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Assistant TLMA Director

RIVERSIDE COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Governor's Office of Planning & Research

APR 18 2019

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

Date: April 12, 2019
To: Interested Agencies and Organizations
SUBJECT: NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF A DRAFT PROGRAM ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT (EIR) AND NOTICE OF EIR SCOPING MEETING FOR THE WINCHESTER COMMUNITY PLAN [GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT (GPA) NO. 1207, COMMUNITY DESIGN GUIDELINES, AND ZONE CONSISTENCY PROGRAM]

Lead Agency: County of Riverside	Contacts:	Phone:	Email:
Street Address: 4080 Lemon Street, 12 th Fl.	Jerry Jolliffe	(951) 955-3024	jjolliff@rivco.org
City/State/Zip: Riverside, CA 92501	Phayvanh Nanthavongdouangsy	(951) 955-6573	pnanthav@rivco.org
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 1409, Riverside, CA 92502-1409			

The **COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE** will be the Lead Agency and will prepare a program-level environmental impact report (EIR) for the project identified below. We need to know the views of your agency as to the scope and content of the EIR which is relevant to your agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project. Your agency will need to use the EIR prepared by our agency when considering your permit or other approval for the project.

The project description, location, and the potential environmental effects are contained in the attached materials. A copy of the Initial Study Checklist (☐ is ☒ is not) attached.

Due to the time limits mandated by State law, your response must be sent at the earliest possible date but **not later than 30 days** after receipt of this notice (**comment period begins on April 18, 2019, and ends on May 20, 2019**).

Please send your response to Jerry Jolliffe at the address shown above. We will need the name for a contact person at your agency.

Project Title: Winchester Community Plan (GPA No. 1207)
Project Applicant: County of Riverside
Project Location: Generally, unincorporated Riverside County between the cities of Menifee and Hemet

Project Description: The Winchester Community Plan includes General Plan Amendment No. 1207, a Community Design Guidelines, and a Zone Consistency Program to guide future decisions regarding growth and development of the community. The Community Plan is proposed to address topics related to the Winchester community such as land use, community character and design, housing needs, open space and recreation opportunities, and mobility and transportation. A major portion of the Community Plan would be dedicated to looking at future land use opportunities within the Community Plan Area, including, but not necessarily limited to, the potential need for and location of future residential, commercial, mixed use, industrial, agricultural, and open space uses. Additional information is available online at: <http://planning.rctlma.org/Advanced-Planning/Winchester-Community-Plan>.

Scoping Meeting: An informational Public Agency EIR Scoping Meeting is scheduled on Tuesday, April 30, 2019, from 3:00 PM to 4:30 PM. This will be followed by a Public EIR Scoping Meeting later that same evening, on Tuesday, April 30, 2019 from 6:30 PM to 8:00 pm. Members of the public and public agencies can attend either or both EIR Scoping Meetings. Both meetings will be held in the Frances Domenigoni Community Center, located at 32665 Haddock Street, Winchester, CA 92596.

Date: April 12, 2019

Signature: 
Title: Contract Planner
Telephone: (951) 955-3024

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P.O. Box 1409, Riverside, California 92502-1409
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PROJECT INFORMATION PACKET

I. INTRODUCTION

Pursuant to *California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines* Section 15082, the County of Riverside has distributed this Notice of Preparation/Project Information Packet for the Winchester Community Plan Program Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

The sections that follow describe the County's location in the region; summarize the Community Plan document; and list the issue areas to be evaluated in the EIR, which will be prepared in accordance with *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15168.

II. REGIONAL LOCATION

The Winchester community is located in western Riverside County, immediately east of the City of Menifee, immediately southwest of the City of Hemet, approximately 3 miles north of the City of Murrieta, and approximately 7 miles north of the City of Temecula. Primary regional access is provided by Interstate 15 (I-15) and State Route 79 (SR-79) to the south; I-15 and I-215 to the west; and I-215 and SR 74 to the north, as depicted on **Exhibit 1**.

The Winchester Community Plan area encompasses an area of approximately 23,153 acres and is generally bordered by Diamond Valley Lake and the City of Hemet to the east, Scott Road to the south, Briggs Road to the west and Stetson Road and Double Butte to the north, as depicted on **Exhibit 2**.

The Winchester Community Plan project will also include a reassessment of the Highway 79 Policy Area in light of recently constructed and planned transportation projects within and near the policy area, and may be modified or removed, accordingly. The Highway 79 Policy Area applies to the area covered by the Winchester Community Plan, the unincorporated area covered by most of the remainder of the Harvest Valley-Winchester Area Plan, and also a portion of the San Jacinto Valley, Sun City-Menifee Valley, and Southwest area plans of the County's General Plan, as depicted on **Exhibit 3**.

III. WINCHESTER COMMUNITY PLAN PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The County of Riverside has begun a community-based planning process to update the Winchester Community Plan. The Winchester Community Plan is a policy document that will guide future decisions regarding growth and change in the community. The plan will address topics related to the Winchester Community, including:

- Land use
- Community character and design
- Housing
- Open space and recreation
- Mobility and transportation
- Zoning consistent with the General Plan

The Community Plan will evaluate future land use opportunities within the Community Plan area, including the extent and distribution of future residential, commercial, mixed-use, industrial, agricultural and open space lands.

The majority of the Community Plan Area is agricultural and undeveloped land. Some portions are considered undevelopable due to topographical or other constraints. The majority of existing residential development is on large lots, with some concentration of smaller lots focused around the intersection of Simpson and Winchester Roads.

III. RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PLANS AND PROGRAMS

The Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC) is working with the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) on a proposed realignment of SR-79 between Domenigoni Parkway and Gilman Springs Road. The Environmental Document for that project was approved in December 2016. The roadway realignment project is currently awaiting funding to begin acquisition of the needed rights-of-way and construction of the project. The most current preferred alternative for the proposed SR-79 realignment is located in the northeast corner of the Winchester Community Plan, with the majority of the realignment proposed to be within the boundary for the Winchester Community Plan.

IV. PROJECT APPROVALS

Approval of the Winchester Community Plan will require amendments to the County of Riverside General Plan, Zoning Code, and Zoning Map, as well as an approval for a Community Design Guideline.

V. POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

For purposes of CEQA, the Winchester Community Plan, the amendments to County of Riverside General Plan, Zoning Code and Zoning Map, and their implementation constitute the "Project." The EIR will evaluate potential environmental impacts resulting from the Project, and will address the following environmental topical areas:

- Aesthetics
- Agriculture and Forestry Resources
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources: Archaeological and Historical Resources
- Energy
- Geology and Soils, including Paleontological Resources
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality, including floodplain and drainage
- Land Use and Planning
- Mineral Resources
- Noise
- Population and Housing
- Public Services, including fire and police protection, schools, parks
- Recreation
- Transportation
- Tribal Cultural Resources
- Utilities and Service Systems, including water/groundwater, wastewater, electrical power, natural gas, telecommunications, solid waste
- Wildfire
- Growth Inducement

Due to the decision to prepare a EIR, an Initial Study was not prepared. This option is permitted under *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15063(a), which states that if the Lead Agency determines an EIR will be required for a project, the Lead Agency may skip further initial review and begin work on the EIR.

VI. RESPONSES AND EIR SCOPING MEETING

The County of Riverside requests interested agencies and parties provide written or verbal comments as to the scope and content of the environmental information and analysis to be included in the EIR, in connection with the proposed Winchester Community Plan. **The 30-day NOP review period begins on Thursday, April 18, 2019, and ends on Monday, May 20, 2019 at 5:00 PM.** Due to the time limits mandated by State law, please send your written response to the County of Riverside at the address below at the earliest possible date but no later than **Monday, May 20, 2019 at 5:00 PM.**

An informational Public Agency EIR Scoping Meeting is scheduled on **Tuesday, April 30, 2019, from 3:00 PM to 4:30 PM.** This will be followed by a Public EIR Scoping Meeting later that same evening, on **Thursday, April 30, 2019 from 6:30 PM to 8:00 pm.** The public EIR Scoping Meeting will take place during the regular monthly meeting of the Winchester-Homeland MAC (Municipal Advisory Council). Members of the public and public agencies can attend either or both EIR Scoping Meetings. Both meetings will be held in the Frances Domenigoni Community Center, located at 32665 Haddock Street, Winchester, CA 92596.

Please include your name and address for all written correspondence. Written correspondence should be directed to: Riverside County Planning Department, P.O. Box 1409, Riverside, CA 92502-1409, Attn: Jerry Jolliffe, Project Planner. Responses may also be submitted by fax to (951) 955-1811 or by email to JJolliff@RIVCO.ORG.

Jerry Jolliffe, Contract Planner
County of Riverside
4080 Lemon Street, 12th Floor
Riverside, CA 92501

Exhibit 1: Regional Location Map

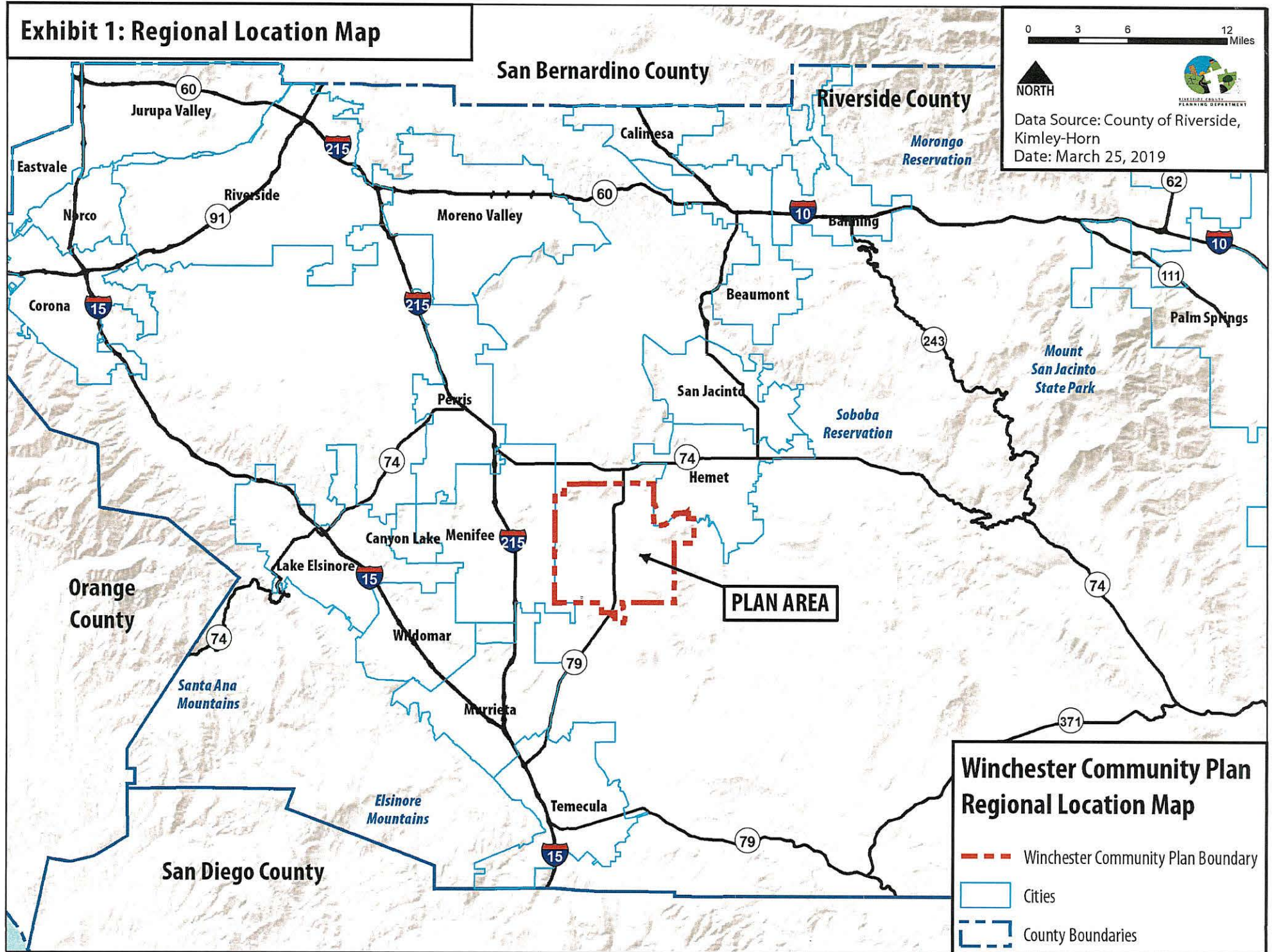


Exhibit 2: Community Plan Area

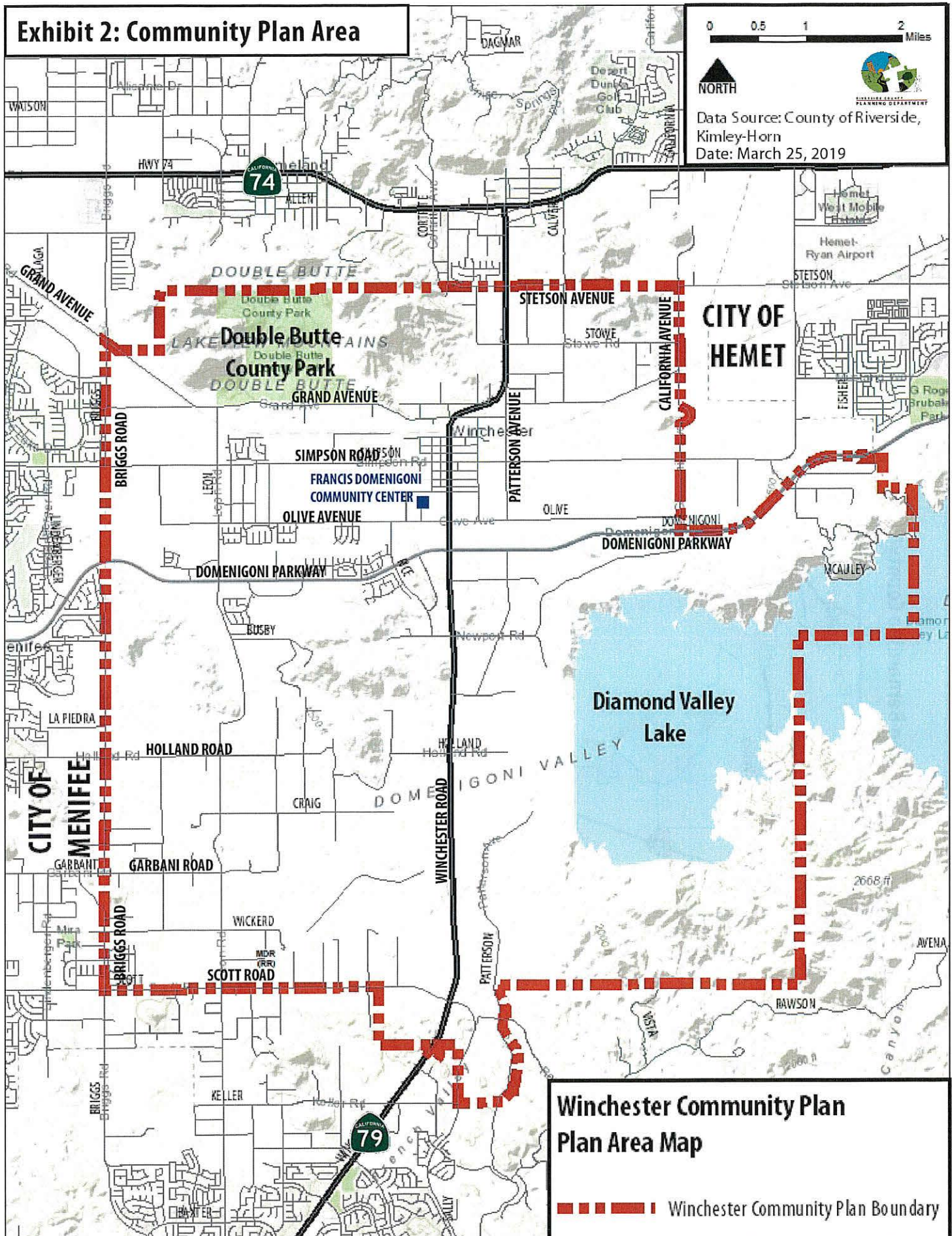


Exhibit 3: Highway 79 Policy Area

