



210 N. Church Street, Suite B
Visalia, California 93291
Phone (559)623-0450
Fax (559)733-6720
www.tularecog.org

MEMORANDUM

TO: Active Transportation Advisory Committee (ATAC)

FROM: Roberto Brady, TCAG Staff

DATE: August 27, 2020

SUBJECT: Great Central Valley Bicycle Route

The Great Central Valley Bicycle Route (GCVBR) is a non-governmental planning initiative to facilitate and encourage long-range bicycle touring in the Central Valley. Michael Smiley, GCVBR project planner, has sent the attached preliminary routes maps and design considerations for staff's review and comments. The comments of the ATAC would also be appreciated. Any such comments or questions can be routed through me (rbrady@tularecog.org) or directly to Mr. Smiley (msmiley@greatcitydesign.com). Thank you.

Great Central Valley Bicycle Route

Route Planning Criteria

Updated 7-6-20

The Great Central Valley Bicycle Route (GCVBR) is a potential segment of the US Bicycle Route System (USBRS), a national network of cross-country bicycle routes currently in the planning stages. When approved, GCVBR will be part of USBR#87, an interstate inland route extending through the central valleys of Washington, Oregon and California. I am leading the effort to map the California Central Valley portion of the route.

Route Planning Criteria

Following is some criteria I have developed for route selection, based on years of experience as an urban designer, planner, and touring bicyclist, and extensive input from colleagues, public agencies, and bicycle advocates.

Generally, these criteria are in order of priority, although there are exceptions. These are targets; sometimes not possible to achieve all concurrently.

- 1) A Valley-focused route. The route is not intended to travel into the Sierra foothills or coastal hills.
- 2) The best route possible that can be used today. It is not the intent to create a future planned alignment that is not optimal for use today. However, it is envisioned that the alignment will become a part of future bicycle facility plans and investments. As incremental improvements are made in response to local planning efforts over time, this route could be realigned to correspond to improved facilities.
- 3) Safety. Primarily related to traffic. Class I (paved trails) and Class II (bike lanes), low volume roads, and quiet residential streets preferred, even if route is longer. Avoid wherever possible: Heavily-trafficked, narrow, winding, shoulder-less country roads (particularly on uphill grades), and strip retail districts with multiple curb cuts.
- 4) *"The trip's the thing"* (not the destination). High scenic and educational values and variety, including bucolic countryside, city centers, historic sites, the state capitol and county seats, state and regional parks, university campuses, farmers markets, rivers, beaches and other special places and natural features, etc. Try to introduce riders to the many features that make the state, the Valley, and the locality unique. Fastest, direct route not a priority. Route may meander to touch a variety of landscapes and features.
- 5) Notwithstanding the above, where possible, document a route that could also serve as a safe local commuter route and also be safe and enjoyable for inexperienced bicyclists.
- 6) All paved. Minimize unpaved segments. No single track.
- 7) Connections to rail and major bus transit stations.
- 8) Closely-spaced food and beverage (grocery stores, pubs, etc.). 10 to 20-mile target maximum spacing.
- 9) Support services. Bicycle repair and info, general retail (25 to 30 mile spacing).
- 10) Overnight accommodations spaced suitable for 40-60-mile riding days including accommodations for both hotel/motel users as well as campers.
- 11) Minimize steep grades (over 5-6%).
- 12) Part of existing approved city and county bike plans and/or published routes by local bicycle organizations.
(Note: I often use this criterion to begin planning a route, particularly accessing central cities. However, it is not one of the highest priorities, since local plans vary in quality and may not be suited to a through route).

Who I Am

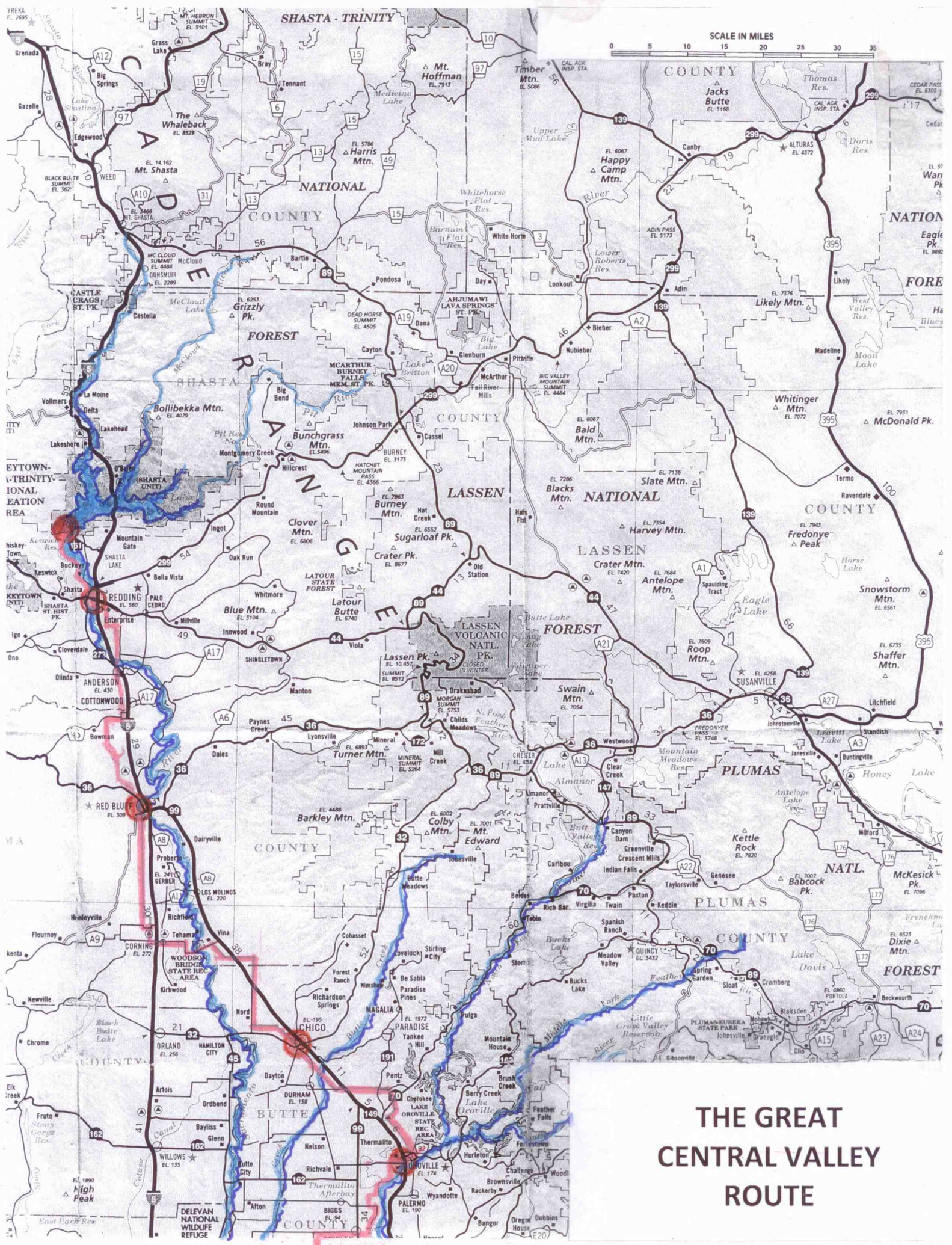
I am an Urban Designer, City Planner and Landscape Architect in private practice and a lifelong touring bicyclist. My first multi-day self-supported tour was at age 14 and I have toured across and throughout the United States at every opportunity since. As a city planner over 40 years, I often planned multi-modal transportation plans (including bicycle and pedestrian facilities) as part of city and regional plans. One of my preferred vacations is a 1-2 week self-supported tour with a close companion on a well-planned route with no schedule.

Michael Smiley, Principal

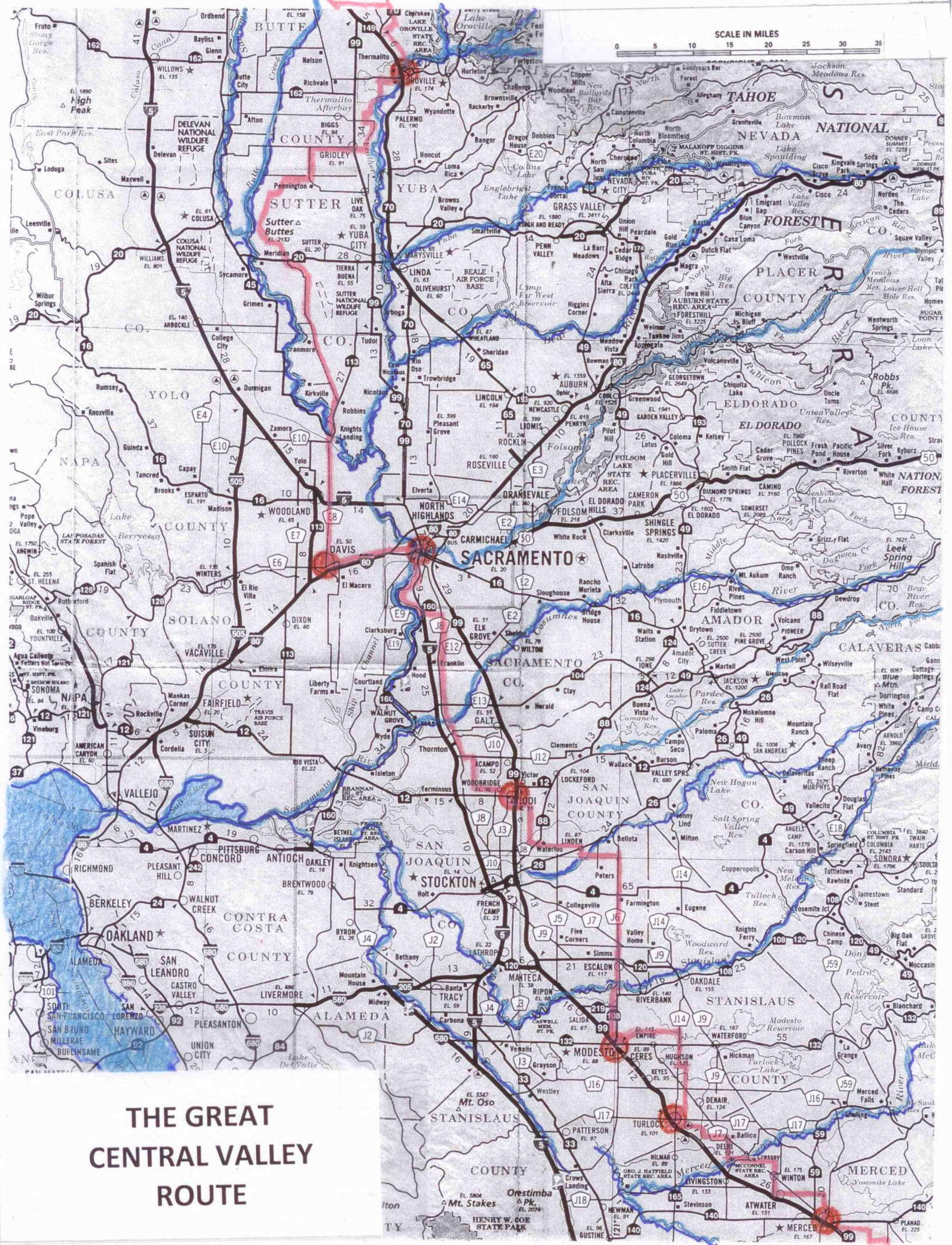
CITYdesignworks

Nevada City, California

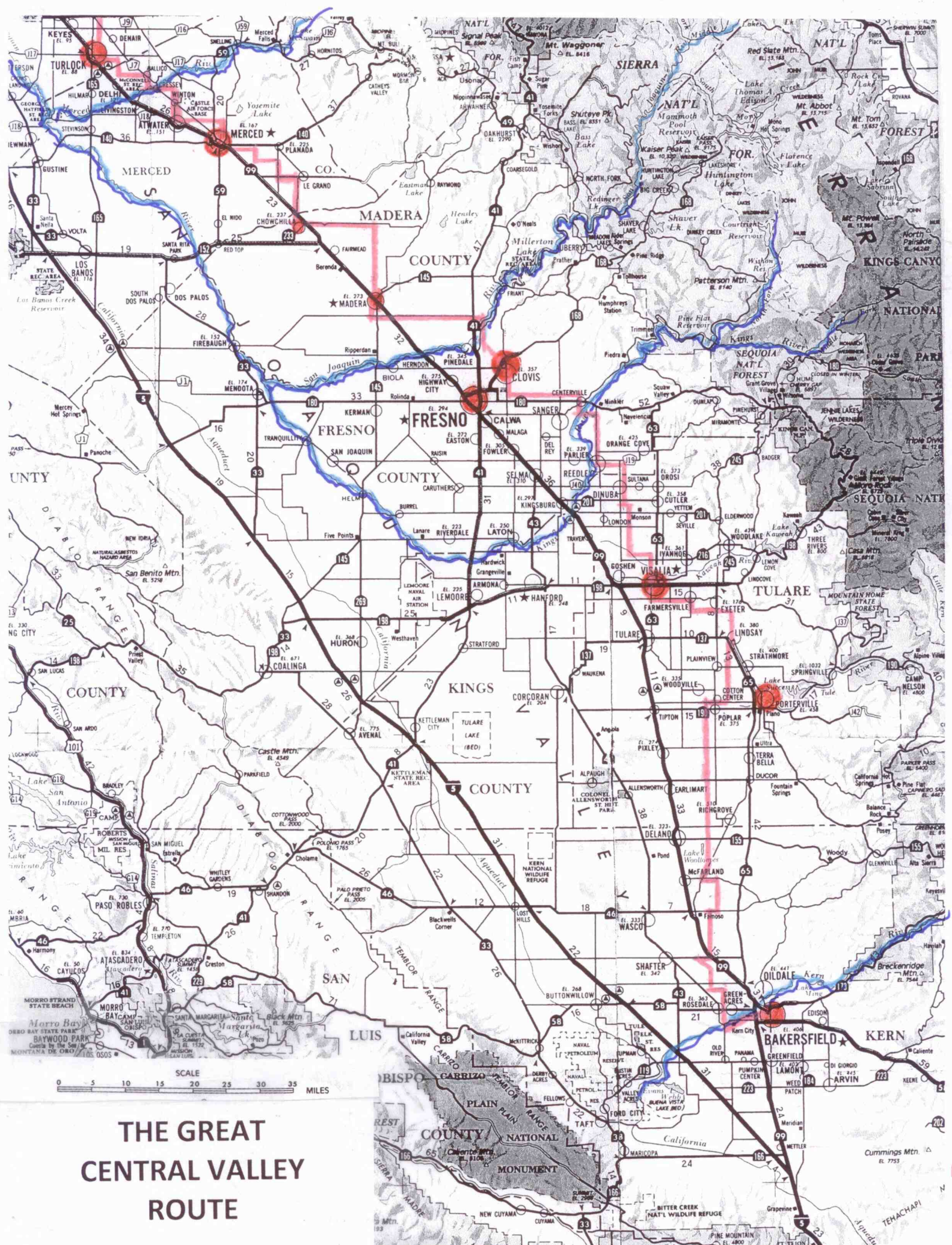
(530) 264-7033



THE GREAT CENTRAL VALLEY ROUTE



THE GREAT
CENTRAL VALLEY
ROUTE



THE GREAT CENTRAL VALLEY ROUTE

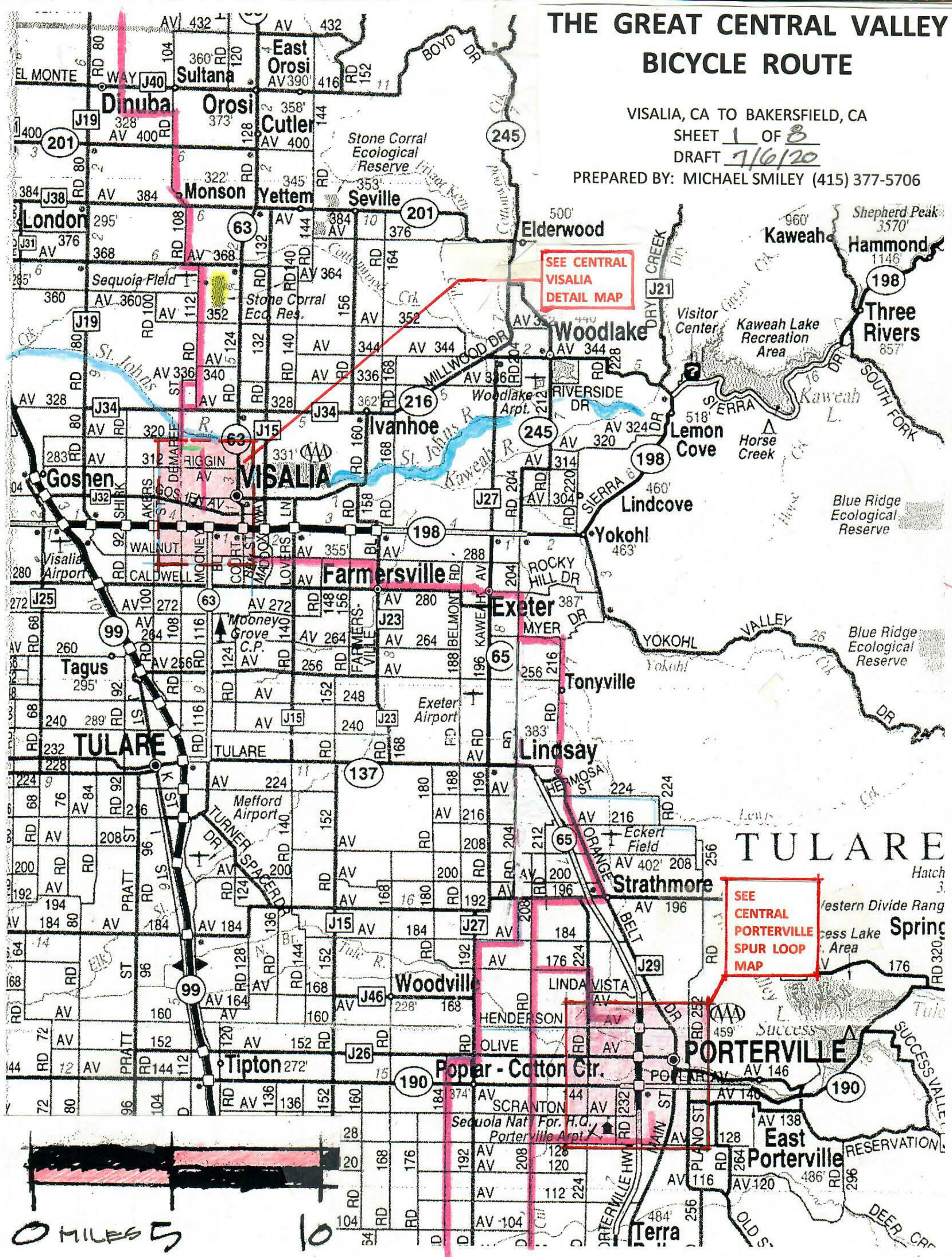
THE GREAT CENTRAL VALLEY BICYCLE ROUTE

VISALIA, CA TO BAKERSFIELD, CA

SHEET 1 OF 8

DRAFT 7/6/20

PREPARED BY: MICHAEL SMILEY (415) 377-5706



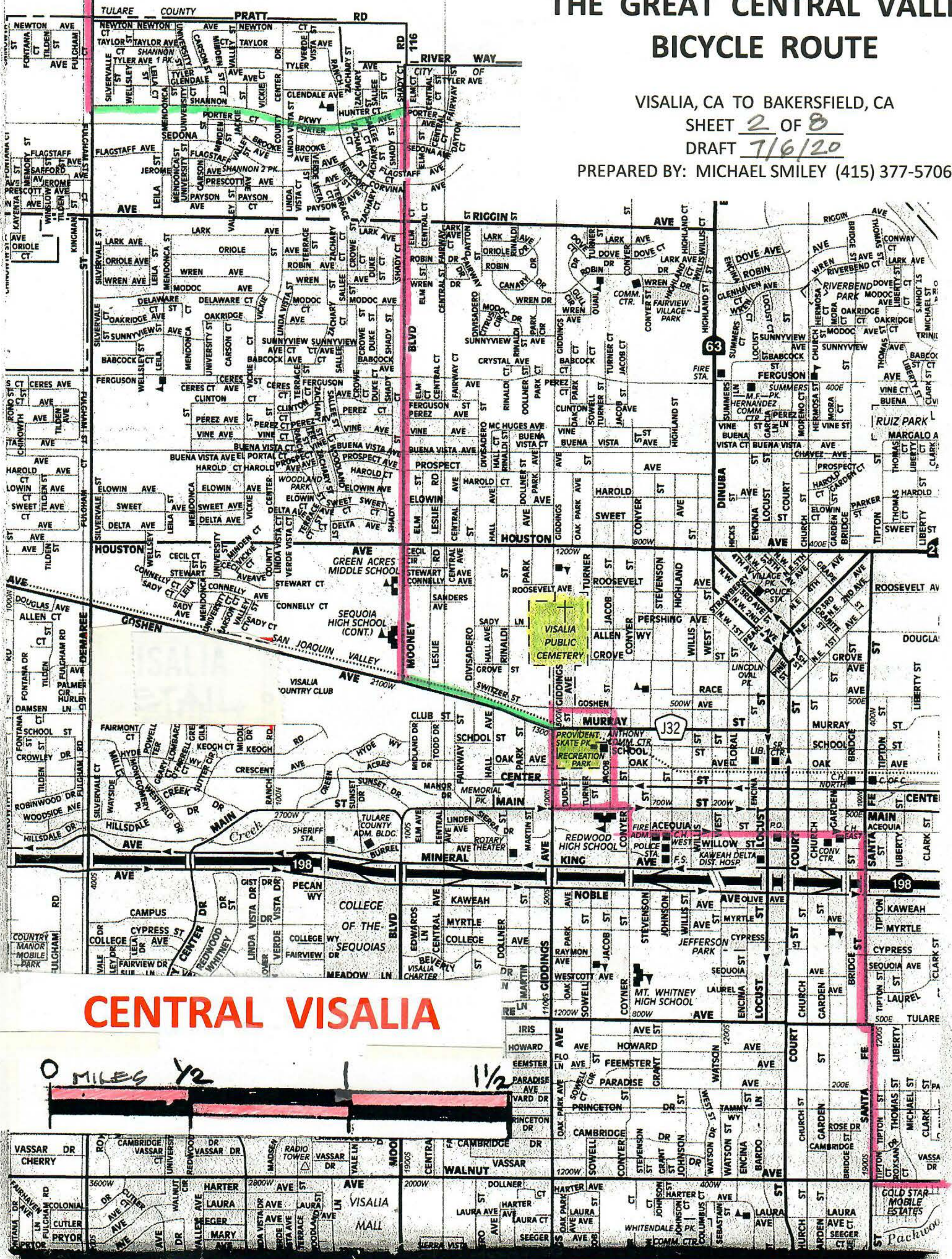
THE GREAT CENTRAL VALLEY BICYCLE ROUTE

VISALIA, CA TO BAKERSFIELD, CA

SHEET 2 OF 8

DRAFT 7/6/20

PREPARED BY: MICHAEL SMILEY (415) 377-5706

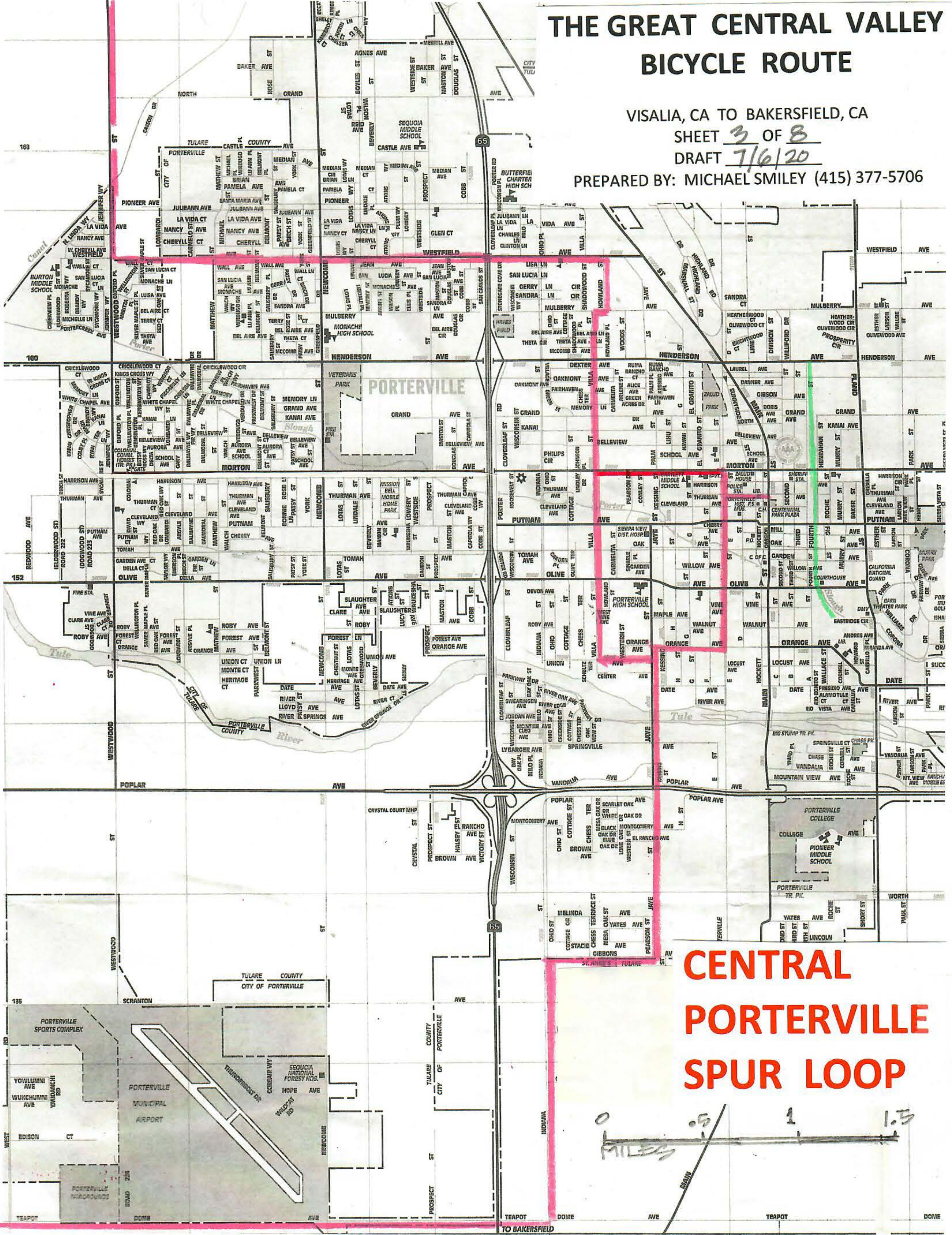


THE GREAT CENTRAL VALLEY BICYCLE ROUTE

VISALIA, CA TO BAKERSFIELD, CA

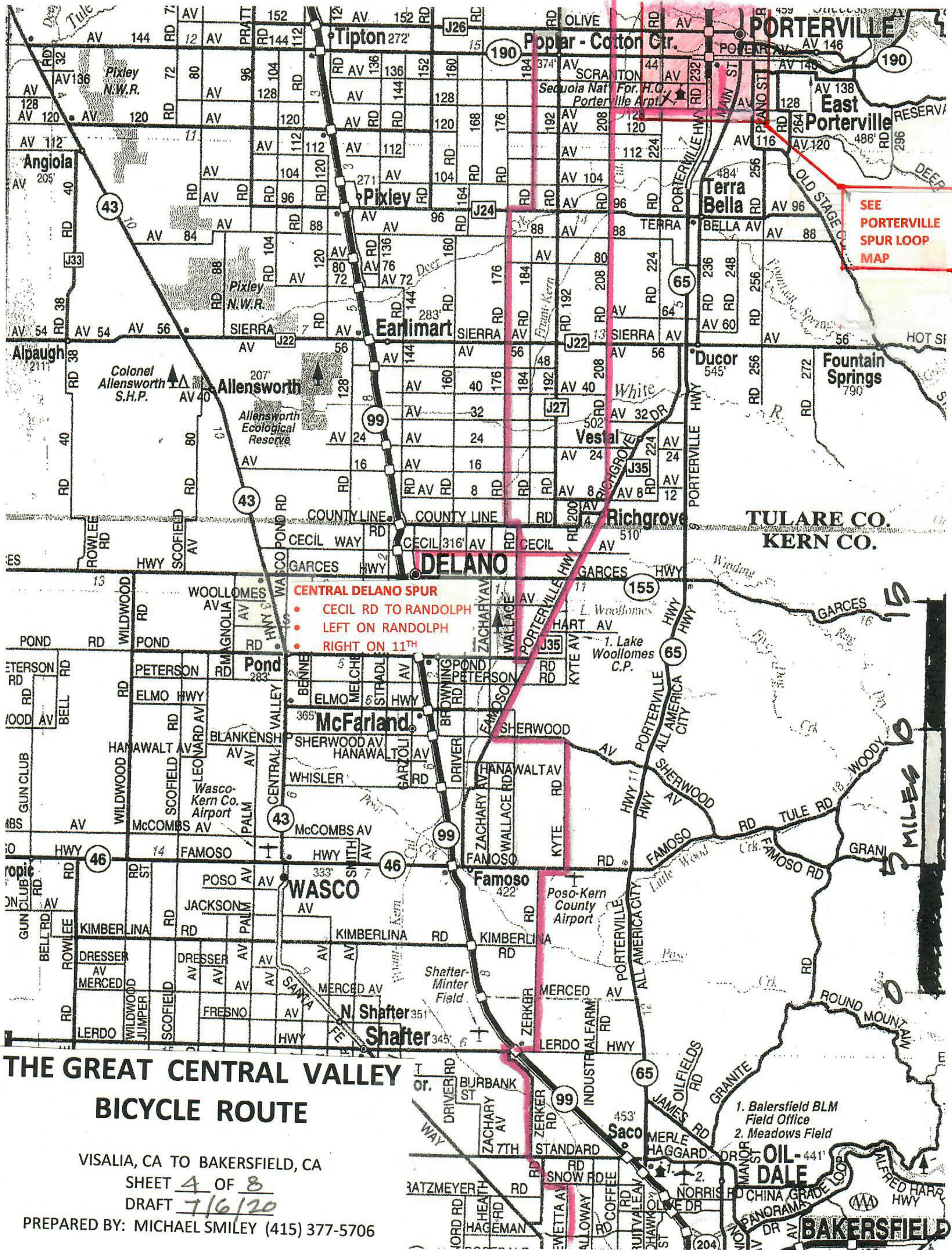
SHEET 3 OF 8
DRAFT 7/6/20

PREPARED BY: MICHAEL SMILEY (415) 377-5706



**CENTRAL
PORTERVILLE
SPUR LOOP**

0 0.5 1 1.5
MILES



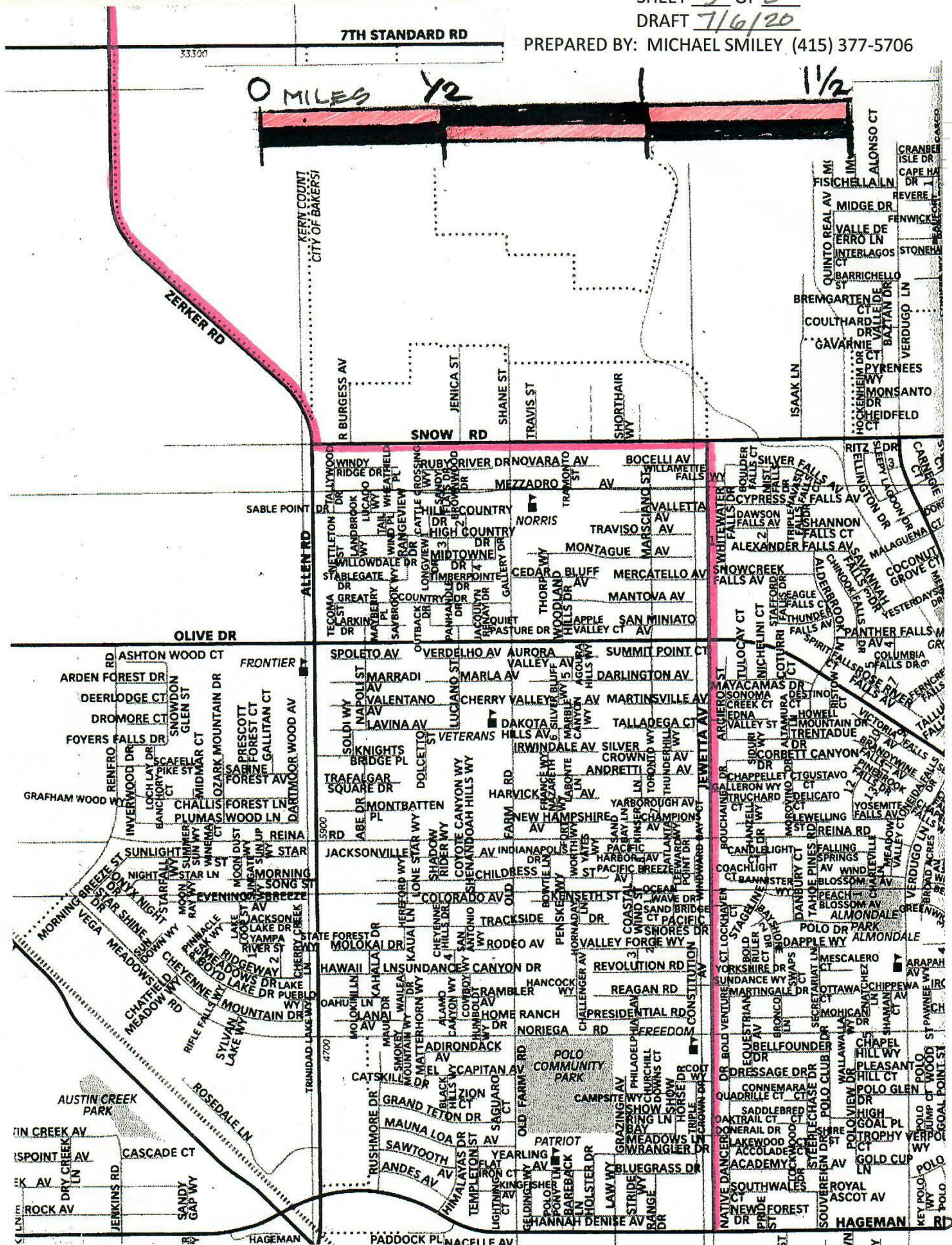
THE GREAT CENTRAL VALLEY BICYCLE ROUTE

VISALIA, CA TO BAKERSFIELD, CA

SHEET 5 OF 8

DRAFT 7/6/20

PREPARED BY: MICHAEL SMILEY (415) 377-5706



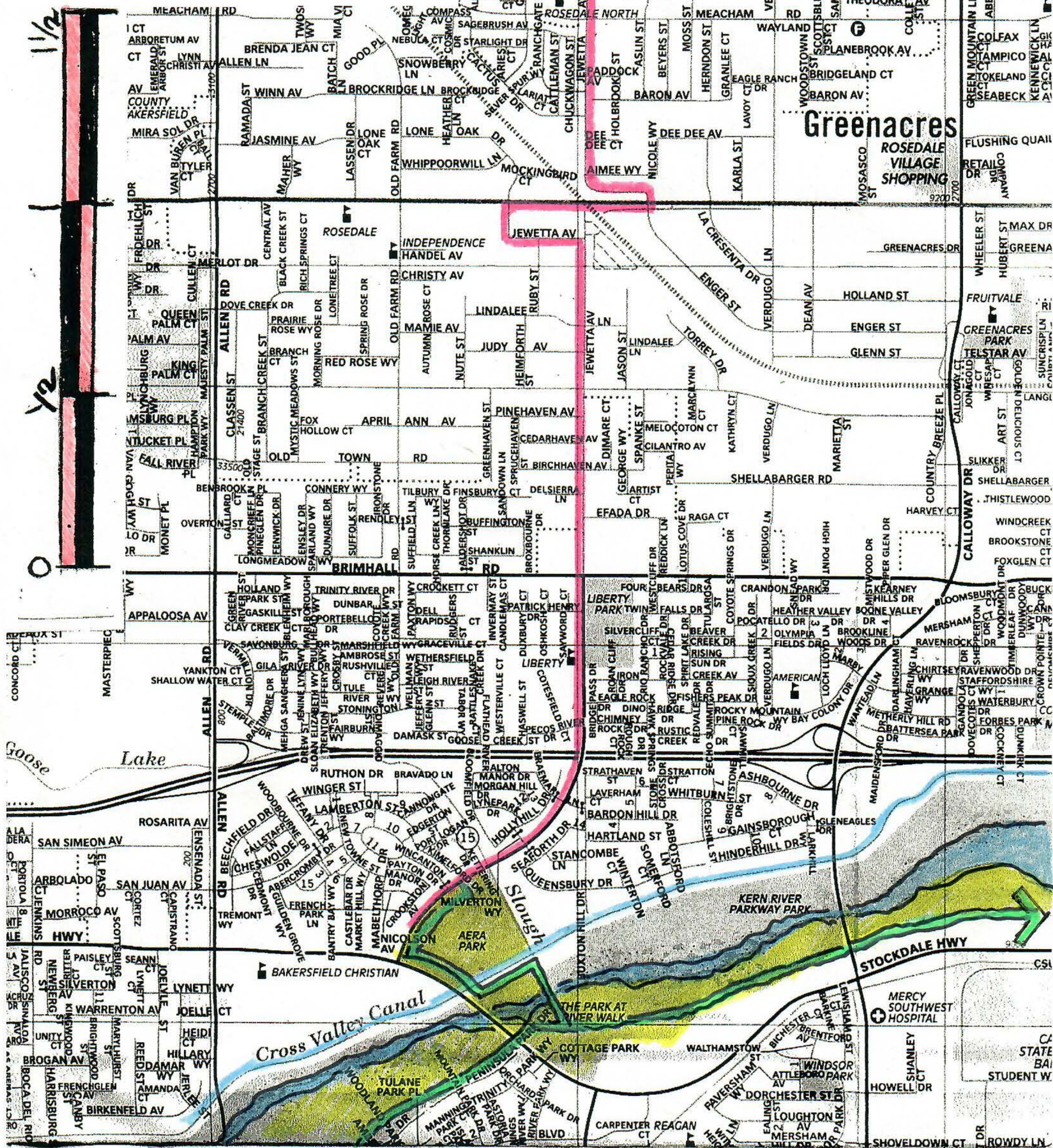
THE GREAT CENTRAL VALLEY BICYCLE ROUTE

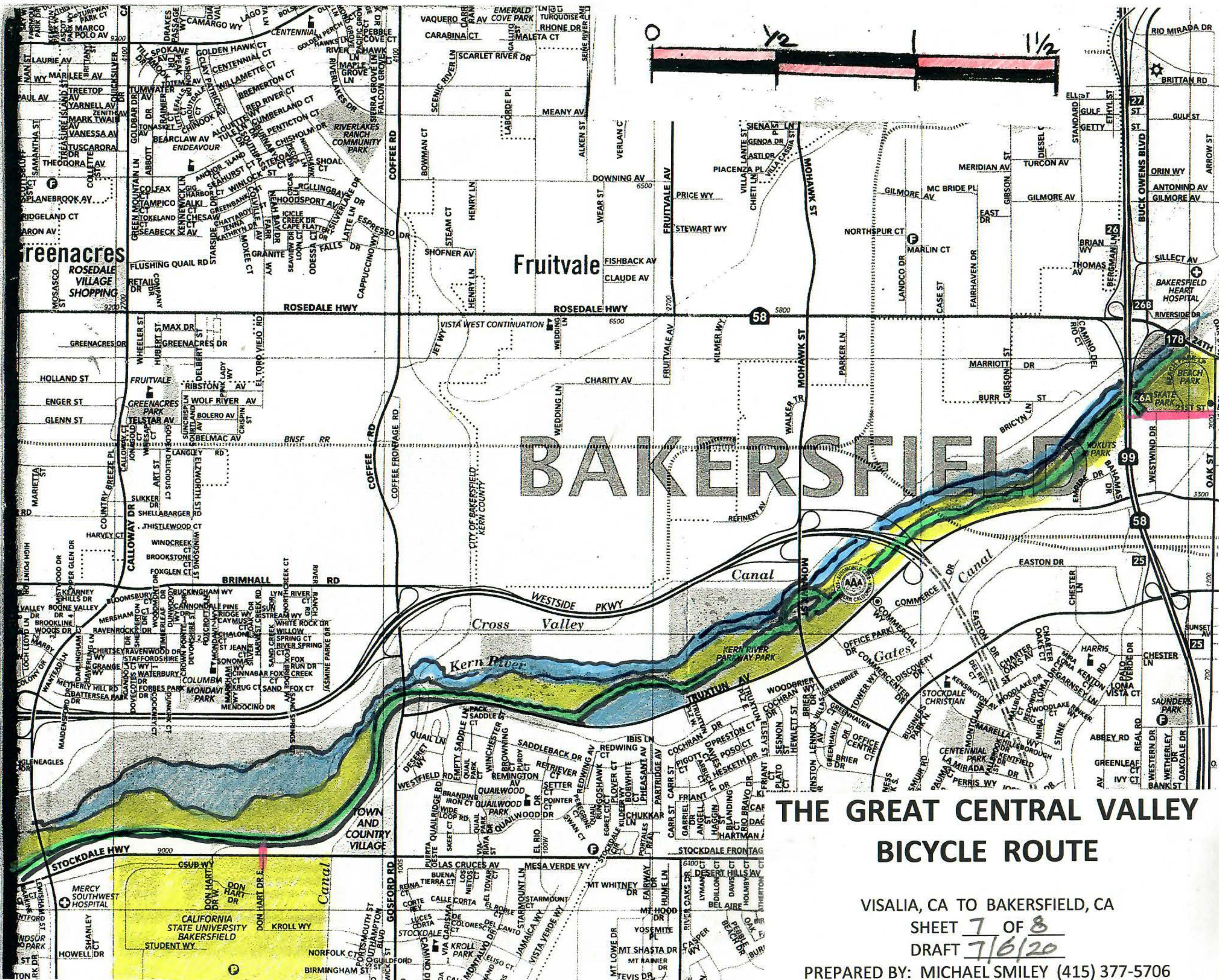
VISALIA, CA TO BAKERSFIELD, CA

SHEET 6 OF 8

DRAFT 7/6/20

PREPARED BY: MICHAEL SMILEY (415) 377-5706





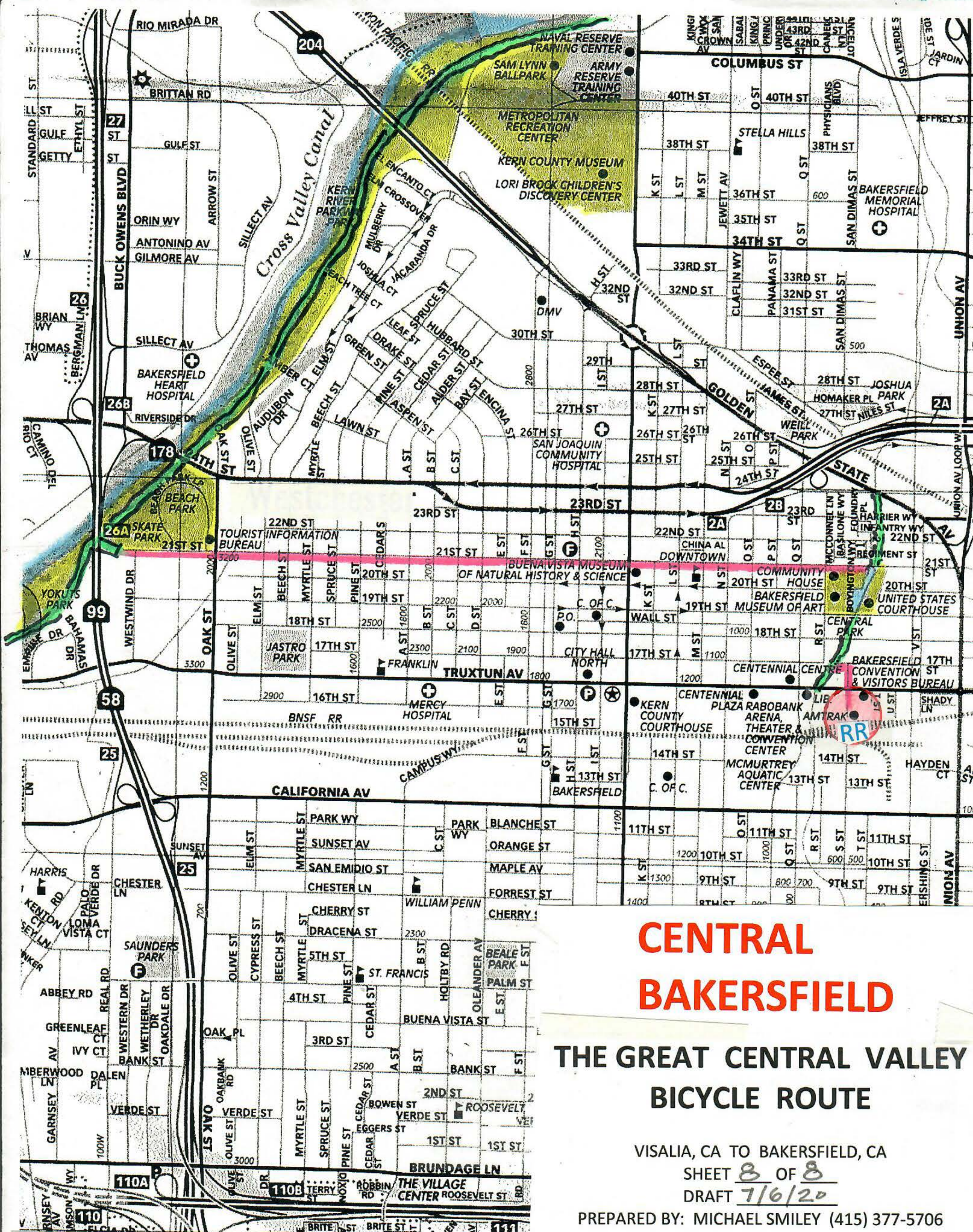
THE GREAT CENTRAL VALLEY BICYCLE ROUTE

VISALIA, CA TO BAKERSFIELD, CA

SHEET 7 OF 8

DRAFT 7/6/20

PREPARED BY: MICHAEL SMILEY (415) 377-5706



CENTRAL BAKERSFIELD

THE GREAT CENTRAL VALLEY BICYCLE ROUTE

VISALIA, CA TO BAKERSFIELD, CA

SHEET 8 OF 8
DRAFT 7/6/20

PREPARED BY: MICHAEL SMILEY (415) 377-5706