

NOTICE OF PREPARATION

Interstate 215 Garbani Road Interchange Project

Availability of Notice of Preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR)

Date: July 13, 2026
To: Reviewing Public Agencies, Interested Parties, and Organizations
From: City of Menifee
Subject: Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Interstate 215 Garbani Road Interchange Project

In partnership with the City of Menifee, Caltrans will be the Lead Agency in preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Interstate 215 (I-215) Garbani Road Interchange Project (Project) pursuant to Section 15021 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines. Caltrans as Lead Agency will prepare the EIR in cooperation with the City of Menifee acting as a Responsible Agency under CEQA. The City of Menifee and Caltrans intend to prepare a joint EIR/Environmental Assessment (EA) pursuant to both CEQA and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

The proposed project would improve transportation circulation and connectivity in the area by reconstructing Garbani Road to provide continuous multimodal travel across I-215 and constructing a new I-215 interchange at Garbani Road. Please share comments about the scope and content of this project and related environmental information germane to your agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project.

The Notice of Preparation (NOP) will be circulated for a 35-day public review and comment period that begins July 13, 2026, and ends August 16, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. The City of Menifee welcomes public input during the review period. If the City of Menifee or the Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation (LCI) has not received a response or a well-justified request for additional time by a responsible agency by the end of the review period, the City may presume the responsible agency has no response (CEQA Guidelines Section 15082(b)(2)). Agencies will need to use the EIR/EA when considering permits or other approvals for the project.

Please submit written comments to:

Kourtney Graves, Senior Environmental Scientist
California Department of Transportation
464 W. 4th St, 6th Floor (MS 827)
San Bernardino, CA 92401-1400

Please address email comments to I-215GarbaniRoadInterchange@dot.ca.gov.

All comments must be received no later than August 16, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. For more information, please visit the project website at: menifee.ca.gov/garbani

PUBLIC MEETING

A public scoping meeting is scheduled during the 35-day public comment period, which begins with the release of this NOP. The scoping meeting purpose is to provide an opportunity for comment, identify public and agency concerns, and define issues that need to be examined in the EIR.

Meeting Details:

When: Tuesday, July 21, 2026, from 5:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Where: City Council Chambers, 29844 Haun Road, Menifee, CA 92586

PROJECT LOCATION

The project limits are at I-215 and Garbani Road between postmile (PM) R15.5 and PM 17.5. The new interchange would be located approximately 1 mile north of the Scott Road Interchange and approximately 2 miles south of the Newport Road Interchange.

PROJECT PURPOSE AND NEED

Purpose:

The purpose of the proposed project is to improve access to The City of Menifee and to address traffic operations and other modes of travel, considering current and future land uses, the associated future traffic volumes, and travel demands. The objectives of the project are to:

- Improve traffic circulation and connectivity to communities east and west of I-215;
- Improve the City's pedestrian and bicycle connectivity and network;
- Provide overall improved access to the regional transportation system
- Provide better access or connection to I-215, which would reduce congestion at adjacent interchanges and local intersections that would operate unacceptably under current and future conditions due to planned land uses as identified in the City's General Plan, as well as existing and future traffic from adjacent communities
- Provide improved access to the City's planned Economic Development Corridor that would provide economic benefit to local community and capture shorter trips

Need:

Garbani Road is classified as a Major 4-lane divided roadway in the City's General Plan and currently features discontinuous connectivity in the east-west direction due to I-215, which bisects Menifee in half. Vehicle trips on Garbani Road travel onto parallel facilities to cross or access I-215. This constraint is a bigger challenge to alternative modes of travel such as bicycles and pedestrians.

The transportation facilities in Menifee are also experiencing an increase in traffic demand generated by land use growth in residential and commercial development activities. Roadways in the project area, including the nearest I-215 interchanges at Scott Road and Newport Road, are experiencing varied levels of congestion during the peak periods. It is expected that this congestion would worsen in the future with increased traffic demand resulting from the ongoing and future residential and commercial developments in the study area. Additionally, communities adjacent to Menifee also use the City roadway network to access I-215. Expected growth in these adjacent communities is anticipated to exacerbate the existing traffic congestion on the City's roadway system.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The City, in cooperation with Caltrans, proposes to construct a new interchange at I-215 and Garbani Road. The project site is located in the City of Menifee between PM R15.5 and PM R17.5. The new interchange would be located approximately 1 mile north of the Scott Road Interchange and approximately 2 miles south of the Newport Road Interchange. Garbani Road currently features discontinuous connectivity in the east-west direction due to I-215, which bisects Menifee. The proposed project would improve transportation circulation and connectivity in the area by reconstructing Garbani Road to provide continuous multimodal travel across I-215 and constructing a new I-215 interchange at Garbani Road.

The following three alternatives are being studied in the EIR for this project:

- Alternative 1 – No-Build Alternative
- Alternative 2 – Compact Diamond Interchange
- Alternative 3 – Spread Diamond Interchange
- Alternative 4 – Diverging Diamond Interchange

Alternative 1: No-Build Alternative

Under the No-Build Alternative, the existing transportation facilities within the project area would remain unchanged, except for planned and programmed improvements being implemented as separate projects by other entities. This alternative does not address the purpose and need of the project. The No-Build Alternative represents the baseline alternative and offers a basis for the analysis and evaluation of the Build Alternatives.

Alternative 2: Compact Diamond Interchange

Build Alternative 2 includes construction of a new diamond configured interchange along I-215 at Garbani Road, and improvements to Garbani and Antelope Roads. Build Alternative 2 includes four diagonal northbound and southbound on- and off-ramps. The ramp terminal intersections would be signal controlled four-way stop intersections, or unsignalized roundabouts. Auxiliary lanes from the Scott Road interchange directly south of the project would be extended to the Garbani Road interchange northbound off-ramp and southbound on-ramp.

The proposed improvements on Garbani Road include reconstruction to a continuous Major (4-Lane) roadway between the Haun Road intersection west of I-215 and the Champagne Drive intersection east of I-215, consistent with the City's General Plan designation for Garbani Road. The roadway characteristics would be consistent with the City's roadway standards to include four 12-foot-wide travel lanes, a 12-foot-wide raised median/left-turn lane, two 8-foot-wide Class II bicycle lanes, and two 6-foot-wide sidewalks. In addition, a 10-foot-wide regional trail is proposed along the north side of Garbani Road consistent with the City's Community/Regional Trail standards. Under Alternative 2 the portion of reconstructed Garbani Road that would be a bridge over the I-215 is approximately 108 feet wide and 204 feet long. The Garbani Road bridge over I-215 would include four 12-foot-wide lanes, 24-foot-wide median/double left-turn lane pocket, two 8-foot-wide bike lanes, a 12-foot-wide sidewalk on the north side, and a 6-foot-wide sidewalk on the south side.

The proposed improvements along Antelope Road include upgrade of the road to a Major (4-Lane) Road with four 12-foot-wide lanes, a 12-foot-wide median/left-turn lane, two 8-foot-wide bike lanes, and two 6-foot-wide sidewalks. Antelope Road would be realigned approximately 3,840 feet to the east. The relocated Garbani/Antelope Roads intersection would be a signal controlled intersection or an un-signalized roundabout.

Alternative 3: Spread Diamond Interchange

Build Alternative 3 includes construction of a new spread diamond interchange along I-215 at Garbani Road. The configuration includes four diagonal northbound and southbound on- and off-ramps that would be signal controlled or roundabouts, similar to Build Alternative 2. Auxiliary lanes from the Scott Road interchange directly south of the project would be extended to the Garbani Road interchange northbound off-ramp and southbound on-ramp. The primary difference between the designs is that the spread diamond configuration is a larger footprint that at a future time could accommodate the addition of a loop on-ramp if traffic conditions past the 20-year horizon year would require it. The proposed Garbani Road bridge over I-215 under Build Alternative 3 is approximately 88 feet wide and 204 feet long. The bridge includes four 12-foot-wide lanes, a 4-foot-wide median, two 8-foot-wide bike lanes, a 12-foot-wide sidewalk on the north side, and a 6-foot-wide sidewalk on the south side.

Build Alternative 3 would share the same proposed improvements to Garbani and Antelope Roads as under all build alternatives, which are described above under Build Alternative 2.

Alternative 4: Diverging Diamond Interchange

Build Alternative 4 includes construction of a new diverging diamond interchange (DDI) along I-215 at Garbani Road. The DDI configuration would include two signalized ramp intersections and a configuration that allows for direct left turns to freeway on-ramps. Auxiliary lanes from the Scott Road interchange directly south of the project would be extended to the Garbani Road interchange northbound off-ramp and southbound on-ramp. The Garbani Road bridge over I-215

proposed under Alternative 2 is approximately 92 feet wide and 204 feet long. The bridge includes four 12-foot-wide lanes, two 8-foot-wide bike lanes, two 4-foot-wide shoulders, and a barrier-protected 16-foot-wide regional trail and sidewalk path, which converges along the center of the interchange.

Build Alternative 4 would share the same proposed improvements to Garbani and Antelope Roads as under all build alternatives, which are described above under Build Alternative 2.

REQUIRED APPROVALS

Approvals for the project include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Construction General Permit Compliance (Clean Water Act Section 402)
- 1602 Streambed Alteration Agreement from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW)
- 401 Water Quality Certification from the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB)
- 404 Permit from the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)
- Flood Control encroachment and related permits
- Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act
- Assembly Bill 52 Native American Tribal Coordination
- Right-of-Way

POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

As required by CEQA, the EIR will describe existing conditions and evaluate the potential environmental effects of the project and a reasonable range of alternatives, including the No-Build Alternative. It will address direct, indirect, and cumulative effects. The EIR will identify feasible mitigation measures, if available, to reduce significant and potentially significant impacts. The following environmental topic areas are preliminarily anticipated to be evaluated in the EIR:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| • Aesthetics | • Hazards and Hazardous Materials |
| • Agriculture and Forest Resources | • Hydrology/Water Quality |
| • Air Quality | • Land Use/Planning |
| • Biological Resources | • Mineral Resources |
| • Climate Change | • Noise |
| • Community Impacts | • Paleontological Resources |
| • Cultural Resources | • Population and Housing |
| • Cumulative Impacts | • Public Services |
| • Energy | • Recreation |
| • Geology/Soils | • Transportation |
| • Greenhouse Gas Emissions | • Tribal Cultural Resources |
| • Growth | • Utilities/Service Systems |

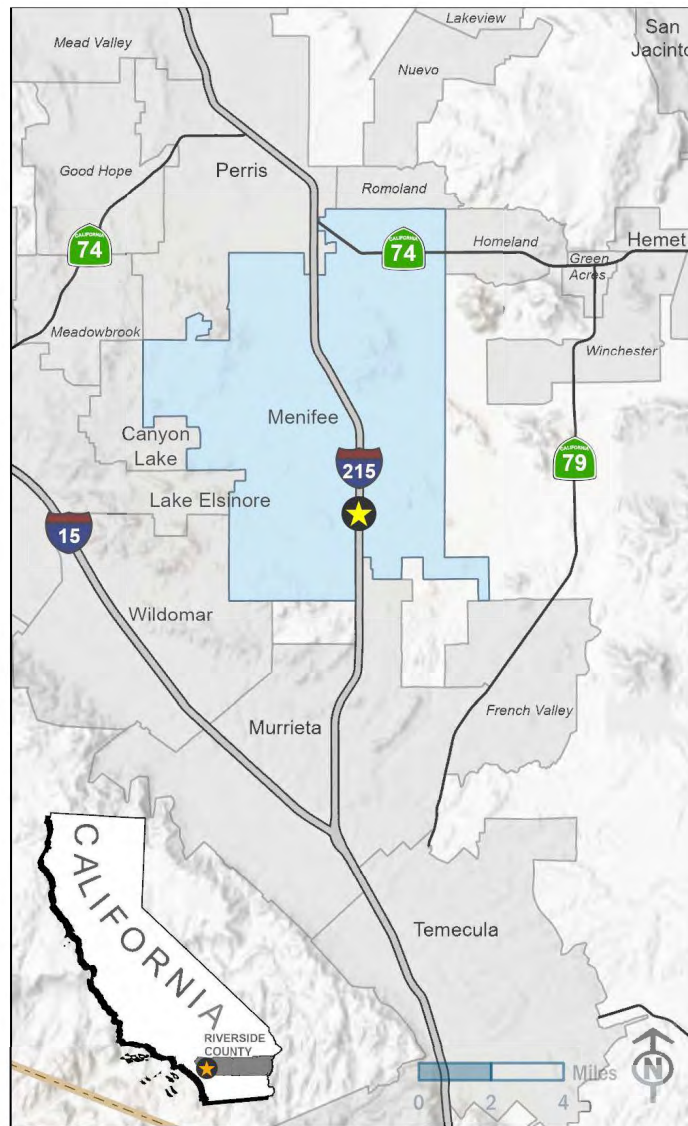
- Visual
- Wildfire

At this time, anticipated potentially significant impacts are related to:

- The project footprint overlaps the Paloma Wash, which is an ephemeral desert drainage and flood control facility, supporting open space and riparian habitats;
- Increasing capacity and vehicle miles traveled along Garbani Road; and
- Cultural resources and Tribal sensitivity in the area.

FIGURES

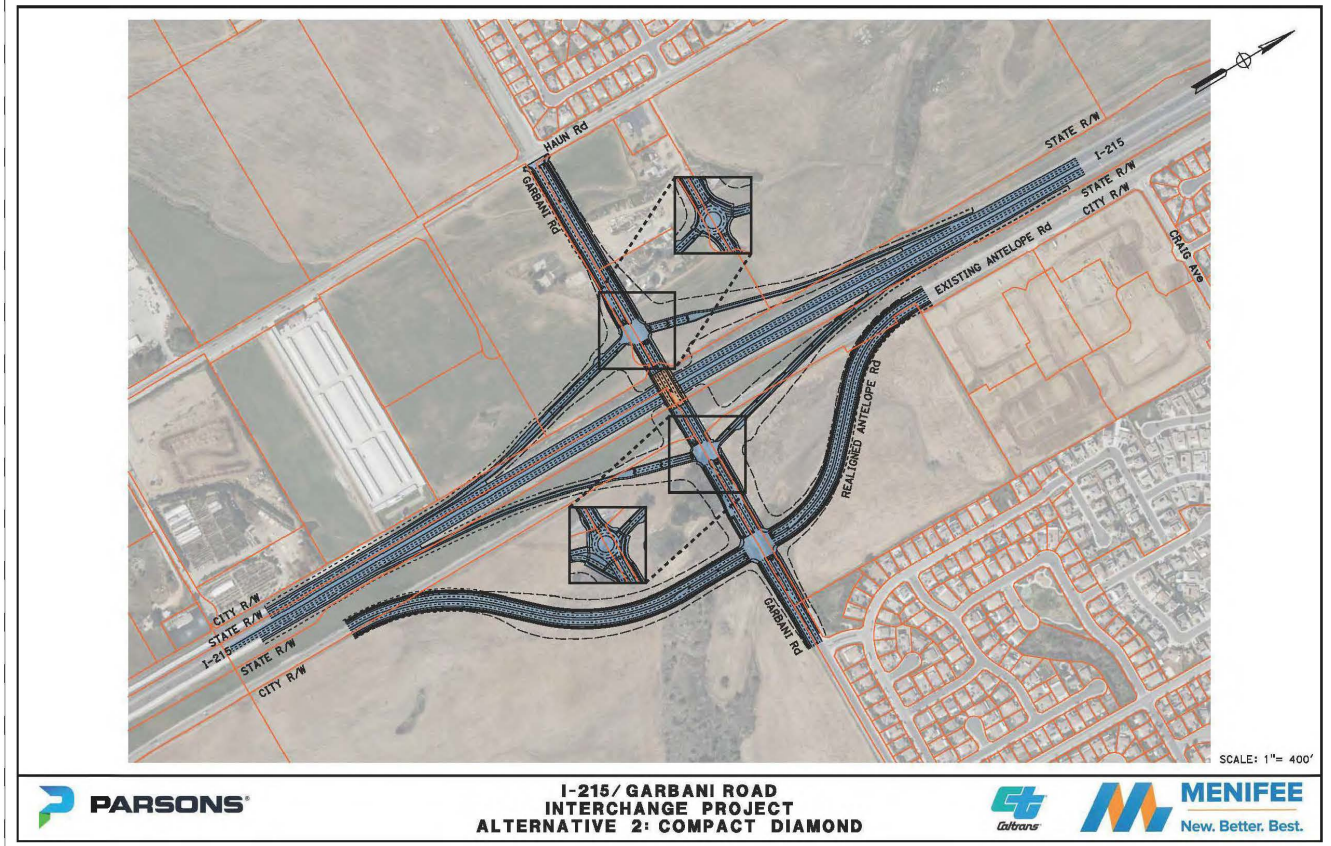
Regional Project Location Map



Project Vicinity Map



Exhibits of Build Alternatives (Project Alternatives 2, 3, 4)





**I-215/GARBANI ROAD
INTERCHANGE PROJECT
ALTERNATIVE 3: SPREAD DIAMOND**



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New. Better. Best.



**I-215/GARBANI ROAD
INTERCHANGE PROJECT
ALTERNATIVE 4: DIVERGING DIAMOND**



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