NOTICE OF PREPARATION
OF A DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT
& PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING
INTERSTATE 215/ELLIS AVENUE
OVERCROSSING PROJECT

Date: **May 19, 2025**

To: State Clearinghouse, Property Owners, Responsible and Trustee Agencies, and Interested Parties

From: City of Perris
101 North D Street, Perris, CA 92570

Subject: Notice of Preparation and Public Scoping Meeting Notice for the preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Interstate 215/Ellis Avenue Overcrossing Project (EA 1P040)

Scoping Meeting:	**June 4, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. (Perris Planning Commission Meeting)** **Perris City Council Chambers** **101 North D Street, Perris, CA 92570**
Comment Period:	**May 19, 2025 through June 19, 2025**
Project Title:	Interstate 215/Ellis Avenue Overcrossing Project (EA 1P040)
Project Applicant:	City of Perris 101 North D Street, Perris, CA 92570
City Environmental Document Webpage:	https://www.cityofperris.org/departments/development-services/planning/environmental-documents-for-public-review

Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR):

The City of Perris (City) will be the Lead Agency pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and will be responsible for the preparation of a Draft EIR for the proposed Interstate 215/Ellis Avenue Overcrossing Project (Project). The City has determined that an EIR is required for the Project based on its potential to cause significant environmental effects (CEQA Guidelines Sections 15060 and 15081). The City is requesting input from you or your agency or organization as to the scope and content of the environmental information that is relevant to your agency or organization's statutory responsibilities or interests in connection with the proposed Project.

This Notice of Preparation identifies the Project applicant, contains a description of the proposed Project including setting and location, and identifies the potential environmental effects. A project location map is included in this Notice of Preparation (Figure 1).

Due to time limits mandated by State law, your response must be received at the earliest possible date, **but not later than 30 days** after receipt of this Notice of Preparation. The public comment period for this Notice of Preparation begins on **May 19, 2025**, and is set to close at 5:00 p.m. **on June 19, 2025**.

Please send written comments to John Pourkazemi, City Engineer, at the address shown above (Attention to Grace Alvarez, Special Project Manager) or via email to galvarez@cityofperris.org. Please include with your comments the name and contact person of the agency or organization.

Project Information

I. Project Site Location and Setting

The Project site is located along Interstate 215 (I-215) at Ellis Avenue, 0.9 mile south of the I-215/West State Route 74 (SR-74)/Redlands Avenue interchange and 1.8 miles north of the I-215/East SR-74 Interchange (these interchanges are also within the City of Perris). I-215 is a major north-south corridor that begins in the City of Murrieta at its junction with Interstate I-15 and ends in the community of Devore in San Bernardino County at its terminus at I-15. The I-215 Post Mile limit for the Project site is 25.2 (see Figure 2).

Current land uses within and adjacent to the Project site include light industrial, non-irrigated farmland, residential, and a conservation area. The Project will be designed to avoid the conservation area. Under the City' New Perris Specific Plan (dated July 2010), planned future land uses for the area adjacent to the Project site include residential, retail commercial, office commercial, hotel, research and development, golf course, and roadways/circulation. This Project would be designed to meet the roadways/circulation element of the New Perris Specific Plan.

The Project is located within the influence areas for March Air Reserve Base/Inland Port Airport (located 5 miles northwest of the Project site) and Perris Valley Airport (located 0.85 mile southwest of the Project site). The Project area overlaps the following criteria cells included in the Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP): 3173, 3174, and 3069. It is also directly adjacent to a designated conservation area (see Figure 2).

II. Project Description

The City, in cooperation with the California Department of Transportation District 8 (Caltrans), proposes to construct a new overcrossing bridge over I-215 at Ellis Avenue. The proposed overcrossing will include two general-purpose travel lanes in each direction, bike lanes, sidewalks, and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)-compliant curb ramps.

The Project is proposed toaccommodate future traffic demand along Ellis Avenue due to industrial, commercial, and residential developments planned near the Project area. It would also help to improve transportation efficiency within the City by creating another east-west corridor to cross I-215. The Project will extend Ellis Avenue 1.27 miles (Alternative 3) to 1.41 miles (Alternative 2) with 342 feet (0.06 mile) located within Caltrans right-of-way (where the Project crosses I-215), from its current terminus on the west side of I-215 and end at San Jacinto Avenue on the east side (see Figure 2). Right-of-way width for the extended portion of Ellis will range from 105 feet to 205 feet and

pavement width will vary from 60 feet to 74 feet.

Purpose and Need

Ellis Avenue currently ends on either side of I-215, thus requiring users to travel over one mile north or south to the nearest interchanges to cross the interstate. This Project is proposed to address this deficiency and connect local communities with a new bridge over I-215. In addition to reducing commute times for regular users, the bridge would also reduce response times for emergency vehicles and improve local circulation.

Project Alternatives

There are three proposed Alternatives for the Project (See Figure 2).

Alternative 1 (No Project): No new development would occur. Existing conditions would not be altered.

Alternative 2: This Alternative would extend Ellis Avenue from its current terminus west of I-215 to the intersection of San Jacinto Avenue across from Murrieta Road, including a new overcrossing over I-215 at Post Mile 25.2. The proposed new road would be 1.41 miles long and impact a total of 0.04 square miles. Of the total impacted area, just 342 feet fall within Caltrans right-of-way (where the Project crosses I-215, see Figure 2).

Alternative 2 proposes to remove the existing cul-de-sac at Ellis Avenue just west of I-215. It would introduce a 30 miles per hour horizontal curve where the cul-de-sac was to avoid dedicated conservation land currently bordered by the old Ellis Avenue alignment (prior to the construction of the cul-de-sac) and I-215. Approximately 0.23 mile (1,235 feet) northeast of the curve, Ellis Avenue would be elevated on a proposed bridge structure through FEMA flood zone AE to keep the road above the 1,420-foot required flood zone elevation where it also crosses I-215 before descending to meet the current grade east of I-215 and FEMA flood zone AE. The bridge would be approximately 353 feet long. This alternative ends at San Jacinto Avenue across from Murrieta Road, where a signalized intersection is proposed. San Jacinto Avenue would also be widened at the intersection to provide access to Ellis Avenue.

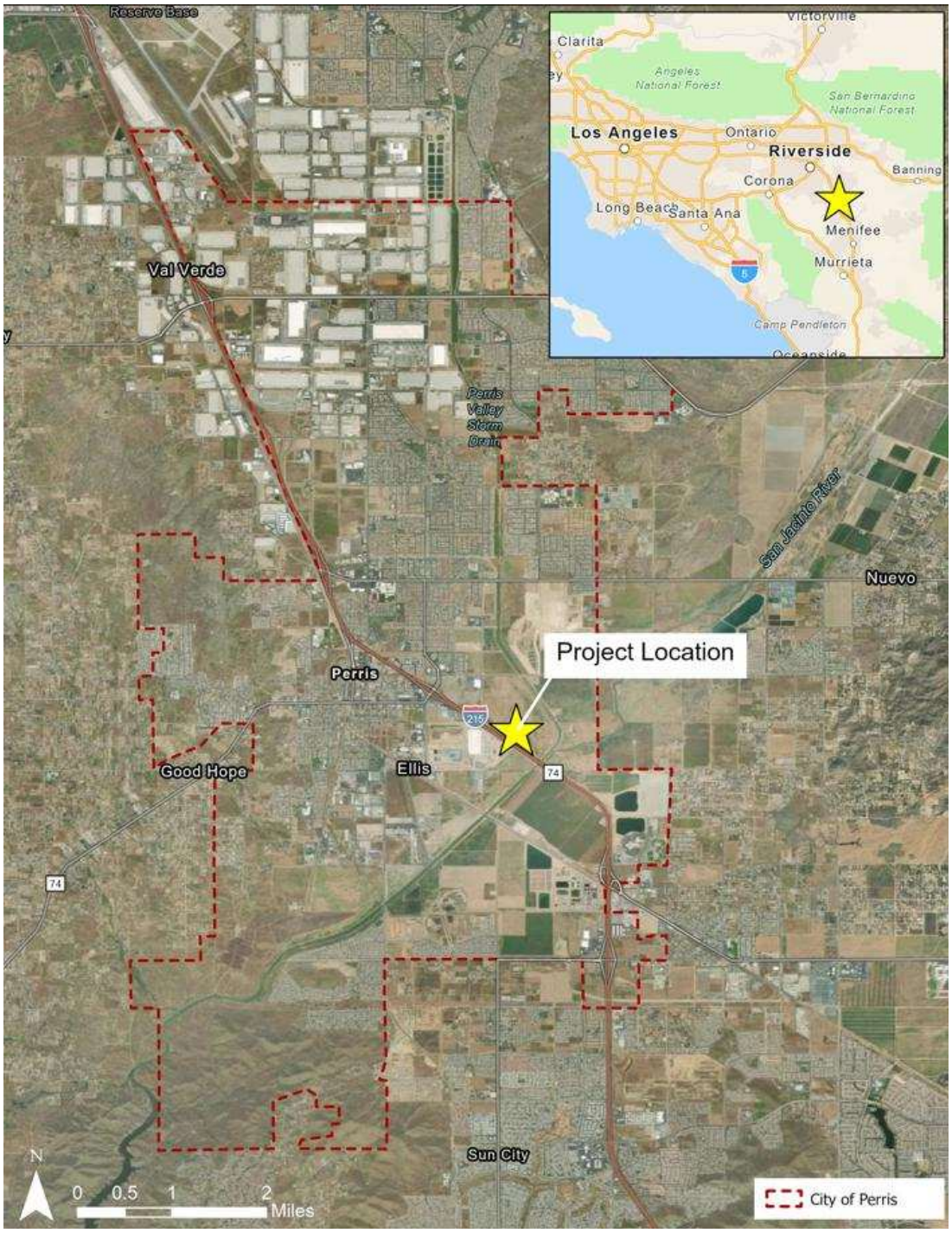
Alternative 3: This Alternative would extend Ellis Avenue from its current terminus west of I-215 to a new intersection at San Jacinto Avenue, just west of the Perris Valley Storm Drain (PVSD) Channel, including a new overcrossing over I-215 at Post Mile 25.2. The proposed new road would be 1.27 miles long and impact a total of 0.04 square miles.

Similar to Alternative 2, Alternative 3 proposes to remove the existing cul-de-sac at Ellis Ave just west of I-215 and immediately introduces a 30 miles per hour horizontal curve to avoid dedicated conservation land currently bordered by the old Ellis Avenue alignment (prior to the construction of the cul-de-sac) and I-215. Approximately 0.23 mile (1,235 feet) northeast of the curve, Ellis Avenue would be elevated on a proposed bridge structure through FEMA flood zone AE to keep the road above the 1420-foot required flood zone elevation where it also crosses I-215 before descending to meet current grade east of I-215 and FEMA flood zone AE. The bridge would be approximately 353 feet long. This alternative would end at San Jacinto Avenue, creating a T-intersection approximately 0.11 mile (605 feet) west of the PVSD Channel. Similar to Alternative 2, San Jacinto Avenue would also be widened at the intersection to provide access to Ellis Avenue.

Project Construction

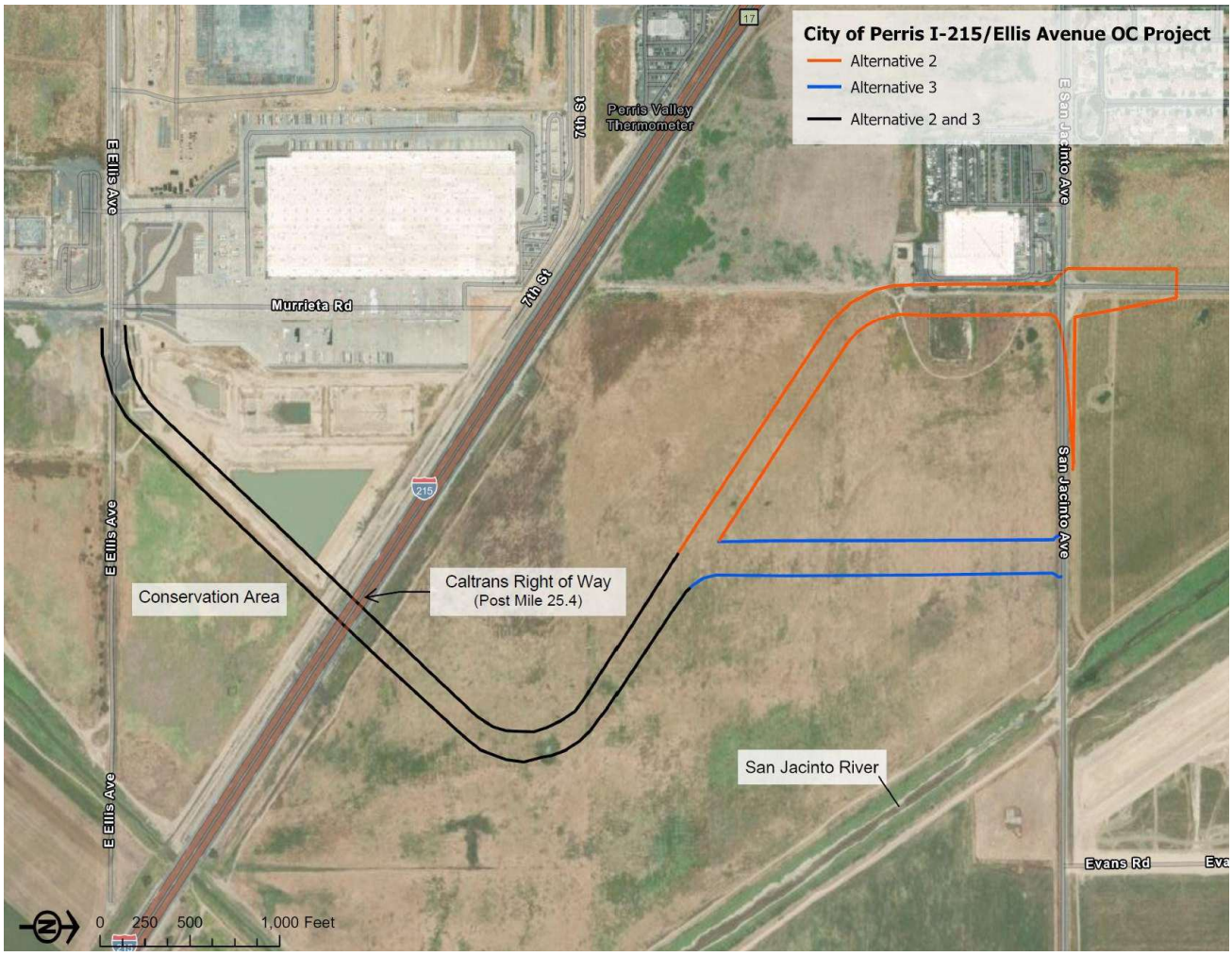
This Project is currently in the design phase. Construction is anticipated to begin in 2031 and occur over approximately two years.

Figure 1: Regional Location Map



Source: Moffatt & Nichol, 2025

Figure 2: Project Limits for Alternatives 2 and 3



Source: Moffatt & Nichol, 2025

III. Required Permits/Approvals

Pursuant to the provisions of CEQA and the Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA Guidelines), the City of Perris, as the Lead Agency, is charged with the responsibility of deciding whether to approve the Project. The following approvals and permits and discretionary actions are required from the City of Perris to implement the Project:

- Certification of the EIR
- Review of all site plans, including grading and impacts to utilities and connecting roads.

Approvals and permits which may be required by other agencies include:

- **Federal Aviation Administration.** Coordination and/or approval is needed from the FAA (Form 7460-1) for construction activities due to the Project's location with respect to Perris Valley Airport and March Air Reserve Base/Inland Port Airport.
- **Utility Agencies.** Permits and associated approvals, as necessary for potential changes or connections to existing utility infrastructure to serve the proposed Project.
- **U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.** Section 404 (Clean Water Act) if there are impacts to Waters of the U.S. (if applicable).
- **Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board.**
    - Section 401 (Clean Water Act) Water Quality Certification
    - Section 402 (Clean Water Act) of Best Management Practices (BMPs) proposed under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit

- **California Department of Fish and Wildlife**. Stream Alteration Agreement (1602) for impacts to Jurisdictional Waters of the State (only if the Project area overlaps with Waters of the State is confirmed).

Right of Way permissions will also need to be granted by property owners for the following parcels, which may be directly or indirectly impacted, located within or adjacent to the Project site:

Parcel Number(s)	Property Owner
310-190-012, 310-190-013, 310-190-016	ALRAHAMAN
310-220-030	BLACKBURN MELVIN
327-020-016, 327-020-017, 327-020-018, 327-020-019	C R COUSINS INC
310-220-053, 310-220-054	COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE
330-090-012	DAVID ABEL HUERTA
310-110-053	EASTERN MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT
310-170-017	IDIL PERRIS LOGISTICS CENTER
327-020-020	INTEX PROP PERRIS VALLEY LP
310-190-034, 310-200-004, 310-200-006	MP PARKWEST PARTNERS
311-210-009	PERRIS SUNRISE ESTATES
310-200-005, 310-200-014, 310-220-003, 310-220-029, 310-220-047, 310-220-048	PERRIS, PROPERTY
310-110-020, 310-110-021, 310-110-022, 310-110-023, 310-110-040, 310-110-041, 310-110-042, 310-110-049, 310-110-051	PERRIS, WLPX ACCOUNTING
310-110-044	PERRIS, WLPX VENUE
310-170-016	RECLINE BORROWER LLC
310-190-014, 310-200-009, 310-220-052, 327-020-003, 327-020-012, 327-020-014, 327-020-015	RIVERSIDE COUNTY FLOOD CONTROL
310-110-046, 310-110-047, 310-110-048	V BROTHERS
310-170-018, 330-090-011	WESTERN RIVERSIDE COUNTY REGIONAL CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
330-090-041	WKC REAL ESTATE

IV. Probable Environmental Effects of the Project

The Draft EIR for the proposed Project will contain a detailed Project Description, a description of the existing environmental setting of the Project site and surrounding area, analysis of Project-specific environmental impacts, analysis of cumulative impacts, identification of project-specific mitigation measures required to reduce potentially significant impacts, and an analysis of alternatives to the Project that could reduce one or more of the potentially significant impacts of the Project.

The following environmental topics will be analyzed in the Draft EIR:

- Aesthetics
- Agriculture and Forestry Resources
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Energy
- Geology and Soils
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use and Planning
- Mineral Resources
- Noise
- Population and Housing
- Public Services
- Recreation
- Transportation
- Tribal Cultural Resources
- Utilities and Service Systems
- Wildfire

V. Scoping Meeting

As identified previously, the City of Perris will conduct a Draft EIR scoping meeting with the City of Perris Planning Commission on June 4, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. in the Perris City Council Chambers located at 101 North D Street, Perris, CA 92570. At the meeting, the City will provide an overview of the Project, information on the environmental process, and will solicit public input on environmental issues to be addressed in the Draft EIR and on items of public concern. Issues identified during the scoping meeting will be addressed in the Draft EIR as appropriate.

VI. Response to This Notice of Preparation

The Notice of Preparation and Project plans are available for review on the City's website at:

https://www.cityofperris.org/departments/development-services/planning/environmental-documents-for-public-review

Copies of the Notice of Preparation are available for review at the Downtown Library (163 E. San Jacinto Avenue, Perris, CA 92570) and at the City of Perris Development Services Department located at 135 North D Street, Perris, CA 92570.

Please provide written comments no later than 30 days from the receipt of this Notice of Preparation, by June 19, 2025. According to Section 15082(b) of the CEQA Guidelines, your comments should address the scope and content of environmental information related to your agency's area of statutory responsibility. More specifically, your response should identify the significant environmental issues and reasonable alternatives and mitigation measures that you or your agency will need to have explored in the Draft EIR; and whether your agency will be a responsible agency or a trustee agency, as defined by CEQA Code Sections 15381 and 15386, respectively. Please submit all comments to the following address or email:

John Pourkazemi, City Engineer

Attn: Grace Alvarez, Special Project Manager

City of Perris Engineering Department
24 South D Street, Suite 100
Perris, CA 92570
Email: galvarez@cityofperris.org

Signature: _____

John Pourkazemi, City Engineer

The City of Perris appreciates your attention to the Notice of Preparation.