

4. *Project Description*

4.1 **INTRODUCTION**

“Project,” as defined by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, means “the whole of an action, which has a potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment, and that is any of the following: (1)...enactment and amendment of zoning ordinances, and the adoption and amendment of local General Plans or elements thereof pursuant to Government Code Sections 65100–65700” (14 Cal. Code of Reg. 15378[a]).

The Menifee General Plan has been prepared in accordance with state planning law, as provided in California Government Code Section 65300. The Menifee General Plan is meant to be a framework for guiding planning and development in Menifee for the next 20 or more years and can be thought of as the blueprint for the City’s growth and development. The Menifee General Plan is comprehensive both in its geography and subject matter. It addresses the entire territory within the City’s boundaries and a broad spectrum of issues associated with the future buildout of the City.

The Menifee General Plan is consistent with California Government Code Section 65302 because it addresses the seven required elements or topics of a general plan (land use, circulation, housing, conservation, open space, noise, and safety) in addition to two optional elements: community design and economic development, as described below. Once adopted, the optional elements have the same legal status as the mandatory elements. No single element or subject supersedes any other, and all are internally consistent.



4.2 **PROJECT LOCATION**

The City of Menifee is in western Riverside County, approximately 30 miles southeast of the City of Riverside. The City is generally bordered City of Perris and unincorporated county to the north; City of Canyon Lake, City of Lake Elsinore and City of Wildomar to the west; City of Wildomar, City of Murrieta and unincorporated county to the south; and unincorporated communities of Homeland and Winchester to the east (see Chapter 3, Figure 3-1). Interstate 215 (I-215) bisects the City north to south.

4.3 **STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES**

The following objectives have been established for the City of Menifee General Plan and will aid decision makers in their review of the proposed project and associated environmental impacts:

- Adopt a new General Plan that establishes the goals and policies to create a built environment that fosters the enjoyment, financial stability, and well-being of the entire community.
- Preserve a diverse mix of neighborhoods that provide an array of housing choices for a variety of life stages and lifestyles.
- Preserve the City’s rural character, where appropriate.

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- Create a vibrant downtown, complete with a Community Center that serves as the central facility for our annual community celebrations and a gathering place for a broad spectrum of interests and ages.
- Preserve and promote historic and cultural resources that are unique to the City.
- Provide for adequate open space, recreational and cultural amenities to serve existing and future residents.
- Provide access to rail, bus rapid transit, local shuttle services and develop a citywide golf cart/neighborhood electric vehicle plan to minimize vehicular trips that improve air quality.
- Improve the community's jobs-housing balance and fiscal sustainability by planning for a diversified employment base, supported by a variety of commercial, industrial, and mixed-use land uses through creation of the Economic Development Corridor (EDC) land use designation.
- Create a plan that promotes long-term economic vitality and fiscal responsibility.
- Reconcile General Plan buildout projections with regional and subregional estimates for growth.
- Incorporate housing sites identified in the Housing Element into the Land Use Element.
- Ensure consistency with AB 32, SB 375, and other federal, State, and local mandates.
- Incorporate goals, policies, and programs that integrate multiple modes of transportation and meet the requirements of the Complete Streets Act.

4.4 PROJECT CHARACTERISTICS

The Menifee General Plan includes forecasts of long-term conditions and outlines development goals and policies, exhibits and diagrams. It guides growth and development within the City by designating land uses in the proposed land use map and through implementation of the goals and policies of the Menifee General Plan. It would also provide a long-term vision for the city, and through its implementation goals and policies, indicate how that vision may be achieved over time.

The **Land Use Element** describes goals and policies for areas within a jurisdiction's boundaries in both narrative and graphic terms and establishes development criteria and parameters, including building intensity and population density. Land use categories are used to depict the general distribution, location, and extent of public and private uses of land. The City of Menifee's Land Use Element also covers public utilities and infrastructure.

The **Circulation Element** deals with the identification, location, and extent of existing and proposed major thoroughfares, transportation routes, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, public transit routes, and neighborhood electric vehicle/golf routes, along with the movement of goods and location of scenic highways. It serves as the circulation plan for the City and must be correlated with the land use element.

The **Housing Element** analyzes housing needs for all income groups and demonstrates how to meet those needs. State law requires that this element be revised, at a minimum, every five years.

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The **Open Space and Conservation Element** sets forth goals and policies to preserve open space for park and recreation purposes as well as address the comprehensive and long-range preservation of the City's natural landforms and other open space areas. It also provides guidance related to the protection of habitat and wildlife resources, and the responsible conservation and use of minerals, energy, and water.

The **Noise Element** provides guidance related to noise conditions and identifies goals and policies aimed at mitigating and adapting to nuisance noise in the City.

The **Safety Element** identifies seismic, geologic, flood, and wildfire hazards, and establishes policies to protect the community.

The **Community Design Element** establishes the goals and policies that would create a built environment that fosters the enjoyment, financial benefit, and well-being of the entire community.

The **Economic Development Element** establishes goals and policies for encouraging private investment in Menifee, increasing the quantity and quality of jobs, expanding and diversifying revenue sources, providing for fiscal sustainability and guiding financial decisions.

Though this DEIR fully complies with the requirements of CEQA and is based on a comparison of the proposed Land Use Plan to existing land uses, it is important to note that the Menifee General Plan is a regulatory document that sets the framework for future growth and development in the City and does not directly result in development in and of itself. Before any development can occur in the City, all such development is required to be analyzed for conformance with the Menifee General Plan, zoning requirements, and other applicable local and state requirements; comply with the requirements of CEQA; and obtain all necessary clearances and permits.



Proposed General Plan Land Use Designations

Figure 4-1, *Proposed Land Use Plan* shows the preferred distribution of land use that would be implemented upon theoretical buildout of the Menifee General Plan. Table 4-1 describes the proposed General Plan land use designations and the uses that would be permitted under each designation. Land use designations define the amount, type, and nature of future development that is allowed in a given location of the City. The table also provides a comparison of the current Riverside County Integrated Project (RCIP; County General Plan) land use designations to those proposed under the Menifee General Plan.

Table 4-1
Proposed Land Use Designations

Land Use Designation	Allowed Uses
RESIDENTIAL	
Rural Mountainous (RM)	Single-family residential uses with a minimum lot size of 10 acres (1 du/10 ac). Generally characterized as areas of at least 10 acres where a minimum of 70 percent of the area has slopes of 25 percent or greater. Allows limited animal keeping, agriculture, recreational uses, governmental uses, and compatible resource development (which may include the commercial extraction of mineral resources with approval of a surface mine permit and associated uses).

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**Table 4-1
Proposed Land Use Designations**

Land Use Designation	Allowed Uses
Rural Residential 5 acre minimum (RR5)	Single-family residences with a minimum lot size of 5 acres (1 du/5 ac). Animal keeping and agricultural uses are expected and encouraged, also allows recreational and governmental uses.
Rural Residential 2 acre minimum (RR2)	Single-family detached residences on large parcels of 2 to 5 acres (1 du/2–5 ac). Limited agriculture, intensive equestrian, and animal keeping uses are expected and encouraged. Allows small scale home-based business operations in accordance with the Zoning Code on rural large lot properties if consistent w/surrounding character.
Rural Residential 1 acre minimum (RR1)	Single-family detached residences on large parcels of 1 to 2 acres (1 cu/1–2 ac). Limited agriculture, equestrian and animal keeping uses are expected and encouraged. Allows small scale home-based business operations in accordance with the Zoning Code on rural large lot properties if consistent w/surrounding character.
Rural Residential 1/2 acre minimum (RR1/2)	Single-family detached residences on large parcels of 1/2 to 1 acre (1 du/1/2–1 ac). Limited agriculture and animal keeping is permitted; however, intensive animal keeping is discouraged.
2.1–5 du/acre Residential (2.1-5R)	Single-family detached and attached residences with a density range of 2 to 5 dwelling units per acre. Limited agriculture and animal keeping is permitted; however, intensive animal keeping is discouraged.
5.1–8 du/acre Residential (5.1-8R)	Single-family attached and detached residences with a density range of 5.1 to 8 dwelling units per acre.
8.1–14 du/acre Residential (8.1-14R)	Single-family attached and detached residences, including townhouses, stacked flats, courtyard homes, patio homes, and zero lot line homes.
14.1–20 du/acre Residential (14.1-20R)	Single-family attached residences and multifamily dwellings such as triplexes, fourplexes, motorcourt clusters, and row townhomes.
20.1–24 du/acre Residential (20.1-24R)	Multifamily dwellings including apartments and condominiums.
COMMERCIAL, OFFICE & INDUSTRIAL	
Commercial Retail (CR) 0.20–0.35 FAR	Neighborhood-, local-, and regional-serving retail and service uses. Hotels are also permitted in this land use designation.
Commercial Office (CO) 0.25–1.0 FAR	Variety of office-related uses including financial, legal, insurance and other office services. Corporate offices and supporting hotel and ancillary retail uses are also permitted.
Business Park (BP) Maximum 0.60 FAR	Industrial and related uses including warehousing/distribution, assembly and light manufacturing, repair facilities, and business parks including corporate offices. Employee-intensive uses, including research and development, technology centers, "clean" industry and supporting hotel and ancillary retail uses are also permitted.
Heavy Industrial (HI) Maximum 0.50 FAR	More intense industrial activities, such as manufacturing uses, that can generate significant impacts such as excessive noise, dust, and other nuisances.
OTHER	
Specific Plan (SP)	The purpose of a specific plan is to provide detailed policies, standards and criteria for the development or redevelopment of an area. As required by State law, specific plans are generally comprised of a land plan, circulation plan, development standards, design guidelines, phasing plan, and set forth detailed implementation programs necessary to serve the development. The actual designation of each area will be SP. Actual land uses are illustrated in detail in the Specific Plan documents (zoning). Amendments to land use in the Specific Plan will not warrant a revision to the General Plan (General Plan Amendment).

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**Table 4-1
Proposed Land Use Designations**

Land Use Designation	Allowed Uses
Economic Development Corridor (EDC) Maximum 24 du/ac and 1.0 FAR	<p>The intent of the EDC land use designation is to designate areas where a mixture of residential, commercial, office, industrial, entertainment, educational, and/or recreational uses, or other uses are planned. Both horizontal and vertical mixed uses are permitted. In general, areas designated as EDC are envisioned to develop primarily as nonresidential uses with residential uses playing a supporting role. Residential uses are required to be integrated vertically or horizontally with other uses and are not allowed as standalone projects. Overall, residential uses are not permitted to exceed 15 percent of the total EDC acreage nor be allowed directly adjacent to I-215.</p> <p>The EDC designation is primarily intended for uses along corridors such as I-215 and Ethanac, Newport and Scott Roads since land uses in these areas have a higher likelihood to transition over time in comparison to other areas of the City. The EDC designation will provide a similar level of flexibility to landowners as the county's Community Center Overlay was intended to do.</p> <p>Preparation of a Conceptual Master Plan will be required for new development projects in EDC areas. A comprehensive understanding of the relationship to surrounding uses is essential to creating cohesive, integrated development in EDC areas. The Conceptual Master Plan will take into consideration circulation, infrastructure-, and design-related issues for the proposed site and adjacent uses.</p> <p>Development in EDC areas may be implemented by a specific plan or through conventional zoning designations. The appropriate mechanism will be determined by City staff upon review of the Conceptual Master Plan.</p>
AGRICULTURE	
Agriculture (AG)	Agricultural land including row crops, groves, nurseries, dairies, poultry farms, processing plants, and other related uses. One single-family residence allowed per 10 acres except as otherwise specified by a policy or zoning.
OPEN SPACE	
Conservation (OS-C)	The protection of open space for natural hazard protection, and natural and scenic resource preservation. Existing agriculture is permitted to remain.
Recreation (OS-R)	Recreational uses including parks, trails, athletic fields, golf courses, and drainage corridors to be used as recreation facilities.
	Neighborhood parks are permitted within residential land uses.
Water (OS-W)	Includes bodies of water and natural or artificial drainage corridors. Recreational facilities such as parks and trails are also permitted in this designation if agreements can be reached with governing agencies.
INSTITUTIONAL	
Public/Quasi Public Facilities (PF) ≤ 0.50 FAR	Civic uses such as City administrative buildings (City Hall, fire stations, police stations, community centers), government offices, corporation yards (areas for the city or other public agencies to store equipment or vehicles), cemeteries, and libraries. Applies to existing public schools and private schools at the elementary, junior high, and high school levels. Also includes institutions of higher learning.
Public Utility Corridor (PUC)	Indicates locations that contain easements for significant public utilities infrastructure, such as electrical transmission lines. Improvements/uses within utility easements may include parks, trails, nurseries, storage, or any other use that is compatible with adjacent land uses and permitted by the utility provider. Uses proposed within these easements require coordination with the appropriate utility provider.



Projections shown in Table 4-2 are based on the theoretical buildout (dwelling units, population, nonresidential square footage, and employment) of each land use designation based on a range of allowable residential densities (expressed as units per acre) and nonresidential intensities (expressed as floor area ratio). Theoretical buildout of the proposed Land Use Plan is projected to accommodate approximately 63,754 dwelling units and 158,948 people.

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**Table 4-2
Future General Plan Buildout Projections**

Land Use Category	Acres¹	Assumed Density (du/ac)²	Intensity (FAR)²	Units	Population³	Retail (Square Feet)	Nonretail (Square Feet)	Total (Square Feet)
Residential								
Rural Mountainous (RM)	464	0.10		46	120			
Rural Residential 5 ac min (RR5)	663	0.20		133	344			
Rural Residential 2 ac min (RR2)	1,629	0.50		815	2,106			
Rural Residential 1 ac min (RR1)	2,634	1.0		2,634	6,813			
Rural Residential 1/2 ac min (RR1/2)	756	2.0		1,512	3,909			
2.1-5 du/ac Residential (2.1-5R)	5,946	4.0		23,785	61,511			
5.1-8 du/ac Residential (5.1-8R)	639	6.0		3,833	9,912			
8.1-14 du/ac Residential (8.1-14R)	88	10.0		885	2,288			
14.1-20 du/ac Residential (14.1-20R)	None	18.0		None	None			
20.1-24 du/ac Residential (20.1-24R)	256	22.0		5,499	10,513			
Subtotal	13,075	—	—	39,141	97,515	—	—	—
Nonresidential								
Commercial Retail (CR)	202		0.23			2,018,027		2,018,027
Commercial Office (CO)	10		0.35				150,369	150,369
Heavy Industrial (HI)	28		0.40				494,803	494,803
Business Park (BP)	413		0.38				6,836,666	6,836,666
Subtotal	653	—	—	—	—	2,018,027	7,481,838	9,499,865
Economic Development Corridor (EDC)	2,437	5.1–18.0	0.23–0.38	4,744	10,049	3,774,167	28,281,889	32,056,056
Subtotal	3,090			4,744	10,049	5,792,194	35,763,727	41,555,921
Specific Plan⁴								
Specific Plan (SP)	6,750			19,867	51,378	4,959,034	5,805,749	10,764,783
Subtotal	6,750⁵	—	—	19,867	51,378	4,959,034	5,805,749	10,764,783
Other								
Agriculture (AG)	79							
Conservation (OS-C)	1,664							
Recreation (OS-R)	725							
Water (OS-W)	69							

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**Table 4-2
Future General Plan Buildout Projections**

Land Use Category	Acres¹	Assumed Density (du/ac)²	Intensity (FAR)²	Units	Population³	Retail (Square Feet)	Nonretail (Square Feet)	Total (Square Feet)
Public/Quasi-Public Facilities (PF)	484							
Public Utilities Corridor (PUC)	132							
Railroad (Rail)	25							
Right-of-Way (ROW)	3,720							
Subtotal	6,898							
Total	29,813	—	—	63,754	158,942	10,751,227	41,569,476	52,320,704

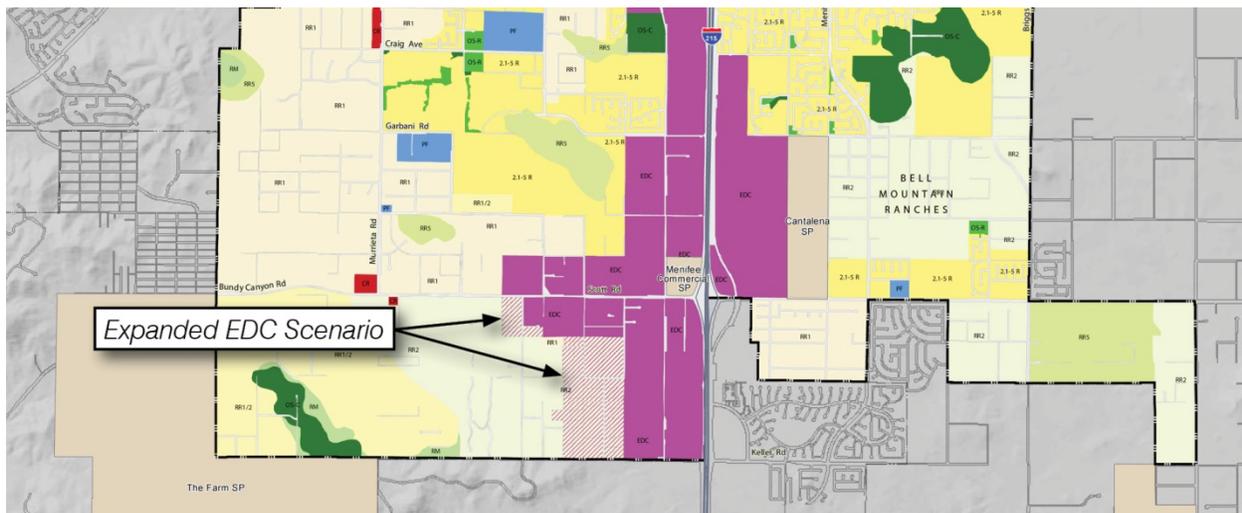
¹ Acres shown are adjusted gross acreages and do not include the right-of-way for roadways (Collector Roads and above) flood control facilities, or railroads.
² Density/Intensity includes both residential density, expressed as units per acre, and nonresidential intensity, expressed as floor area ratio (FAR), which is the amount of building square footage in relation to the size of the lot.
³ Projections of population by land use designation are based on a persons-per-household factor that varies by housing type. A 7.64 percent vacancy rate was assumed for population based on 2009 City of Menifee vacancy rate figures identified by the California Department of Finance.
⁴ The total number of units and square footage of retail and nonretail uses for specific plans were taken directly from the approved Land Use Plans associated with each adopted specific plan document. If the figures were unavailable, standard density and intensity assumptions were applied.
⁵ Of the 6,750 total acres in specific plan areas, approximately 1,782 acres (26 percent of the specific plan acreage) are dedicated to open space uses. These acres are in addition to the open space acreages identified in the land use designations.

Optional Buildout Scenario



The Economic Development Corridor (EDC) designation is intended to provide economic vitality and flexibility in land use options to promote economic development along the City’s major corridors.

Based on input from the public and direction from City Council, the proposed project includes two separate EDC buildout scenarios. The difference in buildout scenarios affects 197 acres in the southern portion of the City, west of I-215 and south of Scott Road as shown in striped area designated Expanded Economic Development Corridor (EDC) Scenario below.



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A summary of the differences between the Land Use Plan with the EDC and the Expanded EDC are provided below.

- Increase the EDC area
 - Add 197 acres to the EDC-designated area
 - Increase nonretail by 3,260,901 square feet

- Reduce the Rural Residential area
 - Remove 4 acres of the RR1 (1-acre minimum) land use designation and 193 acres of the RR2 (2 acres minimum) land use designation
 - Reduce population by 281 persons
 - Reduce total number of units by 101

Table 4-3 shows the land use categories that would change with the inclusion of the Expanded EDC Scenario as well as the projected theoretical buildout totals of this land use scenario. The balance of the land use categories would remain as presented in Table 4-2.

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**Table 4-3
Future General Plan Buildout Projections with Expanded EDC**

<i>Land Use Category</i>	<i>Acres</i>	<i>Assumed Density (du/ac)</i>	<i>Intensity (FAR)</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Population</i>	<i>Retail (Square Feet)</i>	<i>Nonretail (Square Feet)</i>	<i>Total (Square Feet)</i>
Rural Residential 2 ac min (RR2)	1,629	0.5	—	815	2,106	—	—	—
Rural Residential 2 ac min (RR2) with Expanded EDC	1,436	0.5	—	718	1,835	—	—	—
Difference	-193	0	—	-97	-271	—	—	—
Rural Residential 1 ac min (RR1)	2,634	1	—	2,634	6,813	—	—	—
Rural Residential 1 ac min (RR1) with Expanded EDC	2,630	1	—	2,630	6,803	—	—	—
Difference	-4	0	—	-4	-10	—	—	—
Economic Development Corridor (EDC)	2,437	5.1–18.0	0.23–0.38	4,744	10,049	3,774,167	28,281,889	32,056,056
EDC with Expanded EDC Area	2,634	5.1–18.0	0.23–0.38	0	0	3,774,167	31,542,790	35,316,957
Difference	197	—	—	0	0	0	3,260,901	3,260,901
Total GP	29,813	—	—	63,754	158,942	10,751,227 ¹	41,569,476	52,320,704
Total GP with Expanded EDC	29,813	—	—	63,653	158,661	10,751,227	44,830,377	55,581,605
Difference	0	—	—	-101	-281	0	3,260,901	3,260,901

¹ The total General Plan retail square feet includes 2,018,027sf of Commercial Retail (CR), 4,959,034 sf of Specific Plan (SP), and 3,774,167 sf for EDC; the Expanded EDC area does not include retail uses.



Infrastructure Improvements

It is anticipated that as buildout of the Menifee General Plan occurs over the next 20 years or more, infrastructure improvements would be required to serve future development. The Menifee General Plan does not directly result in development in and of itself and does not propose specific infrastructure improvements to transportation, water, wastewater, or storm drain facilities. However, future growth that would be accommodated by the Menifee General Plan would be considered as infrastructure planning documents for the City are updated to identify additional infrastructure improvements needed to accommodate the proposed growth. Potential environmental impacts from future project-specific

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improvements would be evaluated on a case-by-case basis at the time development plans are submitted to the City.

Proposed General Plan Goals and Policies

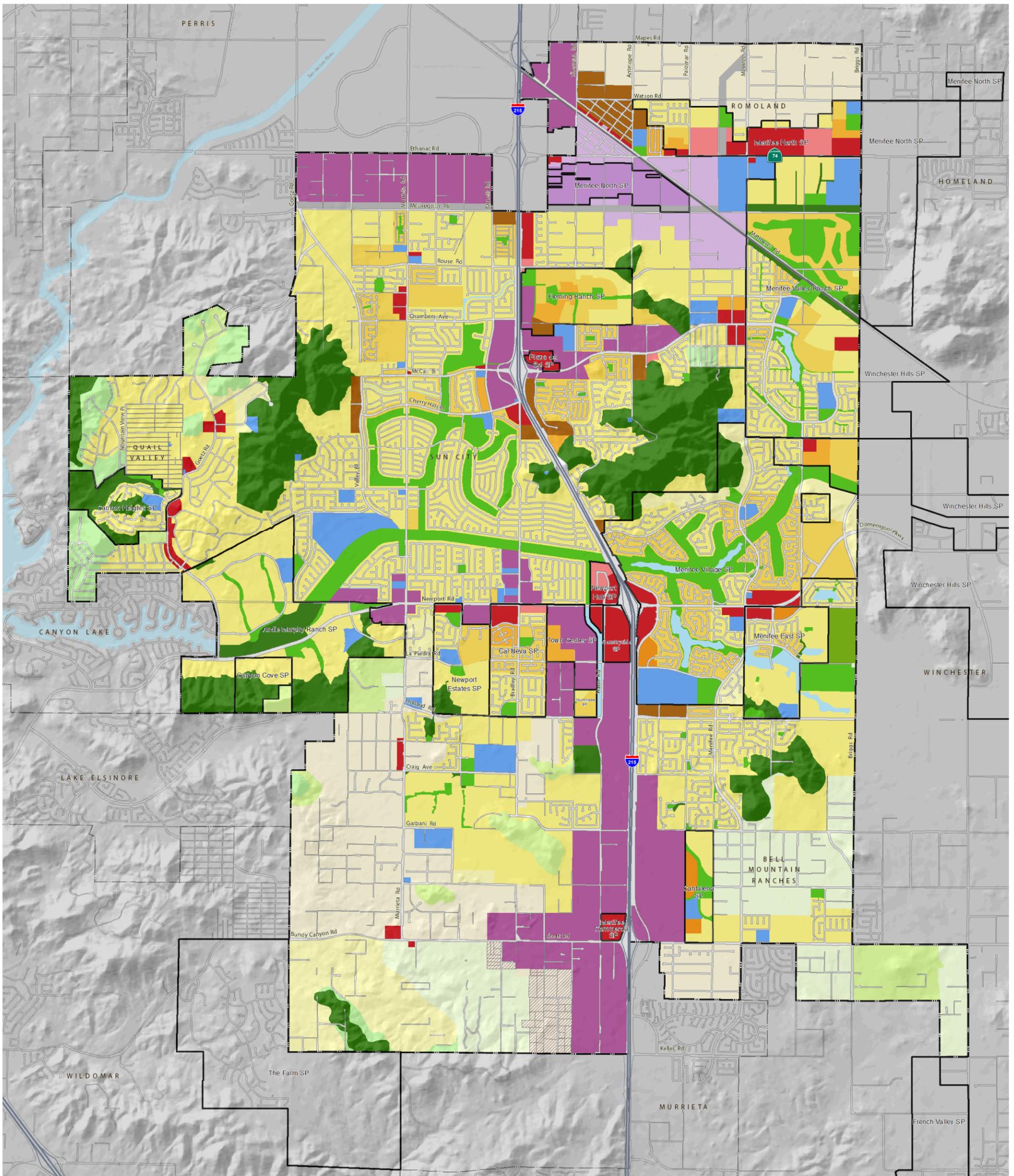
A list of all of the proposed goals and policies for each of the elements included in the Menifee General Plan is provided in Appendix C. These policies are meant to govern the development and growth decisions of the City.

4.5 INTENDED USES OF THE EIR

This is a Program EIR that examines the potential environmental impacts of the proposed Menifee General Plan. This DEIR is also being prepared to address various actions by the City and others to adopt and implement the General Plan. It is the intent of the DEIR to enable the City of Menifee, other responsible agencies, and interested parties to evaluate the environmental impacts of the proposed project, thereby enabling them to make informed decisions with respect to the requested entitlements. The anticipated approvals required for this project are:

<i>Lead Agency</i>	<i>Action</i>
City of Menifee Planning Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recommendation to City Council to adopt the Menifee General Plan and certify the EIR.
City of Menifee City Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adoption of the Menifee General Plan and certification of the EIR.
Riverside County Airport Land Use Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consistency finding with the Airport Land Use Plan

Proposed Land Use Plan



Source: The Planning Center | DC&E, 2013

Rural Mountainous (RM) 10 ac min	2.1-5 du/ac Residential (2.1-5R)	Commercial Retail (CR) 0.20 - 0.35 FAR	Agriculture (AG)	Public Utility Corridor (PUC)
Rural Residential 5 ac min (RR5)	5.1-8 du/ac Residential (5.1-8R)	Commercial Office (CO) 0.25 - 1.0 FAR	Conservation (OS-C)	Railroad
Rural Residential 2 ac min (RR2)	8.1-14 du/ac Residential (8.1-14R)	Heavy Industrial (HI) 0.15 - 0.50 FAR	Recreation (OS-R)	Specific Plan (SP)
Rural Residential 1 ac min (RR1)	14.1-20 du/ac Residential (14.1-20R)	Business Park (BP) 0.25 - 0.60 FAR	Water (OS-W)	Expanded EDC Scenario
Rural Residential 1/2 ac min (RR1/2)	20.1-24 du/ac Residential (20.1-24R)	Economic Development Corridor (EDC)	Public/Quasi Public Facilities (PF)	

Note: Proposed Land Use Plan is illustrated with Expanded Economic Development Corridor Scenario.



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