

GLOSSARY

Air pollution—The presence of contaminants in the air in concentrations which interfere directly or indirectly with human health, safety, or comfort or with the full use and enjoyment of property.

Anticipated development—Parcels of land for which a site plan and/or subdivision plat has been approved or for which a preliminary site plan and/or subdivision plat has been formally submitted.

Advanced wastewater treatment (AWT)—Wastewater treatment beyond conventional secondary treatment; it includes removal of nutrients, organic materials, bacteria, viruses, suspended solids, and minerals. The purpose of AWT may be to alleviate pollution of a receiving watercourse or to provide a water quality adequate for reuse, or both. The process may be used following, in conjunction with, or replace entirely the conventional secondary process.

Aquifer—A permeable underground geologic formation through which groundwater flows.

Aquifer recharge area—A place where surface runoff enters an aquifer.

Areas of critical environmental concern—Areas where uncontrolled development could result in irreversible damage to historic, cultural or aesthetic values, or natural systems or processes which are of more than local significance, or could unreasonably endanger life and property as a result of natural hazards of more than local significance. Source: Title V (e) of 5.268, the proposed Land Use Policy and Planning Assistance Act of 1973.

Arterial highway—The principal street carrying the major portion of trips entering and leaving an urban area, as well as the majority of through movements desiring to bypass a central city. Significant intra-area travel and important intra-urban and inter-city bus services should be served by this class of facilities. In the principal arterial system, the concept of service to the abutting land is subordinate to the provision of travel service to major traffic movements. Because of the nature of travel served by the principal arterial system, almost all fully and partially controlled access facilities will be part of this functional class.

Assisted housing—Housing built for families whose incomes limit or preclude them from purchasing or renting safe, decent and sanitary shelter of adequate size in the conventional market. This housing may be publicly or privately owned; rents or sales prices are controlled according to income.

Basic employment—Those jobs which serve a regional or national market.

Berm—A long, narrow, raised strip of ground used as a natural buffer between residential areas and noise-generating roadways or other incompatible land uses, or for landscape enhancement.

Buffer—A use established to separate and protect one type of land use from objectionable aspects of another. It may consist of space, structures, plantings, or some combination thereof.

Buffer Zone—An area of land designated or established to protect one land use from the incompatible aspects of another land use. The achievement of this objective can be realized through the provision of an undisturbed naturally vegetated area, a regraded or otherwise disturbed area, a landscaped area, any of which may contain screening, barriers or retaining walls to further the objective of the buffer zone. Thus, transitional screening required under Article 13 of the Zoning Ordinance is one form of a buffer. Unless otherwise specified, utility lines and laterals shall be permitted within a buffer zone.

CBD (central or community business district)—The primary shopping area for a population of 20,000 to 30,000 persons, with a one- or two-mile radius, usually containing 100,000 to 300,000 square feet of commercial space on 20 to 40 acres and offering reasonable opportunity for comparison shopping in a compact location.

Cluster development—Development at a density authorized by application of a zoning district, in which development the individual lots are smaller than the average lot authorized by the zoning category, with the excess land thus made available used for common land and purposes. The intent of cluster development is improved relationship of uses on land to the land itself, as set forth in Section 2-408 of the Zoning Ordinance.

Collector street—Principal street leading from neighborhood to main thoroughfares. Its primary role is to gather traffic from local streets for connection with the arterial network. Direct residential frontage on collector streets in low-density areas is undesirable, but frequently occurs.

Committed development—Parcels of land on which construction is underway or for which building permits have been issued.

Community park—A large local-serving park designed to serve citizens within a two-mile area.

Condominium—A form of property ownership, usually within a multifamily or townhouse building or complex, in which the interior space within each unit is independently owned. Within a condominium, all the owners collectively are responsible for the maintenance of all the common facilities, including the building structure and exterior grounds.

Constraints—Physical characteristic(s) of a natural system which, if perturbed beyond the system's tolerance of capacity to stabilize or return to its normal state, produce(s) undesired effects with associated social and economic costs.

Cooperative—A form of property ownership, generally used in multi-unit development, whereby the building or complex of buildings is owned jointly by its occupants. Transfer of ownership must be approved by the governing board of a cooperative.

Critical environmental area—"... any area which due to its location, nature, or uniqueness must be preserved in order that special values essential in maintaining vital ecological relationships, as well as areas of special scenic or historic significance, be protected and conserved for the benefit, enjoyment, and general welfare of the people of the Commonwealth." Va. Code Ann. Section 10-187 et. seq.

DAAR—Dulles Airport Access Road.

Density—A number, typically population or dwelling units, expressed in terms of land area, typically in acres. For example: 12 persons per acre or four dwelling units per acre are density figures, representing the average extent of development concentration within an area.

Developed land—The total of all parcels containing permanent structures valued at \$2,500 or more, plus all parcels not generally available for development (e.g., tax exempt land, private rights of way, parcels owned in common by homeowners associations, etc.). In general usage, these definitions should also point out that (a) an individual home may be established on two or more adjacent parcels, with one or more of those parcels inventoried as "undeveloped" under this definition; (b) a developed parcel larger than the minimum or typical zoning lot can, by simply being subdivided, create additional undeveloped land; and (c) single parcels of private right of way or homeowners' association land would not normally be considered as developed land but, in aggregate, they represent land not available for further development.

Development hazards—Physical constraints on land use, e.g. highly erodible soil.

District park—Minimum size, 200 acres. Development is generally of major recreational facilities, including tennis courts, athletic fields, multi-use court, picnic area and trails.

D.U. (du)—Dwelling unit or density unit.

Du/ac—Dwelling units per acre.

Easement—An interest in land owned by another that entitles its holder to a specific right with respect to that land.

Ecotone—The overlap of two or more separate plant communities. As a consequence of the overlap, ecotones contain plants from both communities, making a greater diversity of species. This diversity supports a high diversity of animals.

Elevator apartments—Apartments in structures requiring elevators to serve upper floors. Generally, elevator apartments would be more than five stories high.

EQC (environmental quality corridor)—An open space system designed to link and preserve natural resource areas and provide accessible outdoor recreation. The system is based primarily on existing and proposed parks, floodplains, and stream valleys. Wildlife habitats, potential reservoir sites, utility rights of way wetlands, commercial farms, historic sites, and citizen-identified environmental areas are all used to further delineate the system.

Erodible soils—Soils capable of diminishing by exposure to elements such as wind or water.

Families of low income—Families whose income is below 50 percent of the County median income but exceeds 25 percent of the County median income.

Families of moderate income—Families whose income is below 80 percent of the County median income but exceeds 50 percent of the County median income.

Families of middle income—Families whose income is below 120 percent of the County median income but exceeds 80 percent of the County median income.

Feeder bus system—A network of bus routes designed to systematically carry people to and from one or more central points (such as Metro stations) from outlying, and usually dispersed, locations.

Floodplain—Land area, adjacent to a stream or other surface waters, which may be submerged by flooding; usually the comparatively flat plain within which a stream or riverbed meanders.

Freeway—A highway with controlled access, designed to provide uninterrupted movement of vehicles.

Garden apartments—Low-rise apartment buildings, generally not more than 3½ stories in which elevator service between floors is not made available.

Grade separation—Use of an overpass/underpass structure to permit conflicting travel movements to change routes without interruption by eliminating the need for left-turn movements across facing traffic lanes.

High density—12 dwellings units or more per acre.

High-rise or elevator apartments—Apartment buildings containing elevators. Can be ownership or rental.

Indirect source—Any structure or facility which will cause mobile source activity (e.g., auto traffic), resulting in the emission of air contaminants. Airports, highways, shopping centers, etc., are examples of indirect sources.

Infill—Completion of an established development pattern (usually residential) through the development of similar or compatible uses and densities on vacant parcels within the existing pattern.

Infill housing—Housing built on scattered sites, usually only a few lots wide. Constructed in such a manner that they conform with adjacent existing structures.

Land with development potential—Land suitable and feasible for new development—unimproved and underutilized land; land without environmental prohibitions; improved land suitable and feasible for redevelopment; land not already committed or anticipated for development.

Land with environmental constraints—Land with poor drainage, scenic vistas, need for open space, etc., limits its suitability for certain types of development.

Land with environmental prohibitions—Land which is in floodplain, has adverse soil conditions, excessively steep topography or forestation necessary to prevent soil erosion.

Level-of-service—Qualitative measure of the effect of a number of traffic factors, including speed and travel time, traffic interruptions, freedom to maneuver, safety, driving comfort and convenience, and operating costs. In practice, selected specific levels are defined in terms of particular limiting values of certain of these factors.

Local-serving park—Facilities designed to serve the people in the immediate vicinity of the park, generally within two miles. Included are neighborhood and community parks.

Local streets—Streets within neighborhoods, providing direct access to abutting land uses and serving only to provide mobility within that locality.

Low density—Four or fewer dwelling units per acre.
Low- and moderate-income families—Families whose income would qualify them for assistance through the Federal Housing Program. The Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 defines lower income as "80 percent of the median income of the market area" and very low income as "50 percent of the median income of the market area."

Low-intensity commercial development—Low-rise office structures or other nonretail commercial use.

Mansion house—A residential structure with two or more units, each of which qualifies under the zoning ordinance as a single-family attached unit but externally the structure has the appearance of one single-family detached unit.

Marginally-viable commercial activity—A center of retail activity whose future profit is questionable.

Medium density—Five to eleven dwelling units per acre.

Middle-income families—Families whose income is above the limits for federal housing programs but below the income required to purchase or rent private market housing.

Minor arterial streets—Streets which connect and augment the principal arterial system and provide for trips of moderate length.

Mode split—Term used to describe the percentage of travel which occurs by individual transportation modes (e.g., auto, transit).

Natural barrier—A form of buffer created by an existing object, such as trees, stone wall.

Nutrients—Elements or compounds essential as raw material for organism growth and development, e.g. oxygen, carbon, nitrogen and phosphorus.

NVPDC—Northern Virginia Planning District Commission.

Office use—A commercial land use categorized as follows:

Transitional low-rise office use. A nonretail low-intensity commercial use which provides an effective transition (e.g., townhouse style) between more intense commercial activity and existing stable or planned residential uses. Such use should be of a scale (height and bulk) and style that is compatible with the adjacent stable or planned residential community. In no case should transitional low-rise office uses exceed three stories in height.

Low-rise office use. A nonretail low-intensity commercial use which provides an effective transition between higher intensity commercial or industrial uses and residential of transitional low-rise office uses. Such use should be of a scale (height and bulk) and situated on a parcel of sufficient size to achieve compatibility with adjacent existing and planned uses. In general, low-rise office uses should not exceed three stories.

Mid-rise office use. A nonretail, medium-intensity commercial use which is located generally between higher intensity commercial or industrial uses and low-rise office, transitional low-rise office or low intensity, small scale commercial retail uses. Such use should be of scale (height and bulk) and situated on a parcel of sufficient size to ensure compatibility with the adjacent existing and planned uses. In general, mid rise office uses should not exceed six stories.

High-rise office use. A nonretail, high-intensity commercial use which is located either adjacent to medium- and high-intensity commercial and industrial uses or on a site of sufficient sized to ensure its compatibility with the surrounding existing and planned uses.

PAD—Planned Apartment Development.

PDH—Planned Development Housing.

Peak-hour traffic—Traffic during the hours of 7:30-8:30 AM and 5:00-6:00 PM, when most traffic occurs, in connection with trips to and from places of employment, on a typical work day.

Physical hazards—Physical constraints on land use, such as highly erodible soils, floodplains, and slippage-prone shrink-swell soils.

Pipeline—Term used to describe the administrative process by which development proposals are evaluated. In the Area Plans, the term may also be used to signify committed and/or anticipated development which is under construction or for which site plans have been approved.

Potomac estuary—The tidal portion of the Potomac River that extends from below Little Falls to the Chesapeake Bay.

Primary wastewater treatment—Removal of organic and inorganic settleable solids by the physical process of sedimentation.

Private recreation—Sites and facilities for tennis clubs, swimming clubs, golf courses, and other athletic facilities, provision for which can be made in attractive structures and/or on attractive grounds. Such uses, when well designed and appropriately located, can buffer less compatible uses as well as provide functional and visual relief to a development pattern.

Regional center—An activity center which normally contains a full range of urban facilities and services, including residential, commercial, and office uses as well as community facilities, adequate to serve 100,000 or more persons.

Regional-serving park—Generally, large County or Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority parks of 100 or more acres.

Residential density—Residential densities are defined in terms of average number of persons, families, or dwelling units per acre. Residential density ranges are defined in terms of dwelling units per acre only.

SMSA—Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area, the Bureau of the Census designation for a metropolitan area. Specifically, a "county or group of contiguous counties which contains at least one city of 50,000 inhabitants or more.... Contiguous counties are included if, according to certain criteria, they are socially and economically integrated with the central city." Fairfax County is part of the Washington SMSA.

Secondary wastewater treatment—Use of biological growths to effect decomposition or oxidation of organic material into more stable compounds and provide a higher degree of treatment than can be accomplished by primary sedimentation alone.

Sewerage—An area containing one or more water-sheds, in which sewage flows are collected at a single location, usually a sewage treatment plant.

Single-family residential—Units designed to house one family per unit. In use, the term generally implies detached single-family residential.

Slippage soils—Marine or silty clay deposits, plastic in nature, with a high shrink-swell potential and which are generally unstable, particularly on steep slopes. Soil shrinkage results in damage to structures built on these deposits.

Small-area transit (SAT) service—An alternate mode for collecting and distributing those functions of a transportation system that are presently provided by automobile; e.g., small bus (Dial-a-Ride) is an example of SAT.

Stream valley—Any stream and the land extending from either side of it to a line established by the high point of the concave/convex topography, as delineated on a map adopted by the Stream Valley Board. For purposes of stream valley acquisition, the five-criteria definition of stream valleys contained in *A Restudy of the Pohick Watershed* (1969) will apply. The two primary criteria include all of the land within the 100-year floodplain and the area along the floodplain in slopes of 15 percent or more.

Subsidized housing—Housing provided at less than market prices or rents, for the sheltering of persons with limited resources and/or incomes. The subsidizing agent may be the federal (HUD), state (Virginia Housing Development Authority), or local government (County Redevelopment Housing Authority).

Transitional zone—A designation intended to guide the conversion of an area from one predominant use to another, usually from low-density residential to high-density residential, commercial, or industrial uses.

Travel corridors—A generalized but not route-specific indication of a need to get from place to place. A corridor may contain more than one transportation facility.

Ultimate development—According to the Comprehensive Plan, that activity which will occur by the year 1995.

Underenrolled schools—A school in which the number of students is below the planned capacity for the structure.

Underutilized land—Parcels with an assessed improvement of less than \$2,500, and portions of large parcels which may reasonably be expected to undergo further development.

Undeveloped land—Unimproved or underutilized land. Land containing no structures valued at \$2,500 or more. (See unimproved land.)

Unimproved land—All land lacking any structure or other improvement except those parcels not generally available for development (i.e., tax-exempt land, private rights of way, parcels owned in common by homeowners associations). (See also undeveloped land.)

VDH&T—Virginia Department of Highways and Transportation.

Vacant land—Parcels with no assessed improvement value.

VEPCO easement—An acquired right of use, interest, in lands owned by another, VEPCO easement to transmission support.

Watershed—The area drained by a particular stream or network of streams.

Wetlands—Lowlands covered by shallow and sometimes temporary or intermittent waters, including marshes, swamps, bogs, wet meadows, potholes, sloughs, and river bottom lands.

WMATA—Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority.

Wildlife habitat—Areas which contain the proper food, water and vegetative cover necessary to support a diverse community of animals, birds and fish; some examples include floodplains, upland hardwoods, pine woods, meadows and marshes. Sizes vary and hence habitats may occur in urbanized areas.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

A highly significant element in the PLUS effort since its inception has been the publications program, designed primarily to provide a solid foundation upon which the comprehensive plans could be based. They followed the publication of the Proposal for Implementing an Improved Planning and Land Use Control System in Fairfax County, the final report of the Task Force on Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Control, which was adopted by the Board of Supervisors for public hearing on June 11, 1973. Most of these subsequent documents were produced by County staff, while others were prepared under contract with the County. Two types were generated. PLUS program working papers were prepared primarily as staff working documents, with major concern for maximum feedback in review. PLUS program research papers were distributed widely, at no cost, and were placed in the public libraries for citizen review, in line with the continuing objective of encouraging the highest possible citizen participation.

PLUS Program Working Papers*

- #1. Summary of Staff Review of Existing Plans and Major Issues for Updating District Plans. OCP. May 4, 1974.
- #2. Land Supply Analysis and Land Area Classification for Land Use Planning Workshop. OCP. June 29, 1974.
- #3. Documentation of Developed and Undeveloped Land in Fairfax County and by Planning District. OCP. July 15, 1974. (Published as PLUS Program Research Paper #6, August 1974.)
- #4. A Housing and Environmental Development Corporation for Fairfax County. Prepared for COP by Cambridge Urban Associates. August 1974.
- #5. Countywide Plan Alternatives. OCP. September 1974.
- #6. The Role of Commercial Agriculture in Land Use Planning for Fairfax County. OCP. November 1974.
- #7. Feasibility of a Transferable Development Rights Program for Fairfax County. ORS. October 1974.
- #8. Citizen's Inventory of Environmental Resources. OCP. April 1975.

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- #1. A Brief History of Planning, Zoning, and Environmental Constraints in Fairfax County, Va. County Attorney's Office. January 1974.
- #2. The Legal Basis for a Growth Control System in Fairfax County, Va. Prepared for Fairfax County by Robert H. Freilich, Hulen Professor of Law in Urban Affairs, University of Missouri-Kansas City School of Law. March 1974.
- #3. Fairfax County Study Design on Analytic Tools to Evaluate Development Alternatives. Prepared for OCP, Fairfax County, by CONSAD Research Corporation. January 1974.
- #4. Economic Base Study, Cycle 1. OCP. June 1974.
- #5. Demographic Factors of Growth in Fairfax County, 1960-1970. ORS. July 1974.
- #6. Analysis of Developed and Undeveloped Land in Fairfax County. OCP. August 1974.
- #7. Growth, Change and the Environment in Fairfax County—The Environmental Planning Process. OCP. September 1974.
- #8. Housing for People: An Analysis of Housing Needs in Fairfax County. ORS. In press. June 1975.

* Note: All of these publications are out of print.

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