

section 18

Glossary

18 Glossary

The following Glossary of terms is provided as an aid in understanding and interpreting the Comprehensive Plan by defining terms that may not be familiar to all readers, or by clarifying their usage in the Plan. The glossary is not intended to be an instrument of policy.

Definitions found in this glossary were adapted from several sources, including A Planners Dictionary (Michael Davidson and Fay Dolnick, editors; American Planning Association, 2004); the websites for the Federal Highway Administration, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the International Association of Landscape Ecology; and Wikipedia.

The hyperlinks below provide an aid to navigation for the on-line and PDF versions of the Plan.

‘A – D’ | ‘E – H’ | ‘I – L’ | ‘M – P’ | ‘Q – T’ | ‘U – Z’

A – D

Access management: Regulatory control of access to streets, roads, and highways from public roads and private driveways. Controls may include restrictions on the placement of interchanges, restrictions on the type, number, and location of access to roadways, and use of physical controls such as signals, channelization, and medians.

Accessory dwelling unit: A separate, complete dwelling unit with its own entrance, kitchen, sleeping area, and full bathroom facilities, which is an attached or detached extension to an existing single-family structure.

Adaptive use: The conversion of obsolete or historic buildings from their original or most recent use to a new use, for example, the conversion of former hospital or school buildings to residential use, or the conversion of an historic single-family home to office use.

Administrative approval: An official and binding decision delegated to government staff by elected or appointed public officials.

Affordable housing: Housing that costs less than 30 percent of household income for low- and moderate-income households. Low income is typically defined as 60 percent or below Area Median Income, while moderate is defined as 60 – 80 percent of Area Median Income. Affordable housing may be provided by the market or subsidized by government or nonprofit organizations

Air rights: The ownership or control of the volume of three-dimensional air space above a piece of land or existing building.

Alternative energy sources: Energy derived from sources other than those that have historically provided the bulk of energy in a particular market or sector. Alternative energy sources may also produce less pollution or exhibit less price volatility than historic sources.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA): A federal law intended to provide disabled people with equitable living and working conditions. It prohibits employers from discriminating against qualified job applicants and workers who are or who become disabled and also sets requirements for handicapped accessibility.

Ancillary retail: The retail sales of various products in a store or similar facility that is located within and is secondary to a health care facility, hotel, residential development and/or office or industrial complex for the purpose of serving residents, employees, patrons, and visitors. These uses can include pharmacies, gift shops, and food service establishments.

Annexation: The incorporation of a land area into a municipal corporation with a resulting change in the corporate limits of that municipality. This is the process by which cities extend their municipal services, regulations, voting privileges, and taxing authority into new territory. Annexation can be voluntary (petitioned) or involuntary (city-initiated).

Area median income (AMI): A commonly used measure of regional income in which the income of a family is defined as the combined pre-tax incomes of all residents over the age of 18 during a single-year period. The median income is the income at which half of all families of a certain size earn more and half earn less.

Assisted housing: Government provision of housing for senior and disabled citizens, low-cost housing in multi-unit complexes that are available to low-income families, or rental vouchers that allow very low-income families to choose where they want to live.

Automobile dependency: A result of transportation and land use patterns that do not provide meaningful alternatives to private vehicular travel, such as convenient and efficient provisions for transit, pedestrian, or bicycle travel.

Auto-oriented businesses: Businesses that offer services for automobiles, such as gas stations, auto repair, auto servicing, and auto sales. Also, business that are dependent on easy automobile access for success, like drive-through fast food restaurants.

Beltline: The Interstate Highway loop around Raleigh, composed of I-40 and I-440.

Big box: A large single-tenant, warehouse-like retail building, typically with large parking lot, such as membership buying clubs and home improvement stores. When grouped together, they form a power center.

Biodiversity: The variety of life and its activities that includes living things and the communities and ecosystems in which they occur, including genetic diversity within species, species diversity within a community, and diversity in a full range of biological communities.

Bio-solids: By-products of wastewater treatment that have been treated and stabilized to the extent that it is possible to beneficially re-use them, also known as sewage sludge.

Blight: Community deterioration that is characterized by obsolete, dilapidated, and/or abandoned buildings, unsanitary or unsafe conditions, and trash accumulation. The statutory definition of a “blighted area” can be found in the Urban Redevelopment Law, N.C.G.S. 160A-503.

Brownfield: Abandoned, idled, or under-used industrial and commercial sites where expansion or redevelopment is complicated by real or perceived environmental contamination. They can be in urban, suburban, or rural areas.

Buffer: An area of land, which may include landscaping, tree stands, berms, walls, fences, and building setbacks, that is located between land uses of different character or intensity, and is intended to mitigate potential negative impacts of the proximity and adjacency of such different uses.

Building lot coverage (BLC): The ratio of the ground floor or footprint area of a building to the total lot area.

Building orientation: The placement of a building within its surrounding context. If a building faces a street, it is said that the building orientation is toward the street. Building orientation sometimes refers to a building’s placement in respect to north, south, east, and west.

Bus rapid transit: A variety of transportation systems that, through improvements to infrastructure, vehicles, and scheduling, uses buses to provide a service that is of a greater speed, frequency, and/or dependability than an ordinary bus line.

Business improvement district: A special tax assessment district in which property owners agree to have additional charges placed on their tax bills in order to fund services beyond those provided by the local government. These services can include extra maintenance, improved street lighting, beautification, promotional activities, and heightened security.

By-right (also “as-by-right” or “as-of-right”): A standing legal right, particularly to use property within the limits of the regulations governing the use of such property, without having to justify or gain permission for such use.

Capital Area Greenway: The greenway system for the City of Raleigh. The greenway system is a network of public open spaces providing for riparian buffers, floodplain protection, and wildlife habitat, as well as recreational trails that provide for outdoor activity such as walking, jogging, hiking, bicycling, and nature study.

Capital Area Metropolitan Planning

Organization (CAMPO): The joint quasi-governmental unit that coordinates regional transportation planning for all of Wake County, and for portions of Granville, Franklin, Johnston, and Harnett Counties.

Capital improvement program (CIP): A short-range, five-year budget used to fund capital projects and equipment purchases. The CIP provides a planning schedule and identifies options for financing costs. CIP programs involve such one-time expenses as facility construction, as opposed to the operating budget that funds routine and recurring expenses.

Car sharing: A model of car rental in which people pay a membership fee for the ability to rent cars for short periods of time, often by the hour. Car sharing is helpful to those who only occasionally require use of a vehicle or who need access to a vehicle of a different type than they use on a day-to-day basis.

Center of Region Enterprise (CORE): A multi-jurisdictional planning initiative for the land area between the Raleigh-Durham International Airport and the Research Triangle Park. Six local governments exercise land use control and plan for infrastructure in this area, including Cary, Durham (city), Durham County, Morrisville, Raleigh, and Wake County. In order to create a balanced, sustainable pattern of development in this area, these local governments, regional organizations, and private sector leaders have developed a comprehensive plan for the CORE area.

Certified Local Government: A federally-based preservation partnership among federal, state, and local governments focused on promoting historic preservation. The program is jointly administered by the National Park Service (NPS) and the State Historic Preservation Offices (SHPOs) in each state, with each local community working through a certification process to become recognized as a Certified Local Government. Among other things, the certification makes federal historic preservation grants available to local governments.

City of Raleigh Arts Commission (CORAC): The official advisory body and advocate for the arts to the Raleigh City Council, which appoints its members.

Climate change: Any long term change in the climate of the Earth, or of a region or city.

Anthropogenic climate change is such change attributed to human activity, including the emission of greenhouse gases (GHGs) due to the use of fossil fuels or creation of agricultural or industrial byproducts such as methane. The observed rise in global atmospheric and oceanic temperatures over the past century is also referred to as “global warming.”

Cluster development: A development technique that concentrates buildings on a portion of a site, allowing the remaining land to be used for recreation, open space, or preservation of natural features.

Co-generation: A power plant that generates both electricity and useful heat for uses such as space and water heating. Because heat is a by-product that is typically wasted, co-generation is more thermodynamically efficient.

Co-location: The placement of multiple (sometimes related) entities within a single location. In an organization, it refers to placing related roles or groups in a single room, building, or campus. In business, it refers to the practice of locating multiple related businesses in the same location.

Commercial: A land use, building, or other activity involving the sale of goods or services.

Community Inventory Report: An extensive review and analysis of conditions and trends in Raleigh, prepared to serve as the factual and analytical foundation for the 2030 Raleigh Comprehensive Plan.

Community rating system (CRS): A program for recognizing and encouraging community floodplain management activities that exceed the minimum National Flood Insurance Program standards.

Commuter rail: Heavy rail service offered primarily at peak commuting times in the morning and evening. Commuter rail usually makes few stops and extends across a region to connect residential communities with employment centers.

Conditional use zoning: The attachment of special conditions to a rezoning. Conditions can include restrictions of use, size, design, and development timing as a means to mitigate potential adverse impacts that could be expected to occur without imposing such conditions. The conditions are over and above the restrictions otherwise made on the land through the general zoning category.

Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Program (CMAQ): Coordinated growth management techniques, including traffic level of service requirements, standards for public transit, trip reduction programs, and capital improvement programming for the purpose of reducing the cumulative regional traffic impacts of development.

Conservation subdivision: Subdivisions featuring shared open space and clustered compact lots. The purpose of a conservation subdivision is to protect farmland and/or natural resources while allowing for the maximum number of residences under the zoning and subdivision regulations.

Context sensitive solutions (CSS): A transportation facility design approach that considers the total context within which a transportation improvement project will exist. It is an interdisciplinary collaboration to develop a facility that fits its physical setting and preserves scenic, aesthetic, historic, and environmental resources while maintaining safety and mobility.

Corridor: An area including and characterized by proximity to a linear means of travel or movement. Corridors may be constructed by humans (transportation right-of-ways) or present in the natural environment (rivers).

Cottage industry: A small business, located in a neighborhood, that functions without altering the residential character of the neighborhood.

Cul-de-sac: A local street having one end open to vehicular traffic and the other end permanently closed at a vehicular turnaround.

Cultural tourism: Tourism oriented to an area's unique cultural attributes, including its arts. Cultural tourism can center on urban historic and cultural facilities such as museums and theatres.

Daylighting (streams): The reconstruction of a previously-piped stream into an exposed channel. Typically the goal is to restore a stream of water to a more natural state.

Demand-responsive transit: A user-oriented form of public transport characterized by flexible routing and scheduling of small vehicles. The vehicles operate in shared-ride mode between pick-up and drop-off locations according to passenger needs.

Demographics: Population characteristics commonly including race, age, income, disabilities, mobility (in terms of travel time to work or number of vehicles available), educational attainment, home ownership, and employment status.

Density: The number of dwelling units per a unit of land area, usually expressed as the ratio of residential units per acre.

Density bonus: In a development, those additional residential units (exceeding the otherwise allowed residential density) that are granted as a result of the provision of a community amenity, affordable housing, or some other realization of community goals.

Distributed generation: The creation of electricity from many small energy sources rather than a few more centralized electric plants.

Downtown Raleigh Alliance (DRA): A consortium of downtown Raleigh businesses and property owners, funded through a special property tax levy, that promotes downtown through marketing and advocacy and also provides services such as sidewalk cleaning, security, and visitor services.

Drainage basin: The area that contributes storm water to a drainage system or water body.

Dual plumbing system: A system that utilizes separate and independent piping systems for reclaimed/re-use water and potable water.

Duplex: A structure on a single lot containing two dwelling units, each separated from the other by walls and having its own direct outside access.

E – H

Ecosystem: A characteristic assembly of plant and animal life within a specific physical environment and all the interactions among species and between species and their environment.

Effluent: Something that flows out, particularly the outflow or discharge of wastewater.

Emergency housing: Temporary housing for low-income families, for a one day to four month period, who are homeless or at risk of homelessness that provides a transition into other housing options. The term is also used to refer to temporary housing for people made homeless by disasters.

Enterprise resource planning (ERP): A computer system used to manage and coordinate all the resources, information, and functions of an organization.

E-waste (Electronic waste): Computers, entertainment electronics, mobile phones, and other such items passed on by their original owners, including used electronics destined for re-use, re-sale, salvage, recycling, or disposal.

Extra-territorial jurisdiction (ETJ): Authority granted to municipalities to exercise zoning and subdivision powers outside but adjacent to their city limits. It is intended to protect land on the edge of communities from being encroached on by incompatible activities and to provide an orderly extension of services, including utilities and roads.

Façade: The face of a building, especially the principal face, including the entire building wall, windows, doors, canopies, and visible roof structures.

Fair housing: The prohibition of discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, and familial status in the rental or purchase of homes and other housing-related transactions, such as advertising, mortgage lending, and homeowner's insurance.

Fast-tracking: To speed up the processing, production, or construction of a project.

Fats, oils, and grease (FOG): Usually by-products of food preparation, especially regarding their introduction into a wastewater system. Sanitary sewer systems are not designed or equipped to handle the FOG that can accumulate on the interior of the sewer pipes, causing blockages and overflows.

Fee-in-lieu: Cash payments that may be required of an owner or developer as a substitute for dedication of land or physical improvements, usually calculated in dollars per lot, square foot of land, or building area, or in dollars per linear foot of street frontage.

Fenestration: Window and door openings in a building wall, one of the important elements of the exterior appearance of a building.

Fixed guideway: Any transit service that uses exclusive or controlled right-of-ways or rails. The term includes heavy rail, commuter rail, light rail, and bus service operating in exclusive or controlled right-of-ways.

Flag lot: A parcel of land that is accessible only by a long narrow strip of land leading from the main road.

Flex space: A building providing flexibility among office and other uses such as manufacturing, laboratory, warehouse, etc.

Floodplain: The land area susceptible to inundation by water as a result of flood. Typically a floodplain is geographically defined by the likelihood of a flood of a certain severity. A 100-year floodplain would be inundated by a flood whose severity could be expected on average once every 100 years; likewise a 500-year floodplain would be defined by floodwaters whose severity could be expected on average once every 500 years.

Floodway: That portion of a waterway channel that is, during flooding, extremely hazardous due to the velocity of storm waters, erosion potential, and water-borne debris.

Floor area ratio: The total floor area of a building or buildings (including all floors in a multi-story building) on a lot, divided by the lot area.

Food System: The combination of agriculture, processing, distribution, retail, dining, culture, and education that determines the level of access an individual or community has to safe and healthy foods.

Force main: Pipelines that move wastewater under pressure, usually uphill. Pumps or compressors located in a lift station, rather than gravity, provide the energy for wastewater conveyance in force mains.

Form-based zoning: A zoning type that allows flexibility in determining land uses within the constraints of a set building type. The look, scale, and layout of an area are controlled but building owners and occupants are allowed within certain parameters to determine how the buildings will be used.

Fossil fuel: Combustible fuels formed from the decomposition and transformation of organic matter over a geologic time scale. Examples are natural gas, oil, and coal.

Frequent network: The network of transit routes that operate with frequencies of 15 minutes or better throughout the day.

Geographic information system (GIS): A method of storing, managing, creating, and analyzing geographic information digitally on computers.

GoRaleigh: The City of Raleigh's fixed-route bus and demand-responsive transit system.

GoTriangle: An authority that provides regional bus service and promotes other transportation demand management techniques in the Triangle area. GoTriangle is also charged with implementing a regional rail transit system.

Grade-separation: The vertical separation of one horizontal stream of movement from another, such as motor vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists from trains, or motor vehicles from pedestrians and bicycles. An overpass is an example of a grade separation.

Gravity system: Conventional wastewater collection systems that convey untreated wastewater through pipelines to a treatment facility or lift station by gravity, not pumping. The pipes are installed with slopes sufficient to propel the wastewater to its destination without being pumped.

Greater Raleigh Convention and Visitors

Bureau: A not-for-profit marketing organization that promotes tourism and provides resources for convention planners for the Raleigh area.

Green collar job/green industry: A class of jobs oriented toward environmental protection or resource efficiency and usually requiring expertise in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics. Renewable energy, biofuels manufacturing, and climate change adaptation are examples of Green Collar fields.

Green infrastructure: An interconnected green space network that is planned and managed for its natural resource values and for the associated benefits it confers to human populations [Benedict, Mark and Edward McMahon (2006) "Green Infrastructure," Island Press].

Greenfield: Farmland and open areas where there has been little or no prior development and there is minimal threat of environmental contamination (see also Brownfield in 'A-D').

Greenhouse gases: Gases that absorb light in the infrared spectrum and trap heat within the Earth's atmosphere. Common greenhouse gases are water vapor, carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, and ozone.

Greenprint: One of the six themes of the Raleigh 2030 Comprehensive Plan. The Greenprint theme promotes Raleigh as a model green city and a leader in environmental sustainability and stewardship.

Gross Density: Density measured on a district- or area-wide basis when the numerator is typically dwelling units, and the denominator is total land area in the district, area or property inclusive of streets, common areas, conserved open space, and other land within the district or area.

Heritage business: Businesses that capitalize on local history and culture.

Highway corridor: A geographical band that lies on both side of and includes a limited access roadway designed for high traffic volumes and connected to a regional or national network of similar roadways.

Historic Overlay District (HOD): A zoning district that provides protection through design review for buildings and places that are of importance because of their significance in history and/or their unique architectural style.

Hospitality sector: Businesses that provide food, beverages, or accommodation services, including restaurants, bars, hotels, and contract catering, especially for visitors.

Household: Any number of related people or a maximum of four unrelated people living together in a single dwelling unit.

Housing First: An approach to ending homelessness that centers on providing homeless people with housing quickly without pre-conditions and then offers needed services.

Housing Location Policy: The adopted set of goals and criteria used by the city to determine if a potential affordable housing site will serve the needs of low income residents while preventing undesirable outcomes such as areas of concentrated poverty.

Housing tax credit: A reduction of taxes for buying a house, often for lower-income and first-time homebuyers.

Housing trust fund: A program with dedicated sources of funding not subject to an annual appropriations process. The purposes of such a fund are usually to assure an adequate supply of rental housing and increase homeownership for extremely low, very low income and otherwise homeless households.

Human capital: The stock and accumulation of skills and knowledge gained by workers through education and experience.

I – L

Illicit discharge: The unlawful introduction of pollutants into the environment, either directly or via public infrastructure.

Impervious surface coverage: The percentage of the area of a lot that is covered by solid or dense surface through which rain or irrigation water cannot penetrate.

Inclusionary housing: A development containing market rate dwelling units as well as low- and moderate-income dwelling units. Certain governments may adopt regulations that provide incentives for or require a minimum percentage of housing for low- and moderate-income households in new housing developments and in conversions of apartments to condominiums.

Incorporated/Corporate limits: The area under the legal jurisdiction of, receiving services from, and paying associated taxes to a municipality.

Infill: Development or redevelopment of land that has remained vacant or is underused but is in close proximity to areas that are substantially developed. The term is also used to describe construction of new houses on residential lots where the former house has been demolished (see also Teardown in ‘Q – T’).

Infrastructure: Facilities and services needed to sustain development, land use, and human health and activity. Specific components of infrastructure may be site-based, such as fire stations, parks, schools, and other public facilities; or linear in nature, such as streets; water, sewer, and utility lines; and greenways.

Intensity of land use: The amount of development and range of uses present on a piece of land and the degree of environmental and infrastructure impacts subsequently produced. Intensity ranges from uses of low intensity (agricultural and residential) to uses of high intensity (heavy industry). Common measures of intensity include residential density, floor-area ratio, hours of operation, trip generation, and performance measures related to light, noise, dust, and vibration.

Intermittent stream: A stream that only flows for part of the year, typically mapped as a dashed blue line.

Invasive species: Non-native plants or animals that economically, environmentally, and/or ecologically adversely affect the habitats they invade.

Jobs-housing balance: The ratio of jobs to housing units. The ratio is considered balanced when the number of jobs is equal to the number of workers per household (typically 1.3). An imbalance of jobs and housing indicates that some workers must commute into or out of the area of analysis.

Joint venture units: Coordinated public-private sector effort to provide affordable housing.

Knowledge-based industries: Those industries that are relatively intensive in their need of technology and human capital.

Land clearing and inert debris (LCID): The removal of vegetation from a site except when land is cleared and cultivated for agricultural uses. Mowing, trimming, pruning, or removal of vegetation to maintain it in a healthy condition is not considered clearing.

Land trust: A private, non-profit conservation organization formed to protect community assets such as productive farm and forest land, natural areas, historic structures, recreational areas, or affordable housing units.

Land use: A description of how land is occupied or utilized, usually according to standard categories such as residential, office and industrial.

Landscape ecology: The study of spatial variation in landscapes at a variety of scales. It includes the biophysical and societal causes and consequences of landscape heterogeneity.

Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED): A building rating system that provides standards for environmentally sustainable construction.

Leapfrog development: Development that takes place outside of, but near to, a jurisdiction in order to benefit from cost or regulatory differences between jurisdictions.

Level of service (LOS): Standards used to measure the quality or effectiveness of a service such as police, fire, or library, or the performance of a facility, such as a street or highway.

Lifestyle center: Upscale retail areas typically located near affluent neighborhoods. Lifestyle centers tend to be smaller than suburban malls, are often open air, and are devoid of anchor stores.

Long range transportation plan (LRTP): A strategy developed to guide the public investment in multimodal transportation facilities for 25 to 30 years into the future. The plan may be amended as a result of changes in projected federal, state, and local funding, major improvement studies, interchange justification studies, and environmental impact studies. The plan provides the context for a region's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), the short range capital improvement program.

Low impact development (LID): A comprehensive land planning and engineering design approach with a goal of maintaining and enhancing the pre-development water characteristics and drainage of urban and developing watersheds.

Low-income housing tax credit: A tax incentive for the use of private money in the development of affordable housing for low-income households. The tax credits are more attractive than tax deductions as they provide a dollar-for-dollar reduction in a taxpayer's federal income tax, whereas a tax deduction only provides a reduction in taxable income.

Low-moderate income: Between 50 and 80 percent of Area Median Income (AMI) (see 'A – D').

M – P

Metropolitan planning organization (MPO): A regional government unit that provides service planning, particularly planning for the transportation system.

Micro-power: Very small power-generating installations, such as rooftop windmills (see also Distributed Generation in 'A – D').

Minimum housing code: A local government ordinance that sets minimum standards of safety and sanitation for dwellings. Minimum size, electrical safety, and availability of plumbing, heat, and ventilation are usually regulated by such ordinances, among other concerns.

Mixed-income neighborhoods: Neighborhoods with housing options for people of a variety of incomes rather than homogeneous income-segregated neighborhoods.

Mixed-use: Containing two or more of the following major categories of land use: residential, office, retail, hotel, entertainment. The mixing can be vertical, in the form of mixed-use buildings; or horizontal, when part of a Mixed-Use Development, provided the development is walkable.

Mixed-use center: A special type of mixed-use development that functions as a center by virtue of its size, central location, and a development form characterized by a more intensely developed central area that transitions to lower-intensity areas at its edges. A mixed-use development should have a minimum of 100,000 square feet of retail/restaurant/entertainment use to qualify as a center.

Mixed-use development: A walkable development project containing two or more of the following major categories of land use: residential, office, retail, hotel, entertainment.

Multimodal transportation: The use of more than one type of transportation, particularly the use of modes like bicycles and buses in addition to or other than the single-occupant automobile.

Multi-use fields: Outdoor recreational space that can be used for more than one specific sport or for informal recreation.

Multi-use path: A path that can be utilized by more than one type of user, possibly including pedestrians, bicyclists, horseback riders, skaters, and golf carts.

Municipal solid waste (MSW): Trash and garbage that is collected by a municipality.

Natural areas: Land and water that have substantially retained their natural character, or although altered in character, are important habitats for plant and animal life.

Neighborhood park: A park with a neighborhood-sized service area, as opposed to community parks, which have larger service areas and may contain amenities such as swimming pools.

NeighborWoods: A national program with local affiliates that works to restore and maintain the tree cover in a community.

Net metering: An electricity policy for consumers who own (usually small) renewable energy generators, such as for wind or solar power. Under net metering, owners receive credit for at least a portion of the electricity they generate. See also Micro-power and Distributed Generation (see 'A-D').

No adverse impact (NAI): A type of drainage basin management in which the actions of one property owner are not allowed to adversely affect the rights of other property owners. The adverse effects or impacts can be measured in terms of increased flood peaks, increased flood stages, higher flood velocities, increased erosion, and sedimentation.

Node: An identifiable grouping of land uses concentrated in an area, usually of higher intensity than their surroundings. Under the 2030 Comprehensive Plan, nodes are encouraged to be walkable (see 'U – Z').

North Carolina Housing Finance Agency: A state-chartered agency that works to create affordable housing for those whose needs are not met by the general housing market.

North Carolina Mountains to Sea Trail: A trail consisting of footpaths, roads, and state bicycle routes. When complete it will stretch about 950 miles east-west across the state.

North Carolina Wildlife Resources

Commission: The NCWRC regulates hunting and fishing in North Carolina, registers boats, and offers various wildlife programs.

One stop shop: A location where various needs can be met in one place. In the context of permitting, a single location for obtaining information, forms, and staff assistance for obtaining a variety of permits.

Operating budget: A type of budget containing a detailed projection of all estimated income and expenses based on forecasted revenue during a given period. The budget allocates money for salaries, utilities, rents, maintenance, and other operating expenses.

Package treatment plant: A relatively small wastewater treatment plant that serves an area otherwise not served by municipal wastewater treatment facilities.

Park and ride lot: A facility designed for parking automobiles, the occupants of which transfer to public transit to continue their trips.

Pedestrian-friendly: The design of a development plan or area in a manner that encourages walkability. Relevant design elements include density, site layout, building orientation, infrastructure, lighting, and security (see also Walkable in ‘U – Z’).

Pedestrian street: Pedestrian (-oriented) streets have characteristics that activate the public realm such as active ground floor uses, are designed and posted as low speed (35 and below), include plantings/street trees, sidewalks, and on street parking (or the potential for on street parking).

Performance-based zoning: Zoning regulations that permit uses based on a particular set of standards rather than on particular type of use. It is a flexible zoning technique designed to evaluate development on a project-by-project basis. The process involves preparing a detailed analysis of existing conditions in the area and estimates the impacts of development on community facilities, the environment, local economic conditions, and on subsequent standards established by the community.

Performance standards: Verifiable, measurable levels of service in terms of quantity, quality, and timeliness.

Potable water: Water that is clean enough for drinking and cooking.

Power center: A retail area dominated by several large anchors, particularly discount department stores, off-price stores, and warehouse clubs. The center typically has few if any small tenants.

Preserve: An area in which beneficial land uses in their present condition are protected, such as a nature preserve or an agricultural preserve.

Preserve America designation: A federal program that encourages and supports community efforts to preserve and appreciate local cultural identity through heritage tourism initiatives.

Pressure collection system: A wastewater collection system that relies on pumping rather than gravity to move wastewater for treatment.

Priority wildlife: Wildlife species found by the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission to be of greatest conservation concern and/or need, and so listed in the North Carolina Wildlife Action Plan.

Primary watershed protection area: The area immediately adjacent to a water supply reservoir, with more stringent regulations than the outer-lying secondary watershed. The extents of such protection areas are defined by the North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources (see also Secondary watershed protection area in ‘Q – T’).

Public art: A fountain, sculpture, painting, mural, or similar object that is sited as a focal point and is intended for the enjoyment of the general public. The term usually applies to art that is located outdoors on government property.

Public housing: Rental housing for eligible low-income families, the elderly, and persons with disabilities.

Public realm: The common areas between private property and buildings, including all public spaces, streets, alleys, sidewalks, parks, plazas, and open space.

Purple pipe: Pipes containing reclaimed non-drinkable re-use water that is used for irrigation. The water has been treated to make it safe for returning to the environment but not so clean as to be drinkable.

Q – T

Rainwater harvesting: The accumulation and storage of rainwater. Traditionally rainwater harvesting has provided water for household use, livestock, and irrigation.

Raleigh Historic Landmark: A building, structure, site, area, or object designated by Raleigh City Council as being of special significance in terms of historical, prehistorical, architectural, archaeological, and/or cultural importance, and possessing integrity of design, setting, workmanship, materials, feeling, and/or association.

Raleigh Housing Authority: A local government agency chartered by the State of North Carolina that owns and manages approximately 2,000 public housing units and administers more than 3,500 rent vouchers.

Redevelopment: The process of replacing or upgrading existing development.

Redevelopment areas: Areas in which jurisdictions can use eminent domain to acquire properties for the purpose of improving blighted conditions. The State of North Carolina sets the criteria for identifying these areas and how the properties are subsequently handled by jurisdictions.

Regional rail: A form of rail transit intended to serve multi-jurisdictional regions. It is similar to commuter rail in coverage, but designed to provide a greater span and frequency of service outside of commuting hours.

Renewable energy: Energy generated from natural resources such as sunlight, wind, and geothermal heat that are naturally replenished.

Research Triangle Region Partnership (RTRP): A public-private partnership that works to keep the 13-county Research Triangle region economically competitive through business, government, and educational collaboration.

Resilience: The ability of an organization to respond, recover, and adapt in the wake of events that disrupt normal service delivery or operational activities

Re-use water: Waste water that has been treated and made available for purposes such as irrigation and car washes.

Revolving Historic Preservation Loan Fund: A fund with capital designated for the preservation of historically and architecturally significant properties threatened by demolition or neglect. The fund acquires a property and sells it to a party committed to rehabilitate the historic structure, or provides loans for the same purpose. Proceeds from the sale or loan repayment are returned to the revolving fund in order to assist other endangered historic properties for the same purpose.

Rezoning: An amendment to the official zoning map that changes the zoning district of an area.

Rip-rap: Large rocks or concrete chunks applied to the shoreline of a water body to prevent erosion.

Right-of-way: A strip of land granted for a rail line, highway, or other transportation facility.

Riparian area: The area of transition between land features and water features, such as a stream bank, shoreline, or the border of a wetland. Riparian areas are characterized by frequently waterlogged soils and distinct types of vegetation adapted to these soils.

Road diet: a technique whereby the number of travel lanes or width of the roadway is reduced in order to provide for sidewalks, bike lanes, bus lanes, or landscaped medians.

Safe yield: A water resources engineering term used to identify the calculated maximum available water supply withdrawal rate capacity in million gallons per day (MGD) of a surface water reservoir during a specified period of time, based on historical tributary streamflow and weather information. Safe yields generally use a 20-year or 50-year time period for these calculations.

Scattered site policy: Council-adopted guidance for the distribution and location of assisted rental housing in the City of Raleigh. This policy promotes greater rental housing choice and opportunities for low-income households and avoids undue concentrations of assisted rental housing in minority and low-income neighborhoods.

Secondary watershed protection area: The outer-lying part of the watershed of a drinking water reservoir. The development regulations pertaining to these areas are less stringent than those for the primary watershed protection area (see also Primary watershed protection area in ‘M – P’).

Segregated land uses: The separation rather than mixing of different types of land uses. Land areas with relatively homogenous land uses result, such as shopping centers, which contain almost exclusively retail uses.

Sense of place: The characteristics of a location that make it readily recognizable as unique and different from its surroundings and that provide a feeling of belonging to or being identified with that particular place.

Sensitive road design: See Context sensitive solutions in ‘A – D’.

Single-family attached housing: Housing in which the dwelling units share vertical party walls, but the structure and land are owned fee-simple. Townhouses and row houses are examples.

Single-family detached housing: Housing in which each building contains just one dwelling, exclusive of sheds and detached garages.

Site plan: A map or graphic depicting the development of a tract of land, including the location and relationship of structures, streets, driveways, recreation areas, parking areas, utilities, landscaping, grading, walkways, and other site development information.

Smart growth: A perspective, method, and goal for managing the growth of a community. It focuses on the long-term implications of growth and how they may affect the community, instead of viewing growth as an end in itself.

Southeast Raleigh Assembly (SERA): A Raleigh City Council-appointed group that promotes a broad range of economic and social support for Southeast Raleigh.

Special Transit Advisory Commission (STAC): A regional task force charged to make recommendations regarding long-rang transit planning for the Triangle region. The Commission completed its work in May 2008 and has provided its recommendations to the Triangle Region’s

MPOs, including recommendations for bus service, circulator service, and rail transit.

Sprawl: A development pattern characterized by large expanses of predominantly low-intensity, automobile-dependent development found in outlying suburban and exurban areas (see ‘A – D’).

Step backs: The reduction of a building’s volume and profile proportional to the building’s height. A pyramidal building consequently has notable step backs whereas a cubic building has no step backs.

Stormwater: The flow of water that results from precipitation and that occurs immediately following rainfall or a snowmelt.

Stormwater control measures (SCMs): Methods, measures, practices, and maintenance procedures intended to reduce water pollution and prevent erosion and sedimentation by detaining and treating stormwater on a development site.

Street connectivity: The extent to which street systems provide multiple routes and connections serving the same origins and destinations, allowing the dispersion of traffic through several routes, and redundancy in the case of congestion or blockage.

Street stub: A street having only one outlet for vehicular traffic and that is intended to be extended to serve development on adjacent land.

Street tree: A tree that is currently located or proposed for planting along a street or highway. Such tree can be located on private property or on public land.

Streetcar: An electric rail-borne vehicle, of lighter weight and construction than a train, designed for the transport of passengers on tracks running primarily on streets.

Street Design Manual: A publication of the City of Raleigh Public Works Department containing regulations and standards for adequate and coordinated construction of transportation facilities.

Streetscape: The visual and experiential character of the linear space defined by the buildings adjacent to a street. The elements of a streetscape include building façades, landscaping, sidewalks, paving, street furniture (benches, kiosks, trash receptacles, fountains, etc.), signs, awnings, and street lighting.

Street wall: The group of building faces that define the edges of a roadway corridor.

Strip development: Commercial, retail, or industrial development, usually one lot deep, that fronts on a major street. It includes individual buildings on their own lots and small linear (strip) shopping centers with on-site parking in front of the stores.

Structured parking: A covered, usually multi-story structure that provides parking areas for motor vehicles, also known as a parking deck.

Student-oriented housing: Structures intended to house students, particularly college students. Included are dormitories, sorority and fraternity houses, but also multi-bedroom, rent-by-the-bedroom apartment units that are marketed to students.

Subdivision: The division of land into two or more lots. Also a development consisting of subdivided lots.

Supportive housing: A combination of housing and services intended to help people live more stable, productive lives. Supportive housing targets the homeless and those who also have very low incomes or serious, persistent issues such as substance abuse, mental or physical illness, or who are dually diagnosed.

Surface parking: Vehicular parking located in one level on the ground, most commonly seen as parking lots.

System integration plan: A park plan developed prior to the initiation of a Master Plan, containing a set of guidelines for the interim management of parkland, documenting existing site conditions and constraints, establishing the park's classification consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, and if applicable proposing any special intent for the park.

Tactical urbanism: The use of inexpensive, short-term installations in the public realm to raise questions and suggest solutions for city planning issues.

Teardown: The demolition of an existing house in order to provide a building site for the immediate construction of a new house.

Text amendments: Changes to the City Code of Ordinances.

Tiered water rates: Different water rates applied to different types of water users, usually lower rates for households and higher rates for industrial and commercial users, such as car washes and bottling plants.

Topography: The configuration of the earth's surface including the relative relief, elevations, and positions of land features.

Track-out camps: Special-subject training camps held outside of formal education for children who are enrolled in schools following the year-round educational calendar.

Traditional neighborhood development (TND): A development pattern that mimics pre-1950's development and exhibits several of these characteristics: alleys, grid-based street layout, buildings oriented to the street, front porches on houses, pedestrian orientation, mixed land uses, and public squares.

Traffic calming: The use of physical measures, such as speed humps, traffic circles, narrow lane widths, or similar devices, intended to discourage speeding and improve the usability of a street for bicycles and pedestrians.

Transfer of development rights: The moving of the right to develop or build from one land parcel to another, or from a portion of a lot to another part of the same lot.

Transit corridor: A relatively narrow strip of land through which transit service runs. This may be a rail corridor or a regular street with bus service.

Transit-first features: Physical or technological adjustments that allow transit vehicles greater efficiency, such as traffic signal preferences and reserved travel lanes for buses, and give transit vehicles advantages in the general traffic stream.

Transit-oriented development (TOD): A development of high density mixed land uses that have a transit facility as a focal point. TODs mix residential, retail, office, and public uses in a walkable environment, making it convenient for residents and employees to travel by transit, bicycle, foot, or car.

Transit supportive development/design: An approach to development near transit that seeks to maximize the use and spillover benefits of transit.

Transitional housing: Shelter provided to the homeless or those exiting emergency housing for a period of four to twenty-four months, combined with other social services and counseling programs to assist in the transition to self-sufficiency through the acquisition of a stable income and permanent affordable housing.

Transitional protective yard: A physical buffer required by the zoning code that separates and provides a transition between potentially incompatible land uses, particularly between more and less intensive uses.

Transportation demand management (TDM): Programs, plans, or policies designed to encourage changes in individual travel behavior. TDM can emphasize alternatives to the single-occupant vehicle such as carpools, vanpools, and transit; other techniques include reduction or elimination of the number of vehicle trips, telecommuting, alternative work weeks, and flex time.

Transportation impact analysis (TIA): A study of the effects of a proposed development on the transportation system and that system's ability to respond to the increase in demand created by the development.

Transportation improvement program (TIP): A prioritized multi-year program for the implementation of transportation improvement projects by NCDOT. It is a management tool to ensure the most effective use of funding for transportation improvements. The TIP is a federal requirement of the transportation planning process. A transportation improvement is not eligible for federal funding unless it is listed in the TIP.

Triangle J Council of Governments (TJCOG): A voluntary organization of municipal and county governments in North Carolina's Region J (Chatham, Durham, Johnston, Lee, Moore, Orange and Wake Counties). It is one of 17 regional councils established in 1972 by the state to aid, assist, and improve the capabilities of local governments in administration, planning, fiscal management, and development.

Triangle Region: A region in central North Carolina, anchored by the cities of Raleigh, Durham, and Chapel Hill, commonly called "the Triangle." The eight-county region is officially named by the U.S. Census Bureau as the Raleigh-Durham-Cary Combined Statistical Area.

Typology: The classification of physical characteristics commonly found in buildings and urban places, according to their association with different categories, such as intensity of development. The following is an example of a set of characteristics with typological associations: single-family residences set well back from a street on large lots and surrounded by mowed lawns with naturalistic ornamental plantings of trees and shrubs are associated typologically with suburban places.

U – Z

Universal design: Buildings, products, and environments that are usable and effective for everyone, regardless of physical abilities or disabilities.

Unprogrammed open space: Open space, particularly in parks, that is not set aside for any particular sport or recreational activity. The space is therefore available for spontaneous use by the public.

Unsafe building code: Regulations that describe the circumstances in which a building is considered structurally dangerous to the general public and unfit for human access or habitation.

Upper Neuse Clean Water Initiative (UNCWI): An initiative of the Triangle Land Conservancy that promotes multi-county cooperation to protect the water quality of the Triangle region's part of the Neuse River basin.

Upper Neuse River Basin Association

(UNRBA): A group of representatives of eight municipalities and six counties whose goal is water quality protection and water resource planning and management within the 770 square mile watershed that drains into Falls Lake.

Urban services area (USA): An area in which a nearby jurisdiction will eventually supply urban services (such as water, wastewater, fire, and police protection) and outside of which such services will not be extended by that jurisdiction.

Vehicle miles traveled (VMT): A unit to measure vehicle travel made by a private vehicle, such as an automobile, van, pickup truck, or motorcycle. Each mile traveled is counted as one vehicle mile regardless of the number of persons in the vehicle.

Vehicle trips per day (VPD): The number of vehicle trips generated by a particular location within one day.

Very low income: Very low income is defined as below 50 percent of the area median income (AMI).

Viewshed: The area within view from a defined observation point.

Wake County Growth Issues Task Force: A citizen group created by the Wake County Board of Commissioners to examine growth management strategies and help Wake County balance growth and quality of life issues.

Walkable: Characteristic of how easy, pleasant, and practical an area is for walking. Walkable areas include origins and destinations located within walking distance of one another, and linked by a pedestrian-friendly network and development pattern (see ‘M – P’).

Waste-to-energy: Energy generated from fuel that has been derived from solid waste or sewage.

Wastewater: Water carrying waste from domestic, commercial, or industrial facilities, otherwise known as sewage.

Water conservation: The prudent and efficient use of water, recognizing that water supplies are limited and that the treatment of water, both for drinking and wastewater returned to the environment, is expensive and energy intensive.

Water resources: All sources of water for human use, including rain, ground water, water in reservoirs, and water courses. **Water supply watershed:** The drainage basin for a reservoir that provides drinking water.

Water treatment plant (WTP): The facility within the water supply system that can clean water to make it drinkable.

Watershed: A land area that collects precipitation and contributes runoff to a receiving body of water or point along a watercourse, also known as a drainage basin.

Western Wake Partnership: The four local governments that cooperate for regional wastewater management in western Wake County. The partners are the towns of Apex, Cary, Holly Springs, and Morrisville.

Wetland: Areas that are inundated and saturated by water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions, including swamps, marshes, bogs, and similar areas.

William Christmas Plan: The original plat laying out the streets and lots of the plan for the City of Raleigh was developed at the direction of the State Legislature by William Christmas in April 1792 for the purpose of establishing a new capital city. Union (now Capitol) Square was reserved for the statehouse in the center, with four principal streets radiating axially from each face of the square. The axial streets were named for the four judicial districts toward which they ran (each identified by the name of its principal city). The other 17 streets were named for the remaining judicial districts, for the points of the compass, for the site-selection commissioners, and for other prominent citizens. The plan included four parks named for the first three Governors (Nash, Caswell, and Burke) and for Attorney General Alfred Moore, of which Nash and Moore squares still remain as open space.

Workforce housing: Housing affordable to working low- and moderate-income persons, often applied to housing for workers who supply essential services such as police and teachers.

Zoning: Local laws used by jurisdictions to regulate the uses of land, buildings, and structures within designated areas.