



SAFETY ELEMENT

HOME PAGE

OVERVIEW

It is of fundamental importance to the City of Menifee to protect and preserve the health, safety, and welfare of the community to ensure that it continues to be a place people want to live, work, and spend their time. The Safety Element of the General Plan provides a strategy for City staff, residents, developers, and business owners to effectively address natural and man-made hazards in Menifee, including seismic and geological issues; flood hazards; fire hazards; hazardous materials; wind hazards; and disaster preparedness, response, and recovery. The policies and action items provided herein can help create a community that is minimally at risk from natural hazards and that responds quickly, effectively, and efficiently to those hazards. It is the primary goal of this document that as the policies and actions are implemented over the next 20 years, the City of Menifee will be increasingly less impacted by disasters, and in the process, become more self-reliant, sustainable, and prosperous.

The first step in hazard mitigation is to understand the community's vulnerability to the various natural and man-made hazards that can impact the region. To that end, the Safety Element identifies the potential hazards that can significantly affect the City of Menifee. More in-depth information regarding these hazards is provided in the supporting Technical Background Report.

PURPOSE OF ELEMENT

Section 65302 of the State of California Government Code identifies seven mandatory elements in a General Plan, including Safety. Section 65302 (g) defines the types of hazards that need to be identified and addressed. The following hazards, along with strong winds, hazardous materials, and critical facilities (including airports) and emergency response, are considered in Menifee's Safety Element.

1. Seismic and geologic hazards: Seismic hazards, including strong ground shaking, surface fault rupture, and seismically induced ground failure, such as liquefaction and slope failures and geologic hazards, including slope instability due to non-seismic causes, and subsidence (GC 65302(g)(1));
- ~~2. Geologic hazards, including slope instability due to non-seismic causes, and subsidence;~~

2. Flooding hazards, including storm-induced flooding, inundation resulting from the failure of water reservoirs, dams, and levees, and areas vulnerable to flooding after wildfires (GC 65302(g)(2));
3. Fire hazards, including both wildland fires and structure fires ~~in the urban areas~~, in state responsibility areas and land classified as very high fire hazard severity zones (GC 65302(g)(3));
4. Climate adaptation and resiliency including a vulnerability assessment (GC 65302(g)(4));
5. Residential developments in any hazard area identified in the safety element that do not have at least two emergency evacuation routes (GC 65302(g)(5));
6. Revise the safety element upon each revision of the housing element or local hazard mitigation plan, but not less than once every eight years, to identify new information relating to flood and fire hazards and climate adaptation and resiliency strategies applicable to the city or county that was not available during the previous revision of the safety element (GC 65302(g)(6));
7. Incorporate Federal floodplain management regulations and/or Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)-approved flood plain management ordinance(s) to flood-prone areas (GC 65302(g)(7)).

The Safety Element is written in conjunction and designed to work together with all other elements of the General Plan, most notably the Housing, Land Use, and Open Space and Conservation Elements. For example, the Safety Element contains policies and programs to address future drainage and flood hazards for housing sites. The Housing Element will comply with these requirements, and any future updates to the Housing Element will incorporate any changes in flood hazard and management information. Related to the Land Use Element, the Safety Element involves land-use-related policies that address potential hazards such as seismic and geologic issues, fire, and floods. Some of the land-use-related policies include, but are not limited to, requiring all new developments to mitigate the geologic hazards that have the potential to impact habitable structures and other improvements and requiring all new developments and redevelopment in areas susceptible to flooding (such as the 100-year floodplain and areas known to the City to flood during intense or prolonged rainfall events) to incorporate mitigation measures designed to mitigate flood hazards. Additionally, one of the goals of the Open Space and Conservation Element is to identify and protect sensitive environments and preserve amenities such as the rock features, natural landforms, and ridgelines that characterize Menifee. These landforms are the result of active natural processes (such as erosion) that have the potential to cause future damage to the built environment and are therefore best left either undeveloped or developed following careful design guidelines. These issues are discussed in the Safety Element. The goals of the Open Space and Conservation Element echo this concern by identifying

some of these safety constraints as resources that merit conservation. The Safety Element also works together with various federal, state, and local regulations such as the Federal Clean Water Act, [FEMA](#), the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the California Building and Fire Codes, and the Menifee Municipal Code, to protect the health, safety, and welfare of Menifee’s residents, visitors, and businesses.

BACKGROUND

This element describes the natural and man-made hazards most likely to impact the Menifee area. To reduce their potential effect on the community, these hazards should be carefully considered when new development or redevelopment is proposed in the area. Some issues should be considered for all types of development, whereas others are specific to critical or essential facilities or infrastructure. These distinctions are spelled out where appropriate.

The Safety Element covers [eight](#) general topics: seismic and geological issues; flood hazards; fire hazards; hazardous materials; wind hazards; disaster preparedness, response, and recovery; [climate adaptation, and resiliency; and police services](#). A brief description of each of these topics is presented alongside the related goal and policies to provide context. For more detailed information on each of these issues and how they relate to Menifee’s past and future, please review the General Plan exhibits and related documents identified below.

REFERENCE MATERIAL

For detailed information related to safety, please refer to the following documents. (Weblinks are available on the City’s General Plan website).

City Resources

[Safety Background Document & Definitions](#)

[Technical Background Report to the Safety Element of the General Plan for the City of Menifee \(Earth Consultants International, Inc., July 2010\)](#)

[Climate Vulnerability Assessment](#)

[Menifee Local Hazard Mitigation Plan](#)

[General Plan Environmental Impact Report](#)

[Exhibit S-b1: Engineering Materials](#)

[Exhibit S-b2.1: Dams with the Potential to Inundate](#)

[Exhibit S-b2.2: Diamond Valley Lake West Dam Failure](#)

[Exhibit S-b2.3: Diamond Valley Lake Saddle Dam Failure](#)

[Exhibit S-b2.4: Lake Perris Dam Failure](#)

[Exhibit S-b2.5: Hemet Dam Failure](#)

[Exhibit S-b2.6: Diamond Valley Lake East Dam Failure](#)

[Exhibit S-b2.7: Diamond Valley Lake Forebay Dam Failure](#)

[Exhibit S-b3: Historical Wildland Fires \(updated\)](#)

[Exhibit S-b4: Hazardous Materials](#)

Additional Information

[Riverside County Airport Land Use Commission](#)

GENERAL PLAN EXHIBITS

[Exhibit S-1: Fault Map \(updated consistent with LHMP\)](#)

[Exhibit S-2: Slope Distribution](#)

[Exhibit S-3: Liquefaction and Landslides](#)

[Exhibit S-4: Geologic Map](#)

[Exhibit S-5: Flood Hazards \(updated\)](#)

[Exhibit S-6: High Fire Hazard Areas \(updated\)](#)

[Exhibit S-7: Critical Facilities](#)

[Exhibit S-8: Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones and Public Facilities \(new\)](#)

GOALS AND POLICIES

SEISMIC AND GEOLOGIC ISSUES

The Menifee General Plan area is highly diverse geologically, the result of both the youthful seismic setting of the surrounding region and the effects of climate. No active faults (faults that show evidence of having experienced surface displacement within the last 11,000 years) have been mapped in the Menifee General Plan area; therefore, the hazard of primary surface fault rupture is considered low to none. However, Menifee is located near several regional active faults —such as the San Jacinto and Elsinore faults—that have the potential to cause strong ground shaking in the area (see Exhibit S-1, Fault Map).

Topographically, the Menifee area encompasses numerous rugged and moderately steep hills and mountains surrounded by a series of broad, nearly flat-bottomed valleys (see Exhibit S-2, Slope Distribution). Most development in the area occurs in the valleys and low hillside areas, with the prominent hills and ridgelines largely undeveloped. As a result, slope instability, including rockfalls, debris flows, or ridgetop shattering, is a potential hazard only where development has encroached onto the hills or is at the base of the hills. Most slope damage in the region is likely to occur as a result of earthquake-induced shaking or during periods of exceptional and/or prolonged rainfall.

Seismic shaking can also cause various types of ground deformation; liquefaction and slope failure are the most destructive of these. When liquefaction occurs, the soils that liquefy lose their ability to support structures; buildings may sink or tilt, with the potential for extensive structural damage. Three areas in Menifee are thought to have soils that could liquefy during an earthquake: the Salt Creek floodplain, the Warm Springs Creek floodplain, and portions of the Paloma Wash Valley (see Exhibit S-3, Liquefaction and

Policies

- S-3.1 Require that all new developments and redevelopments in areas susceptible to flooding (such as the 100-year floodplain and areas known to the City to flood during intense or prolonged rainfall events) incorporate mitigation measures designed to mitigate flood hazards.
- S-3.2 Reduce flood hazards in developed areas known to flood.
- S-3.3 Use technology to identify flood-prone areas and to notify residents and motorists of impending flood hazards and evacuation procedures.
- S-3.4 Develop floodplains as parks, nature trails, equestrian parks, golf courses, or other types of recreational facilities or joint-use facilities that can withstand periodic inundation wherever feasible.
- S-3.5 Encourage neighboring jurisdictions to require development occurring adjacent to the City to consider the impact of flooding and flood control measures on properties within Menifee.
- S-3.6: Coordinate with FEMA to ensure that flood mapping and flood risk information is current and available.
- S-3.7: When feasible locate new essential public facilities outside of flood risk areas, including, but not limited to, hospitals and health care facilities, emergency shelters, emergency command centers, and emergency communications facilities or identify other methods to minimize damage if these facilities are located in flood hazard zones.

FIRE HAZARDS

Wildfires are a necessary part of the natural ecosystem in southern California, but they become a hazard when they extend out of control into developed areas, with a resultant loss of property, and sometimes, injuries or loss of life. The wildfire risk in the United States has increased in the last few decades with more encroachment of residences and other structures into the wildland environment, and the growing number of people living and playing in wildland areas.

Wildland Urban Interface

According to the U.S. Fire Administration, the zone of transition between unoccupied land and human development is referred to as the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI). The WUI zone is highly susceptible to

wildfires because it is where built environment meets with undeveloped wildland or vegetative fuels. The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CalFire) estimates the length of fire season had increased by 75 days in 2020. In 2015, wildfires in Riverside County and nearby municipalities resulted in approximately \$42 million worth of losses in residential and commercial properties. Riverside County Fire Department data indicate ~~that between about 30 and 40~~ about 47 wildland fires, ~~typically less than 10 acres in size,~~ incidents occur in the Menifee area every year; with careful planning, the number of fires can be reduced and their impact to the City of Menifee can be minimized. The burn area is estimated to decrease its average size from the 156.8 acres observed between the years 1961 through 1990 to 128.2 acres projected for the years 2035 through 2064.

Topography has considerable effect on wildland fire behavior and on the ability of firefighters and their equipment to take action to suppress those fires. A fire starting in the bottom of a canyon may rush quickly to the ridge and become large, before initial attack forces can arrive, simply because of topography.

In an effort to alleviate fire dangers near the interface between urban development and wildlands, the construction of fuel modification zones (firebreak, fuel break, or greenbelt) has been required. The continued application of this method does have drawbacks and, therefore, is not the only acceptable solution. Impacts on wildlife, unique vegetation, and, in some cases, to the watershed, can be impacted with fuel modification zones. Balancing fire prevention measure to reduce the level of risk to structures with wildland impacts must be developed with the design of each project.

Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones

The Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones shown in Exhibit S-6 were established in 1996 to identify areas at the greatest threat of wildfires that require added precautions and protection. The designation is established based on the following criteria:

- Vegetation and its potential to burn over a 5-year time period
- Topography
- Weather
- Crown fire potential
- Ember production and movement

- Likelihood of an area burning over a 30 to 50-year time period

The California Building Code Chapter 7A requires that buildings constructed in areas identified as VHFHSZ must be built using fire-resistive features. Within the City of Menifee, certain roads, residential development, and commercial areas are currently located within the VHFHSZ.

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (Cal Fire) has recommended that the urban, low-lying areas in Menifee be classified as having a Moderate Fire Hazard, whereas the hillside areas are generally classified as having a Very High Fire Hazard. The majority of the City's VHFHSZ falls under local responsibility, however, a small portion falls under federal responsibility. The areas between the flatlands and the hillsides are classified as High Fire Hazard. Most of the low-lying areas within the City are located within local responsibility areas (LRAs); the hillsides are within either state or federal responsibility areas. Fire suppression responsibility for these areas is divided among local, state, and federal agencies, respectively (see Exhibit S-6, High Fire Hazard Areas). California state law requires that fire hazard areas be disclosed in real estate transactions.

Goal S- 4: A community that has effective fire mitigation and response measures in place, and as a result is minimally impacted by wildland and structure fires.

Policies

- S-4.1 Require fire-resistant building construction materials, the use of vegetation control methods, and other construction and fire prevention features to reduce the hazard of wildland fire. Ensure all new development and/or redevelopment in the LRA and VHFHSZ will comply with the California Fire Code (CFC) and California Building Code (CBC). All new development within the LRA Very High Fire zone will comply with Chapter 49 of the California Fire Code and Chapter 7A of the California Building Code.
- S-4.2 Ensure, to the maximum extent possible, that fire services, such as firefighting equipment and personnel, infrastructure, and response times, are adequate for all sections of the City. The City will continue to coordinate with the Riverside County Fire Department, for Interagency coordination, to respond to emergency calls in Menifee and to provide training and ongoing programs for public education.
- S-4.3 Encourage owners of non-sprinklered high-occupancy structures to retrofit their buildings to include internal sprinklers.

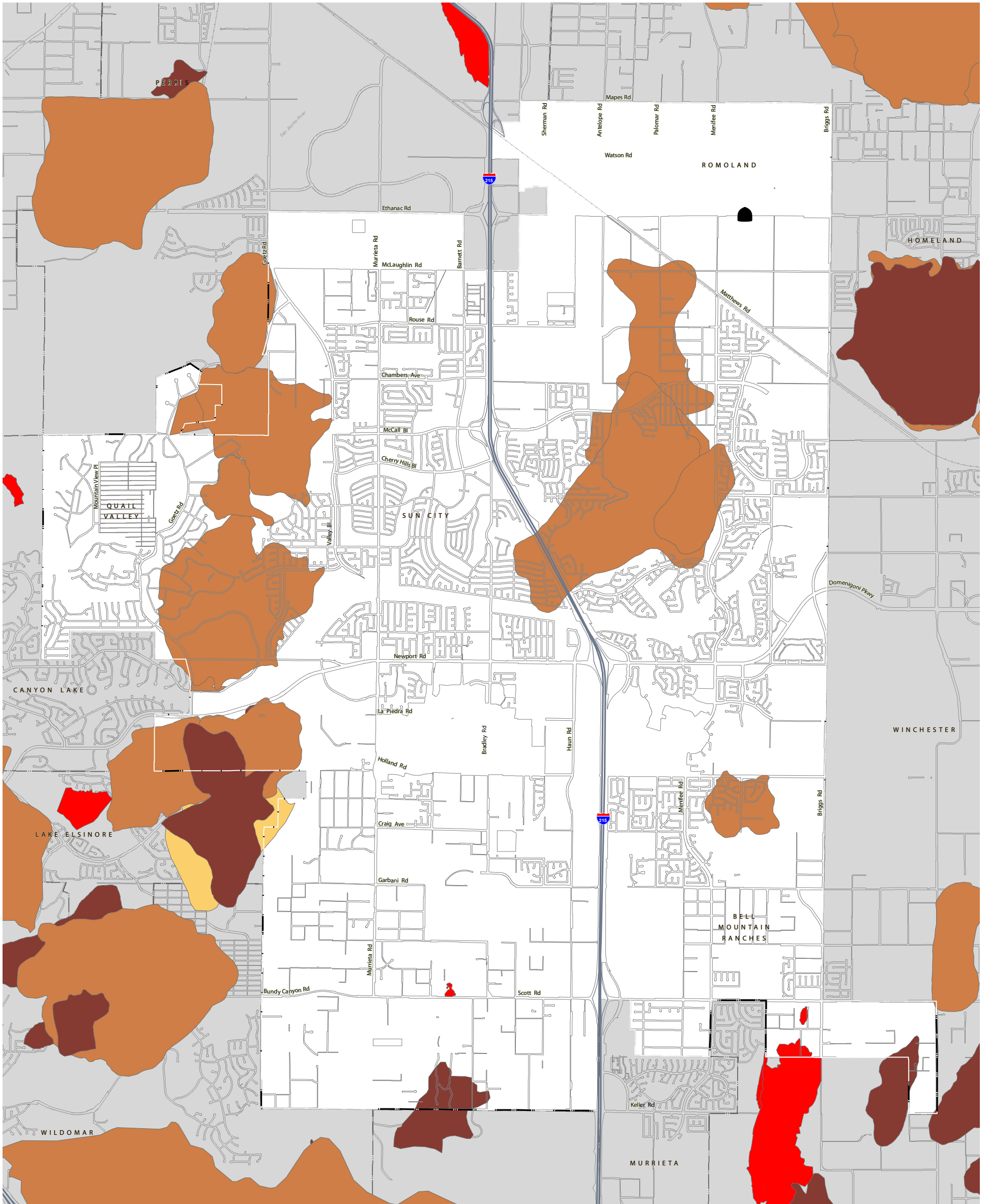
- S-4.4 Review development proposals for impacts to fire facilities and compatibility with fire areas or mitigate.
- S-4.5: Coordinate with CalFire to ensure that Fire Hazard Severity Zone mapping is up to date.
- S-4.6: Coordinate with Easter Municipal Water District to ensure adequate water availability for fire suppression.
- S-4.7: Encourage multi-family housing, group homes, or other community housing in SRAs, LRAs, or VHFHSZs to develop a policy to create emergency evacuation or shelter in place plans.
- S-4.8: When feasible locate new essential public facilities outside of high fire risk areas, including, but not limited to, hospitals and health care facilities, emergency shelters, emergency command centers, and emergency communications facilities, or identifying construction methods or other methods to minimize damage if these facilities are located in a state responsibility area or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone.
- S-4.9: Ensure all new development and/or redevelopment within the SRA will comply with all provisions of Title 14, CCR, division 1.5, chapter 7, subchapter 3, article 3 (commencing with section 1299.01) (Fire Hazard Reduction Around Buildings and Structures Regulations) for SRAs and VHFHSZs.
- S-4.10: Ensure all new residential development as well as all new development and redevelopment within the LRA and VHFHSZ will comply with the most current version of the California Building Codes and California Fire Code.
- S-4.11: When feasible, the City will minimize all new residential, commercial, and industrial development in the VHFHSZ.
- S-4.12: All new development located in the LRA VHFHSZ shall be required to provide a site-specific Fire Protection Plan (FPP) and a Fuel Modification Plan that address fuel modification or incorporate open space and other defensible space areas, as well as multiple points of ingress and egress before approval.

- S-4.13: All new development within the LRA VHFHSZ shall be responsible for long-term maintenance of fire reduction projects; including but not limited to, a roadside fuel reduction plan (including private/public road clearance), defensible space clearances (including fuel breaks) around structures, subdivisions, and other development in the VHFHSZ.
- S-4.14: All new parcel maps and tentative maps in the LRA, SRA, and VHFHSZ shall provide two points of access to the project in conformance with the California Building Code and California Fire Code and CA GC 65302 (g)(5). Approval of parcel maps and tentative maps in LRA's, SRAs or VHFHSZs is conditional based on meeting the SRA Fire Safe Regulations and the Fire Hazard Reduction Around Buildings and Structures Regulations, particularly those regarding road standards for ingress, egress, and fire equipment access. (See Gov. Code, § 66474.02.).
- S-4.15: When feasible, the City will prepare a survey of existing non-conforming developments to identify all existing developments within the City that do not provide two points of access/evacuation routes and identify measures or improvement plans to address opportunities to improve access. Where no additional access opportunities exist, the City and Fire Department should identify a plan for emergency operations in fire/emergency events.
- S-4.16: The City and Fire Department shall develop a policy or program promoting public outreach about defensible space and evacuation routes. The City and Fire District shall include specific plans to reach at risk populations.
- S-4.17: The City should ensure that all new development has adequate water, sewer, and fire protection consistent with the most current California Building Code and California Fire Code and will comply with the board of forestry and fire protection fire safe regulations.
- S-4.18: The City shall evaluate all redevelopment as well as new development after a large fire event to ensure development will comply with the most current version of the California Building Codes and California Fire Code. The City and Fire Department will continue to coordinate with State, regional, and local agencies on emergency management and on fire risk reduction planning.

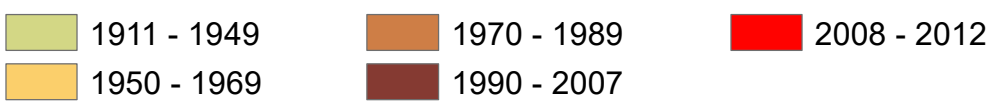
HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Hazardous materials are used every day in industrial, commercial, medical, and residential applications. The primary concern associated with a hazardous materials release is the short- and/or long-term effect to the

EXHIBIT S-B3 HISTORICAL WILDLAND FIRES



Year of Last Burn



Source: CalFire FRAP and ESRI Mapping

No Mapped fires post 2012 according to authoritative data from CalFire
<https://frap.fire.ca.gov/frap-projects/fire-perimeters/>