bakersfield, which were built before seismic codes were first instituted by the City and County. Other building types that may pose substantial hazards in an earthquake include precast concrete tilt-up buildings, and predominantly multi-story buildings of non-ductile concrete frame and composite precast concrete construction types.

The Bakersfield Metropolitan area is located downstream of the Lake Isabella Dam and thus dam failure could cause severe flooding, damage and loss of life. The resulting flood would inundate some 60 square miles of Metropolitan Bakersfield and the surrounding areas. Flooding in Metropolitan Bakersfield can also originate from the Kern River watershed, which lies just to the northwest of the study area. The most severe flooding problems on the Kern River near Bakersfield have resulted from high-intensity winter rainstorms, which generally occur from November through April.

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT
WHERE WE CAME FROM



Top to bottom:
Bakersfield circa 1901
Chester Avenue circa 1908
Bakersfield Clock Tower circa 1948

In **1776**, Spanish explorers first crossed the Tejon Pass into the southern Central Valley to find rich soil and abundant groundwater ideal for growing crops. In the **1850**s, a gold deposit was found in the foothills to the east of what is now Downtown Bakersfield, sparking an early gold rush. Bakersfield was founded thereafter in **1862** as a stopover for prospectors that would feed and water their animals along the southern banks of the Kern River. The City's namesake, Thomas Baker, moved to the area in **1863** at a location that would become known as Baker's field. In **1869** Baker was appointed to lay out the boundaries for a formal township.

The City did not first incorporate until **1873**. In **1899**, oil was discovered just north of the original township. By the end of the **19**th Century, the City had transitioned from a gold boom town to an oil town. Known to this day as the "Oil Capital of California" the Bakersfield oil field produces the majority of California's annual output. Both the oil and agriculture industries remain the cornerstones of the Bakersfield economy.

In the summer of **1952**, two major earthquakes measuring **7.3** and **5.8**, respectively, hit Downtown Bakersfield. The two back to back earthquakes killed **14** people and caused **$70** million (**$625** million in **2016** dollars) in damage, including the destruction of most of Downtown's historic structures.

When the Interstate Highway system was launched in **1956**, its planners opted to not convert State Route **99** into an Interstate in Kern County and elected instead to bypass the major population centers in the southern Central Valley (Bakersfield, Fresno and Modesto) for a more direct route between Los Angeles and San Francisco. By **1979**, Interstate **5** construction was completed from the north to Wheeler Ridge where it connected to an upgraded **SR 99** via the Ridge Route through the Tejon Pass. In the subsequent three decades, the population of Bakersfield tripled from approximately **100,000** in **1980** to over **300,000** in **2010**. This growth was fueled by suburban expansion, creating a significant economic driver in and of itself as affordable home prices drove development.

Suburban expansion focused new development at the urban periphery, and as a result Downtown suffered from disinvestment. For the past decade, Downtown redevelopment was primarily conducted by the City and local healthcare providers, as Bakersfield became the regional healthcare center due to its population growth, with three major hospitals located within or adjacent to the study area. The City's now defunct Community Redevelopment Agency **(CRA)** sought to create catalytic projects as entitlements came to a standstill Downtown in the 90s and 00s.

Major reinvestments in transportation, civic facilities and open spaces, coupled by a general shift in preferences back into historic downtowns has started a nascent Downtown renaissance. This private-sector renaissance has primarily been driven by local restaurant and retail development as millennials and baby boomers seek an alternative lifestyle and authentic experience in Downtown. This has only recently begun to manifest in smaller scale market-rate residential development Downtown.

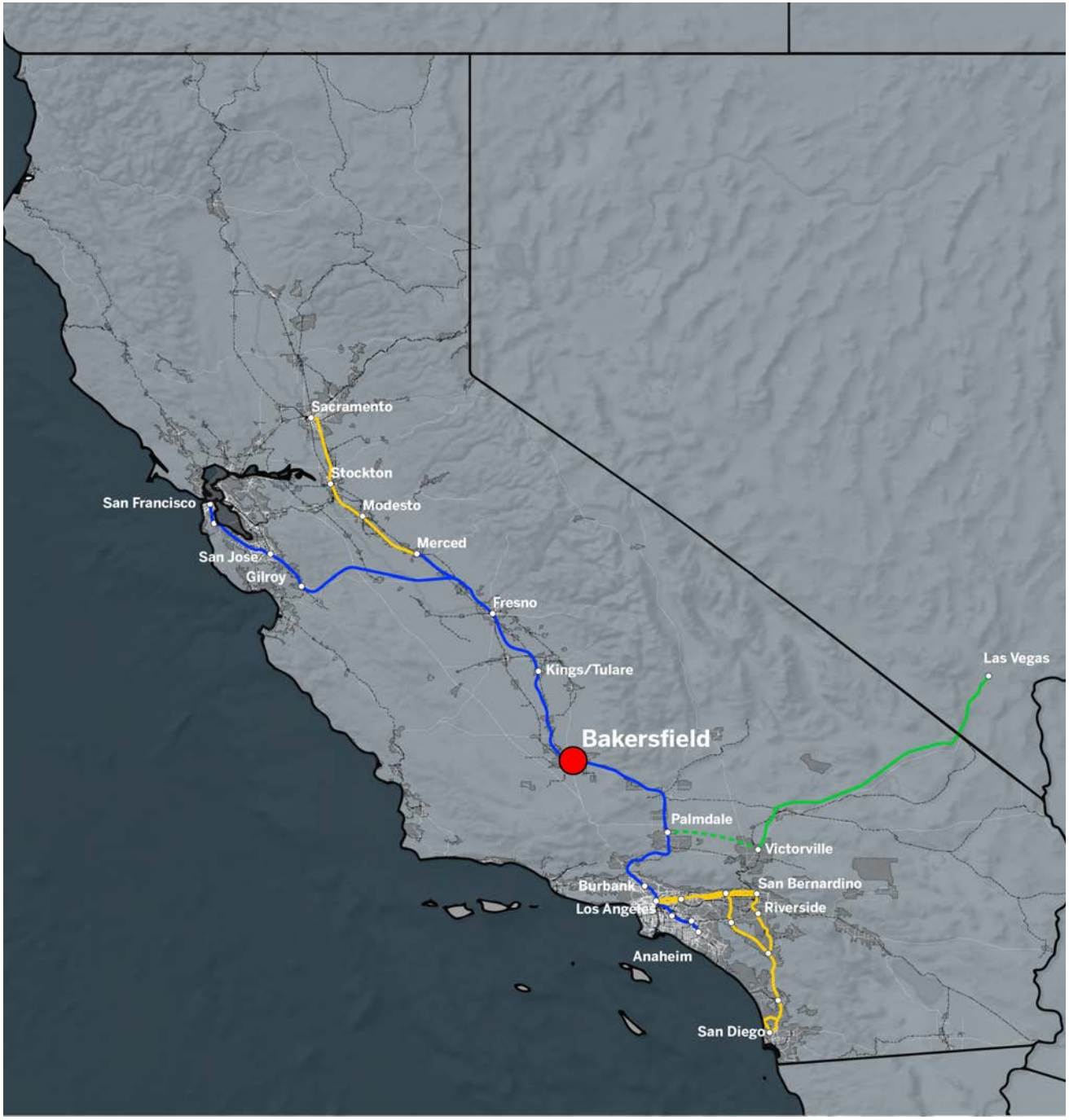
PHYSICAL ASSET STUDY
URBAN DESIGN

MAKING
DOWNTOWN
BAKERSFIELD

STATEWIDE CONTEXT
SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY

California High-Speed Rail

The California High-Speed Rail system, when completed in **2029**, will run from San Francisco to the Los Angeles basin in under three hours at speeds capable of over **200** miles per hour. The system will eventually extend to Sacramento and San Diego, totaling **800** miles with up to **24** stations. The system will operate on a separate rail right-of-way that will be owned and operated by the California High Speed Rail Authority, except for along the Caltrain Corridor where it will share track. Bakersfield is uniquely positioned at the middle of this statewide corridor and unlike other station cities has the opportunity to leverage economic activity from both Northern and Southern California.



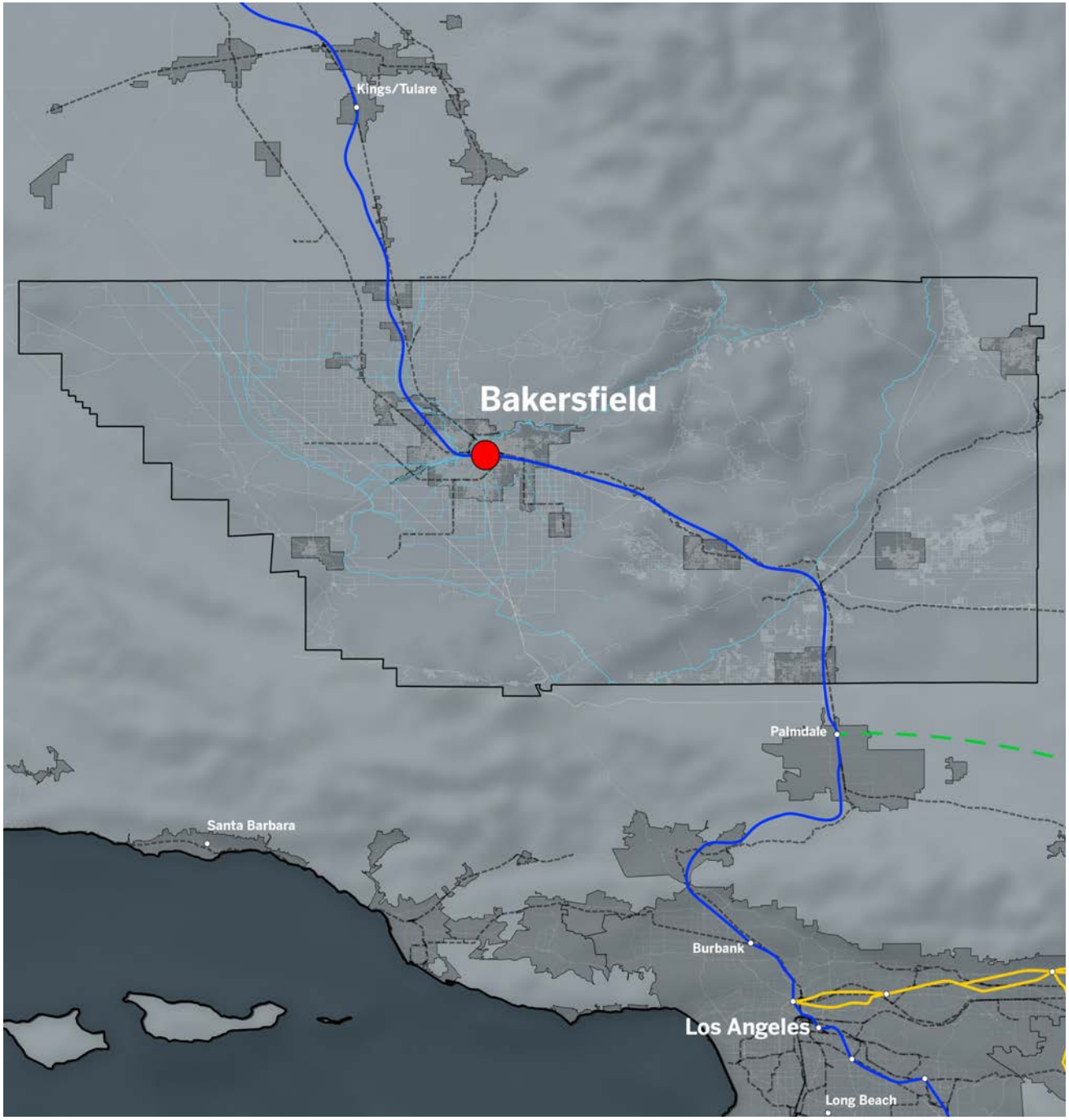
- HSR Alignments - Phase 2
- HSR Alignments - Phase 1
- XpressWest
- Railroads
- Urban Areas

REGIONAL CONTEXT
KERN COUNTY

Center of the Region

Bakersfield is the primary municipality and the seat of Kern County. As the historic core of the region with minimal natural growth constraints other than the Kern River and oilfields to the north, the City has developed in a relatively concentric pattern out from Downtown. As such, Downtown is still the geographic center of the City with the transportation network radiating out from its historic core. Of particular note at this regional scale is the network of farm and irrigation canals, some of which are already being used as bicycle and pedestrian paths. Similar to what has been developed for the Mill Creek linear park, these canals represent an underutilized opportunity for both open space and recreation, but more importantly active transportation connectivity from the greater Bakersfield area into Downtown.

- Kern County Canals
- HSR Alignments - Phase 2
- HSR Alignments - Phase 1
- XpressWest
- Railroads
- Urban Areas

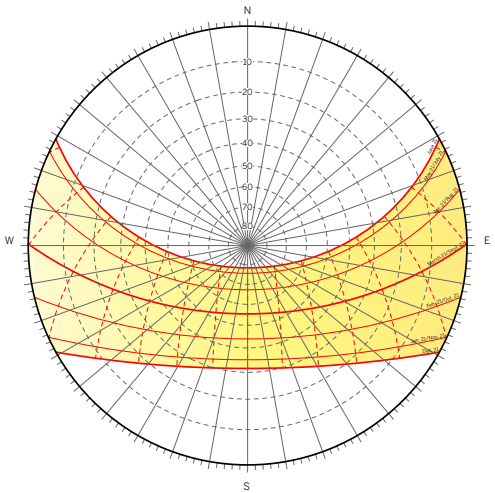


PROJECT AREA
STUDY AREA (AERIAL)

Downtown Bakersfield

The Downtown Bakersfield High-Speed Rail Station Area, comprised of the study area and surrounding neighborhoods, is the boundary for future proposed interventions anticipated to primarily focus on the area around the proposed HSR stations, relevant transportation infrastructure and adjacent commercial opportunities. The sun diagram below depicts the path of the sun through the course of the year.

Sun Path Diagram



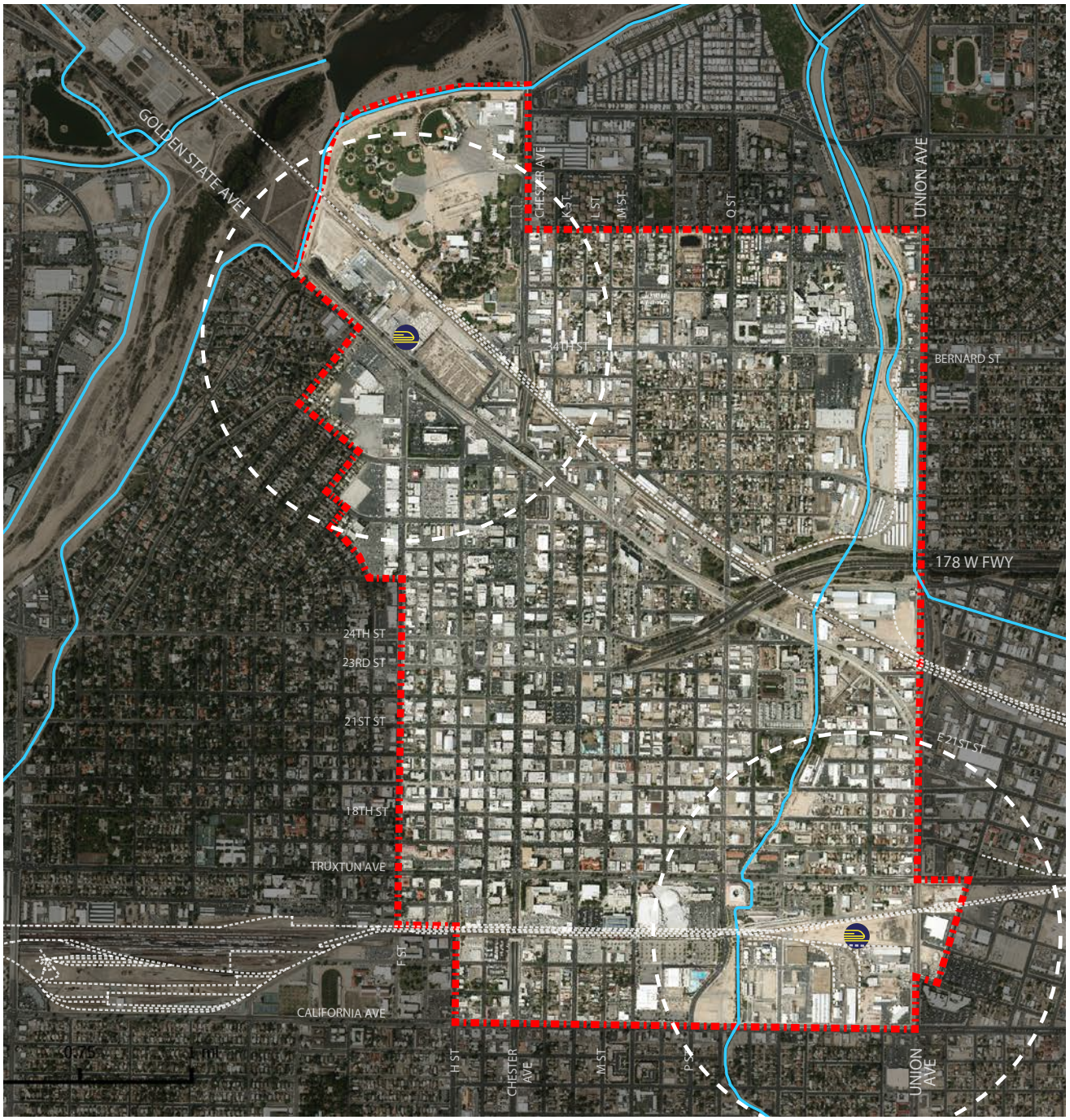
Study Area

1/2 Mile Walk Radius

HSR Station Locations

Kern County Canals

Railroads



MAKING DOWNTOWN BAKERSFIELD

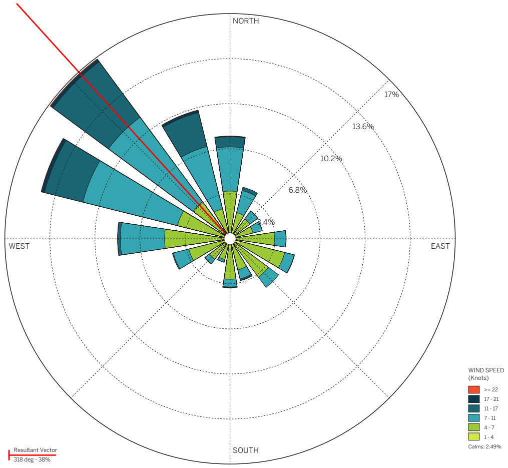
SOM

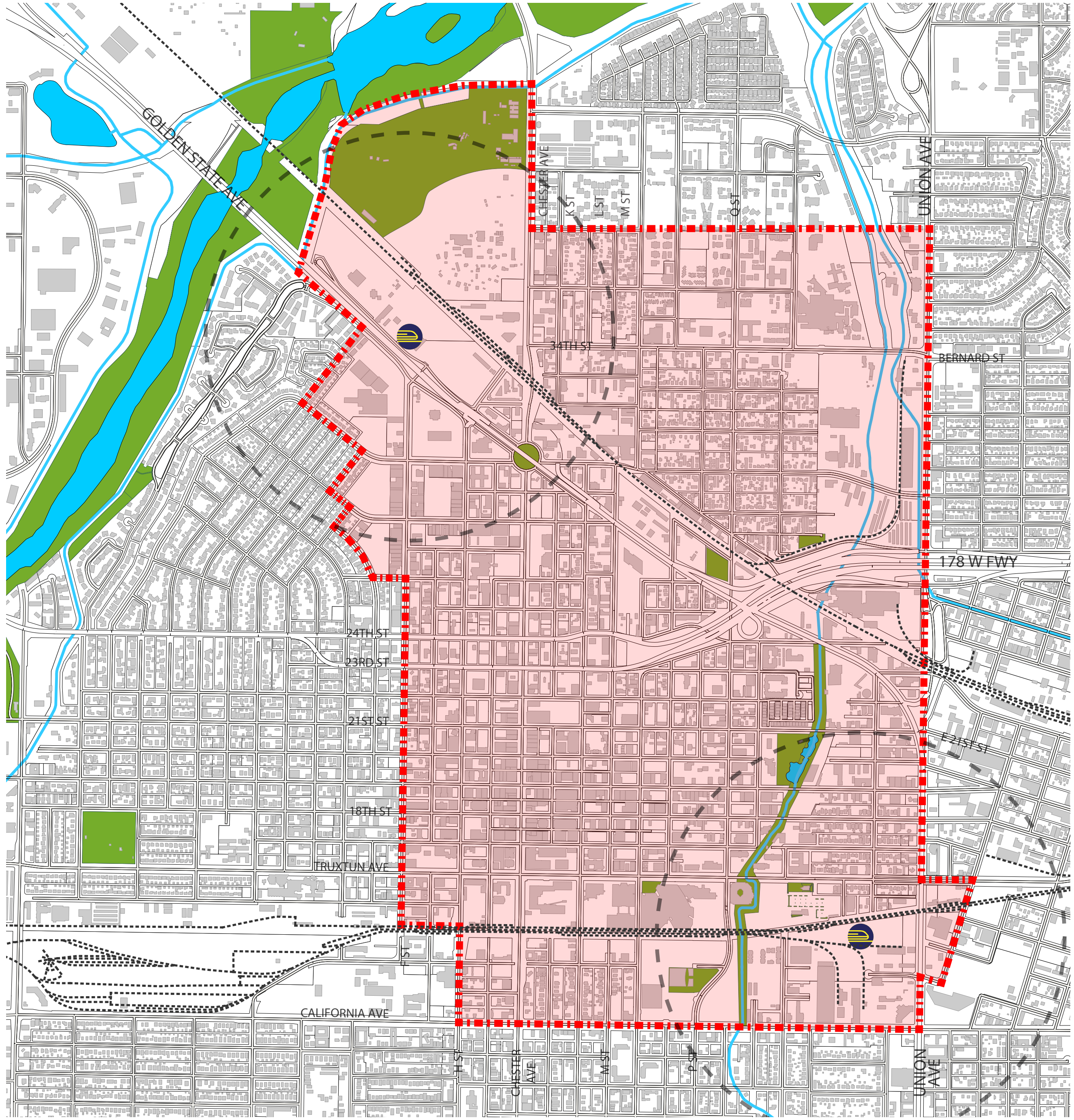
PROJECT AREA
STUDY AREA (FOOTPRINTS)

Downtown Bakersfield

The study area, approximately 2.3 square miles (1472 acres), is generally bound by California Avenue to the south, Union Avenue to the east, 38th Street to the north and F Street to the west. The study area only serves to frame issues and opportunities, and is not meant to constrain this planning process. The wind rose below shows the prevailing wind intensity and direction in Downtown.

Wind Rose





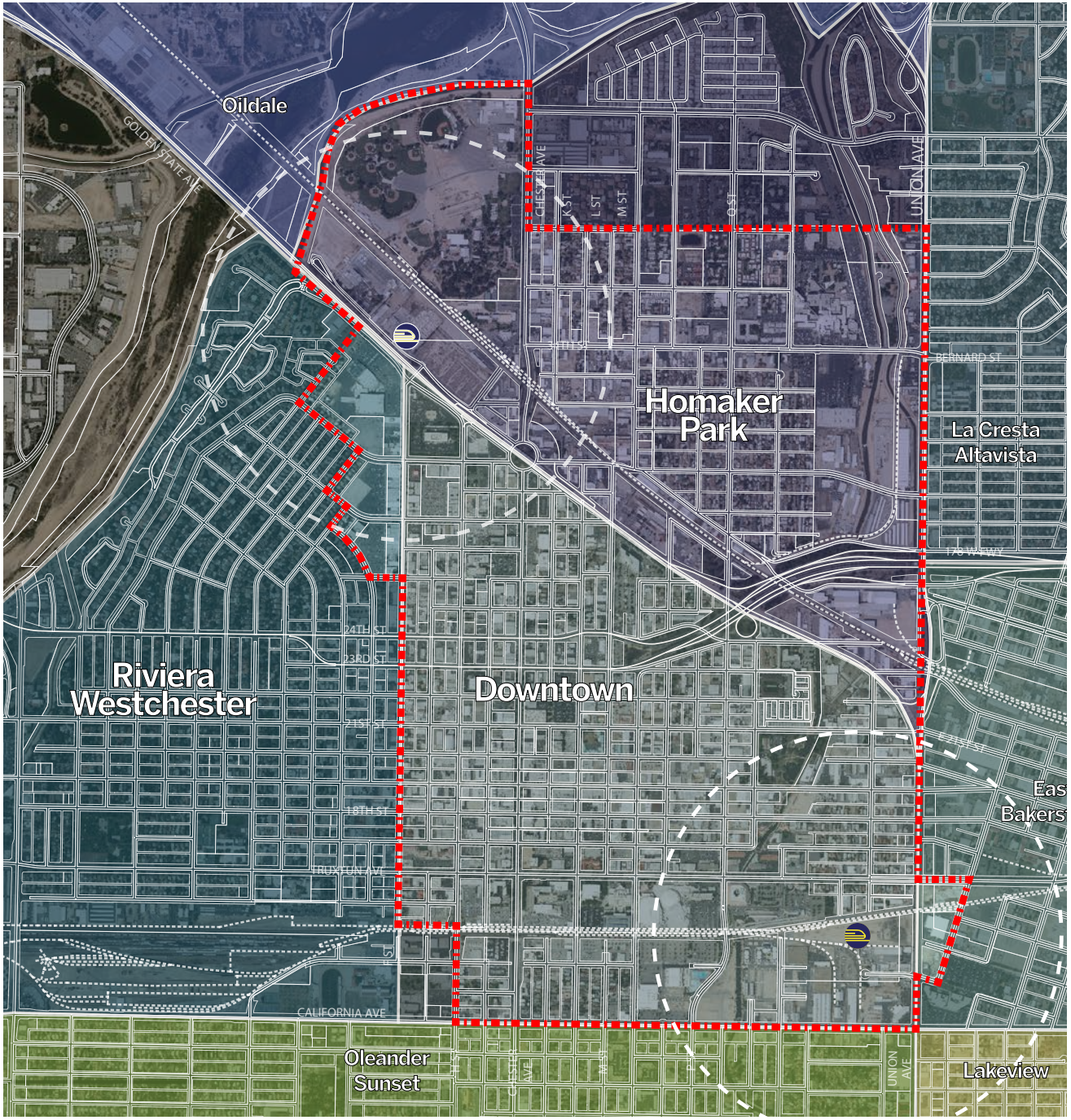
Study Area
1/2 Mile Walk Radius
HSR Station Locations
Kern County Canals
Railroads
Open Space

MAKING DOWNTOWN BAKERSFIELD
SOM

DOWNTOWN NEIGHBORHOODS

More than the CBD

Connecting adjacent neighborhoods to Downtown will increase pedestrian and economic activity by simultaneously reinforcing Downtown as the Central Business District of the entire region and making Downtown the locally serving commercial node for these immediate, inner-ring communities. These new connections will create new pathways and gateways to Downtown, strengthening the identity of the whole.



Study Area

1/2 Mile Walk Radius

HSR Station Locations

Railroads

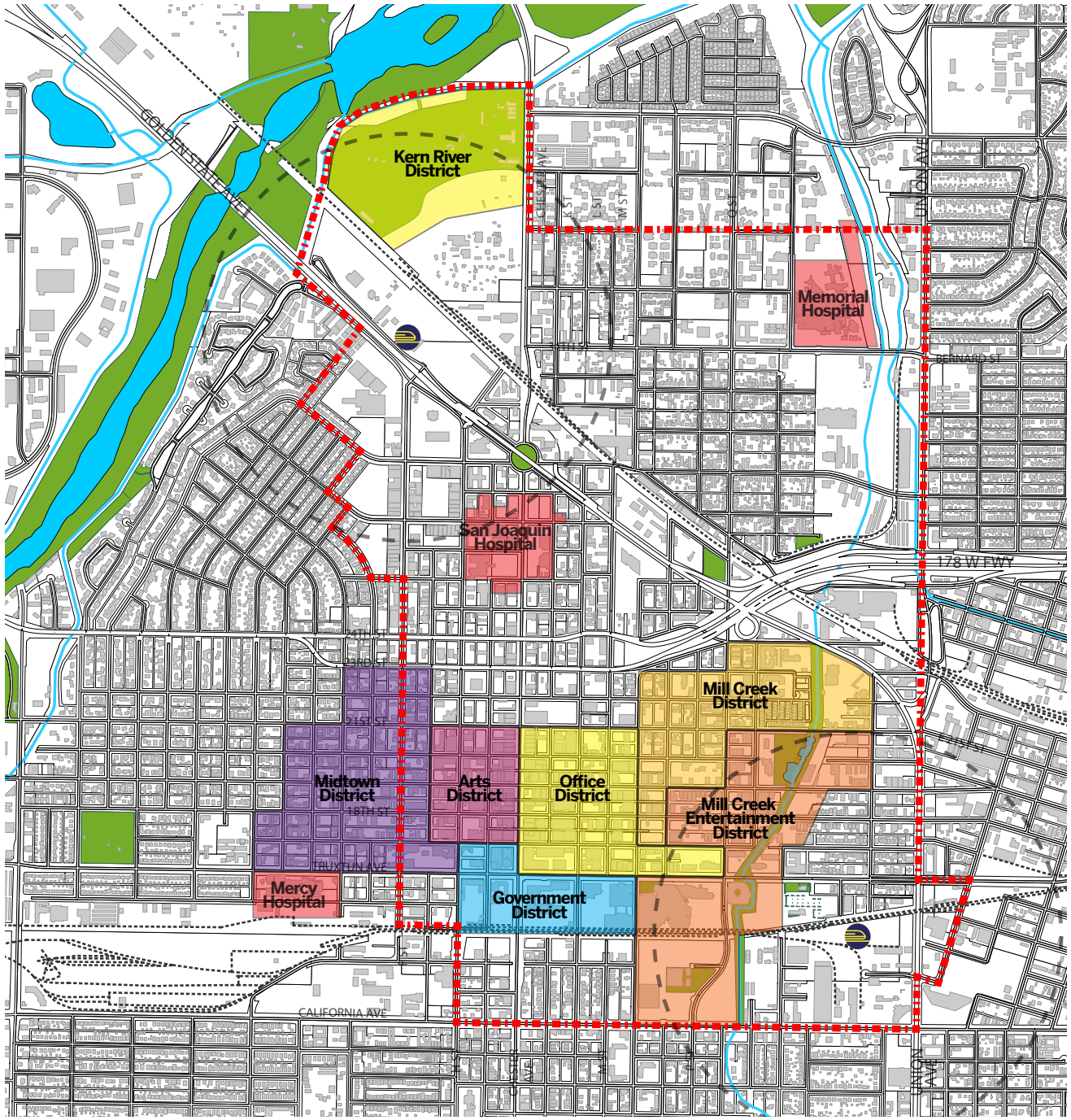
MAKING DOWNTOWN BAKERSFIELD

SOM

DOWNTOWN DISTRICTS

Identity

These Districts, identified by the Downtown Business Association plus all three Downtown hospitals, illustrate the nascent identity of a revitalized Downtown. Their concentration around Chester Avenue and 18th Street denotes a "core" and demonstrates the many definitions of what constitutes "Downtown". Growing, augmenting and creating new Districts will further cultivate the diversity of Downtown's identity with its many services, amenities and destinations.



Study Area
1/2 Mile Walk Radius
HSR Station Locations
Kern County Canals
Railroads
Open Space

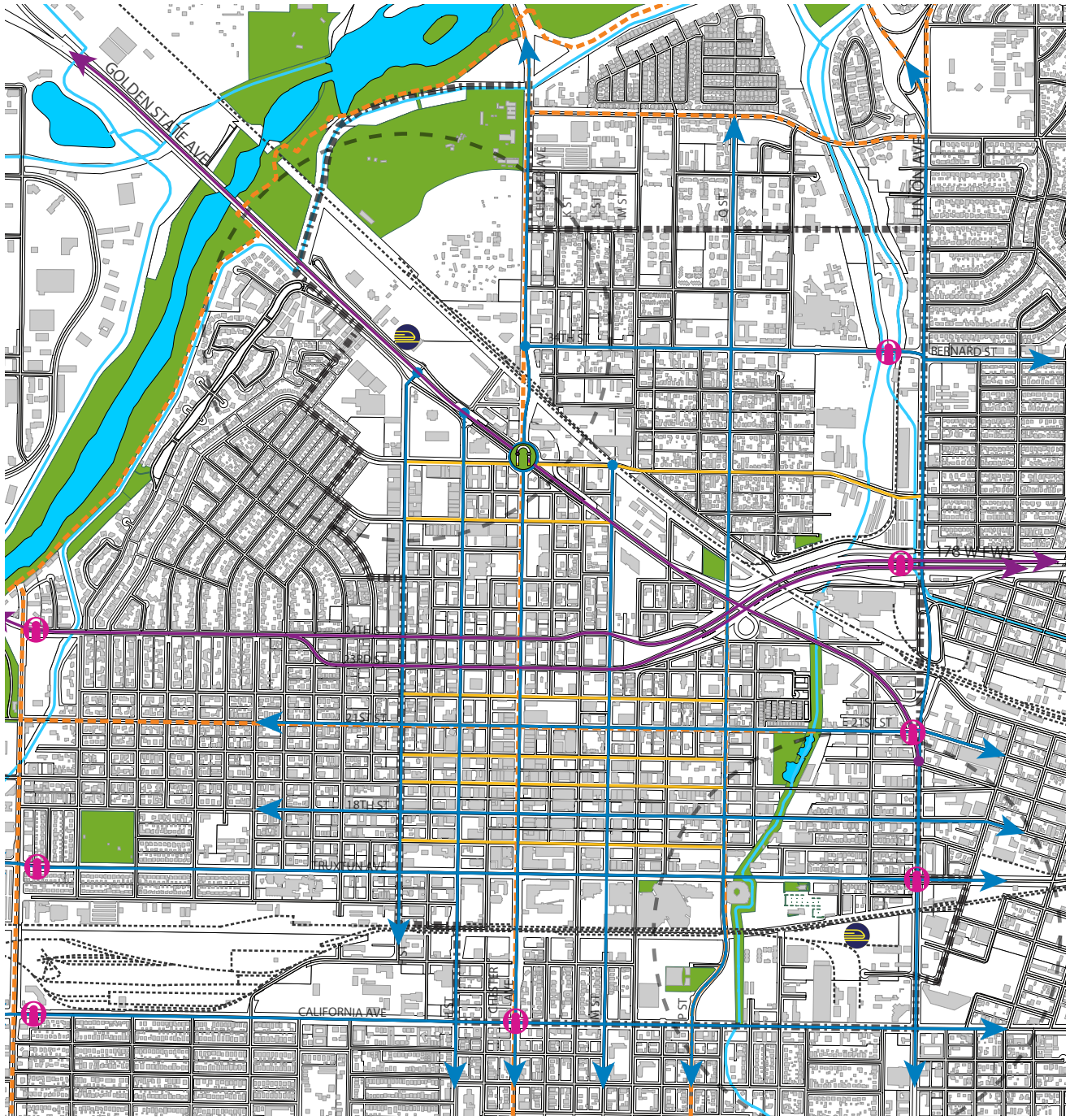
MAKING DOWNTOWN BAKERSFIELD

SOM

CIRCULATION

Corridors and Gateways

Bakersfield is a predominately automobile-oriented community. In contrast, Downtown Bakersfield's historic street grid with small blocks and alleys is very walkable. However, pedestrian activity is limited as most people still drive to and from Downtown locations, buses primarily serve the transit-dependent, and the density of destinations is spread thin across Downtown's comparatively large geographic area. Breaking down the physical and psychological barriers of State Highway 178 (23rd and 24th Streets), Golden State Avenue, vacant and underutilized parcels ("sawtooth streets"), and even the railroad tracks presents an opportunity to no just connect communities, but also celebrate Downtown's infrastructure.



- Expressways
- Major Streets
- Collectors
- Bike Path
- Gateway
- Study Area
- 1/2 Mile Walk Radius
- HSR Station Locations
- Kern County Canals
- Railroads
- Open Space

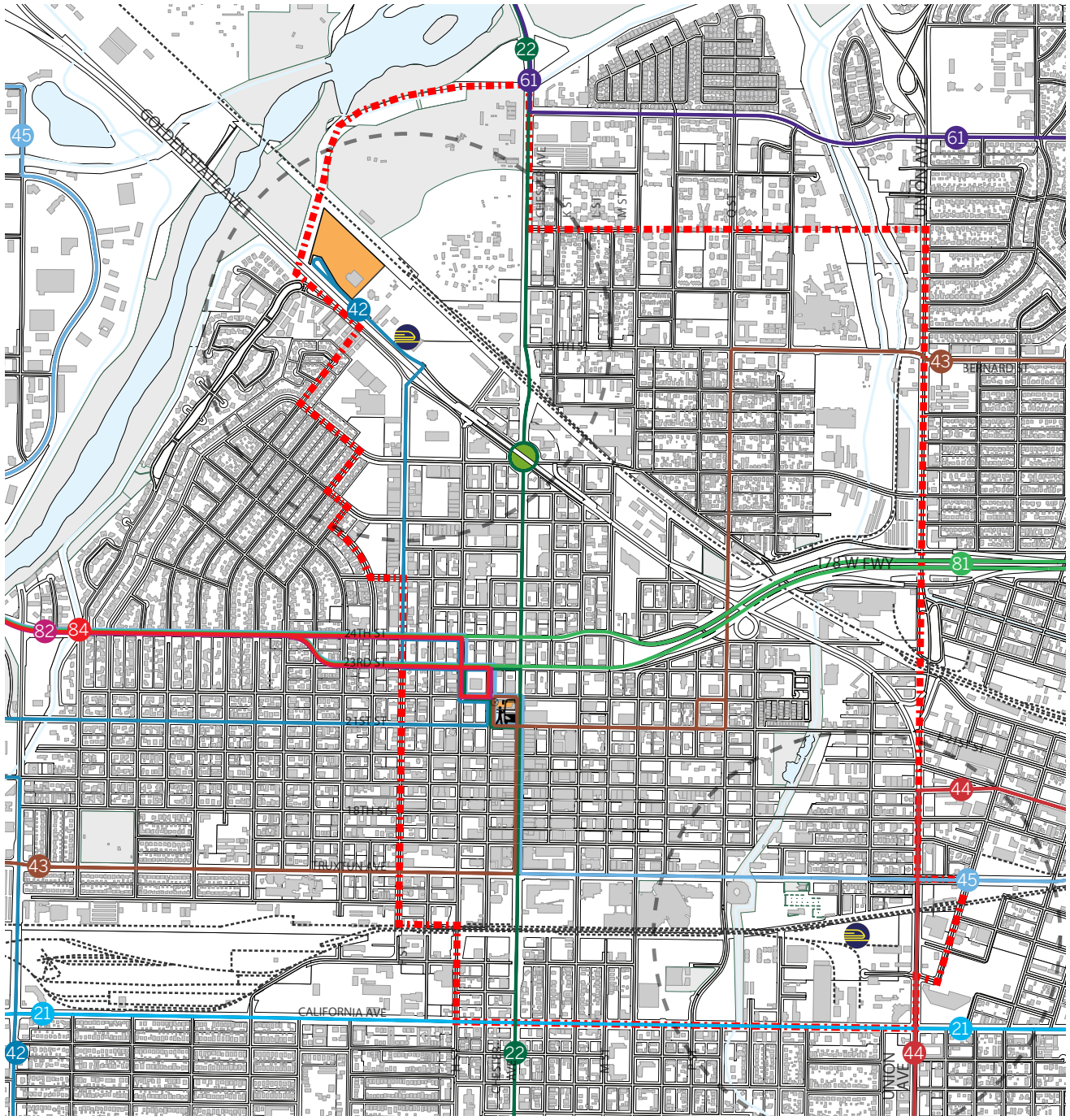
MAKING DOWNTOWN BAKERSFIELD

SOM

TRANSIT ROUTES

Modal Integration

Downtown is the heart of the region's transit network. The buses operate on a hybrid fixed route system, where routes primarily come into and out of Downtown via the Golden Empire Transit Center. The bus system, however, is not integrated with the future F Street High-Speed Rail station location or the existing bicycle pathways that could support modal transfers and first/last mile connections, respectively. The proposed Truxtun HSR station location does connect with the existing bus, bike and pedestrian system. Both potential sites will need to be better integrated regardless, as HSR will augment the modal hierarchy in Downtown.



Transit Center
Transit Facilities
Bus Lines
Study Area
1/2 Mile Walk Radius
HSR Station Locations
Kern County Canals
Railroads
Open Space

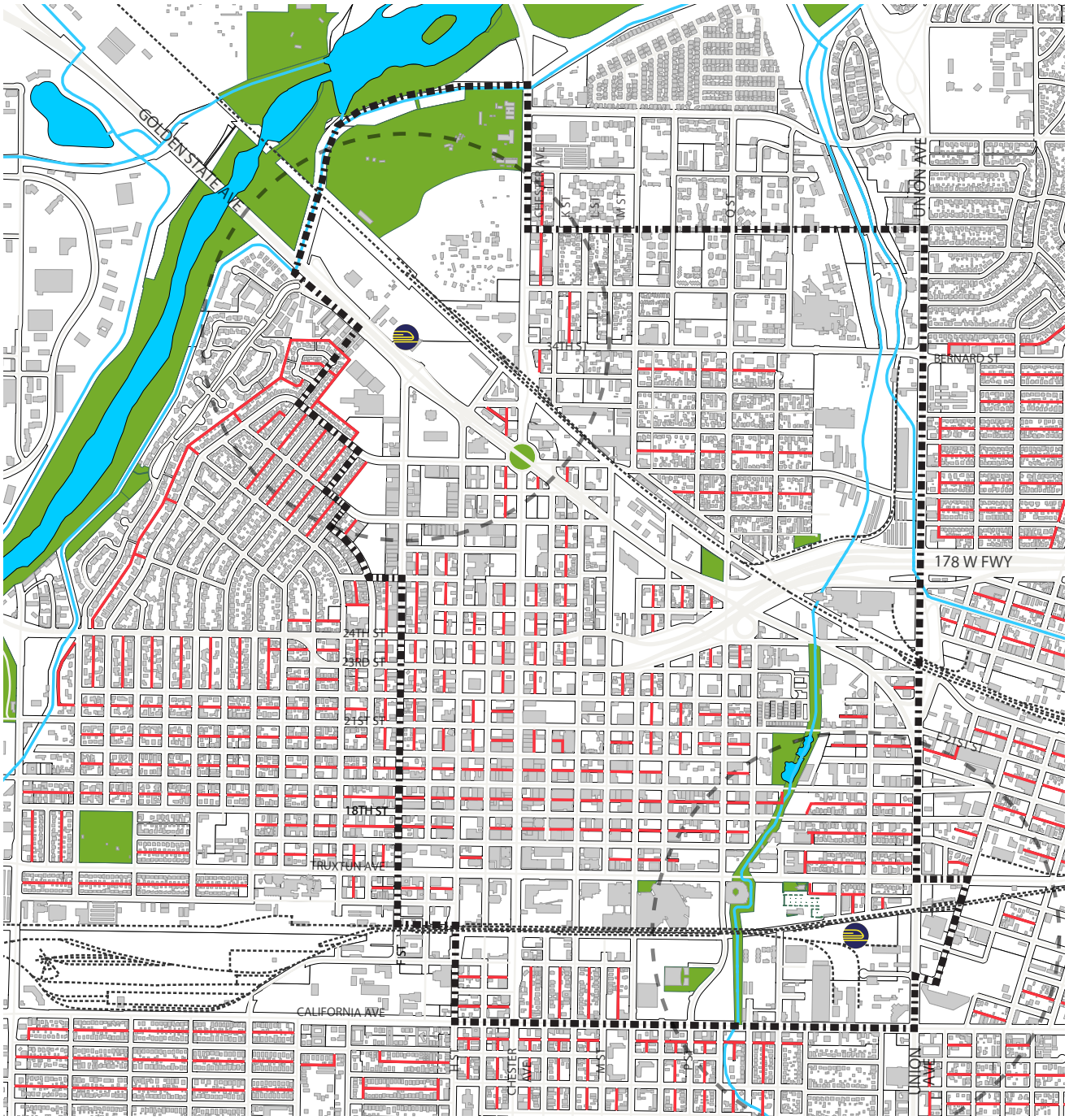
MAKING DOWNTOWN BAKERSFIELD

SOM

ALLEYS

Alternative Pathways

Downtown has a robust network of alleyways, a remnant of the City's historical development patterns. These alleys primarily support city services, but several have been converted to be active alleys with shops and restaurants. Others have been removed and closed to support the circulation of large developments. Maintaining the integrity of the alleyway network in order to support future pathways across and through Downtown would provide increased mobility, and offer a cool, comfortable, and potentially more interesting alternative to the street, leveraging the shade from adjacent buildings during the hot summer months.



Alleys
Study Area
1/2 Mile Walk Radius
HSR Station Locations
Kern County Canals
Railroads
Open Space

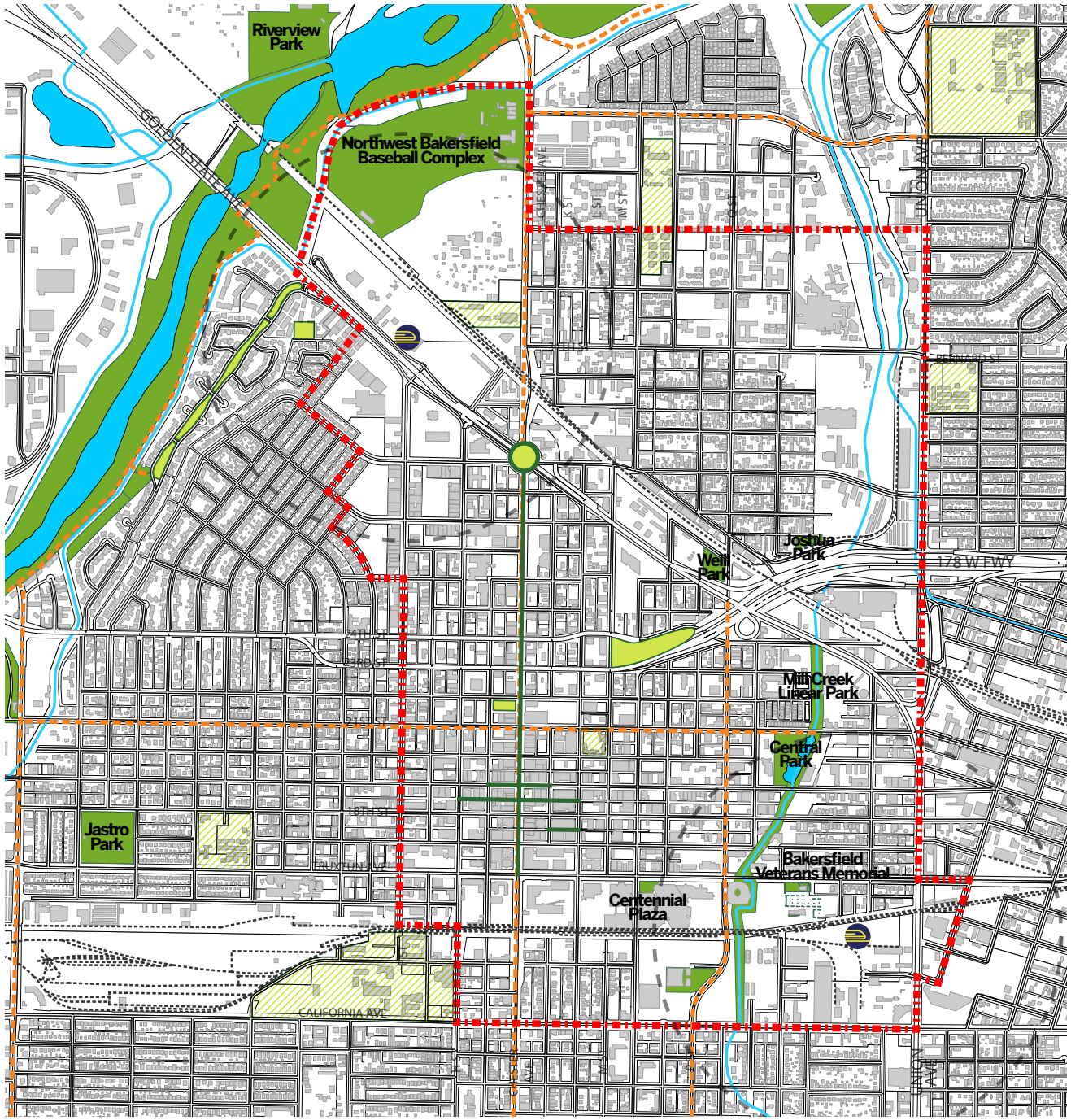
MAKING DOWNTOWN BAKERSFIELD

SOM

OPEN SPACE

Public Realm

Downtown is framed by two open space corridors; the Kern River and Mill Creek Linear Park. These two waterways, however, are not directly linked to one another. Mill Creek could either be extended north to meet the River or a new east-west pathway could be created, potentially retrofitting one of the City's most valuable open space assets, its public right-of-way, to provide an active transportation corridor across Downtown. Outside of those two open spaces there is no primary civic space in Downtown for people to congregate. Leveraging existing open space assets and opening up other dual-use sites such as schools during non-school hours could quickly improve livability by expanding access to active and passive recreation opportunities.



- Dual-Use Sites (Schools)
- Opportunity Spaces
- Streetscape Improvements (paving, lighting, landscaping, street furniture, signage)
- Bike Path
- Study Area
- 1/2 Mile Walk Radius
- HSR Station Locations
- Kern County Canals
- Railroads
- Open Space

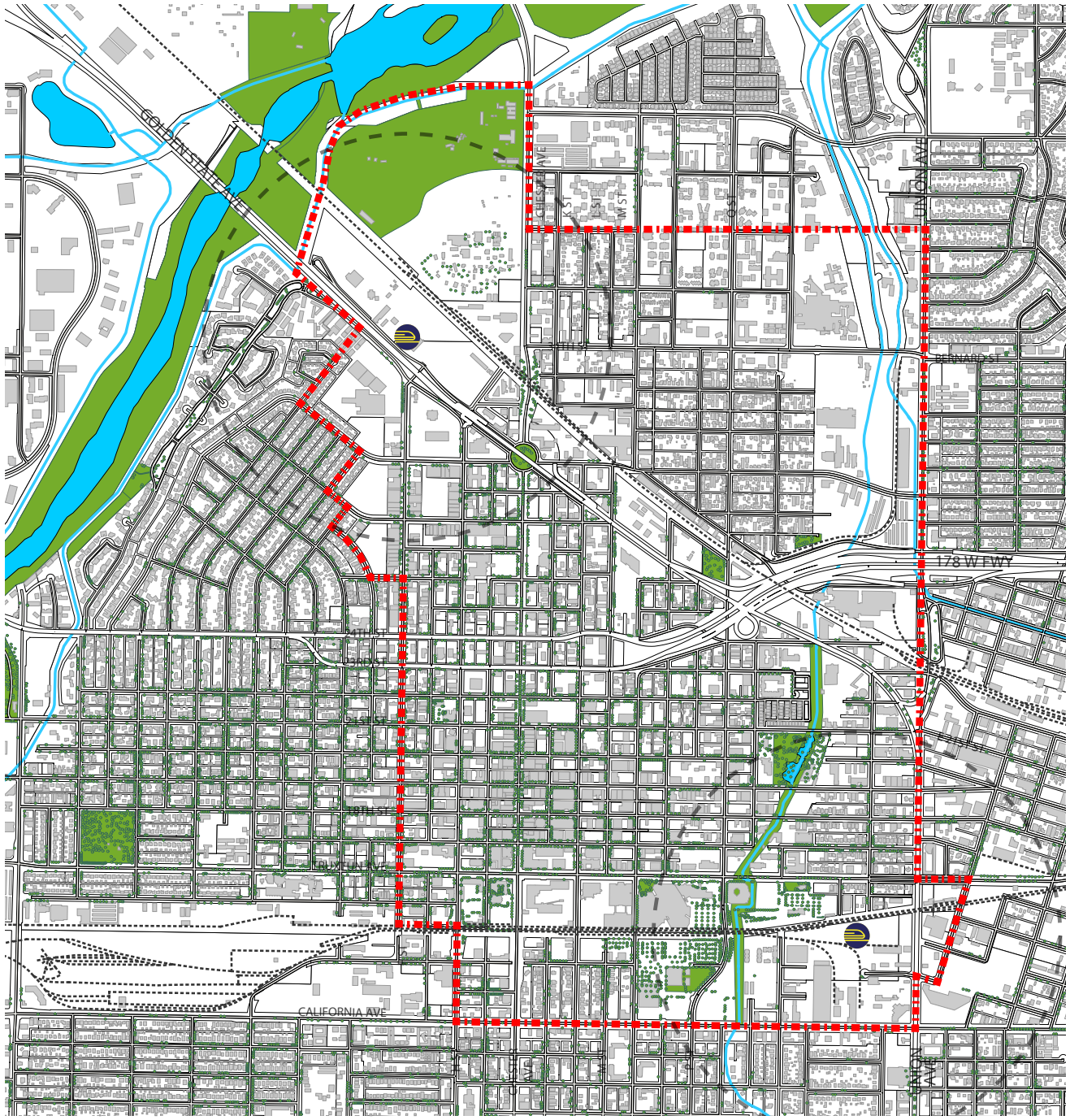
MAKING DOWNTOWN BAKERSFIELD

SOM

TREE CANOPY

Livability

Downtown Bakersfield and its adjacent neighborhoods have inconsistent tree canopy coverage. Where the Westchester neighborhood and historic Downtown (Chester and 19th Street area) have good tree canopy coverage, most other parts of the Study Area are spotty at best. A lack of street trees creates an urban environment that is hotter in the summer, colder in the winter, and windier throughout the year. Street trees are one of the easiest and cheapest sustainability implementation actions as they improve air quality, reduce the urban heat island effect, and mitigate stormwater runoff.



Tree Canopy
Study Area
1/2 Mile Walk Radius
HSR Station Locations
Kern County Canals
Railroads
Open Space

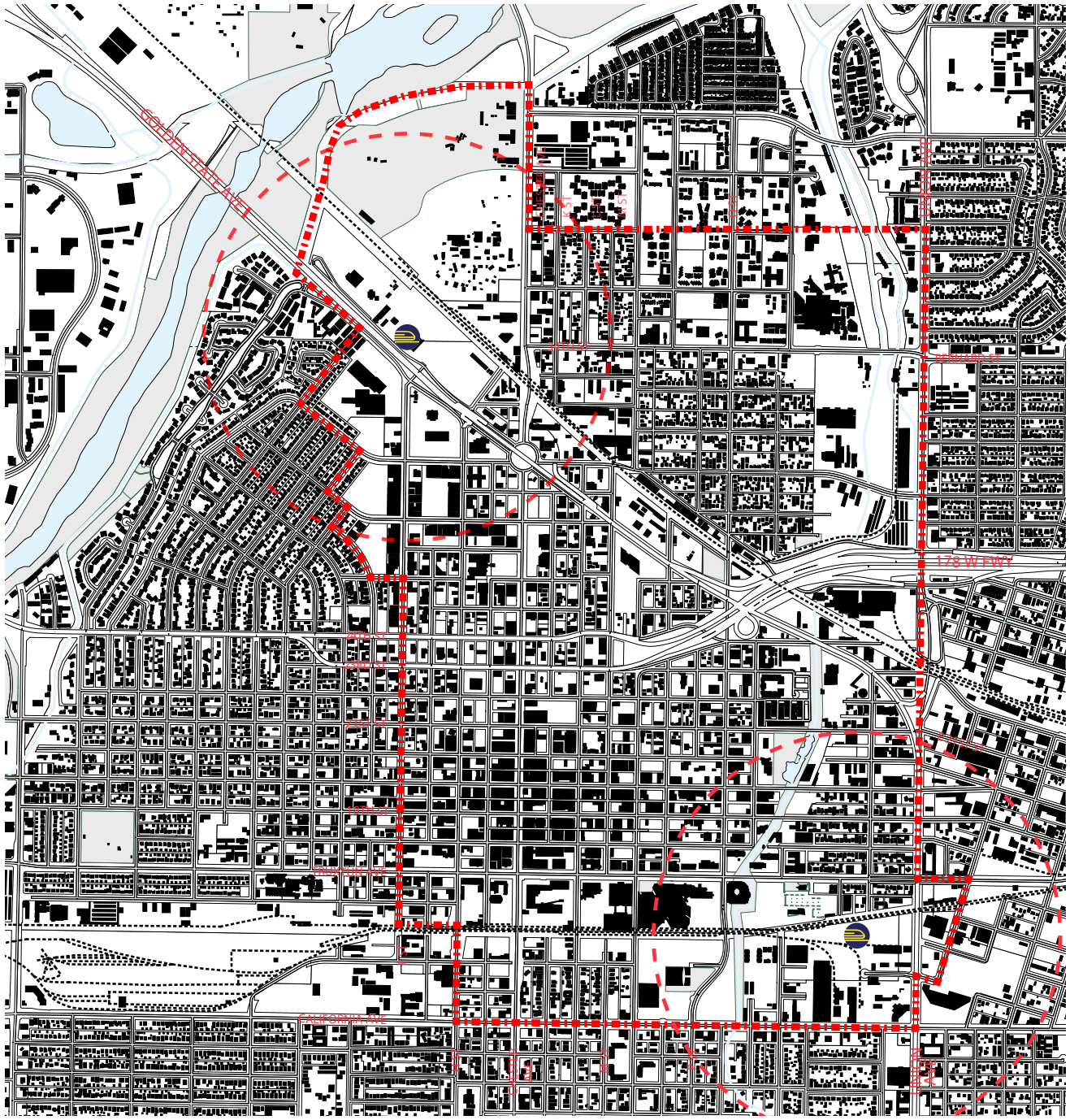
MAKING DOWNTOWN BAKERSFIELD

SOM

FIGURE GROUND

Building Intensity

The intensity of buildings illustrated by the figure ground show a concentration of what could be described as Downtown Bakersfield's "historic core" at Chester Avenue and 18th and 19th Streets. The intensity of buildings also shows the impacts both the railroad and highway systems have had on the historical development of Downtown. Where railroads brought about swaths of industrial uses across downtown, highways show a deterioration in the compactness of the urban fabric as it attracts less intensive automobile-oriented uses.



Study Area

1/2 Mile Walk Radius

HSR Station Locations

Railroads

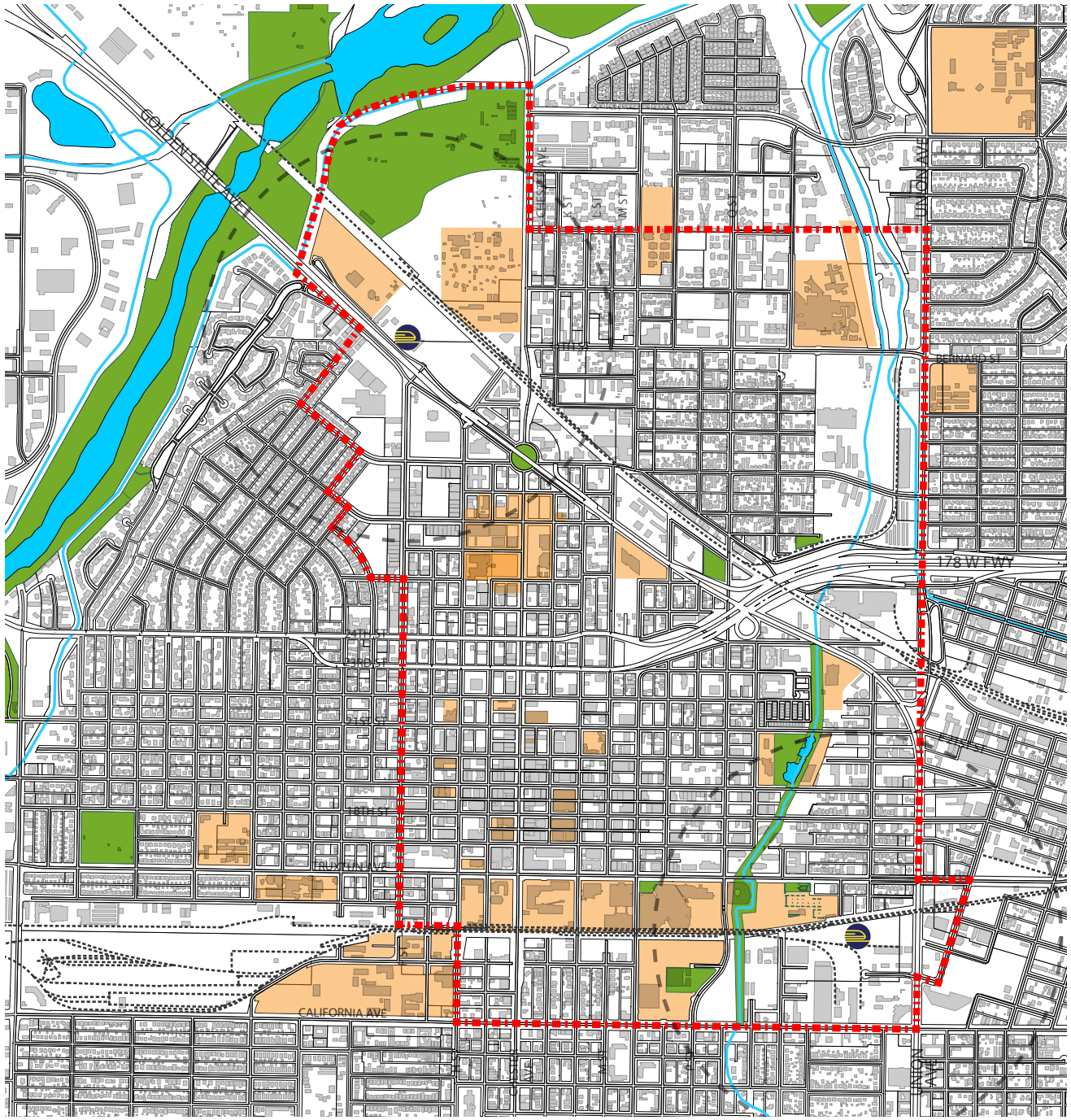
MAKING DOWNTOWN BAKERSFIELD

SOM

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

1. Bakersfield City Hall
2. Bakersfield City Hall North
3. Bakersfield Community Development Department
4. Bakersfield Police Department
5. Bakersfield Fire Department
6. Beale Memorial Library
7. Rabobank Arena and Convention Center
8. San Joaquin Community Hospital Ice Center of Bakersfield
9. McMurtrey Aquatic Center
10. Golden Empire Transit Center
11. Golden Empire Transit Headquarters
12. Buena Vista Museum of Natural History
13. Bakersfield Museum of Art
14. Kern County Superior Court
15. Kern County Assessor
16. Kern County Community Schools
17. Kern County Community College District
18. Kern County Child Support Services
19. Kern County Public Service Building
20. Kern County Museum
21. Bakersfield High School
22. Franklin Elementary School
23. Downtown Elementary
24. Stella Hills Elementary
25. Valley Oaks Charter School
26. Mercy Hospital
27. San Joaquin Community Hospital
28. Memorial Hospital
29. Department of Motor Vehicles
30. Bakersfield Amtrak
31. New Federal Courthouse

Community Facilities
Study Area
1/2 Mile Walk Radius
HSR Station Locations
Kern County Canals
Railroads
Open Space

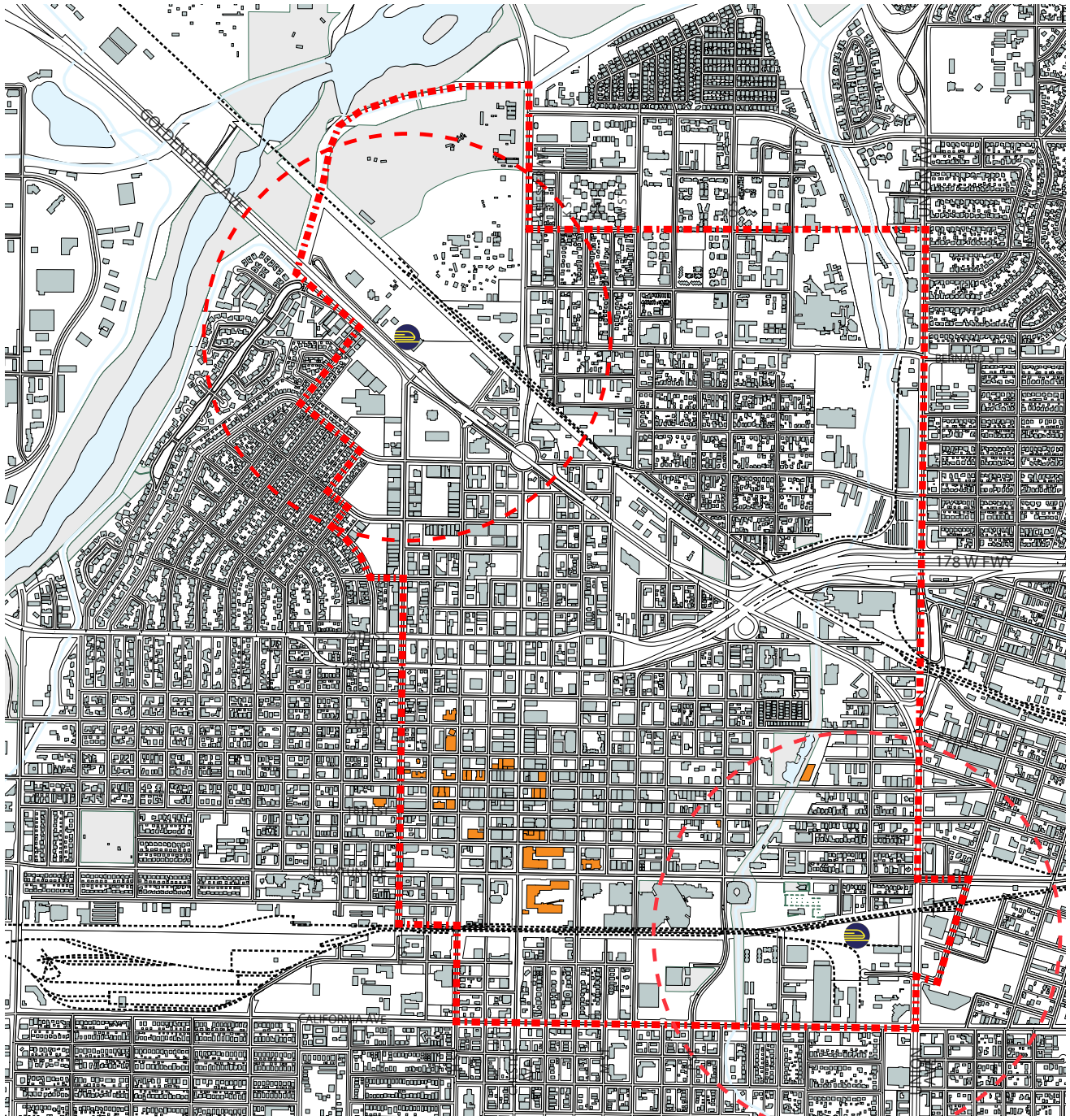


MAKING DOWNTOWN BAKERSFIELD

SOM

SIGNIFICANT BUILDINGS

1. Jastro House (1875) – 1811 20th Street
2. Kern County Land Company (1893) – 1712 19th Street
3. Nile Theatre (1906/1938) – 1721 19th Street
4. Kern County Hall of Records (1908/1940) – 1655 Chester Avenue
5. Tegler Hotel (1914) – 1908 H Street
6. Hayden Building (1915) – 1622 19th Street
7. Standard Oil Building (1917/1921) – 1800 19th Street
8. Masonic Temple (1924) – 1920 18th Street
9. US Post Office (1925) – 1730 18th Street
10. Bakersfield Californian (1926/1936) – 1707 Eye Street
11. Padre Hotel (1928) – 1702 18th Street
12. New China Café (1928) – 801 18th Street
13. Haberfelde Building (1929) – 1706 Chester Avenue
14. Fox Theatre (1930) – 2001 H Street
15. Old Bank of America Building (1930) – 1931 Chester Avenue
16. First Baptist Church (1931) – 1200 Truxtun Avenue
17. Kress Building (1931) – 1401 19th Street
18. Sill Building (1939) – 1508 18th Street
19. Woolworth Building (1939) – 1400 19th Street
20. Davis House (1939) – 2914 West 21st Street
21. Bakersfield Fire Department (1939) – 2120 H Street
22. Kern County Superior Court (1959) 1415 Truxtun Ave.
23. Bank of American Financial Center (1973) – 1440 Truxtun Avenue
24. New Federal Courthouse (2012) - 510 19th Street



Significant Buildings

Study Area

1/2 Mile Walk Radius

HSR Station Locations

Railroads

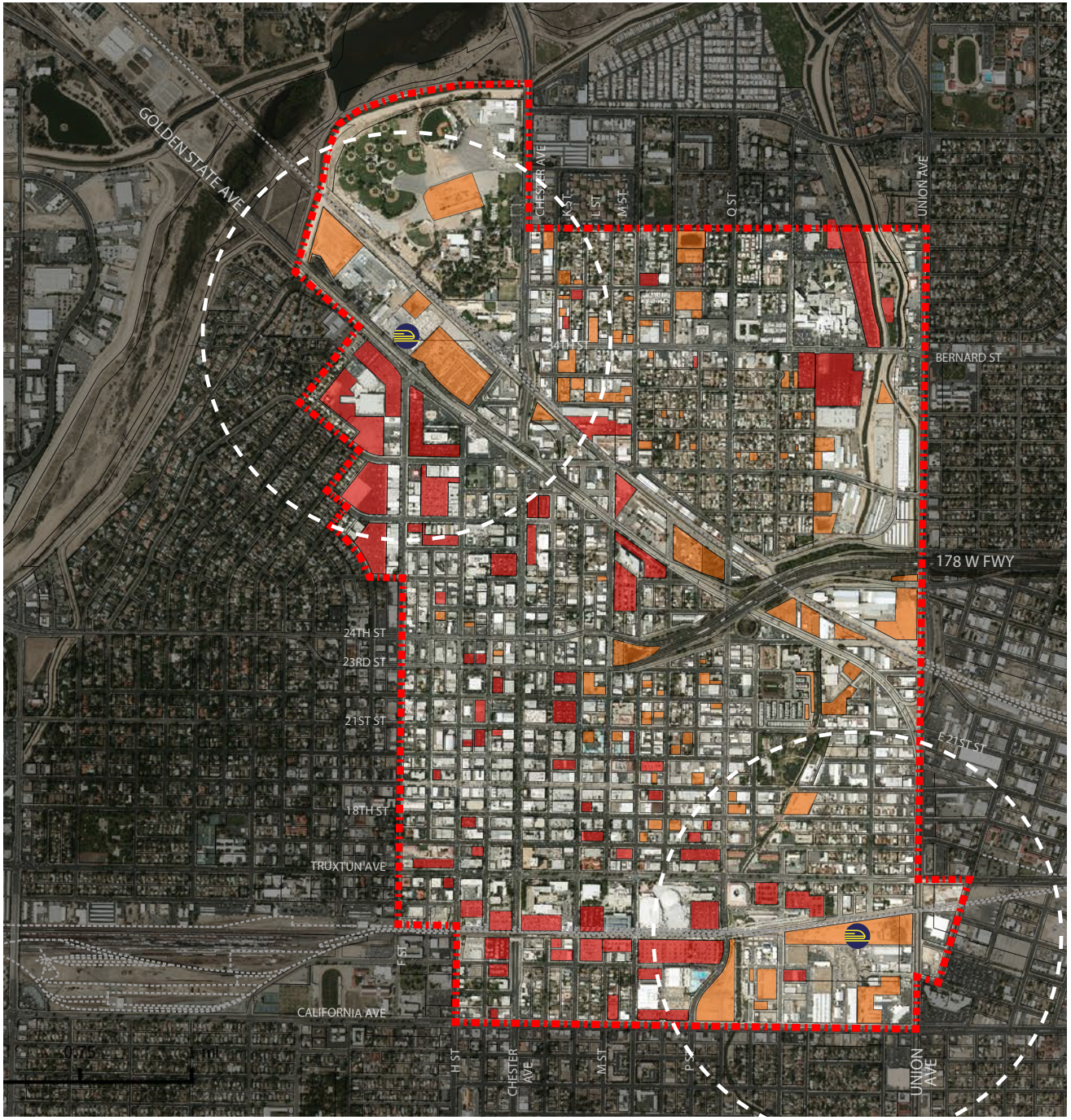
MAKING DOWNTOWN BAKERSFIELD

SOM

UNDERUTILIZED PARCELS

Soft Sites

Between surface parking lots and currently vacant parcels, there is a plethora of underutilized land in Downtown. This quick aerial survey does not denote properties that are less valuable than the land on which they sit. These soft sites should be targeted for more active and compact uses that improve the vibrancy of Downtown, and benefit the tax rolls. The availability and size of these underutilized parcels ranges widely across the study area, creating opportunities for all levels of infill development and reinvestment.



Vacant Lots
Surface Parking
Study Area
1/2 Mile Walk Radius
HSR Station Locations
Kern County Canals
Railroads

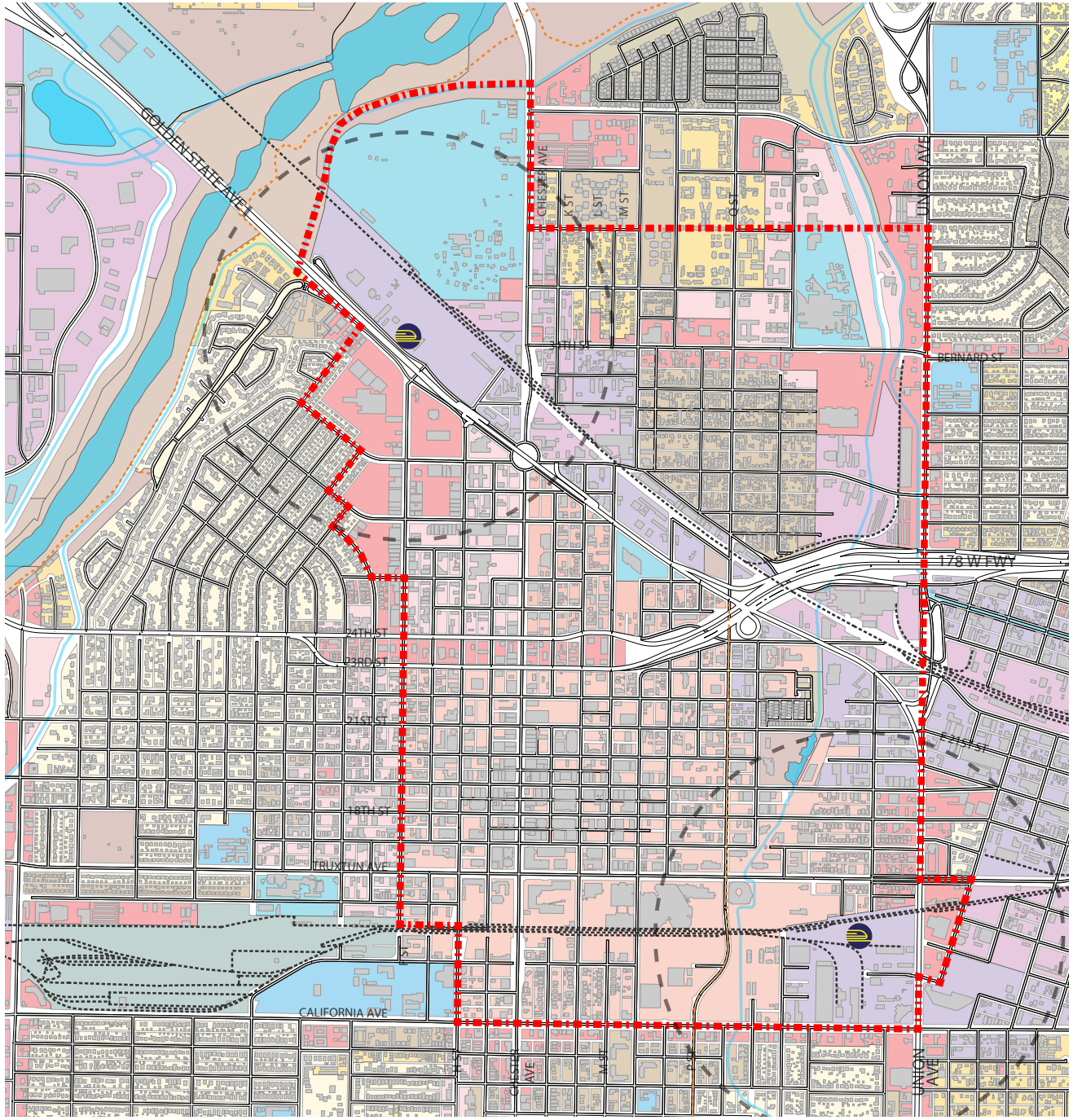
MAKING DOWNTOWN BAKERSFIELD

SOM

LAND USE

- LR - Low Density Residential
- LMR/LR - County Jurisdiction
- LMR - Low Medium Density Residential
- HMR - High Medium Density Residential
- HR - High Density Residential
- HC - Highway Commercial
- GC - General Commercial
- OC - Office Commercial
- MC - Major Commercial
- MUC - Mixed Use
- LI - Light Industrial
- SI - Service industrial
- HI - Heavy Industrial
- OS - Open Space
- OS-P - Parks and Recreation Facilities
- P - Public Facilities
- PS - Public and Private Schools
- PT - Public Transportation Corridor

- Study Area
- 1/2 Mile Walk Radius
- HSR Station Locations
- Kern County Canals
- Railroads



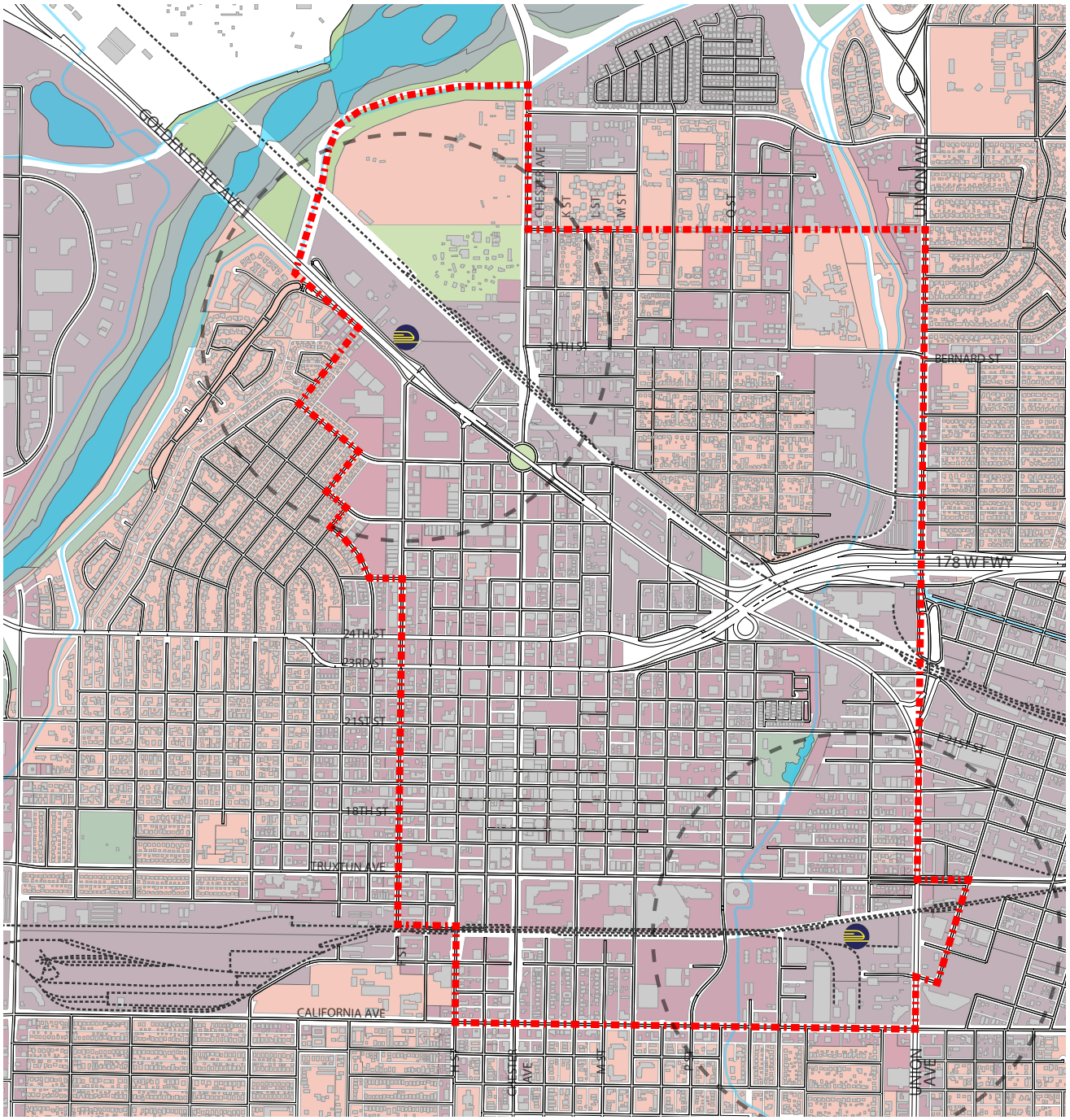
MAKING DOWNTOWN BAKERSFIELD

SOM

ZONING

Flexibility

Commercial is the predominant zone in the study area and Downtown. This zone has no height limit, an FAR of 2:1, and great flexibility of use types and mixtures.



- A - Agriculture
- C - Commercial
- FP - Floodplain
- HOSP - Hospital
- M - Manufacturing
- OS - Open Space
- P - Parking
- R - Residential

- Study Area
- 1/2 Mile Walk Radius
- HSR Station Locations
- Kern County Canals
- Railroads

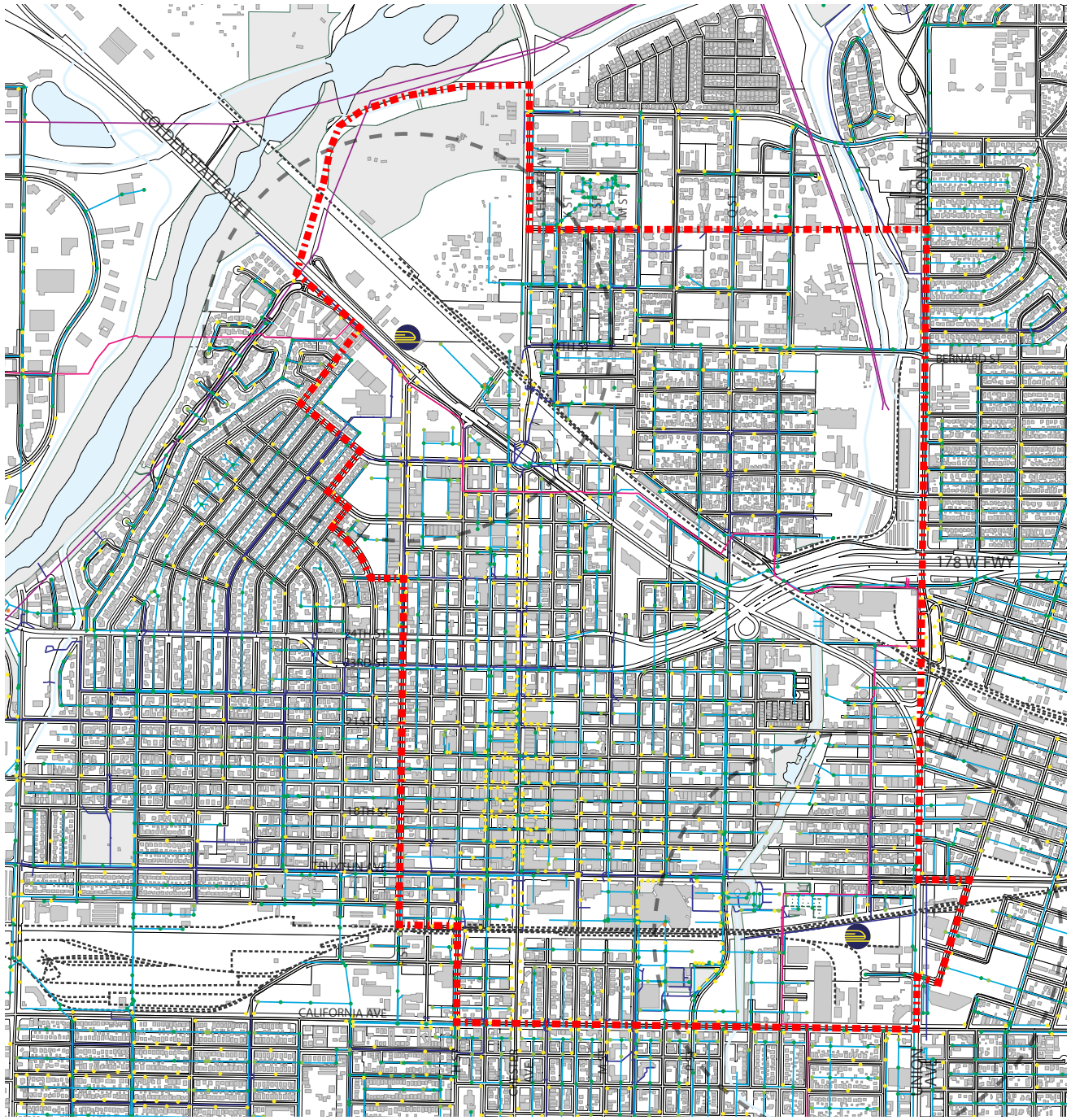
MAKING DOWNTOWN BAKERSFIELD

SOM

UTILITIES

Infrastructure Investment

Infrastructure easements primarily follow existing road and alley right-of-ways in Downtown and its surrounding neighborhoods. At both potential station locations there is a gap in coverage as adjacent uses were historically large industrial parcels along the railroads. The infrastructure at these sites will need to be addressed as more fine-grained transit-oriented development is anticipated for the immediate station areas.



- Liftstations
- Street Lights
- Manholes
- Electrical Pipelines
- Electrical Lines
- Cleanouts
- Sewer Pipes
- Stormwater Pipes
- Study Area
- 1/2 Mile Walk Radius
- HSR Station Locations
- Kern County Canals
- Railroads

MAKING DOWNTOWN BAKERSFIELD

SOM

ACCESS STUDY
MULTI MODAL CONNECTIVITY

MAKING
DOWNTOWN
BAKERSFIELD

Service

Under current California High-Speed Rail Authority plans, high-speed rail service between Bakersfield and San Francisco could be introduced as soon as 2025 , with service to Merced and Anaheim beginning in 2029. Under CHSRA's Draft 2016 Business Plan, frequencies for Bakersfield service would be as shown in Figure 1.

As Figure 1 indicates, initial service would consist of just one train per hour during the mid-day, and two trains per hour during peak periods. Service would also operate only to the north, with connecting bus service to the Los Angeles area. Upon extension of rail service to the Los Angeles area and Merced, service levels would be increased to eight trains per hour peak and five per hour off-peak.

Estimated Ridership, Access by Mode and Parking

While station-level ridership estimates were not made public as part of the release of the Draft 2016 Business Plan, in 2012 CHSRA projected total in the year 2030 of between 4,200 and 5,400 daily boardings at Bakersfield Station if service were provided to San Francisco, Merced and Anaheim. Service levels of six peak and five off-peak trains per hour were assumed, and fares were assumed to be equivalent to 83 percent of average airfare between San Francisco and Los Angeles (with lower fares for shorter distances).

According to CHSRA's Final Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS): Fresno to Bakersfield, released in 2014, Bakersfield Station would generate 4,523 auto trips daily in the year 2035, including 878 in both the AM and PM peak hours. EIR/EIS analysis also found that 900 passengers per day would arrive or depart via transit, and that 500 per day would arrive or depart on foot or by bicycle.

The EIR/EIS also indicates that Bakersfield Station would feature 2,300 parking spaces on-site, sufficient to accommodate demand in the year 2035 (page 3.2-104). However, the Transportation Analysis Technical Report accompanying the EIR/EIS includes an annotated site plan for the Truxtun Avenue site (on page 2–18, excerpted here in Figure 22) featuring three seven-level garages and four surface lots with a total of 4,960 spaces.

Figure 1: CAHSRA Draft 2016 Business Plan - Service Plan

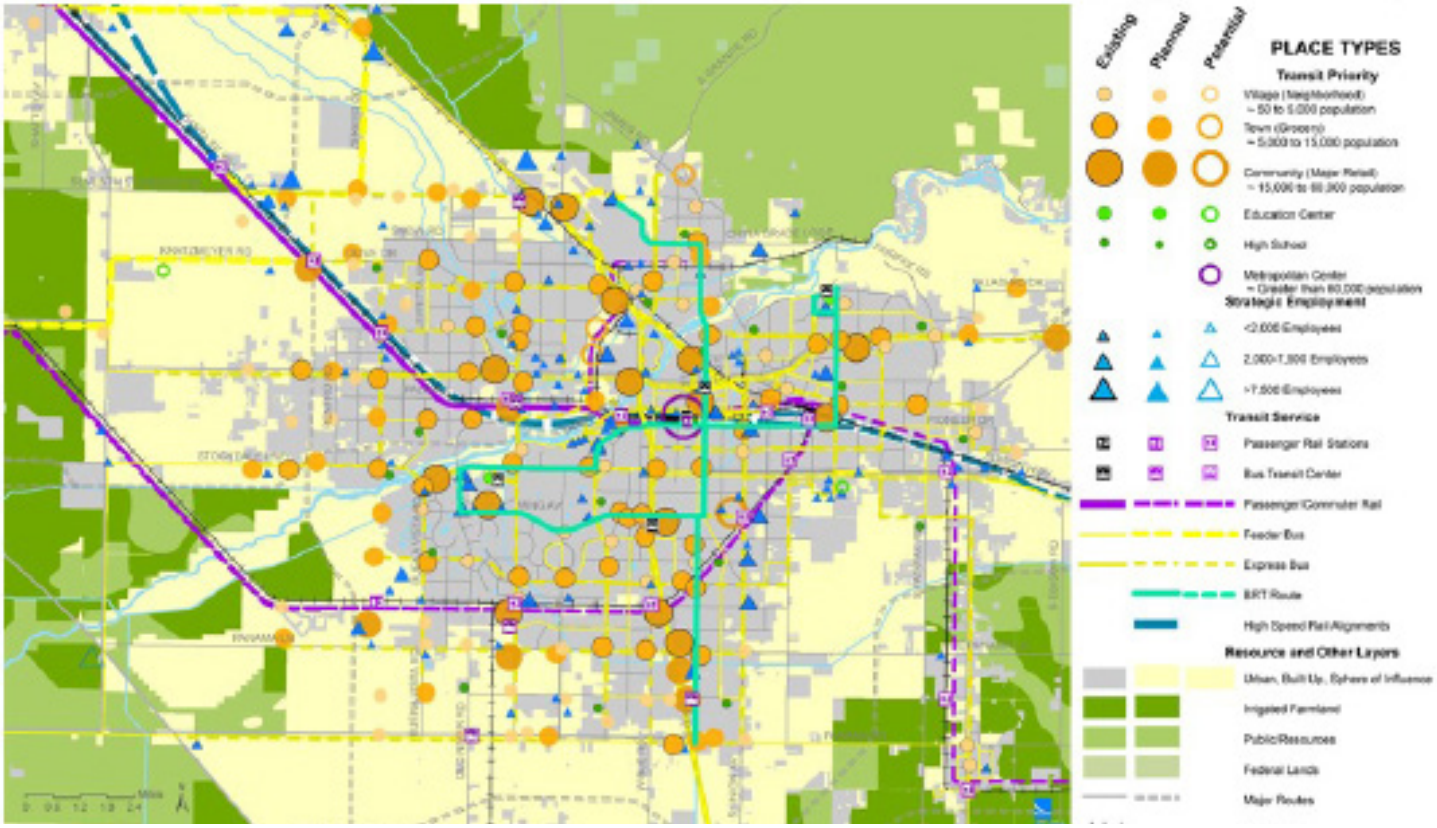
Phase	Rail		Bus	
	Destination	Frequency	Destination	Frequency
Silicon Valley to Central Valley Line Extension	San Francisco	30 mins peak 60 mins off-peak	Los Angeles Union Station	30 mins peak 60 mins off-peak
			West Los Angeles	30 mins peak 60 mins off-peak
			Santa Anita	30 mins peak 60 mins off-peak
Phase 1	San Francisco	15 mins peak 15 mins off-peak	n/a	
	San Jose	10 mins peak 15 mins off-peak		
	Merced	30 mins peak 60 mins off-peak		
	Los Angeles	7.5 mins peak 12 mins off-peak		
	Anaheim	20 mins peak 30 mins off-peak		

Station Sites

Two sites remain under consideration for the Bakersfield Station: the "Hybrid Alternative" site adjacent to the existing Amtrak station on the south side of Truxtun just west of Union Avenue, and the "F Street" site at the terminus of F Street and north of State Route 204 (SR 204). Only the Truxtun site was analyzed in the EIR/EIS, as the F Street site had not yet been identified as an option. For that reason, much of the analysis in this document (including figures in the previous section) assumes both potential HSR station sites produce the same global impacts.

*This would require additional funding. Without additional funding, service would initially operate between San Jose and Shafter, and would not be extended to Bakersfield until 2029.

Figure 2: RTP Place Types in Central Bakersfield (as of 2014)



Regional Transportation Plan

The 2014 Kern Council of Governments (Kern **COG**) Regional Transportation Plan (**RTP**) is Kern County's long-range transportation plan (LRTP). It includes a Constrained Program of Projects or list of planned capital investments through the year **2040**. In the downtown area, the program includes:

- Passenger rail improvements including the high-speed rail station and right-of-way.
- The addition of an Amtrak local stop in North-West Bakersfield
- Creation of high quality transit corridors using express bus, rapid bus and bus rapid transit (BRT) strategies.
- High occupancy vehicle (**HOV**) lanes on the State Route **178** (**SR 178**) freeway.
- The Hageman Flyover connecting State Route **204** (SR **204**) to northwest Bakersfield (see **TRIPS** subsection, next section).
- The **24**th Street Improvements project widening **23**rd and **24**th streets downtown (see **TRIPS** section).
- **SR 204** widening and new interchange at F Street.

As required under California law, the **RTP** also includes a Sustainable Communities Strategy (**SCS**) integrating the transportation plan with a land use plan and designed to achieve state targets for reduction of greenhouse gas (**GHG**) carbon emissions. The **SCS** is based on the "place types" approach to conceptualizing land use patterns previously developed in **2009** for the Kern Regional Blueprint program, a predecessor to the current **RTP** and **SCS**. In the place types approach, "places" might be thought of as nodes with different land use characters and intensities. Identified places in central Bakersfield are shown in Figure 2.

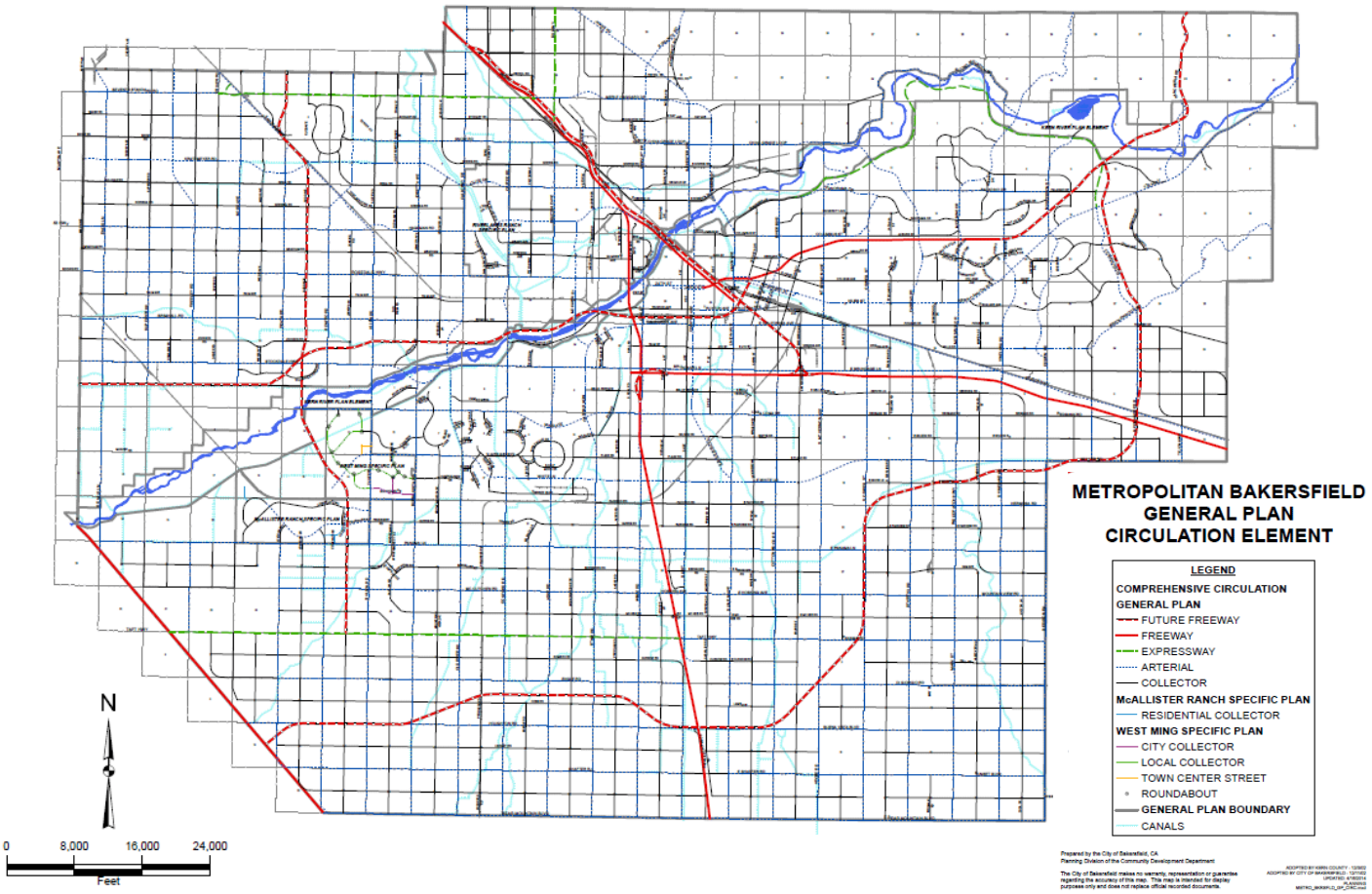
Notably, the study area for the high speed station area plan, is identified as a "metropolitan center," and within it, the Golden State Mall adjacent to the proposed F Street high speed rail station site, is identified as a "major retail" place. The largest "strategic employment" place in the downtown area is located in the "government/convention center" area just west of the proposed Truxtun station site, while the "downtown shopping district" along Chester just north of Truxtun is defined as another "major retail" place.

Metropolitan Bakersfield General Plan

The Metropolitan Bakersfield General Plan covers a 409-square mile area including and surrounding the City of Bakersfield, and was jointly produced by the City and Kern County. Last fully updated in 2002, an updated Draft Existing Conditions, Constraints and Opportunities Report with recommended changes (including identification of a HSR station site) was produced in 2009.

The general plan land use element incorporates basic principles for development though identification of mixed use activity centers. One intensified activity center is located in the vicinity of the F street station location in downtown Bakersfield. Figure # provides the rough location of these mixed use centers. These centers were later adapted by the Kern COG into the Kern Regional Blueprint and the Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Community Strategy.

The General Plan circulation element is focused primarily on roadways. Importantly, it includes the City's street classifications and design standards, described in a following section (Autos). It also recommends roadway expansions, several of which are included in the TRIP program (see following section). The General Plan Circulation Element is illustrated in Figure 3. Note that it includes a future freeway along the Union Pacific right-of-way near the Truxtun HSR station site, the Crosstown Freeway. An alternate plan to link the Westside Parkway to the existing State Route 58 (SR 58) freeway east of State Route 99 (SR 99), the Centennial Corridor project, has since been developed.



STREETS

Top to bottom:
19th and Eye Streets Streetscape
Wall Street Alleyway
Mill Creek Linear Park

The existing network of freeways, expressways, and surface streets in the downtown area is, in many ways, the physical framework for this study. These existing rights-of-way are primarily used for auto travel, although streets also provide access to transit riders, cyclists, and pedestrians. Public rights-of-way also serve as public spaces with street furniture such as benches and lighting, landscaping and other non-transportation elements. The design of roadways, sidewalks, and crosswalks is a key driver of both adjacent land uses and the community's quality of life.

In terms of mobility, streets should be understood both on their own and as part of a larger network, the connectedness of which is fundamental to mobility and access. The existing configurations of major streets in Downtown Bakersfield are described in a following section. Below is a general description of the downtown street network.

> "The design of roadways, sidewalks and crosswalks is a key driver of both adjacent land uses and the community's quality of life."

Network

The downtown area street network consists of both well-connected grids of streets as well as gaps that act as barriers to motorists, and pedestrians among others. The grids are in the downtown core and to the east of Union Avenue, where the cardinal grid shifts to parallel the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (**BNSF**) right-of-way. Each consists of relatively small blocks (approximately **300** feet square downtown, and **360** by **420** feet to the east) providing multiple pathways and relatively direct paths of travel between destinations.

The primary barriers are the Kern River to the north and west of the F Street station site as well as major transportation arteries themselves, including **SR 204** and the **BNSF** right-of-way adjacent to the **F** Street site and the Union Pacific **(UP)** right-of-way near the Truxtun site. While F Street crosses **SR 204**, it does so at-grade, at a large intersection with a long signal cycle (grade separation could eliminate delay, but depending on design, could continue to be a deterrent to pedestrians and cyclists). The **BNSF ROW** divides the neighborhood to the east of the Truxtun site into northern and southern segments. The **UP ROW**, meanwhile, would be spanned by the Truxtun station, but separates the downtown core from neighborhoods to the south. Finally, the downtown grid includes a number of one-way streets, most notably 23rd and 24th streets, which link the SR 178 freeway to the east to 24th Street and Rosedale Highway (SR 58) to the west.

MAJOR STREETS

SR 99

The primary north-south freeway in the Bakersfield region passes to the west of downtown, intersecting with SR 204 and SR 178 (which at that point is a surface street, 24th Street, and not a freeway). In the downtown segment, it consists of four continuous lanes in each direction, plus lanes connecting to on and off-ramps.

SR 204/Golden State Avenue

A relatively short (just over three miles) expressway connects SR 99 west of downtown to Union Avenue to the east, passing to the north of the downtown core at a northwest-to-southeast angle. Also known as Golden State Avenue, SR 204 includes both at-grade and grade-separated intersections, and consists of two lanes each way plus turn lanes at at-grade intersections, including F Street. Between F Street and SR 99, it is fully grade-separated.

SR 178/23rd Street and 24th Street

At SR 99, SR 58 (Rosedale Highway) becomes SR 178, a primary east-west route through Downtown Bakersfield. Between SR 99 and downtown, it follows 24th Street. In downtown, it is aligned along the one-way couplet of 23rd and 24th streets. To the east, starting at M Street, SR 178 becomes a six-lane freeway.

On 23rd and 24th streets downtown, SR 178 consists of three travel lanes each way (with outside lanes accommodating both through movement and turns), as well as parallel curbside parking and sidewalks. 23rd Street is one-way eastbound, while 24th Street is one-way westbound. On 24th Street to the west, there are two through lanes in each direction, plus left-turn lanes. Sidewalks are discontinuous.

Chester Avenue

The main north-south street of Downtown Bakersfield runs just to the east of the F Street station site. Between SR 204 and Truxtun Avenue, it consists of two through lanes each way, plus turn lanes, a center median between turn lanes, curbside parking, discontinuous segments of Class II (unprotected) bike lanes and sidewalks. Chester continues north to Oildale and south to southern Bakersfield.

F Street

F Street parallels Chester four blocks to the west, terminating at California Avenue to the south of downtown before picking up again south of the study area and SR 204 and the F Street station site on the northern edge of downtown. It consists of two travel lanes in each direction, left-turn lanes, parallel parking and sidewalks.
The F Street station site is approximately 0.6 miles north of 24th Street and 1.2 miles north of Truxtun.

Truxtun Avenue

Truxtun Avenue runs east-west along the southern edge of the study area, continuing east and west for several miles. Downtown, it consists of three travel lanes each way plus turn lanes, a median between left-turn lanes, and sidewalks. The Truxtun station site is approximately 0.8 miles east of Chester.

34th Street

34th Street is a major east-west arterial in northern Bakersfield, which terminates at Chester just north of downtown, and adjacent to the F Street station site. Near Chester, it consists of two travel lanes in each direction plus left-turn lanes, parallel parking and sidewalks.

Union Avenue

East of downtown, SR 204 continues to the south as Union Avenue, a major arterial with three travel lanes in each direction plus left-turn lanes and sidewalks. Union passes just to the east of the Truxtun station site.

STREETS POLICY

General Plan Street Classification and Design Standards

The Metropolitan Bakersfield General Plan (see previous section) defines street types and accompanying design standards based on the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Highway Functional Classification System. In addition to freeways and expressways, the General Plan identifies the following categories of streets:

- Arterials are used primarily by through traffic, with a minimal function to provide access to abutting property.
- Collectors function to connect local streets with arterials and to provide access to abutting property.
- Locals are exclusively for property access and through traffic is discouraged.

While in the functional classification system, streets are primarily defined in terms of traffic and relationship to adjacent land uses, associated design standards address other elements including right-of-way width and parking. Design standards for arterials, collectors and local streets in Bakersfield are shown in Figure 4, adapted from the General Plan.

Note that existing streets need not necessarily conform to design standards, and indeed existing streets in the downtown area do not do so.

DPW Subdivision and Engineering Design Manual

In addition to the General Plan design standards described in the previous section, the City of Bakersfield's Department of Public Works Subdivision and Engineering Design Manual includes a number of design requirements for streets. Among major requirements potentially relevant to this effort are:

- Minimum curb radii of 30 feet at arterial and collector intersections, and 20 feet elsewhere.
- Design speeds of 55 miles per hour for arterials and collectors.
- Generally, a minimum roadway width of 36 feet for local streets (40 or 44 feet under certain conditions). Note that this appears to conflict with the General Plan standards described in the previous section.
- A minimum LOS standard of "D." This is applied to intersections (based on delay) as well as segments (based on volume/capacity ratios as defined in the Highway Capacity Manual (HCM)).
- Signalization of intersections based on Caltrans and Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) warrants.
- On arterials, required left turn lanes at all access points, and right turn lanes where 85th percentile speeds and peak hour volumes exceed a defined threshold. On collectors, left and right turn lanes at all intersections with arterials.
- A five-foot minimum width for Class II bicycle lanes.

Complete Street Policy

Consistent with state law requiring cities to include complete streets policies in their general plans (see description in previous section), the City of Bakersfield has a Complete Streets Policy, adopted in 2013, requiring city departments to "give equal consideration to bicyclists, pedestrians, transit riders, and motorists for any and all projects." The policy defines complete streets as "transportation facilities that are planned, designed, operated, and maintained to provide safe mobility for all users, including motorists, bicyclists, pedestrians, and transit riders appropriate to the function and context of the facility." The policy is to be applied to "all roadway projects including those involving new construction, reconstruction, retrofits, repaving, rehabilitation or changes in the allocation of the pavement space on an existing roadway as well as those that involve new privately built roads and easements intended for public use."

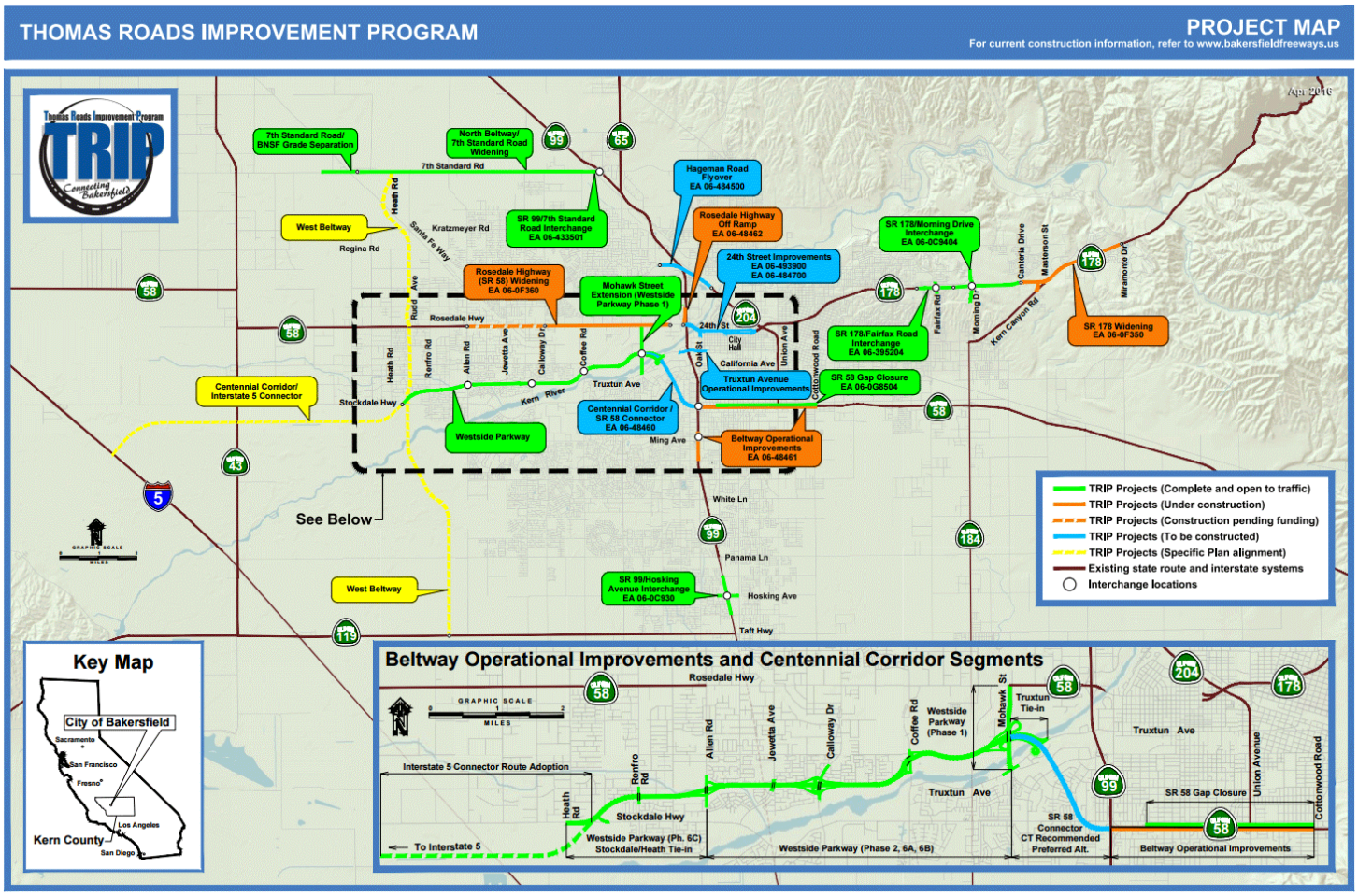
Figure 4: Design Standards for Arterials and Collectors

Facility Type	Lanes	Right-of-Way Width	Pavement Width	Curb Parking
Arterial on state hwy	6	110'-130'	90' plus	No
Arterial w/ bike lanes	6	110'	96'	No
Arterial w/o bike lanes	6	110'	90'	No
Collector w/ bike lane w/ 2-way left turn	4	90'	74'	No
Collector w/ bike lane	4	90'	74'	Yes
Collector w/o bike lane w/ 2-way left turn	4	90'	68'	No
Collector w/o bike lane	4	90'	68'	Yes
Local street (commercial/industrial)	2	60'	44'	*
Local street (residential collector) **	2	60'	44'	Yes
Local street (residential)	2	60'	44'	Yes

* No parking zones will be determined by the traffic engineer.

** This local residential collector standard applies to local streets where vehicular traffic is expected to exceed 750 vehicles per day or where its length exceeds one-half mile.

Figure 5: Thomas Roads Improvement Program Projects (as of 2016)



FUTURE CONDITIONS
TRIP

The Thomas Roads Improvement Program (TRIP) is Metropolitan Bakersfield's major roadway expansion program. The program has already resulted in a new east-west freeway north of the Kern River and west of SR 99, the Westside Parkway, and extension of the existing State Route 58 freeway west of SR 99 to connect to the Parkway (the Centennial Corridor) is planned. TRIP projects are shown in Figure 5.

24th Street Improvements

In association with the widening of Rosedale Highway (SR 58) and of the southbound SR 99 off-ramp at Rosedale Highway to the west, the 23rd Street/24th Street corridor in Downtown Bakersfield is planned to be widened by one lane in each direction. The one-way couplet of 23rd and 24th Streets between M and B/Bay streets would then consist of four lanes in each direction, while 24th Street west of B/Bay streets would be three lanes each way.

West of B/Bay, a center median would be used to convert 24th Street to a "right-in/right-out" configuration with no cross traffic and only two allowed left turns (eastbound at Beech and C Streets). Additionally, several cul-de-sacs have already been implemented at intersections on the south side of the street in conjunction with the project. Together, these projects would, while increasing traffic capacity east-west, render 24th Street a barrier to north-south travel in the Riviera/Westminster neighborhood.

East of B/Bay, 23rd and 24th Streets would be restriped to eliminate curbside parking, allowing for four travel lanes within the existing roadway. Existing sidewalks would be maintained, however, pedestrians would have to cross an additional lane of traffic. Right turns from southbound K Street onto westbound 24th would also be prohibited. The project's Recirculated Draft Environmental Impact Report, addressing issues raised by a legal ruling related to the previously released Final Environmental Impact Report, was released earlier this year.

Hageman Flyover

SR 204 currently terminates to the west at SR 99. This project would extend Hagemen Drive in northwest Bakersfield over SR 99, connecting it to SR 204.

Truxtun Avenue /Oak Street Improvements

Truxtun currently narrows from three lanes in each direction to two each west of Oak Street. This project would extend the six-lane segment to SR 99, and make other related improvements to roadway capacity.

CIRCULATION
AUTOS

Existing Conditions

Street Classifications Figure 6, from the previous section 2009 Metropolitan Bakersfield General Plan Update, shows arterial and collector streets in the downtown area (see previous General Plan Street Classifications and Design Standards section for definitions). Figure 6 below lists arterial street segments.

Figure 6: Arterial Street Segments

Street	From	To
Chester Ave	(continuous through downtown area)	
24th Street	(continuous through downtown area)	
23rd St	Bay/B St	M St
Truxtun Ave	L St	(E of downtown)
Oak St	Sillect Ave	(S of downtown)
Union Ave	(continuous through downtown area)	
California Ave	(continuous through downtown area)	

Among the many collector streets in the downtown area, the most proximate to the HSR station sites are F Street, 34th Street, and Q Street.

Chester Avenue and 23rd and 24th Streets are also part of the region's federally required Congestion Management Program (CMP). On these streets, a minimum roadway vehicular level of service (LOS) of "E" is applied (LOS is a measure of average delay, with "A" indicating minimal delay and "F" indicating maximum delay). In the 2014 RTP, a short segment of 24th Street east of Oak is identified as having roadway LOS of "F."

Figure 7: Arterial Street Segments

Highway	Screenline	ADT
SR 99	N of California Ave	144,000
	S of 24th St	144,000
	N of 24th St	112,000
	S of SR 204/Airport Dr	112,000
SR 178	W of SR 204	48,500
	E of SR 204	54,000
SR 204	W of SR 178 interchange	26,500
	E of F St	33,000
	W of F St	36,500
	E of Pierce Rd (Airport Dr)	36,500

Traffic Volumes Figure 7 shows 2014 Average Daily Trips (ADT) reported by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) for freeways and expressways in the downtown area.

Figure 8: CHSRA Final EIR/EIS: Fresno to Bakersfield - 2013 Traffic Volumes, Lanes and Speed Limits

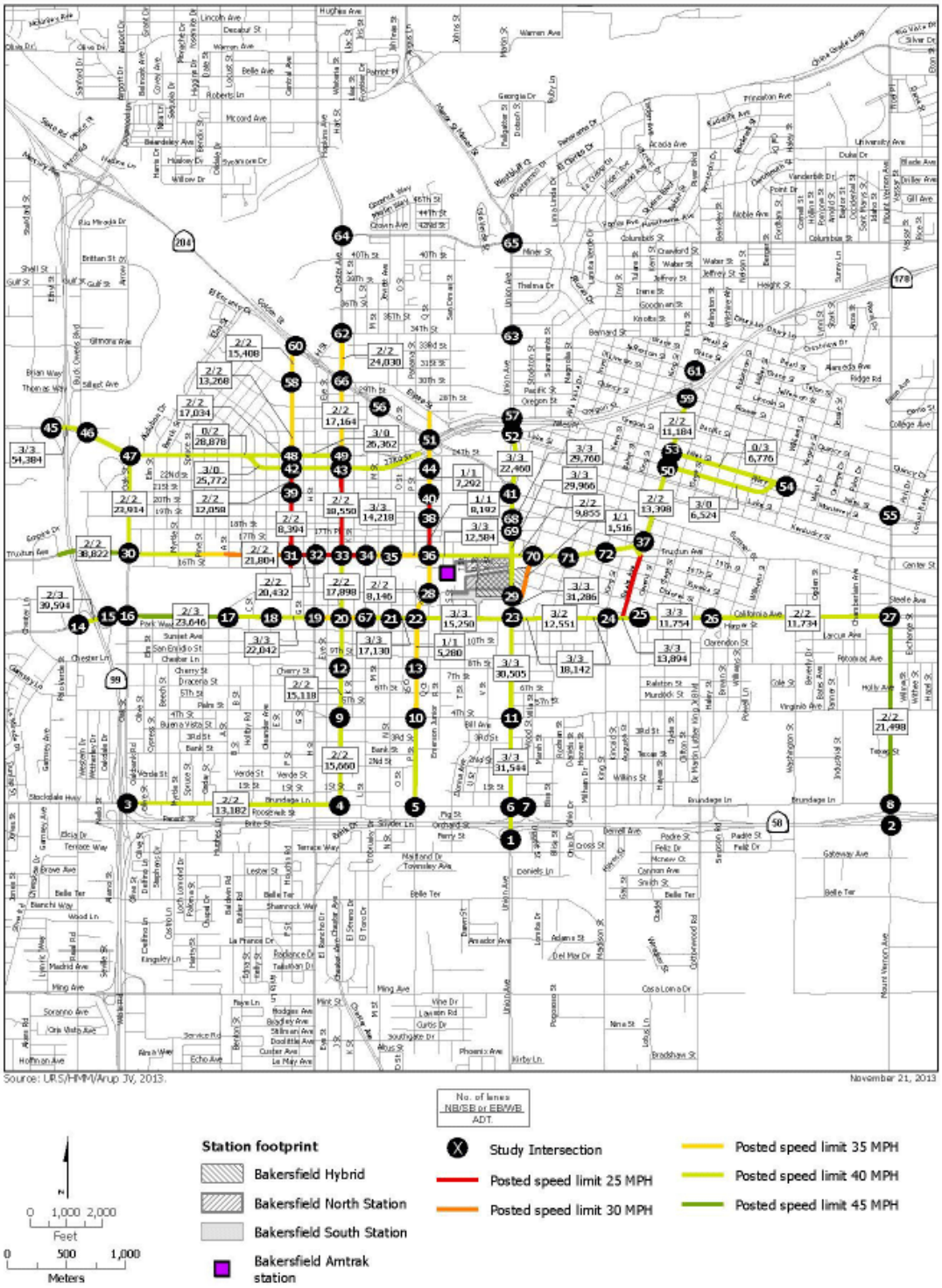
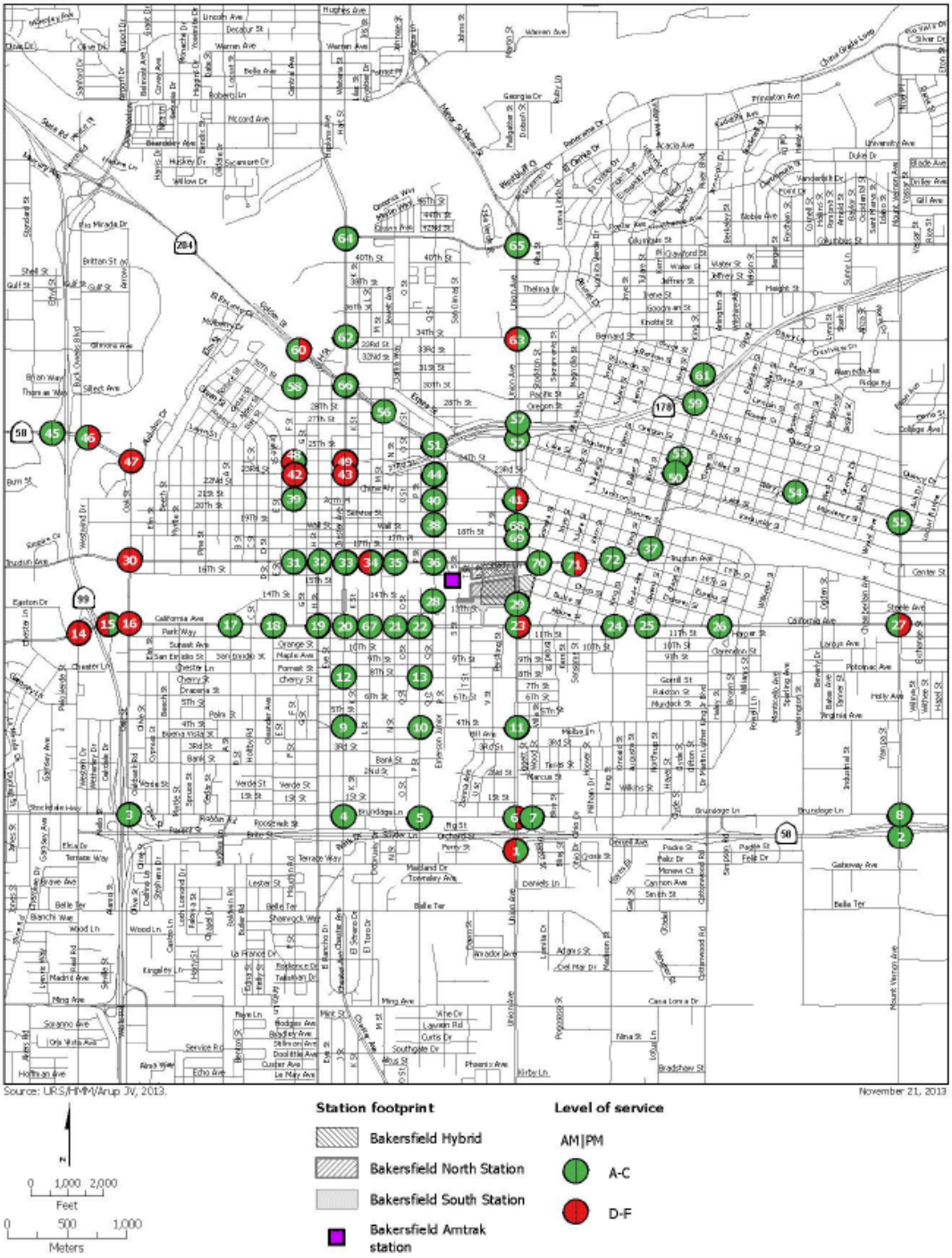


Figure 8, from the CHSRA EIR/EIS, shows year 2013 ADT, numbers of through lanes, and speed limits on downtown streets. Figure 9, excerpted from the CHSRA EIR/EIS, shows year 2013 peak-period vehicular intersection LOS at downtown intersections. As Figure 9 indicates, peak-period LOS at downtown intersections was generally "C" or better, although there were a few exceptions; intersections in the 23rd and 24th Streets corridor and near SR 99 ramps.

Figure 9: CHSRA Final EIR/EIS: Fresno to Bakersfield - 2013 Intersection LOS



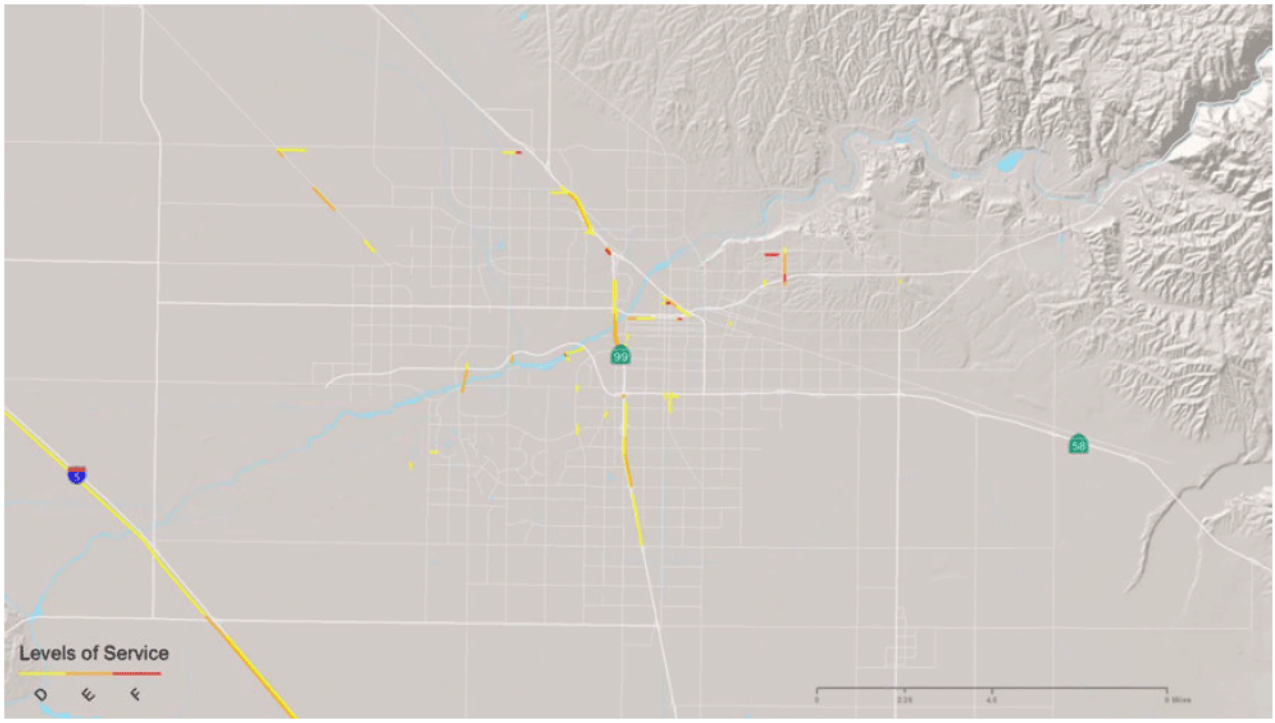
Future Conditions

RTP Projections: Figure 10, from the 2014 Kern COG RTP (see previous section), shows projected year 2040 roadway LOS on freeways, expressways and arterials in Metropolitan Bakersfield based on a "build" scenario including the plan's Constrained Program of Projects. As Figure 10 indicates, in the downtown area LOS of "F" is projected along 23rd Street near the SR 178 freeway and SR 204 near F Street.

HSR Projected Impacts: None of the roadway segments that were analyzed in the CHSRA EIR/EIS were found to be significantly impacted by a station at the Truxtun Avenue site. However, a number of intersections were found to have AM or PM peak period LOS of E or F in the Future (2035) Plus Project condition, as shown in Figure 11 on the following page.

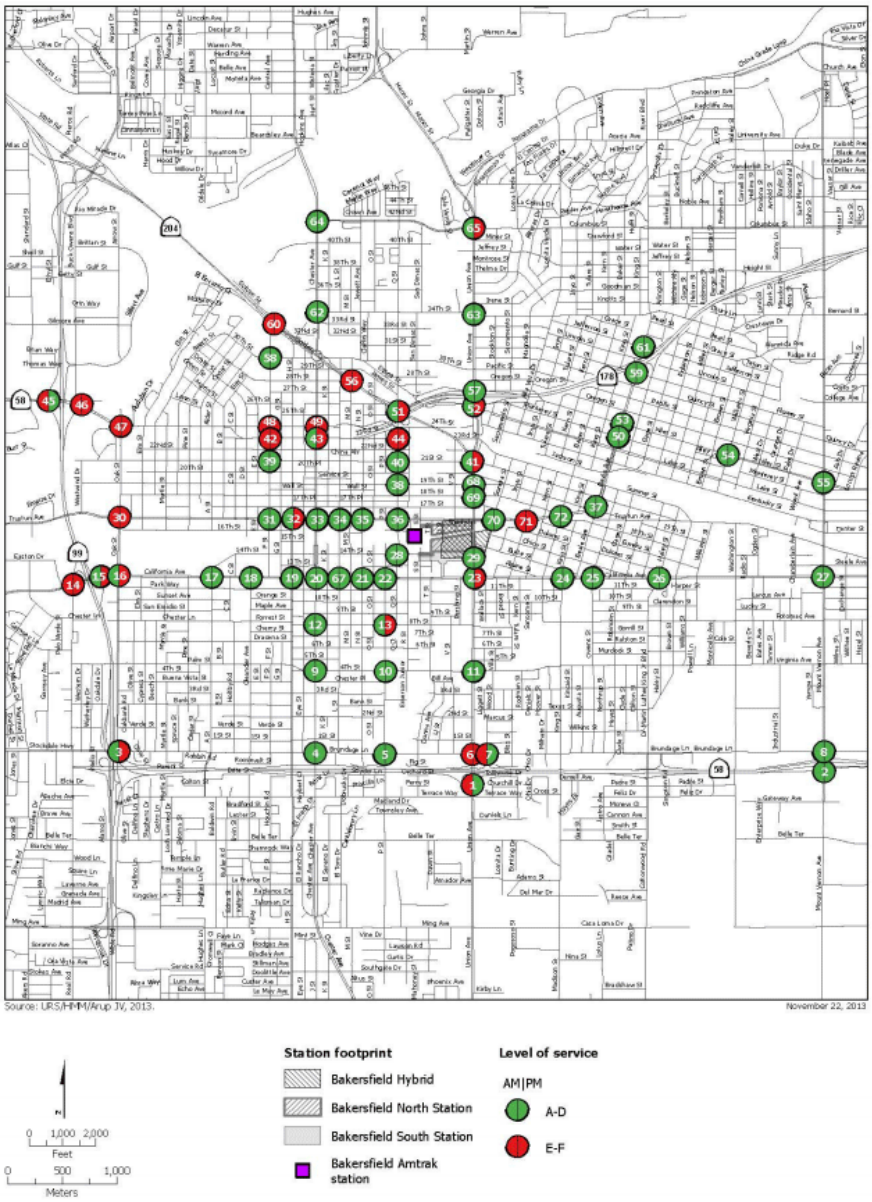
Most of these intersections already experience peak-period LOS of "D" or worse, including intersections in the 23rd and 24th streets corridor and near SR 99 ramps*.

Figure 10: RTP 2040 Projected LOS (Build Scenario)



*It is unclear whether EIR/EIS analysis assumed TRIPS improvements to streets including 23rd and 24th Streets.

Figure 11: CHSRA Final EIR/EIS: Fresno to Bakersfield - 2035 Intersection LOS (Hybrid Alternative)



Significant transportation impacts are anticipated at the F Street station location. Potential mitigation includes access to the station via 34th Street as either and underpass or overpass. Significant improvements are needed to Golden State Highway and F Street. Access north to Pioneer Village Museum and the Kern River bike path and parkway provide easy access for tourist destinations if the station is sited at this location.

CIRCULATION
TRANSIT

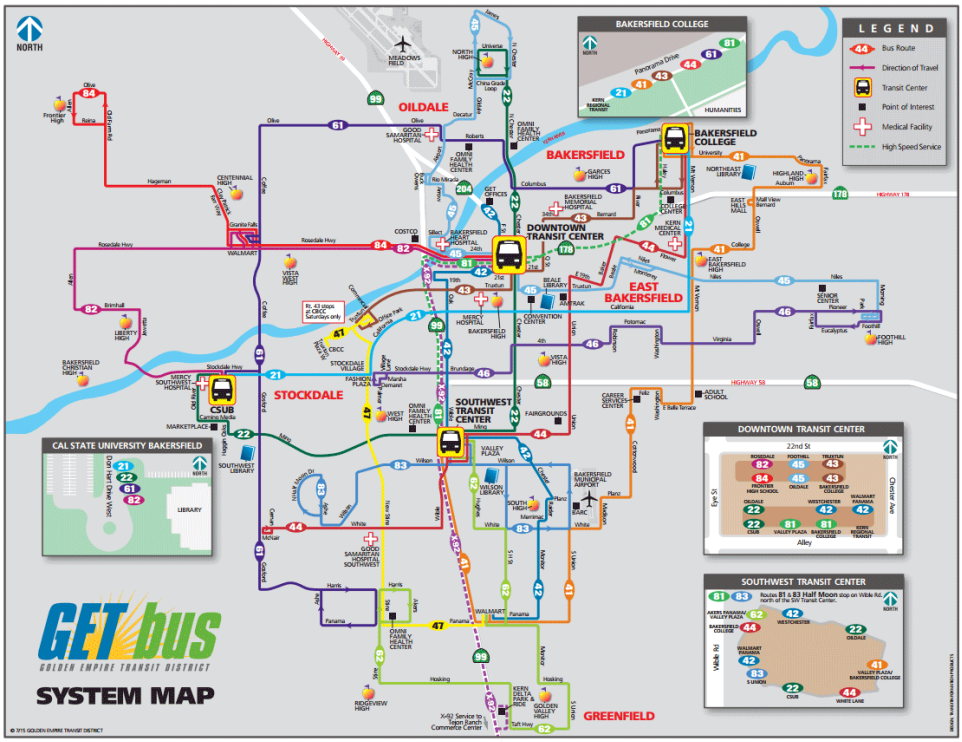
Existing Conditions

Both Golden Empire Transit (GET) local and Kern Transit regional bus lines currently make stops in the vicinity of the both the Truxtun and F Street station sites. The Truxtun site is adjacent to the existing Amtrak station, which is served by multiple lines, while the F Street site is near both Chester Avenue, a major corridor served by trunk Line 22, as well as the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) office near F and SR 204, an important stop on several lines.

The Downtown Transit Center, the central hub of both the GET and Kern Transit systems, is located at Chester and 22nd streets, approximately 1.2 miles northwest of the Truxtun site and 0.9 miles southeast of the F Street site. Timed transfers may be made between multiple lines at this site. This major transfer facility is now approximately 30 years old and was sited at the current location after an effort to consolidate transit services including Amtrak and Greyhound failed to materialize.

In the downtown area, bus lines generally operate on major arterials providing connections beyond downtown, including Chester, 23rd and 24th streets and Truxtun. GET lines also operate on F Street, 21st Street and Q St. Current GET service is shown in Figure 12, the GET system map.

Figure 12: GET Local Bus Lines (as of 2016)



Future Conditions

LRTP In 2012, GET and Kern COG adopted a Metropolitan Bakersfield Transit System Long-Range Plan. In addition to near-term recommendations, most of which have since been implemented and are thus reflected in the existing system, the LRTP included mid (2021–2025) and long-term (2026–2035) service plans including capital improvements.

The LRTP mid-term plan would make a number of major changes, which would then serve as a foundation for additional changes in the long-term. Notably:

- The mid-term plan would phase out the existing Downtown Transit Center, with the HSR station – then assumed to be at the Truxtun site – serving as the de facto hub of the system (although it would be served by fewer lines than the existing DTC).
- Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) service would be implemented on existing trunk corridors including California and Chester Avenues. The latter would be served by two lines, with a combined weekday frequency of 7.5 minutes. Both corridors are close to proposed station sites, although Line 1 on California is shown as stopping near, but not at the HSR station (specifically, at California and Union, approximately 0.4 miles away).
- In the mid-term, enhanced local rail service would be introduced between Wasco and the Amtrak/high-speed rail station on Truxtun. In the long-term, additional lines would be introduced to Buttonwillow and Arvin.

In both the mid and long-term plans, the F Street site is directly served by a single express bus line (in addition to the BRT lines on Chester just to the east). However, the plan was developed before F Street was identified as a potential HSR station site.

The LRTP mid-and long-term plans are shown in Figures 13 and 14, excerpted from the LRTP.

Commuter Rail Feasibility Study Following completion of the LRTP, Kern COG conducted a Commuter Rail Feasibility Study in 2012. That study found that there would be a limited market for regional commuter rail service into and out of Bakersfield for some time into the future. However, if HSR service were implemented, there might be an opportunity for feeder service from Bakersfield to Delano or Wasco/West Delano. The study assumed co-location of the HSR station with the existing Amtrak station at the Truxtun site, as that was the official direction at the time.

Figure 13: GET Mid-Term Plan – Truxtun Site

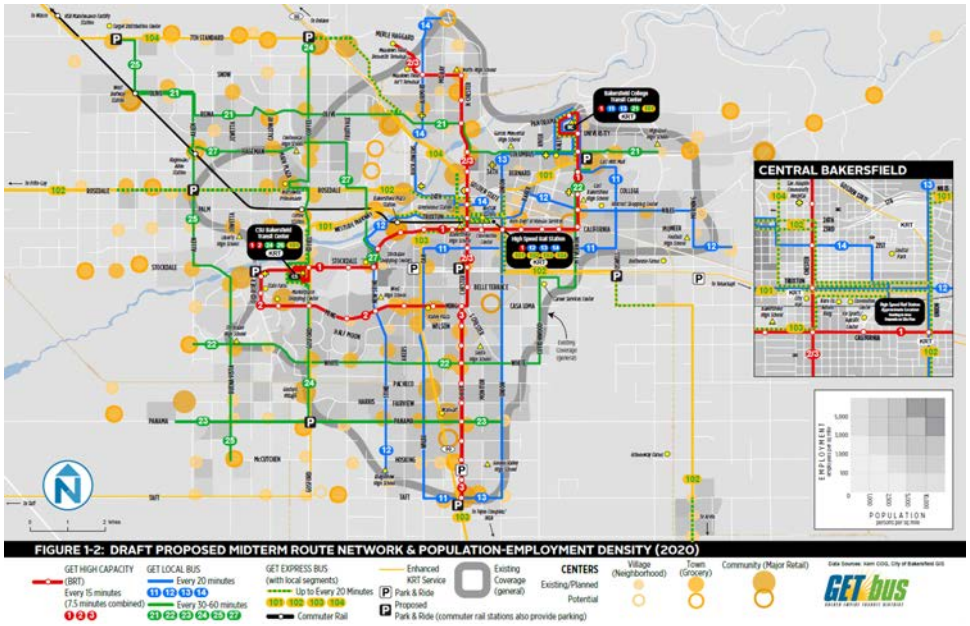
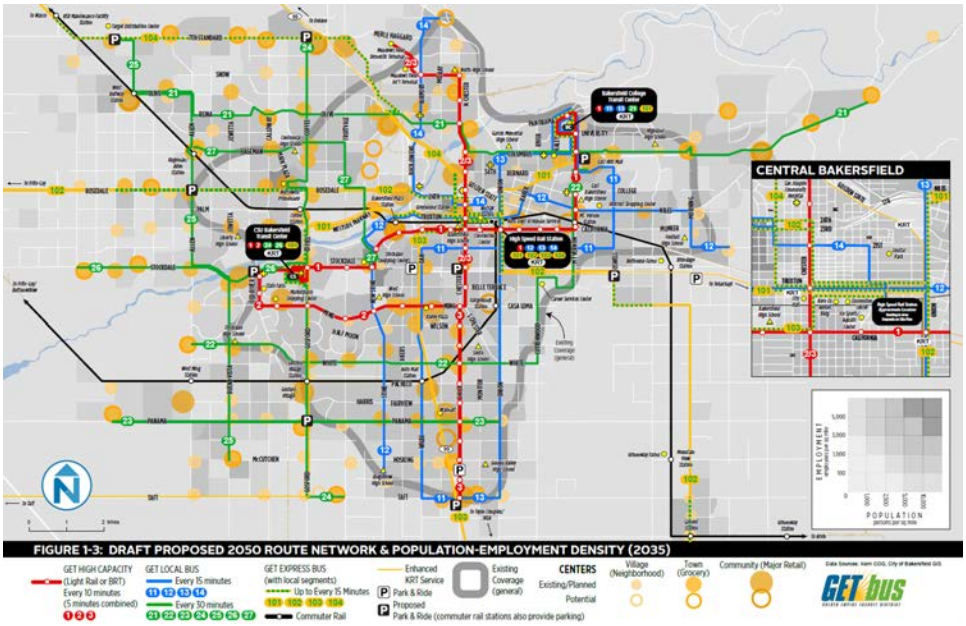


Figure 14: GET Long-Term Plan (as of 2012)



Transit Centers Study

In 2015 Kern COG adopted a Metropolitan Bakersfield Transit Center Study that recommended revisiting the LRTP recommendation to phase out the Downtown Transit Center. Of 15 potential transit center sites in the Bakersfield area that were analyzed for transit-oriented development potential, multimodal access and other factors, the existing DTC and Amtrak sites were among five recommended for short-term retention or implementation. The intersection of F Street and Golden State Avenue, adjacent to the proposed F Street high-speed rail station site was not recommended for study in the next round to avoid duplication of planning efforts with the high speed rail station area plan.

Transit Circulator Shuttle/Street Car Opportunity

In 2010 the Downtown Business Association operated a lunch time electric shuttle bus between the Arts District and 24th and L Streets. The system lacked institutional stability to continue operations. Both the F Street and Truxtun sites are on the periphery of the downtown provide some access challenges to the historic Arts District in downtown Bakersfield. Many communities are bringing back street car systems to bridge the longer pedestrian corridors. As suggested in the Kern COG 2012 commuter rail study, any investment in rail should first demonstrate the need through rubber tire service.

Intermodal Connectivity to the Meadows Field Airport

Meadows Field airport is the largest full service airport in Southern California, capeablecapable of handling the largest passenger airliners that is operating at less than 50% capacity. In addition, the facility has ana 2nd terminal cleared to handle international flights. Convenient access between the HSR station and Meadows Field could bolster one of the most under used airport facilities along the HSR system and help relieve Southern California's congested airports. With its central location to the system, the ability to attract international flights is significant. The GET long range transit plan includes an extension of the Chester Ave BRT to Meadows field. In addition, the RTP/SCS shows potential express bus service along 204/99 between downtown and Meadows Field. This corridor could be a prime location for advanced technology solutions.

CIRCULATION
PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE

Existing Conditions

Pedestrian Infrastructure The street network and major individual streets in the downtown area were described in the previous section, Streets.

Surface streets in the downtown area generally include sidewalks, although there are some exceptions, such as parts of 24th Street west of B and Bay streets (see previous description). Some sidewalks are relatively narrow, and frontages along sidewalks often consist of blank walls or surface parking lots, reducing visual interest and further reducing pedestrian comfort.

Due to the relatively small block size and relatively high density of signalized intersections within the downtown core, crosswalks are available at relatively frequent intervals, reducing requirements for pedestrians to travel well out of direction. However, cycle times at signalized intersections may result in long wait times to cross.

As described in the Streets section, there are a number of major barriers to pedestrian travel in the station areas, including SR 204 and the UP ROW. Additionally, the one-way couplet of 23rd and 24th streets effectively serves as an obstacle to pedestrians attempting to cross it, due to both the long wait times at signals as well as the risk associated with three lanes (soon to be four) of high-speed traffic on each street.

Bicycle Infrastructure There are a limited number of dedicated facilities for cyclists in the downtown area, as shown in Figure 15.

As Figure 15 indicates, the Kern River Pathway, a Class I multi-use path, passes to the northwest of downtown. Streets with significant segments of bike lanes within the downtown area include 21st Street and Columbus Street (east-west) and Oak Street, Chester Avenue and Q Street (north-south). Conditions of facilities vary; notably, bike lanes are either curbside, with gutter pans extending into the lane, or in the "door zone" between parking and travel lanes. There are as yet no buffered or protected on-street facilities for cyclists in the area.

Volumes As part of the Kern County Pedestrian & Bike Study, counts of numbers of pedestrians and bicyclists were conducted at screenlines in the downtown area. These counts were conducted over a 24-hour period on December 1, 2015, a rain-free weekday with slightly below-average temperatures (a low of 34 and a high of 58). The observed volumes are shown in Figure 16.

Additional counts of numbers of cyclists at intersections were conducted for the Bicycle Transportation Plan described in the next section. These counts were conducted on September 18, 2012, a rain-free weekday with slightly above-average temperatures (a high of 92 and a low of 68), and on September 22, 2012, a rain-free Saturday with close-to-average temperatures (a high of 92 and a low of 63). The counts were conducted during morning and evening rush hours on the weekday and in the morning on Saturday. Hourly averages are shown in Figure 17.

Figure 15: Existing Downtown Area Bicycle Facilities (as of 2016)

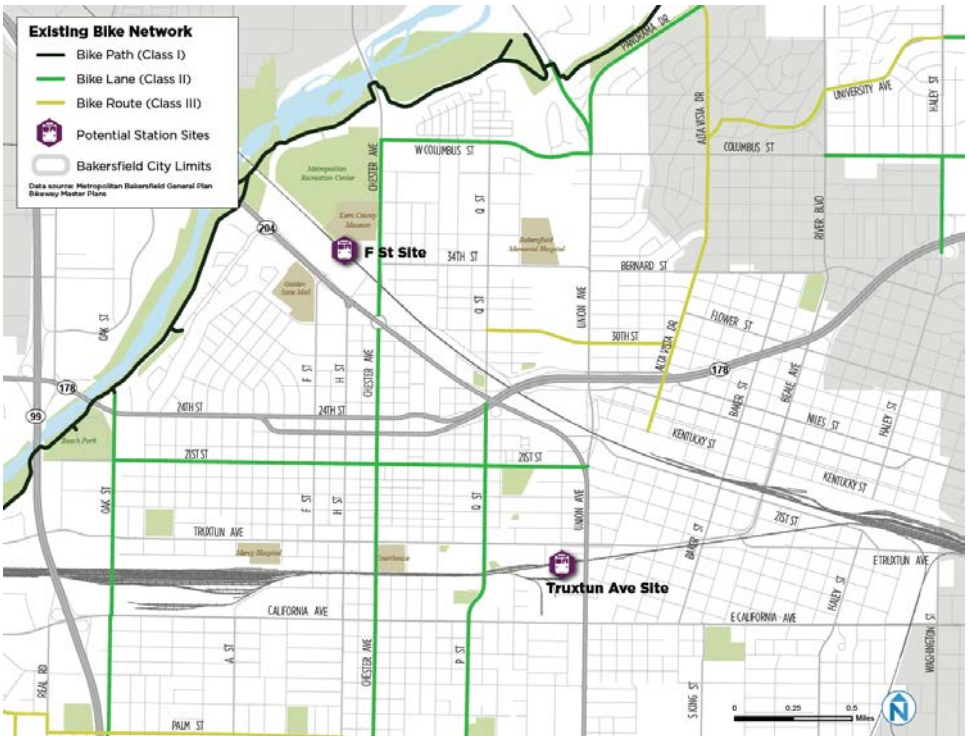


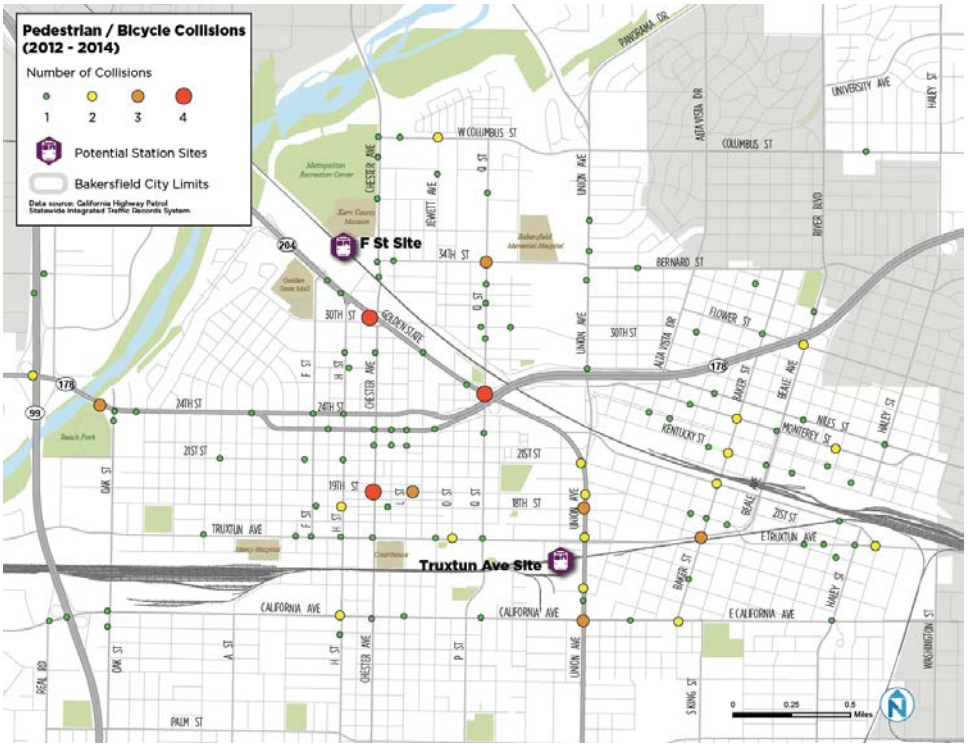
Figure 16: Daily Pedestrian and Bicycle Volumes (2015)

Screenline	Pedestrians	Bicyclists
20th St E of Eye	510	16
21st St W of Chester	403	58
21st St E of Union	74	50
Chester N of 19th St	897	77
Q St N of 21st St	121	65
Q St N of Truxtun	142	42

Figure 17: Peak Hourly Bicycle Volumes (2012)

Intersection	Weekday	Weekend
Chester Ave & Kern River Pathway	48	96
21st St & Oak St	13	13
Chester Ave & Truxtun Ave	6	5

Figure 18: Pedestrian and Bicycle Collisions (2012-2014)



Safety Analysis of Statewide Integrated Traffic Records (SWITRS) data on downtown area collisions involving pedestrians and bicyclists between 2012 and 2014 (the most recent year for which data were available) is shown in Figure 18.

As Figure 18 indicates, collisions were widely distributed, but multiple collisions occurred at a much smaller number of locations, with three or four collisions occurring at or near the intersections of:

- Chester and 30th Street
- Chester and 19th Street
- Q Street and Golden State Avenue (SR 204)
- Q Street and 34th Street
- 24th Street and Oak
- 19th Street and L Street
- 18th Street and Union
- Union and California
- Truxtun and Baker

Figure 19: Bicycle Transportation Plan Downtown Community Priorities (as of 2013)

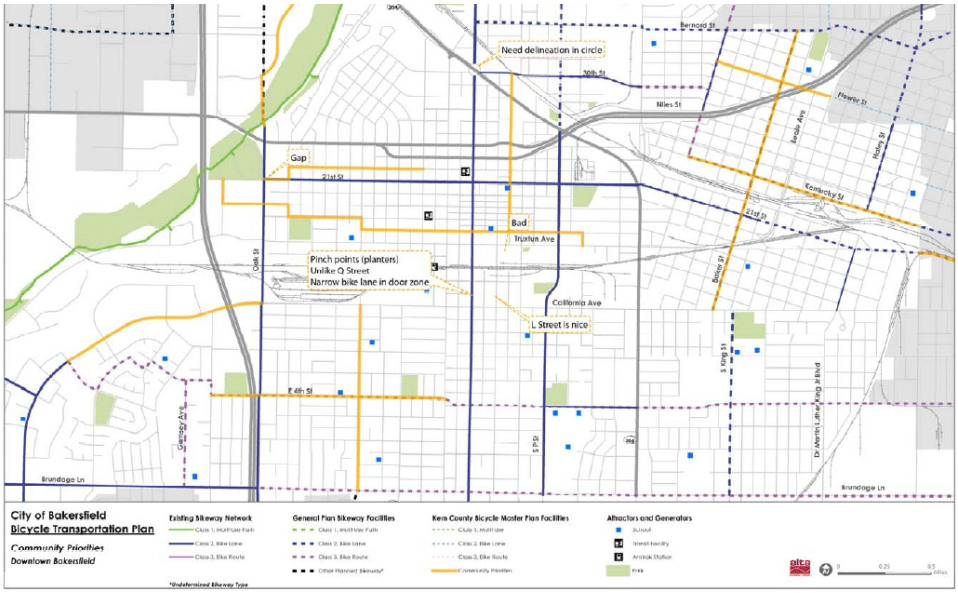
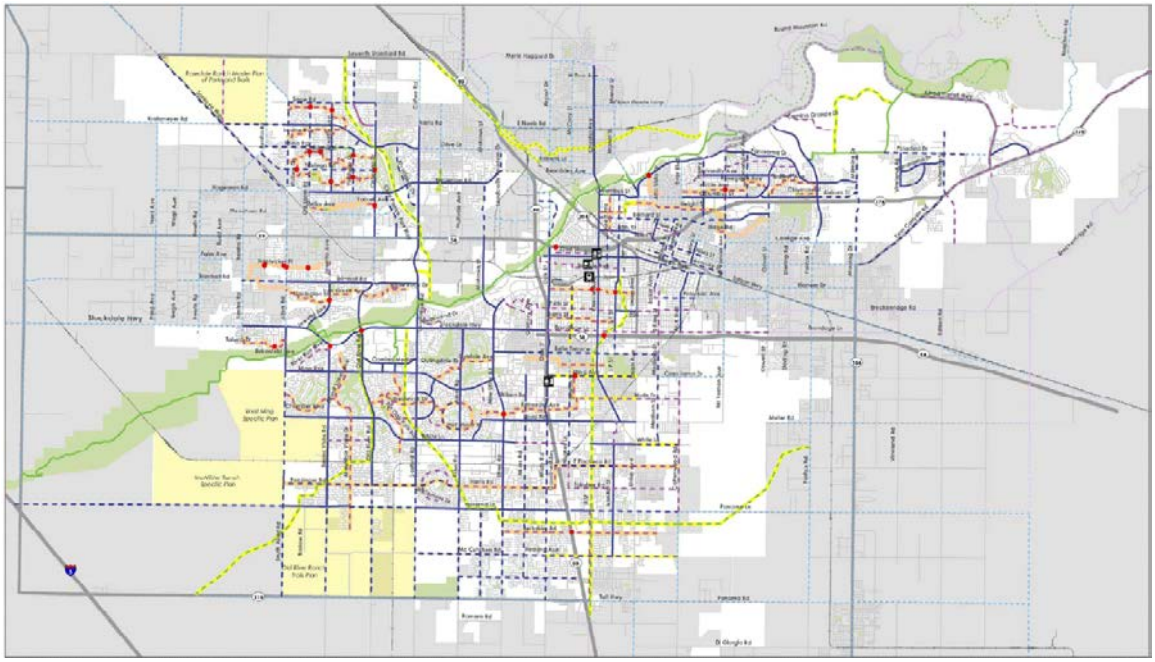


Figure 20: Bicycle Plan Routes and Facilities (as of 2013)



Future Conditions

Bicycle Transportation Plan In 2013, the City of Bakersfield adopted a Bicycle Transportation Plan (BTP). That plan assessed needs and recommended future facilities for cyclists. A BTP illustration of community priorities for the downtown area, as identified through outreach, is shown in Figure 19 (note that some facilities have since been added, including bike lanes on Columbus).

As Figure 19 indicates, cyclists expressed a desire for new routes as well as improvements to existing facilities.

BTP-recommended facilities are shown in Figure 20. In downtown, these include bike lanes on:

- 17th Street/18th Street/19th Street (identified as a "Tier 1" priority)
- 22nd Street west of Chester (Tier 1)
- M Street and Jewett Avenue (Tier 1)
- A northern extension of the existing lanes on Q Street (Tier 1)
- 36th Street

CIRCULATION
PARKING

Existing Conditions

Public Parking No recent data were available on numbers or availability of on and off-street public parking spaces in Downtown Bakersfield. However:

- Curbside parking is available on most blocks and is free (it is time-limited).
- The City maintains a public parking garage at 18th and Eye streets with approximately 500 spaces. A modest fee is charged after two hours ($1 per hour, up to $10 per day), and monthly reserved parking is available for $30.

Public and private institutions and businesses also offer off-street parking for visitors and customers.

Development Requirements The Bakersfield Municipal Code includes requirements for provision of off-street parking in new developments. Complete requirements are listed in Section 17.58.110 of the Code. Major requirements are shown in Figure 21.

Figure 21: Parking Requirements for Major Land Use Categories

Use or Activity	Spaces Required
One-family dwellings	2 spaces per dwelling unit
Multiple-family dwelling and condominium (efficiency, studio and 1-bedroom units)	1 space per unit, plus an additional 10% for guest parking on parcels containing 5 or more units. *
Multiple-family dwelling and condominium (2 or more bedrooms)	2 spaces per unit, plus an additional 10% for guest parking on parcels containing 5 or more units. *
General office	1 space per 250 square feet of gross floor area
Neighborhood and regional shopping center **	1 space per 200 square feet of gross floor area up to and including 35,000 square feet, plus an additional 1 space per 250 square feet of gross floor area in excess of 35,000 square feet
General retail ***	1 space per 300 square feet of gross floor area
Restaurant, including fast food restaurant ****	1 parking space per 75 square feet of gross floor area (no additional parking is required for outdoor seating)
Hotel, motel, rooming house*****	1 space per sleeping unit

* Moderate, low, and very low income projects with 5 or more units and being recorded as such by declaration or covenant that runs with the land, may reduce required parking by 25% (moderate, low and very low income is defined as being at or below 120% of the median income of Kern County as established by the State of California)/

** Freestanding satellite pads such as fast food restaurants or banks shall be computed separately unless satellite buildings contain 2 or more tenants.

*** Single tenant only, for multiple tenant buildings, refer to Neighborhood and regional shopping center.

**** Take-out restaurants where food is consumed off premises shall be parked in accordance with general retail. Whenever the planning director determines that any restaurant with less than 3,000 square feet of gross floor area serves primarily those that may be conducting other business within the "central district" or properties zoned C-B or C-C, he/she may waive all or any portion of the parking requirements.

***** Additional parking required for meeting rooms, restaurants, bars, and office space.

The Code includes a number of exceptions to minimum parking requirements:

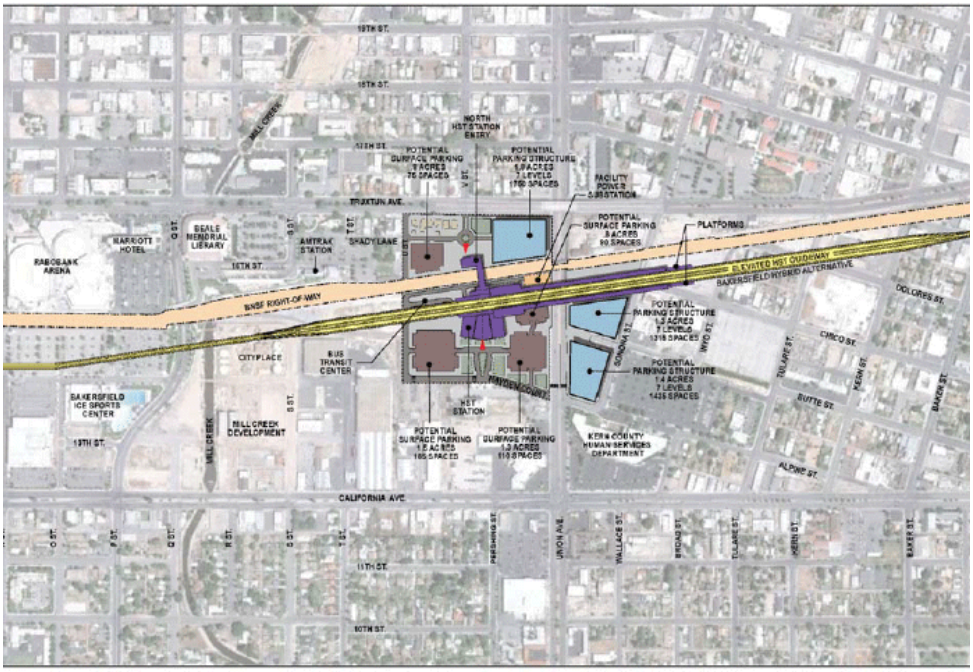
- Section 17.58.055 defines a "transit credit" reduction of 10 percent for developments within 1,000 feet of a transit facility.
- Section 17.58.070 defines situations in which required parking may be provided off-site.
- Section 17.58.080 defines situations in which parking may be shared among different users at the discretion of the planning director.
- Section 17.58.090 indicates that parking requirements may be satisfied by existing public off-street parking at the discretion of the City Council.
- Section 178.58.100 defines situations in which parking requirements may be satisfied by on-street parking along local streets (see previous description of street classifications).
- Section 17.58.120 of the Code indicates that requirements for mixed-use residential and commercial developments in the C-B (Central Business) or C-C (Civic Center) zones covering much of the downtown area may be reduced by up to 50 percent. Additionally, a maximum is set, at 150 percent of minimum.

Future Conditions

Future Conditions A conceptual site plan for the Truxtun site is shown in Figure 22, excerpted from the Transportation Analysis Technical Report appendix to the CAHSRA EIR/EIS. The plan indicates that a total of 4,960 "potential" parking spaces would be provided on-site. In the main EIR/EIS report, the number of parking spaces provided on-site is said to be 2,300.

According to the CAHSRA EIR/EIS, rail right-of-way connecting to the Truxtun site would require removal of 423 parking spaces from the existing McMurtrey Aquatic Center parking lot.

Figure 22: CHSRA Final EIR/EIS: Fresno to Bakersfield - Truxtun Site Plan (as of 2013)



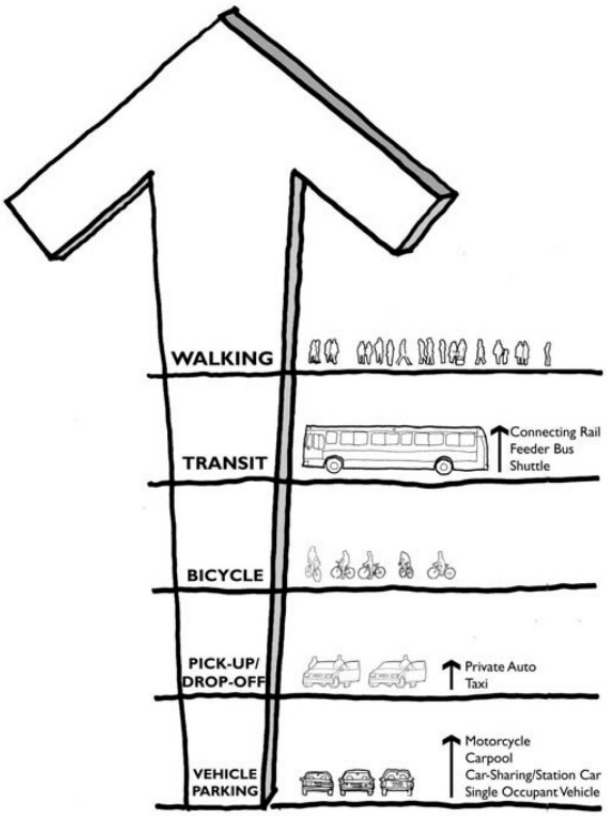
Station Access

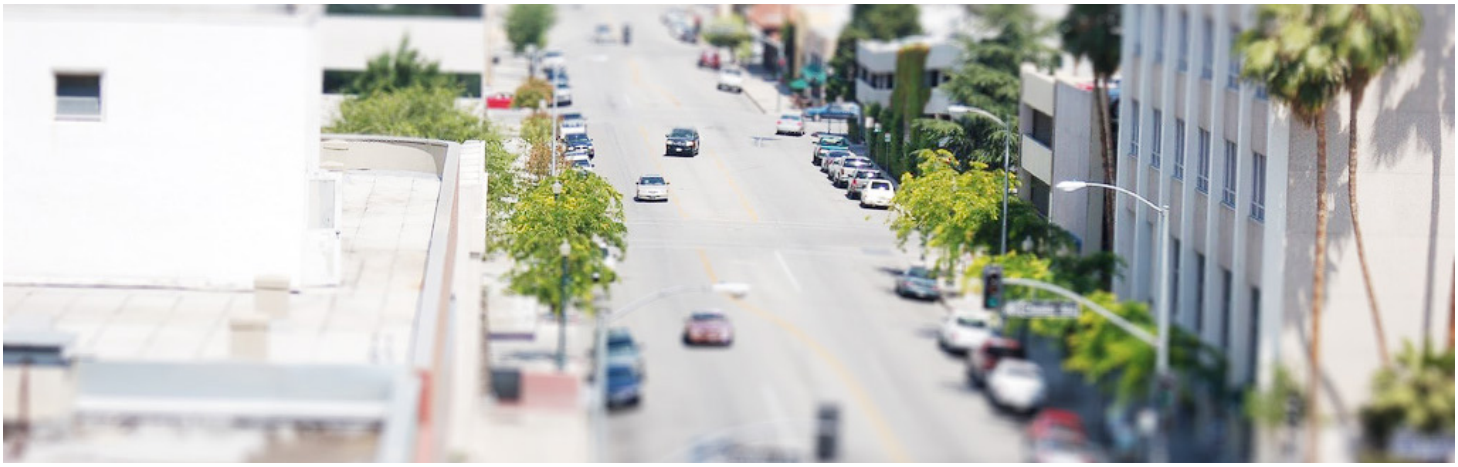
Figure 23 in the preceding section shows a conceptual site plan for the Truxtun station site. In the drawing, the area surrounding the station is almost entirely occupied by parking lots and garages, limiting opportunities for station-area development, as well as access by other modes.

The Draft HST Station Area Development: General Principles and Guidelines issued by CHSRA in 2010 recommend that on-site parking be 1) sufficient to meet demand, 2) priced at market rates, and 3) shared with other uses where possible. The document does not provide guidance on the configuration of on-site parking. However, best practice in provision of patron parking at train stations includes the following principles:

- Siting of parking so that it does not interfere with development opportunities. Location of parking a short walk from the station – up to perhaps one-quarter mile, or a five-minute walk away for an able-bodied adult – is not a deterrent to use of the station, particularly if pedestrian paths between parking lots and the station are properly designed and high-quality. So-called "alpha" development sites nearer the station should be reserved for higher uses.
- Integration of parking with development and sharing among uses. Passenger parking can also be provided as part of development projects nearer the station. In these cases, opportunities may exist for temporal sharing by different uses (for example, commuters by day, and restaurant patrons by night), although such opportunities are limited in the case of high-speed rail, with its need for overnight/long-term parking. In all cases, parking should be efficiently integrated into the station area land use and urban design program.
- Demand for auto access to the station can also be satisfied in part or in full by nearby private lots charging market rates.
- Even when passenger parking is publicly owned, fees should be charged, in part to encourage access by other modes, but also to ensure a reliable revenue stream for maintenance and operations (and, potentially, to help fund multimodal access improvements). This is especially important where the train operator also provides connecting transit service charging a fare, in order to ensure that access by all modes is treated equitably.
- Finally, the best practice in station access is to adopt an "access hierarchy" policy for use in station area design. A typical access hierarchy places the highest priority on modes that provide the greatest benefit and have the fewest impacts on circulation and development opportunities within the station area. Hierarchies do not restrict access by any mode, however, they can be used to determine how access should be provided within station areas. For example, modal hierarchy recommends by placing bus stops closer to the station entrance than parking lots, or by ensuring that secure parking is provided for cyclists.

Figure 23: BART Access Hierarchy





Street Design

The "complete streets" approach to design of urban streets seeks to take into account the safety, comfort and convenience of all users of the street. As described in the Policy subsection of this document, in the Streets section, the City of Bakersfield has an adopted Complete Streets Policy encouraging multimodal street design. In some cases, however, physical and policy constraints may render it difficult if not impossible to design fully multimodal streets.

Fortunately, design of streets that are not fully multimodal need not necessarily be inconsistent with a complete streets approach – if, that is, the streets are part of a "complete corridor" based on a "modal hierarchy." In a complete corridor with a modal hierarchy, parallel streets are designated as priority rights-of-way for one or more mode: for example, one street may be prioritized for auto throughput, while another is prioritized for buses, another for bicycles, and another for pedestrians. Such streets should still be designed to be safe for all users of the street, and all streets should provide a basic level of accommodation for pedestrians.

Downtown Bakersfield, with its closely spaced parallel streets, may be an optimal location for such a "complete corridor" approach.

SYNTHESIS OF FINDINGS

Following is a synthesis of key findings from different areas of the existing conditions access analysis. These points will be of particular relevance to the transportation recommendations development process.

- Both HSR station sites are at the periphery of the downtown core, so first/last mile access will be key. Downtown Bakersfield covers a relatively large area; however, its core has been commonly defined as 18th/19th and Eye Streets, some distance from both the Truxtun and F Street station sites. To effectively connect either site to the core of downtown will require "first/last mile" improvements to multimodal access (e.g. frequent "circulator" shuttle service and improved bicycle facilities and pedestrian pathways).

- Autos will be the primary form of access to the HSR station, and the F Street site (SR 204, SR 178, SR 99, SR 58) is more accessible (within 2 miles) than the Truxtun Avenue site (SR 204, SR 178) to the regional roadway network. While multimodal access improvements will be important, even for some time into the future autos are likely to remain the dominant mode of transportation in the Bakersfield area and the primary means of access to the HSR station. It will be important to accommodate access for motorists; at the same time, parking should be sited and designed so as not to interfere with other means of access.

- In planning for access, it will be important to understand both mode shares as well as modal sheds. Similarly, in planning for access to the HSR station, it will be important to bear in mind both the relative roles of each major mode of access as well as the different characteristics of each mode. Autos have far greater reach than other modes – throughout and even beyond the metropolitan area – and given the very low travel times HSR will offer to Greater Los Angeles and the Bay Area, residents of the region will drive some distance to access the station (just as they would drive some distance to an airport providing frequent, relatively low-cost connections to major population centers). For this reason, the HSR station should be a key consideration in future planning for the regional roadway network. Transit may have similar reach in connecting corridors where it operates, but this depends in large part on the speed and reliability of connecting services. Bicycles have an access "shed" of three to five miles, so developing a well-connected network of high-quality facilities providing access to the station and extending that distance will be critical. Pedestrians may walk a half-mile or more to access a major rail station.

- In planning for access, it will be important to keep in mind evolving technologies. While HSR itself will be a new transportation technology for California, other emerging models and platforms such as Transportation Network Companies (TNCs) and autonomous vehicles should be born in mind when planning for station access. In particular, these emerging modes may eventually call into question many of the assumptions that have driven planning for automobiles, roadways and parking over the past several decades, such as widespread private ownership of autos. In any case, a flexible, adaptable approach to design of and policy for station access will be essential.

- The downtown street network can be leveraged to improve multimodal access to the station site. While current pedestrian volumes on most blocks are relatively low, Downtown Bakersfield's well-connected grid of small blocks provides a promising framework for future improvements to pedestrian connectivity.

- Both SR 178 and SR 204 through downtown are key to the regional roadway network, but could act as major barriers to access to the F Street site. Both 23rd and 24th streets will soon feature four lanes of one-way traffic, and Golden State Avenue at F Street is a high-speed expressway. The former streets lie between the F Street station site and the downtown core, while the latter intersection is also between the site and downtown, and is immediately adjacent to the station. This will present

challenges to the design of the HSR station site as well as access for all modes. Grade separation of the latter intersection would be possible and would improve motorized access, but could itself serve as a barrier to non-motorized access if pedestrians and cyclists are required to go up, down, or out of direction in order to cross.

- Union Avenue and 34th Street provide key secondary access to the station sites. While Truxtun, F Street, and SR 204 would provide "front door" access to the respective station sites, Union would be an important secondary access route to the Truxtun site, and 34th Street could directly serve the "back door" of the F Street site. It will be important to keep these streets in mind in planning for access from all directions.

- The F Street site could be served by bus rapid transit in the Chester corridor. While the Truxtun site lies along a relatively busy existing bus route providing connectivity to the downtown core, the F Street site is near Chester Avenue, perhaps the most important corridor in both the existing and future GET systems. Over the long-term, Line 21 is planned to become a pair of Bus Rapid Transit lines providing fast, frequent and reliable connections north to Oildale and south through downtown to both the H Street corridor and California State University, Bakersfield.

- *Efficient transit access between the high speed rail station and Meadows Field Airport is needed.*

- *Safety for Bike and Pedestrians at the Garces Circle is needed*

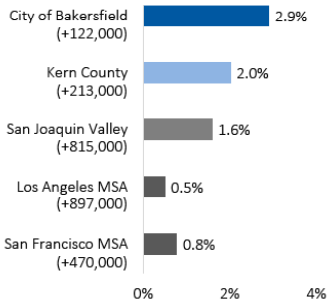
- *Preserving vehicle capacity on 204 between 99 and downtown is a major circulation issue.*

- *Ped and Bike Access to Pioneer Village Museum and the Station is an issue.*

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
MARKET ANALYSIS AND CASE STUDIES

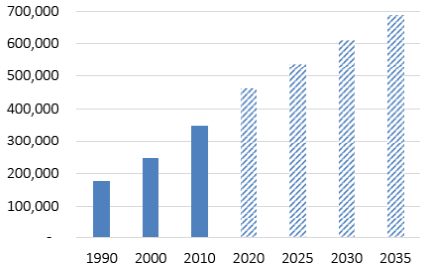
MAKING DOWNTOWN BAKERSFIELD

Figure 24: Population Growth Comparison



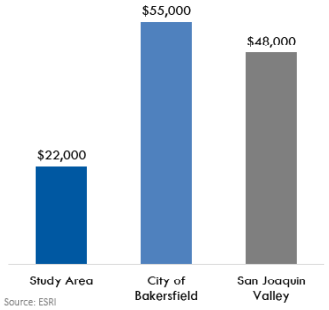
Source: US Census Bureau (2000-14 CAGR)

Figure 25: Bakersfield Population Growth



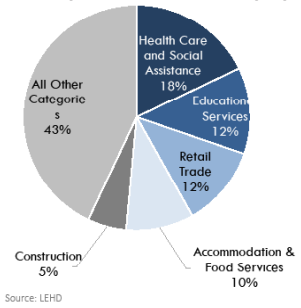
Source: ESRI, U.S. Census, Housing Element Update 2015-2023

Figure 26: Median Household Income (2015)



Source: ESRI

Figure 27: City of Bakersfield Employment



Source: LEHD

The Existing Economic Conditions Report provides an in-depth overview of Bakersfield's demographic, income, and employment makeup from an array of public and proprietary data sources. Major information sources include the U.S. Census Bureau, the Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) database, and ESRI. Projected population and household information was obtained from the Kern County Council of Governments and projected employment information was obtained from the California Employment Development Department.

Bakersfield has historically grown at a faster rate than major coastal metropolitan areas of California (Figure 24), and this growth is expected to continue into the future (Figure 25). The City is still recovering from the lingering effects of the recession, but has fared better than the San Joaquin Valley as a whole.

- Bakersfield and the San Joaquin Valley are seeing major population growth, outpacing the major coastal metropolitan areas of California.
- Bakersfield also has a lower unemployment rate, 8.3 percent, than the San Joaquin Valley unemployment rate of 9.7 percent.
- While Bakersfield has higher incomes and educational attainment than the San Joaquin Valley, the study area does not (Figure 26).
- The main employment sector of the City of Bakersfield is healthcare, and this sector has also seen the largest nominal growth in recent years (Figure 27).
- The study area is a major employment center with approximately 25,000 employees, and contains many local and regional government offices.

REAL ESTATE

The City of Bakersfield is a regional economic hub for Kern County, as well as the southern San Joaquin Valley. Bakersfield has a strong economic base in the agricultural and energy industries, but also serves as a major logistics, retail trade, and healthcare hub.

Introduction

The relatively low cost of living and affordability of housing, in part due to larger amount of developable land in the San Joaquin Valley, will continue to be fundamental drivers for residential and industry growth. While Bakersfield has fostered higher median household incomes than the San Joaquin County average, Downtown Bakersfield has not shared as wholly in the region's strong growth. The new HSR system presents an opportunity to not only strengthen Bakersfield's economy, but to also drive increased development growth in the study area and catalyze wholesale downtown revitalization.

The Economic Existing Conditions Report reviews the current economic context and real estate conditions in Bakersfield and the larger San Joaquin Valley region. This analysis will not only inform current development possibilities in the HSR station area, but will aid in future phases of the Making Downtown Bakersfield plan to identify development challenges and future market opportunities. The full Economic Existing Conditions Report is included in Appendix 1 of this report. Key findings from the report are included in the following summary. It should be noted that additional demand estimates can be found within the Appendix report.

Methodology

To better understand the current Bakersfield market, the Existing Economic Conditions Report evaluates the current real estate performance of residential and commercial land uses, including residential, office, retail, and hospitality. As mentioned above, the purpose of this research is to ascertain the current status of each of these land uses in Bakersfield, and historical performance trends, as well as the position of Bakersfield real estate in the regional California context. This analysis utilized data available through CoStar, a proprietary real estate inventory database, and is supported by discussions with local real estate brokers and economic stakeholders. As the project proceeds, the economic analysis will be supplemented through additional community input.

Figure 28: Rents vs. Vacancy

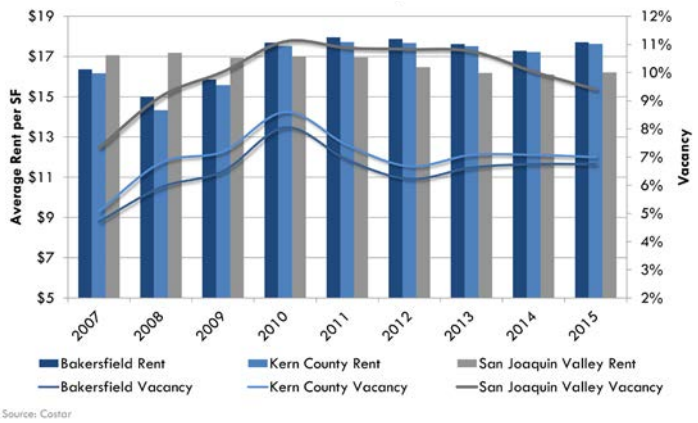
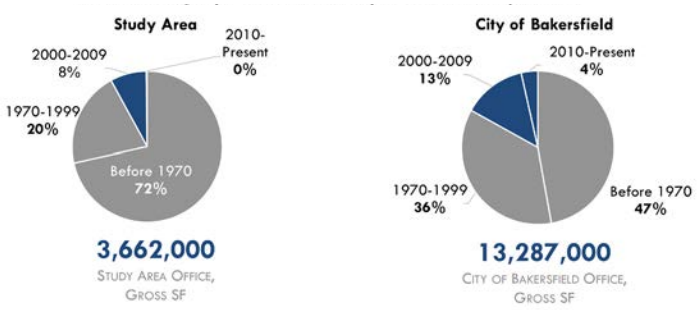


Figure 29: Office Buildings by Year Built as a Proportion of Gross Square Feet



Context

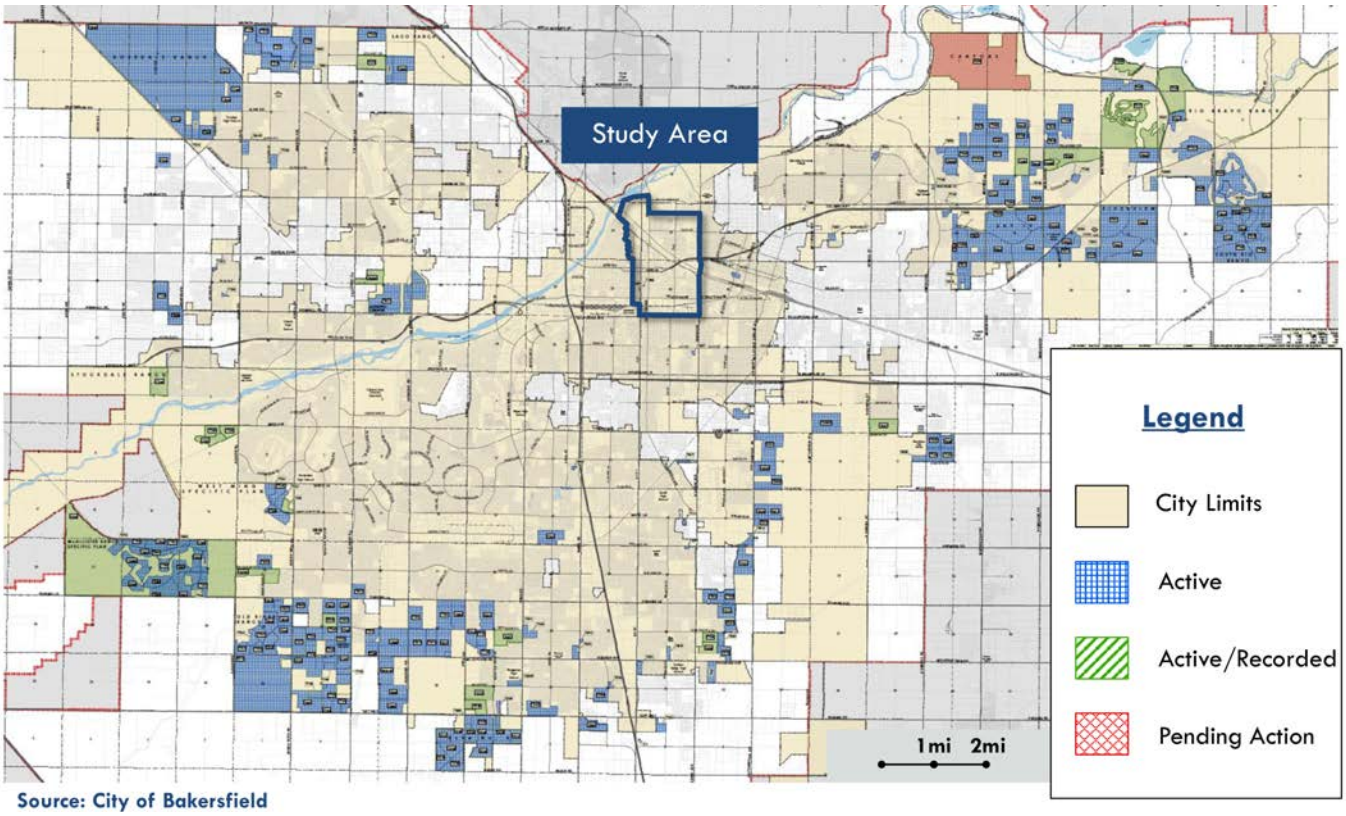
Phase 1 of California's HSR system, expected to be operation in 2029, will connect Bakersfield and much of the San Joaquin Valley with San Francisco and Los Angeles. The initial operating segment, planned to open in 2025, will stretch from San Jose to just north of Bakersfield, but can be extended to a proposed Bakersfield HSR station and San Francisco at that time if federal funding becomes available. HSR access is likely to open up many economic opportunities for Bakersfield, including the opportunity to further support the revitalization of Downtown Bakersfield.

Office Market

Bakersfield's economy has been more stable than the broader region's economy. Even with the recession that started in 2008, Bakersfield added approximately 23,000 jobs between 2002 and 2014. Bakersfield has an opportunity to concentrate office growth in downtown by leveraging HSR and the improved transit connectivity to the city's urban core.

- Of the 13.3 million square feet of office in the City of Bakersfield, approximately 25 percent is located in the study area.
- The Bakersfield office market has higher rents and lower vacancy rates than the San Joaquin Valley (Figure 28).
- With 25,000 jobs, Downtown Bakersfield has a major concentration of Bakersfield's employment, primarily in the government and medical sectors.
- With contractions in Public Administration employment, little of the new office space in Bakersfield has been built within the study area. Bakersfield's office space has expanded by 17 percent since 2000, but the study area has only expanded by 8 percent (Figure 29).
- The Bakersfield office market continues to see growth, but the Downtown market has not captured its fair share of growth in the last two decades. Citywide development policies, downtown placemaking initiatives, and HSR could help to attract more development downtown, including additional private office development.

Figure 30: Residential Tract Map Activity



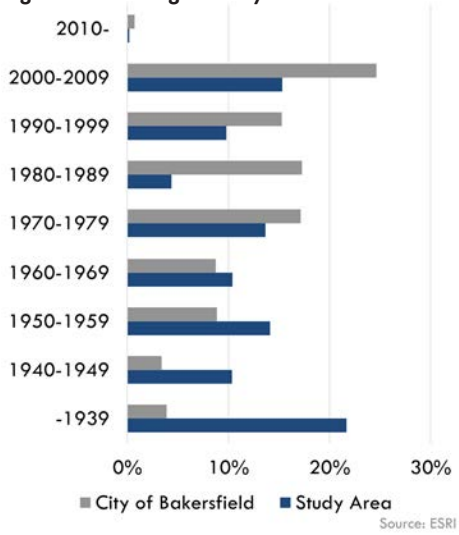
Source: City of Bakersfield

Residential Market

While there has been an increase in multifamily construction since 2000, the majority of development in the City of Bakersfield continues to be owner-occupied, single-family homes located in master planned communities. Downtown residential development will have to command similar or higher prices as suburban locations to justify new construction; this situation could potentially be achieved by enhancing the unique amenities downtown, rather than by attempting to replicate suburban product.

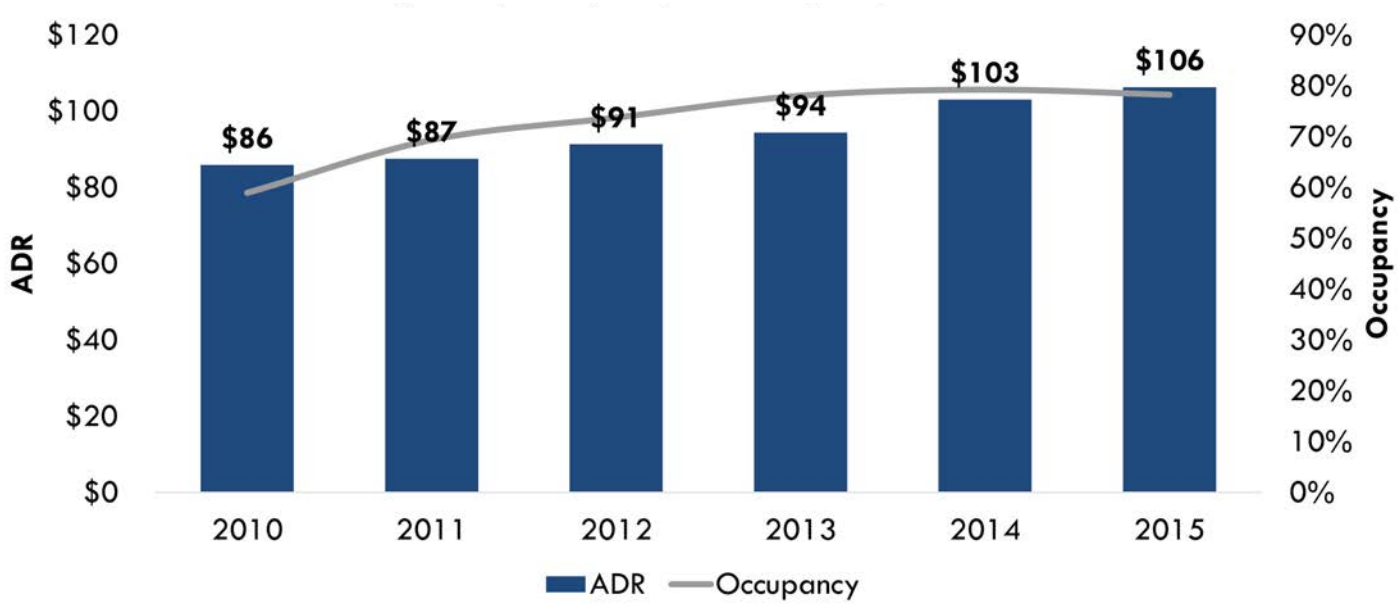
- Over the past two decades, there has been a significant amount of single-family construction in Bakersfield, nearly all of which has been in the form of master-planned communities. Currently 75 percent of Bakersfield's residential units are single-family.
- Since 2000, multi-family apartment development has gained traction in the city (Figure 31), with 925 such units delivered citywide.
- The study area does not have a significant residential population, due to a dearth of quality housing and supporting downtown amenities. However, there is growing interest in downtown living. 14 percent of multi-family units currently being developed in Bakersfield are located in the study area, though many of these units are affordable housing.
- New downtown amenities, such as open space and a grocery store, could increase demand for market-rate housing downtown. While downtown, urban living is nascent in Downtown Bakersfield, similar sized cities across the nation have seen a wave of new investment in their downtowns and are attracting young professionals and empty nesters.
- HSR may create an opportunity for further downtown development, as people may choose to locate in Downtown Bakersfield and commute to other cities.

Figure 31: Housing Units by Year Built



Source: ESRI

Figure 32: Average Daily Rate and Occupancy

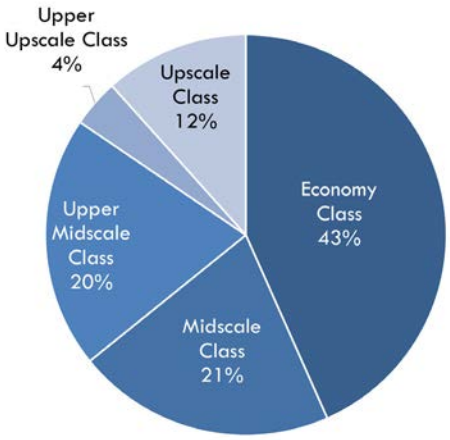


Hotel Market

The majority of Bakersfield's 128 hotels (10,100 hotel rooms) were built after 2000 and are economy or midscale class (Figure ##). Bakersfield's primary hotel users are weekday business travelers.

- Approximately 60 percent of Bakersfield's rooms were built in the past 16 years. This growth is in part due to job growth in Bakersfield and the opening of the Rabobank Arena, the area's largest events venue, in 1998.
- Occupancy rates for downtown upper midscale and upper class hotels are nearly 80 percent (Figure 32), suggesting demand for more upscale hotels rooms in Bakersfield.
- The success of the Padre Hotel demonstrates the latent demand for differentiated products downtown.
- However, modest room rates raise questions of the feasibility of new hotel construction on more expensive Downtown land.
- Four major visitor groups include: business travelers, convention-goers, long-distance travelers driving through California, and tourists who stop in Bakersfield on their drives through the West Coast. Bakersfield's hotel market can be further concentrated in Downtown if the City succeeds in bringing more high quality amenities, such as restaurants, retail, bars, and entertainment to Downtown for business visitors and convention visitors.
- As Downtown continues to see revitalization, travelers will increasingly want to stay near enhanced downtown amenities. Access to HSR and additional Downtown amenities, could locate more business Downtown and support further hotel development.

Figure 33: Hotel Rooms by Class



Source: STR, Inc.

CASE STUDIES

Figure 34: Denver Union Station

Overview

The Economic Existing Conditions Report examined four international case studies to better understand the impacts of HSR on cities with similar characteristics as Bakersfield, and the public policy interventions and actions these cities took to leverage the significant investment of HSR. The international case studies include:

- Lille, France
- Le Mans, France
- Zaragoza, Spain
- Ciudad Real, Spain

Three national case studies were also examined to better understand downtown revitalization and station area development in the US context. The national case studies include:

- Pasadena, California
- Visalia, California
- Denver Union Station (Figure 34)

The lessons learned from the international and US case studies can help inform the City of Bakersfield on the potential impacts HSR may have on the city and the ways the City can utilize the station area planning effort and HSR to achieve its long-term community visions. The US case studies, specifically, inform potential actions the City of Bakersfield can take regardless of HSR to continue to spur downtown revitalization.
The High-Speed Rail Economic Development Case Studies are included in the Appendix of this report.

Key Lesson for Bakersfield

A number of common themes and takeaways emerged for successfully leveraging HSR investments across all the case study cities. The case studies illustrate that proactive policies and actions focused on three major themes: connectivity, station area planning, and governance.

Connectivity ensures that Bakersfield will have a HSR station that can be fully leveraged. Stations outside of center cities generally see less development and are less desirable than those located within or near downtown areas. The Bakersfield

F Street and Truxtun Avenue station locations are within the downtown area, and stands to see similar benefits as other case study cities, such as Lille and Le Mans, as a result of this location. In addition to locating a station near the urban core of a city, providing connectivity between the HSR station and the surrounding neighborhoods and city districts helps to amplify the impact of an HSR station, and spur development along connections to the HSR station.

Such connectivity policies include multimodal connections such as a light-rail or streetcar that can take people from the HSR station to other intra-city areas, as well as major investments in the public realm. Lille and Le Mans both invested in fixed-rail transit to serve their HSR station and provide seamless connections to the remainder of the urban core and other outlying districts. Every effort should be made to ensure the station area is first and foremost friendly and well connected for pedestrians, secondly ensuring seamless multi-modal connections, and finally ensuring access for automobiles that does not hinder the first two modes. Such policies include providing wide and shaded sidewalks, removing barriers to pedestrian movement such as grade separated roadways, missing crosswalks, and roads that are too wide. The station area should have the highest standards for pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure to encourage non-automobile transportation and attract investment.

Station Area Planning, such as zoning controls near station areas, can dramatically boost the impact a new HSR station will have on Bakersfield. Appropriate zoning regulations can ensure a mix of uses in the station area to ensure the station area's long term vitality, and also prevent it from becoming a single use district such as a "nine to five" employment center. While office development often takes the land nearest the HSR stations, residential development can also be focused to the station areas. A mix of uses is vital to healthy station areas, allowing a variety of activities to take place at all hours, and every effort should be made to ensure that the zoning code supports the creation of multiple uses surrounding the station.

Minimum density controls may also be necessary to ensure the station area is not developed too quickly at too low a density, as was the case in Ciudad Real. Both zoning and density controls must acknowledge a long-term development timeframe that spans multiple decades, over 30 years in the case of Le Mans, to ensure decisions made in the station area now do not impede future opportunities in the years to come.

Governance of the station area development is tantamount to ensure it is developed in a way that maximizes its proximity to the HSR station. The case study cities, aside from Ciudad Real, created public development corporations that could acquire, dispose or develop surrounding land under public-private partnerships. These public development corporations generally included local, regional, and national government as well as private stakeholders and the railway authority. They ensured the station area was developed with an eye towards the long-term, as development around HSR stations takes place over decades, while also ensuring that the public's vision for the station area is implemented.

Unique Impacts of HSR

HSR has the potential to have unprecedented impacts on Bakersfield. While HSR's effect on total population and employment are difficult to predict, case studies indicate that HSR can aid in the revitalization of a city's economy and provide a catalyst for population and employment growth with the right public interventions.

One of the most documented effects of HSR is the increased station area concentration and density of development that coincide with HSR service. The large economic catchment areas, reliable travel times, and extremely high carrying capacity can bring large-scale development to the station area in Bakersfield. HSR presents an opportunity for Bakersfield to concentrate some of its future growth inward, building on the progress already made in its downtown area, and lessen the negative impacts of suburban sprawl such as congestion and air pollution.

HSR service can enhance Bakersfield's brand, in the region,

the state and beyond. Development around the HSR station gives Bakersfield the opportunity to create new quality urban places for residents and visitors alike. HSR puts Bakersfield within easy reach of millions of Californians, building potential for more people to come and experience the city's local attractions. Connectivity with the rest of the state is also attractive to employers, and some existing firms in and outside of Bakersfield may relocate to the station area to take advantage of this major asset. Partially coupled with business growth in the station area, business travelers will find Bakersfield in easy reach of major corporate hubs in San Francisco and Los Angeles. Cities such as Zaragoza and Le Mans experienced robust increases in business travelers after HSR service began, and both Zaragoza and Lille saw increases in convention activity as well.

While HSR service brings great opportunities to Bakersfield, these opportunities can only be realized if Bakersfield commits to a compelling vision for the station area to be held over the long-term. HSR should be seen as a catalyst for growth, but not a sole source. Only through a comprehensive set of policy interventions and public realm investments can Bakersfield make the most of its future HSR station.

Downtown Revitalization Case Studies

In light of Bakersfield's ongoing efforts to revitalize its downtown area, which will continue until the arrival of HSR and beyond, three case studies focused on Downtown revitalization were also analyzed, focusing on cities where such revitalization occurred before or without mass transit connections.

Pasadena, a metropolitan center approximately ten miles from Downtown Los Angeles, illustrates ways that the City managed to increase the competitiveness of its historic downtown area (Old Pasadena) versus other regional suburban shopping centers. Visalia, a San Joaquin Valley city approximately 68 miles north of Bakersfield, was studied to represent an example of a revitalized downtown that occurred without any type of mass transit connection and in a development context not too dissimilar from Bakersfield. Denver Union Station was also selected as a case study to learn how multi-modal station investments can be effectively leveraged to catalyze a vibrant mixed use district in its vicinity, especially in the US context.

Key interventions for both Pasadena and Visalia included the creation of a dedicated funding source for maintenance, safety, and improvement of the area. This funding source in both cases stemmed from local businesses, and was construed as an investment in their bottom line as opposed to a series of expensive projects. Strong cooperation of local businesses allowed them to form assessments on themselves, as improvements to the districts at large improved their foot traffic. Thus, local businesses had a strong incentives to pay for public improvements to the area, and were able to prioritize improvements that would make the largest difference to their patrons. Bakersfield should consider the creation of a Downtown Business Improvement District to coalesce resources and political capital around furthering a long-term vision for the Downtown area.

Handling parking was vital in the case of Old Pasadena, and Pasadena managed to create mixed-use parking structures with context sensitive urban design while simultaneously charging for street parking to fund further district improvements. Local merchants often oppose interventions like parking meters out of fear that it will impact their business and driver costumers away to suburban shopping centers, but if parking revenues are dedicated to local area improvements, corresponding investments can more than make up for the increased deterrent of paid parking.

In Denver, a city-led effort to consolidate rail yard space created highly desirable development parcels under single-owner control. While this is a challenge in the absence of a Redevelopment Agency, Bakersfield will have to consider other creative mechanisms to incentivize the kind of development it wants to see in the surrounding station area. In Denver, land assembly was one methodology, but ultimately the process was driven through a partnership between the public and private sectors.

MAKING
DOWNTOWN
BAKERSFIELD