



## Appendix A Glossary

---

**Access** – A way or means of entry. Residential subdivisions and commercial or industrial sites are usually required to have direct access to a street or highway. Good access recognizes traffic safety as well as providing direct passage for police, fire and emergency vehicles.

**Accessory Use** – An activity or structure incidental or secondary to the principal use on the same lot.

**Affordable Housing** – Housing units where the occupant is paying no more than 30 percent of gross household income for housing costs, or up to 40 percent including taxes and utilities.

**Amenity** – Characteristics of a development that increase its desirability to a community or its marketability to the public. Amenities include swimming pools, tennis courts, bicycle and pedestrian paths, landscaping that compliments the environment, attractive site design, etc.

**Auto-Oriented Major Activity Center** – An area of development designed with an emphasis on customers who use automobiles to travel to the site, rather than those with an emphasis on pedestrians. This type of development usually has more than the minimum required number of parking spaces. The main entrance of retail/commercial sites is oriented to the parking area. In many cases, buildings will have parking between the street and the building. Other typical characteristics are blank walls along much of building facades, more than one driveway to sites, and a

low percentage of the site covered by buildings.

**Auto-Oriented Village** – A form of development that corresponds to the Auto-Oriented Major Activity Center pattern, except that it is scaled to fit within a village setting.

**Average Annual Growth Rate** – Growth rates are calculated as annual averages and represented as percentages. For example the average annual population growth rate in Chesapeake between 1985 and 1995 was 4.5%. The average annual growth rate is not to be confused with the annual rate of change measured at a one-year interval.

**Best Management Practices** – That combination of conservation measures, structures, or management practices that reduces or avoids adverse impacts of development on adjoining site's land, water or waterways, and water bodies.

**Bioretention Area** – Bioretention areas are landscaping features adapted to treat stormwater runoff on the development site. They are commonly located in parking lot islands or within small pockets in residential land uses. Surface runoff is directed into shallow, landscaped depressions that contain a combination of mulch and prepared soil to act as a surface water filter. These depressions are designed to incorporate many of the pollutant removal mechanisms that operate in forested ecosystems.

**Blueway** – A network of water trails (e.g. rivers, streams, canals) linked through integrated, coordinated plans. Like greenways, blueways provide protection to natural systems and sensitive areas; enhance alternate transportation options; increase recreational and healthy lifestyle options; and help to coordinate transportation planning and land use development.

**Brownfield** – Abandoned, idled, or underused industrial and commercial facilities where expansion or redevelopment is complicated by real or perceived environmental contamination.

**Buffer** – An area of land, including landscaping, berms, walls, fences, and building setbacks, that is located between land uses of different character and is intended to mitigate negative impacts of the more intense use on a residential or vacant parcel.

**Business Improvement District** – A special assessment district in which property owners agree to have an additional charge placed on their tax bill in order to fund special activities such as capital improvements or business promotion.

**CIB** – Acronym for Capital Improvements Budget. The CIB is a schedule for financing and constructing major public improvements and facilities needed by a locality. The CIB covers a five-year period, is updated annually, and extended another year into the future. It includes major projects such as road and utility improvements which are expensive, have a long life and may need to be planned well in advance. The estimated annual operating cost of operating and maintaining the facilities to be constructed or acquired is also included in the CIB. Because such projects often generate land development, the CIB is an important tool for implementation of the Comprehensive Plan.

**CBPA** – Acronym for Chesapeake Bay Preservation Area.

**Cluster Development** – A development pattern in which residential, commercial, industrial and institutional uses, or combinations thereof, are grouped together, leaving portions of the land undeveloped. Such development usually involves density transfer where unused allowable densities in one area are permitted in another. A zoning ordinance may authorize such development by permitting smaller lot sizes if a specified portion of the land is kept in permanent open space.

**Compact Development** – An alternative development pattern characterized by a dense growth pattern inside a well-defined boundary, dense but pedestrian-scaled neighborhoods; activity nodes around transit lines, and significant redevelopment and infill of older areas and waterfront.

**Conditional Use Permit** – A use category of a zoning ordinance wherein the governing body may, on a case-by-case basis and subject to certain conditions, allow land uses that may have some characteristics which are incompatible with adjacent uses. When the governing body reserves the right to grant such permits, guidelines or standards need not be contained in the zoning ordinance but the public health/safety morals and general welfare and the public objectives of zoning must be considered. Requests for conditional use permits require public notice and hearings before they can be adopted.

**Conservation District** – A district established to provide a means of conserving and area's distinctive atmosphere or character by protecting or enhancing its significant architectural or cultural attributes.

**Density** – The average number of families, persons, or housing units situated on a unit of land; usually expressed as dwelling units per acre.

**Dispersed Development** – An alternative development pattern characterized by absence of urban growth boundaries; unrestricted water and sewer line extensions throughout the locality; possible loss of rural landscape; no new major activity areas are developed; the need for greater environmental management at the development plan stage; no new transit development; limited access management on roadways; and some redevelopment of older neighborhoods and areas.

**Easement** – The right to use property owned by another for specific purposes or to gain access to another property. For example, utility companies often have easements on the private property of individuals

**Floodplain** – A relatively flat or low land area adjoining a river, stream, or watercourse which is subject to partial or complete inundation; or, an area subject to the unusual and rapid accumulation of runoff or surface waters from any source.

**Floor Area Ratio (FAR)**– A formula for determining permitted building volume as a multiple of the area of the lot. FAR gives developers flexibility in deciding whether to build a low building covering most of the lot or a high building covering only a small part of the lot, so long as the total allowed ratio is not exceeded.

**Gateway** – An entrance corridor that heralds the approach of a new landscape and defines the arrival point as a destination.

**Gentrification** – The rehabilitation and resettlement of low- and moderate-income urban neighborhoods by middle- and high-income professionals.

**GIS** – Acronym for Geographic Information System. GIS is a computer system that stores and links non-graphic attributes or geographically referenced data with graphic map features to allow a wide range of information processing and display operations, as well as map production, analysis, and modeling.

**Greenway** – A linear park, alternative transportation route, or open space conservation area approved by the locality that provides passive recreational opportunities, pedestrian and/or bicycle paths, and/or the conservation of open spaces or natural areas, as indicated in a greenway plan.

**HRSD** – Acronym for Hampton Roads Sanitation District – HRSD, a political subdivision of the Commonwealth of Virginia, was created by public referendum in 1940 to eliminate sewage pollution in the tidal waters of the Chesapeake Bay. HRSD’s mission is to protect and enhance the environment through quality wastewater treatment in the Hampton Roads area. HRSD returns treated effluent to nature in a way that will continue to nurture the region’s delicate ecosystems.

**Hydric Soil** – Soil that is saturated, flooded, or ponded long enough during the growing season to develop an anaerobic condition in the upper part.

**IDA** – Acronym for Intensely Developed Area. This is a designated redevelopment area within the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Area Overlay District which incorporates portions of the RPA and RMA. The IDA as displayed on the IDA Map includes areas in which development was concentrated as of January 21, 1992, so that little of the natural environment remains, and where at least one of the three conditions as described in Section 26-516.E of the Chesapeake City Code existed as of that date.

**Impermeable Soil** – Soil that does not readily permit fluids or gases to pass through.

**Infill** – The utilization of vacant land in previously developed areas for buildings, parking lots, recreational facilities and other uses.

**Infrastructure** – Public facilities and governmental services which support the population of a community. The term primarily includes the physical attributes of a locality (e.g. streets, water and sewer lines, parks), as well as the services (e.g. police and fire protection).

**Landscaping** – The modification of the landscape for an aesthetic or functional purpose. It includes the preservation of existing vegetation and the continued maintenance thereof together with grading and installation of minor structures and appurtenances.

**Lane Mile** – A unit of distance corresponding to actual lengths of roadway lanes, utilized for various transportation planning and engineering purposes, including traffic management and capital cost planning.

**Level of Service Standard** – An indicator of the extent or degree of service provided by, or proposed to be provided by, a facility based on, and related to, the operational characteristics of the facility. Level of service shall indicate the capacity per unit of demand for each public facility.

**Light Rail** – Street cars or trolley cars that typically operate entirely or substantially in mixed traffic and in non-exclusive, at-grade rights-of-way. Passengers typically board vehicles from the street level (as opposed to a platform that is level with the train) and the driver may collect fares. Vehicles are each electrically self-propelled and usually operate in one or two-car trains.

**Lot** – The basic development unit. An area with fixed boundaries, used or intended to be used by one building and any accessory building(s) and usually not divided by a highway, street or alley.

**Low-Impact Development** – This environment is characterized by very low-intensity land uses primarily related to natural resources use and diffuse recreational development, relatively low land values, relatively minor public and private capital investment, and/or relatively major biophysical development limitations.

**Major Activity Center** – A form of land use characterized by regional scale retail, commercial, and industrial development that is oriented toward a recognizable corridor or area. Major activity centers can be automobile-oriented or transit-oriented.

**Mixed-Use Development** – The development of a tract of land or building or structure with two or more different uses such as but not limited to residential, office, retail, public, or entertainment, in a compact urban form that can result in measurable reductions in traffic impacts.

**Node** – An identifiable grouping of uses subsidiary and dependent upon a larger urban grouping of similar or related uses.

**Open Space** – Land and water areas retained for use as active or passive recreation areas or for resource protection in an essentially undeveloped state.

**Ordinance** – A law or regulation set forth and adopted by a governmental authority, usually a city or county.

**Overlay District** – An overlay district is a specific area that has been designated to receive special consideration due to a unique or special circumstance. Overlay districts are typically found in the zoning

ordinance and provide supplemental development standards for unique circumstances. Examples of overlay districts in the Zoning Ordinance include the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Areas and the Fentress Overlay District. Overlay districts may also be included in the Comprehensive Plan as “policy overlays” to provide special provisions to a defined area. The Transportation Corridor Overlay District (TCOD) is an example of a Comprehensive Plan overlay.

**Pedestrian-Oriented Development** – Development which is designed with a primary emphasis on the street sidewalk or connecting walkway access to the site and building, rather than on automobile access and parking lots. In pedestrian-oriented developments, buildings are typically placed relatively close to the street and the main entrance is oriented to the street sidewalk or a walkway. Although parking areas and garages may be provided, they are not given primary emphasis in the design of the site.

**Permeable Soil** – Soil having pores or openings that permit liquids or gases to pass through.

**Planned Unit Development (PUD)** – An area for which a unitary development plan has been prepared indicating, but not being limited to, the following land uses: open space, on-site circulation for both pedestrians and vehicles, parking, setbacks, housing densities, building spacings, land coverage, landscaping, relationships, streets, building heights, accessory uses, and architectural treatment. A PUD may also include cluster developments, which are a development design technique that concentrates buildings in a specific area on a site to allow the remaining land to be used for recreation, common open space, or preservation of environmentally sensitive areas.

**Plat** – A document, prepared by a registered surveyor or engineer, that delineates property lines and shows monuments and other landmarks for the purpose of identifying property.

**Point-Source Pollution** – In reference to water quality, a discrete source from which pollution is generated before it enters receiving waters, such as a sewer outfall, a smokestack, or an industrial waste pipe. Conversely, nonpoint source pollution is less definable and usually covers broad areas of land, such as agricultural land with fertilizers that are carried from the land by runoff, or automobiles.

**Proffer** – A condition voluntarily offered by a developer that limits or qualifies how the property in question will be used or developed. Proffers are made under the terms of conditional zoning to lessen the possible negative effects of an unrestricted zoning. The conditions proffered must relate to the rezoning itself and be in accord with the community’s comprehensive plan. Terms of any proffer must be submitted in writing by the developer prior to a public hearing before the governing body. Upon approval, the conditions (proffers) become part of the rezoning and remain in effect even if the property is sold. Proffers are subject to enforcement.

**Redevelopment** – The process of developing land which is, or has been, previously developed.

**Rezoning** – An amendment to the zoning ordinance. Ordinarily, rezonings can take three forms: (1) a comprehensive revision or modification of the zoning text and map; (2) a text change in zone requirements; and (3) a change in the map, e.g., an area zoned for residential use is rezoned to commercial use. Applications for rezonings are reviewed by the locality’s planning staff and planning commission. After receiving a recommendation from the planning commission and holding a

public hearing, the governing body may approve or disapprove an application for a rezoning.

**Riparian Corridor** – The area adjacent to a river, lake or stream, consisting of the area of transition from an aquatic ecosystem to a terrestrial ecosystem and including vegetative and wildlife normally associated with a riparian habitat.

**RMA** – Acronym for Resource Management Area. The RMA is an area within the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Area Overlay District that includes those lands contiguous to the inland boundary of the RPA which have a potential for degrading water quality or diminishing the functional value of the RPA, if not properly managed. The RMA is depicted on the CBPA map and includes, but is not limited to, the following land use categories: floodplains; highly erodible soils, including steep slopes and highly permeable soils; and non-tidal wetlands not included in the RPA.

**RPA** – Acronym for Resource Protection Area. The RPA is an area within the overall Chesapeake Bay Preservation Area Overlay District that includes: all tidal wetlands; non-tidal wetlands connected by surface flow and contiguous to tidal wetlands or water bodies with perennial flow; shorelines; and a one hundred (100) foot vegetated buffer around each such feature and around all water bodies with perennial flow. The buffer area is designed to retard runoff, prevent erosion and filter non-point source pollutants from runoff. The buffer area is also designed to achieve a level of 75% reduction in sediments and 40% reduction in nutrients.

**Rural Development** – An alternative development pattern characterized by sparsely developed areas where the land is primarily used for farming, forestry, resource extraction, very low-density residential uses (e.g. one unit per 3 acres or less), or open space uses.

**Setback** – The minimum distance by which any building or structure must be separated from a street right-of-way or lot line.

**Site Plan** – A plan, to scale, showing uses and structures proposed for a parcel of land as required by the regulations. Includes lot lines, streets, building sites, reserved open space, buildings, major landscape features – both natural and manmade – and depending on requirements, the locations of proposed utility lines.

**Special Taxing District** – A subarea of a community designated by city ordinance to assess payments for construction or installation of public facilities that primarily benefit the property owners within the district.

**Sprawl** – Low-density land-use patterns that are automobile-dependent, energy and land consumptive, and require a very high ratio of road service to development served. The landscape created by sprawl generally has four dimensions: (1) a population that is widely dispersed in low-density development; (2) rigidly separated homes, shops, and workplaces; (3) a network of roads marked by huge blocks and poor access; and (4) a lack of well-defined thriving activity centers such as downtowns or town centers. Most other features usually associated with sprawl (e.g. the lack of transportation choices, relative uniformity of housing options, or the difficulty of walking) are the results of these conditions.

**Stormwater** – The flow of water which results from precipitation and which occurs immediately following rainfall or a snow melt.

**Streetscape** – An area that may either abut or be contained within a public or private street right-of-way or accessway that may contain sidewalks, street furniture, landscaping or trees, and similar features.

**Strip Development** – A pattern of commercial development located along one or both sides of a street which is generally one lot in depth and is characterized by multiple and relatively closely spaced driveways, low open space and landscaping ratios, and high floor area ratios.

**Subdivision** – The division or redivision of a lot, tract, or parcel of land by any means into two or more lots, tracts, parcels, or other divisions of land, including changes in existing lot lines for the purpose, whether immediate or future, of lease, transfer, or ownership, or building or lot development.

**Suburban** – The low- to medium-intensity development patterns which surround the downtown or other more intense, urban areas of the city.

**Sustainable Development** – Development that maintains or enhances economic opportunity and community well-being while protecting and restoring the natural environment upon which people and economies depend. Sustainable development meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

**Swale** – An elongated depression in the land surface that is at least seasonally wet, is usually heavily vegetated, and is normally without flowing water. Swales direct stormwater flows into primary drainage channels and allow some of the stormwater to infiltrate into the ground surface.

**Tax Increment Financing** – A tool used by cities and other development authorities to finance certain types of development costs. The public purposes of TIF are the redevelopment of blighted areas, construction of low- and moderate-income housing, provision of employment opportunities, and improvement of the tax base. With TIF, a city “captures” the additional property taxes generated by the development

that would have gone to other taxing bases and then uses the “tax increments” to finance the development costs.

**Trail** – A way or path designed for and used by pedestrians, equestrians, cyclists using non-motorized bicycles, and others. Trails may include trailheads, which can consist of parking lots, drinking fountains, restrooms and signage.

**Traffic Calming** – A concept fundamentally concerned with reducing the adverse impact of motor vehicles on built-up areas. Usually involves reducing vehicle speeds, providing more space for pedestrians and cyclists, and improving the local environment.

**Transit** – Passenger services provided by public, private, or nonprofit entities, which may include the following transportation modes: commuter rail; rail rapid transit; light rail transit; light guideway transit; express bus; and local fixed route bus.

**Transit-Oriented Major Activity Center** – A form of development that maximizes investment in transit infrastructure by concentrating the most intense types of development around transit stations and along transit lines; development in such areas is designed to make transit use as convenient as possible. This type of development is characterized by moderate and high-density housing concentrated in mixed-use developments, making it convenient for residents and employees to travel by transit, bicycle, foot, or car.

**Transit-Oriented Village** – A form of development that corresponds to the transit-oriented major activity center pattern, except that it is scaled to fit in a village setting.

**Tree Canopy** – The area within the circumference of the drip line of the tree. Canopy-generating trees are of the deciduous variety whose mature height and branch structure provide foliage primarily on the upper half of the tree. The purpose of a canopy tree is to provide shade and protection to adjacent ground areas.

**USGS** – Acronym for United States Geological Survey. The USGS, created by an act of Congress in 1879, is the sole science agency for the Department of the Interior. The USGS serves the nation as an independent fact-finding agency that collects, monitors, analyzes, and provides scientific understanding about natural resource conditions, issues, and problems. Localities rely heavily on topographic maps produced by the USGS, which show all principal physical features of an area, including elevations.

**Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)** – VMT is a transportation planning term. Average vehicle miles traveled per day are collected for various roadways based on continuous traffic counts for specified periods. This indicator shows, in combination with other transportation indicators, the extent of reliance upon automobile transportation. Assessing population growth alongside increases in vehicle miles traveled shows the extent to which the VMT growth results from more people driving or from people driving more miles.

**Village** – A small, compact center of predominantly residential character but with a core of mixed-use commercial, residential, and community services. It often incorporates local-scale economic and social functions that are integrated with housing. A village typically has a recognizable center, discrete physical boundaries, and a pedestrian scale and orientation. This term does not necessarily refer to the form of incorporation of a municipality and is often smaller than a municipality.

**Wetland** – Lands transitional between terrestrial and aquatic systems where the water table is usually at or near the surface or the land is covered by shallow water. For purposes of this definition, wetlands must have the following three attributes: (a) have a predominance of hydric soils; (b) are inundated or saturated by surface or ground water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support a prevalence of hydrophytic vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions; and (c) under normal circumstances support a prevalence of such vegetation.

**Workforce Housing** – Workforce housing is typically considered housing for individuals whose income is between thirty and eighty percent of the area median income.

**Zoning** – The legislative process by which a local government classifies land within the community into areas and districts referred to as zones. Zoning regulates building and structure dimensions, design, placement, and use. Requirements vary from district to district, but they must be uniform within districts.