



Amended, February 2013

Durham Comprehensive Plan

Appendix B Glossary and Acronyms

Durham City-County Planning Department

The Durham Comprehensive Plan

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Glossary

A

Accessory Housing	A secondary dwelling unit that is part of the primary dwelling. Examples include basement apartments and garage apartments.
Adaptive Re-use	The conversion of obsolete or historic buildings from their original or most recent use to a new use. For example, the conversion of industrial buildings to residential use, or the conversion of a single-family home to office use.
Adverse Impact	A negative consequence to the physical, social, or economic environment resulting from an action or project.
Affordable Housing	Housing capable of being purchased or rented by a household with very low, low, or moderate income, based on a household's ability to make monthly payments necessary to obtain housing. Housing is considered affordable when a household pays less than 30 percent of its gross monthly income (GMI) for housing including utilities.
Air Pollution	Concentrations of substances found in the atmosphere that exceed naturally occurring quantities and are undesirable or harmful in some way.
Annexation	The process of incorporating a land area into an existing municipality, with a resulting change in the boundaries of the annexing jurisdiction.
Apartment	A multifamily structure on a single tract or parcel of land containing four or more units.
Arterial	A medium-speed (30-40 m.p.h.), medium-capacity (10,000-35,000 average daily trips) roadway that provides intra-community travel and access to the highway system. Access to community arterials should be provided at collector roads and local streets, but direct access from parcels to existing arterials is common.

B

Base Flood	The flood having a one percent chance of being equaled or exceeded in any given year, that is, the 100-year flood.
Bed and Breakfast	A building or group of buildings containing one or more guest rooms for an overnight stay which are rented at a daily rate and where breakfast is the only meal served to guests.
Bicycle Lane	A corridor expressly reserved for bicycles, existing on a street or roadway in addition to any lanes for use by motorized vehicles.
Bicycle-Oriented Development	A development that is designed to facilitate bicycling, with bike routes on interior and exterior roadways, bike paths, bicycle racks near building entrances, bicycle storage lockers, and/or shower facilities for bicyclers.
Bicycle Path	A paved route not on a street or roadway and expressly reserved for bicycles traversing an otherwise unpaved area. Bicycle paths may parallel roads but typically are separated from them by landscaping.

Bicycle Route	A facility shared with motorists and identified only by signs, a bicycle route has no pavement markings or lane stripes.
Bikeways	A term that encompasses bicycle lanes, bicycle paths, and bicycle routes.
Buffer	A portion of property designated to mitigate impacts between land uses or transportation routes, or to protect water features from pollutants.
Building Capacity	The design capacity of the buildings (without trailers) located on a campus within the Durham Public School System. Building capacity does not reflect campus capacity, which includes students in mobile classrooms.
Buildout	Development of land to its maximum potential or theoretical capacity as permitted under current or proposed planning or zoning designations.

C

Carrying Capacity	The level of land use, human activity, or development for a specific area that can be accommodated permanently without an irreversible change in the quality of air, water, land, or plant and animal habitats. May also refer to the upper limits beyond which the quality of human life, health, welfare, safety, or community character within an area will be impaired. Carrying capacity usually is used to determine the potential of an area to absorb development.
Census	The official decennial enumeration of the population conducted by the Federal government.
Central Business District (CBD)	The major commercial downtown center of a community. General guidelines for delineating a downtown area are defined by the US Census of Retail Trade, with specific boundaries being set by the local municipality.
Cluster Development	A residential subdivision that concentrates development on a portion of a site, leaving the remainder in open space. Cluster developments achieve the land use intensity objectives by virtue of limits to overall density rather than minimum lot sizes.
Collector Street	A local street which serves as a connector between local residential streets, commercial development, and the thoroughfare system; such streets typically collect traffic from 250 to 400 dwelling units.
Commercial	A land use classification that permits facilities for the buying and selling of commodities and services.
Commercial - Linear	Pedestrian-oriented, primarily commercial areas built along streets in the urban, downtown and compact neighborhood tiers. Linear commercial typically includes buildings built to the street and on-street parking and is pedestrian-oriented.
Commercial - Node	Discrete, primarily non-residential areas located at key intersections, incorporating integrated design that promotes vehicular and pedestrian access.

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)	The federal grant program designed to act as a catalyst in leveraging private dollars with public assistance to further the capacity of private and public developers to provide affordable housing opportunities. CDBG provides eligible metropolitan cities and urban counties (called "entitlement communities") with annual direct grants that they can use to revitalize neighborhoods, expand affordable housing and economic opportunities, and/or improve community facilities and services, principally to benefit low- and moderate-income persons.
Community Park	Land with full public access intended to provide recreation opportunities beyond those supplied by neighborhood parks. Community parks are larger in scale than neighborhood parks but smaller than regional parks.
Community Service Node	A commercial development that contains a junior department store, or a large variety, discount or department store. A typical community shopping center has a larger market area than a neighborhood shopping center. The size of a typical community shopping center can range from about 100,000 to 450,000 gross leasable area, with a site area of 10 to 30 acres.
Complete Streets	Street design that enables safe access to all users, including motorists, transit riders, bicyclists, and pedestrians and allows for safe movement along or across streets.
Comprehensive Plan	The overall development plan for the community which has been officially adopted to provide long-range development policies including all specified individual elements thereof among which are the plans for land intensities,; land subdivision; circulation; and community facilities, utilities and services.
Condominium	A structure of two or more units, the interior spaces of which are individually owned; the balance of the property (both land and building) is owned in common by the owners of the individual units.
Conservation	The management of natural resources to prevent waste, destruction, or neglect.
Conservation Subdivision	A housing development in rural areas that is characterized by compact lots and common open space, where the natural features of the land are preserved to the greatest extent possible. Typically, environmentally sensitive areas, such as wetlands, floodplains and steep slopes, are set aside in conservation areas, while lots are reduced in size and arranged to fit in less sensitive areas.
Convenience Goods	Retail items generally necessary or desirable for everyday living, usually purchased at a convenient nearby location. Because these goods cost relatively little compared to income, they are often purchased without comparison-shopping.
Cul-de-sac	A short street having only one end open to traffic and the other being permanently terminated with a vehicular turn-around provided.

D

Daylighting	Daylighting is the efficient use of natural light in order to minimize the need for artificial light in buildings.
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dB	The decibel (dB) is the unit used to measure the magnitude or intensity of sound. It uses a mathematical scale to cover the large range of sound pressures that can be heard by the human ear. A 10-dB increase will be perceived by most people to be a doubling of loudness.
Dedication	The transfer without payment of ownership or other interests in real property from a private entity to a public agency.
Dedication, In lieu of	Cash payments which may be required of an owner or developer as a substitute for a dedication of land, usually calculated in dollars per lot, and referred to as in lieu fees or in lieu contributions.
Density	The number of dwelling units per gross acre, except in the case of a conservation subdivision, where the net area shall be used.
Density, Residential	The number of permanent residential dwelling units per acre of land. Densities may be expressed in units per gross acre or per net developable acre.
Density, Employment	A measure of the number of employed persons per specific area (for example, employees/ acre).
Density Transfer	A way of retaining open space by concentrating densities-usually in compact areas adjacent to existing urbanization and utilities-while leaving unchanged historic, sensitive or hazardous areas. In some jurisdictions, for example, developers can buy development rights of properties targeted for public open space and transfer the additional density to the base number of units permitted in the zone in which they propose to develop.
Developable Land	Land which is suitable as a location for structures and which can be developed free of hazards to, and without disruption of, or significant impact on, natural resource areas.
Developer	(a) The person, firm, corporation, or legal entity that has financial, or operational control over land-disturbing activity; or (b) The person, firm, corporation, or legal entity in possession or control of the land when he directly or indirectly allowed the land-disturbing activity, has benefited from it, or has failed to comply with any provisions of the Unified Development Ordinance.
Development	Any human caused change to improved or unimproved real estate that requires a permit or approval from any agency of the City or County of Durham, including but not limited to, buildings or other structures, mining, dredging, filling, grading, paving, excavation or drilling operations and storage of materials.
Development Rights	The right to develop land by a land owner who maintains fee-simple ownership over the land or by a party other than the owner who has obtained the rights to develop. Such rights usually are expressed in terms of density allowed under existing zoning.
Division of Water Quality	A functional component of the North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources.
DNL	The average annual sound level, in decibels, computed on the basis of a 24-hour period with a 10-dB penalty for sound occurring between 10 p.m. and 7 a.m. to account for the greater intrusiveness of noise during late night or early morning hours.

Duplex	A detached building under single ownership, which is designed for occupation as the residence of two families living independently of each other.
Dwelling Unit	Rooms used for human habitation containing independent cooking, sleeping and toilet facilities; excluded are boarding houses, hotels, and dormitories.

E

Easement	A grant by a property owner for use by the public, a corporation or persons of an area of land for specific purposes.
Easement, Conservation	A tool for acquiring open space with less than full-fee purchase, whereby a public agency buys only certain specific rights from the land owner. These may be positive rights (providing the public with the opportunity to hunt, fish, hike, or ride over the land), or they may be restrictive rights (limiting the uses to which the land owner may devote the land in the future.)
Easement, Scenic	A tool that allows a public agency to use an owner's land for scenic enhancement, such as roadside landscaping or vista preservation.
Elderly Housing	Housing units intended for and solely occupied by persons 62 years of age or older or, an elderly family whose head or spouse is 62 years of age or older
Eminent Domain	The right of a public entity to acquire private property for public use by condemnation, and the payment of just compensation.
Endangered Species	A species of animal or plant is considered to be endangered when its prospects for survival and reproduction are in immediate jeopardy from one or more causes.
Environment	The physical conditions which exist within the area which will be affected by a proposed project, including land, air, water, mineral, flora, fauna, noise, and objects of historic or aesthetic significance."
Erosion	The wearing away of land surface by the action of wind, water, gravity or any combination thereof.
Exaction	A contribution or payment required as an authorized precondition for receiving a development permit; usually refers to mandatory dedication (or fee in lieu of dedication) requirements found in many subdivision regulations.

F

Family	One or more individuals residing in a dwelling unit, living as a single housekeeping unit, and complying with the following rules: (a) Any number of individuals related by blood, marriage, or adoption may occupy a dwelling unit. (b) Where some or all of the occupants are unrelated by blood, marriage, or adoption, the total number of occupants that are unrelated shall not exceed three. In applying this provision, children who are under the age of 23 and who are children of the owner or a person renting an entire dwelling unit from the owner, shall be counted as a single occupant. In addition, in all cases, the limitation set out in subsection (c) below shall apply. (c) The presence of household employees or children in foster care shall not disqualify any premises otherwise satisfying the above rules.
Fast-food Restaurant	Any retail establishment intended primarily to provide short-order food services for on-site dining and/or take-out, including self-serve restaurants (excluding cafeterias where food is consumed on the premises), drive-in restaurants, and formula restaurants required by contract or other arrangement to offer standardized menus, ingredients, and fast-food preparation.
Fixed-Guideway Transit	A transit system composed of buses, short trains or monorails that operate on a single, exclusive track or roadway. Fixed-guideway transit includes heavy rail, light rail, people movers, track guided buses, bus-ways (bus-only roads) and others.
Flood, 100-Year	The magnitude of a flood expected to occur on the average every 100 years, based on historical data. The 100-year flood has a 1/100, or one percent, chance of occurring in any given year.
Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM)	For each community, the official map on which the Federal Insurance Administration has delineated areas of special flood hazard and the risk premium zones applicable to that community.
Floodplain	The relatively level land area on either side of the banks of a stream regularly subject to flooding. That part of the floodplain subject to a one percent chance of flooding in any given year is designated as an "area of special flood hazard" by the Federal Insurance Administration.
Floodway	The area within the special flood hazard areas that has been identified on the Flood Boundary and Floodway Map, which area is the portion of a river or other watercourse and the adjacent land areas that must be reserved in order to discharge the base flood without cumulatively increasing the water surface elevation more than one foot.
Floodway Fringe	The area within the special flood hazard area that has been identified on the Flood Boundary and Floodway Map, which area is adjacent to, but not within the floodway and is within the 100 year floodplain and is inundated by the base flood.
Floor Area Ratio (FAR)	The ratio of building area to parcel area. Floor area ratio is a measure of nonresidential land use intensity.

Focus Areas	Communities or neighborhoods with adopted redevelopment or revitalization plans or publicly funded revitalization initiatives. Projects and programs in these areas are typically funded through the Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG), housing bonds issued by the City of Durham, tax credits allocated by the North Carolina Housing Finance Agency, bonds issued by the Durham Housing Authority and/or HOPE VI to achieve community revitalization goals.
Freeway	A multi-lane, controlled or limited access major road connecting this region, major activity centers or major roads with other regions, major activity centers or major roads. It is designed to accommodate large traffic volumes at high speeds. Such facilities may be part of the Interstate, Federal, or State primary highways system and are identified on the adopted thoroughfare plan.
Future Land Use Map (FLUM)	A map of the community, adopted as part of the Comprehensive Plan, showing desirable patterns of future land use in color and used to guide the location and character of new development.

G

Goal	A general, overall, and ultimate purpose, aim, or end toward which the City and County will direct effort.
Greenhouse Effect	A term used to describe the warming of the Earth’s atmosphere due to accumulated carbon dioxide and other gases in the upper atmosphere. These gases absorb energy radiated from the Earth’s surface, “trapping” it in the same manner as glass in a greenhouse traps heat.
Groundwater	Water under the earth’s surface, often confined to aquifers capable of supplying wells and springs.
Groundwater Recharge	The natural process of infiltration and percolation of rainwater from land areas or streams through permeable soils into water-holding rocks which provide underground storage (“aquifers”).
Group House	A dwelling operated under State regulations that provide room and board for more than 6 individuals who, as a result of age, illness, handicap or some specialized program, require personalized services or a supervised living arrangement in order to assure their safety and comfort. Additional requirements may be imposed by the North Carolina Building Code.
Growth Management	The use by a community of a wide range of techniques in combination to determine the amount, type, and rate of development desired by the community and to channel that growth into designated areas.

H

Habitat	The physical location or type of environment in which an organism or biological population lives or occurs.
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Hazardous Material	Any substance that, because of its quantity, concentration, or physical or chemical characteristics, poses a significant present or potential hazard to human health and safety or to the environment if released into the workplace or the environment. The term includes, but is not limited to, hazardous substances and hazardous wastes.
High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV)	Any vehicle other than a driver-only automobile (e.g., a vanpool, a bus, or two or more persons to a car).
Highway	A high-speed, high-capacity, limited-access transportation facility serving regional and county-wide travel. Highways may cross at a different grade level.
Historic Building or Site	A historic building or site is one which is noteworthy for its significance in local, state, or national history or culture, its architecture or design, or its works of art, memorabilia, or artifacts.
Historic Preservation	The preservation of historically significant structures and neighborhoods until such time as, and in order to facilitate, restoration and rehabilitation of the building(s) to a former condition.
Home Ownership Opportunities	Housing units designed, constructed, and/or marketed for direct sale to owner-occupants. Developments or housing units in this category shall include, but not be limited to, those funded by governmental entities and programs, non-profit corporations and groups, public or private lending institutions, and public housing agencies. "Sweat equity" programs are also included in this category.
Household	All those persons—related or unrelated—who occupy a single housing unit.
Housing Unit	The place of permanent or customary abode of a person or family. A housing unit may be a single-family dwelling, a multi-family dwelling, a condominium, a modular home, a mobile home, a cooperative, or any other residential unit considered real property under State law. A housing unit has, at least, cooking facilities, a bathroom, and a place to sleep.



Impact	The effect of any direct man-made actions or indirect repercussions of man-made actions on existing physical, social, or economic conditions.
Impact Fee	A fee levied on the developer of a project by a city, county, or other public agency as compensation for otherwise-unmitigated impacts the project will produce.
Implementation	Actions, procedures, programs, or techniques that carry out policies.
Industrial	The manufacture, production, and processing of consumer goods. Industrial is often divided into "heavy industrial" uses, such as construction yards, quarrying, and factories; and "light industrial" uses, such as research and development and less intensive warehousing and manufacturing.

Industry, Basic	The segment of economic activity that brings dollars to a region from other areas. Traditional examples are manufacturing, mining and agriculture. The products of all of these activities are exported (sold) to other regions. The money thus brought into the local economy is used to purchase locally provided goods and services as well as items that are not available locally and which must be imported from other regions. Other, less traditional examples of basic industry are tourism, higher education, and retirement activities that also bring new money into a region.
Industry, Non-basic	The segment of economic activity that is supported by the circulation of dollars within a region. Examples are the wholesale, retail, and service functions that supply goods and services to local sources of demand such as businesses, public agencies, and households.
Infill Development	Development of vacant land, usually individual lots or leftover properties, within areas that are already largely developed.
Infrastructure	Public services and facilities, such as sewage-disposal systems, water-supply systems, other utility systems, public safety facilities, libraries, schools, and roads.
Institutional Use	(1) Privately owned and operated activities which are institutional in nature, such as hospitals, museums, and schools; (2) churches and other religious institutions; and (3) other nonprofit activities of an education, youth, welfare, or philanthropic nature which can not be considered a residential, commercial, or industrial activity.
Issues	Important unsettled community matters or problems that are identified in a community's general plan and dealt with by the plan's goals, objectives, and policies.

J

K

L

Landmark	Refers to a building, site, object, or structure having historical, architectural, social, or cultural significance and marked for preservation by the local, state, or federal government.
Landscaping	Planting-including trees, shrubs, and ground covers-suitably designed, selected, installed, and maintained as to enhance a site or roadway permanently.
Land Use	The occupation or utilization of land or water area for any human activity or any purpose defined in a land use plan.

Level of Service (LOS)	In general, 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. A measure of capacity per unit of demand for a public service or facility. For purposes of the Durham school adequate facility policy, Level of Service shall mean the measure of the utilization, expressed as a percentage, which is the result of comparing the number of students enrolled in the school system at all schools of each type with the total building capacity of all schools of that type.
Low Impact Development (LID)	An ecologically-friendly approach to site development and stormwater management that aims to mitigate development impacts to land, water and air. LID aims to preserve open space and minimize land disturbance; protect drainage ways, vegetation, soils, and sensitive areas; re-examine the use and sizing of traditional site infrastructure and customize site design to each site; incorporate wetlands, stream corridors and mature forests as site design elements; and decentralize and micromanage stormwater at its source.
Low-Income Household	A household earning 80 percent or less of the median household income for Durham County.
Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Program (LIHTC)	The Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC or Tax Credit) program was created by the Tax Reform Act of 1986 as an alternate method of funding housing for low- and moderate-income households. In 2003, each state receives a tax credit of \$1.75 per person that can be allocated towards funding housing that meets program guidelines. The program was recently changed to allow the, the allocation to be adjusted for inflation. Tax credits are used to leverage private capital into new construction or acquisition and rehabilitation of affordable housing. LIHTC in North Carolina is administered by NCHFA.

M

Manufactured Home	A residential unit that is not constructed in accordance with the standards set forth in the North Carolina State Building Code and is composed of one or more components, each of which was substantially assembled in a manufacturing plant and designed to be transported to a site on its own chassis.
Maximum Building Capacity	The level of service that may be permitted in the Durham Public School System, or 120 percent of total building capacity.
Million Gallons per Day (MGD)	A unit of measurement for use and treatment of water and wastewater.
Million Solar Roofs Initiative	The Million Solar Roof Initiative (MSRI) is a US Dept. of Energy effort to facilitate the installation of solar energy systems on one million US buildings by 2010. The MSRI involves soliciting voluntary participation by state and local governments and groups; developing a pool of existing federal lending and financing options; leveraging other financial support and incentives, both current and proposed; and accelerating the use of solar energy systems on Federal buildings. See web site: www.millionsolarroofs.com

Moderate-Income Household	A household with an annual income between the lower income eligibility limits and 120 percent of the area median family income adjusted by household size.
Modular Unit	A factory-fabricated, transportable building of dwelling in compliance with the North Carolina Building Code, that is designed to be used by itself or to be incorporated with other units into a structure that will be a finished building on a permanent location on a permanent foundation.

N

National Register of Historic Places	The official list, established by the National Historic Preservation Act, of sites, districts, buildings, structures, and objects significant in the nation’s history or whose artistic or architectural value is unique.
Neighborhood Service Node	A commercial development that provides for the sale of convenience goods (food, drugs, and sundries) and personal services (those that meet the daily needs of an immediate neighborhood trade area) A supermarket that combines grocery shopping with a pharmacy and other convenience goods and service is the principle tenant in most neighborhood centers. The size of a typical neighborhood shopping center can range from about 30,000 to 100,000 gross leasable area on a site of 3 to 10 acres.
Non-Attainment	The condition of not achieving a desired or required level of performance. Frequently used in reference to air quality.
Non-Conforming Use	A use which was valid when brought into existence, but by subsequent regulation becomes no longer conforming. “Non-conforming use” is a generic term and includes (1) non-conforming structures (by virtue of size, type of construction, location on land, or proximity to other structures), (2) nonconforming use of a conforming building, (3) non-conforming use of a non-conforming building, and (4) non-conforming use of land.

O

Objective	A specific statement of desired future condition toward which the local government will expend effort in the context of striving to achieve a broader goal. An objective should be achievable and, where possible, should be measurable and time-specific
Office Use	The use of land by general business offices, medical and professional offices, administrative or headquarters offices for large wholesaling or manufacturing operations, and research and development.
Open Space	Areas of a development that allow for light, air, wildlife habitat, and for scenic and recreational use. Also included are areas designed to enhance the privacy or general appearance of a development. Private open space is open space that is owned by a corporation, individual, or house owners association. Public open space is open spaced owned by a governmental jurisdiction.
Overlay	A zoning designation on a zoning map that modifies the basic underlying designation in some specific manner.

Ozone A tri-atomic form of oxygen (O₃) created naturally in the upper atmosphere by a photochemical reaction with solar ultraviolet radiation. In the lower atmosphere, ozone is a recognized air pollutant that is not emitted directly into the environment, but is formed by complex chemical reactions between oxides of nitrogen and reactive organic compounds in the presence of sunlight, and becomes a major agent in the formation of smog.

P

Parking, Shared A public or private parking area used jointly by two or more uses.

Parking Management An evolving TDM technique designed to obtain maximum utilization from a limited number of parking spaces. Can involve pricing and preferential treatment for high occupancy vehicles (HOVs), non-peak period users, and short-term users.

Parking Ratio The number of parking spaces provided per 1,000 square of floor area.

Parks Open space lands whose primary purpose is recreation.

Park Strip A piece of land located between the rear of a curb and the front of a sidewalk, usually used for planting low ground cover and/or street trees, also known as “planter strip.”

Pedestrian-Oriented Development A development that is designed to facilitate walking, with walkways connecting the development to the surrounding neighborhood, interior walkways connecting buildings, and pedestrian amenities (such as benches, landscaping, street furniture, etc.).

Performance Standards Zoning regulations that permit uses based on a particular set of standards of operation rather than on particular type of use. Performance standards provide specific criteria limiting noise, air pollution, emissions, odors, vibration, dust, dirt, glare, heat, fire hazards, wastes, traffic impacts, and visual impact of a use.

Planned Unit Development (PUD) A description of a proposed unified development, consisting at a minimum of a map and adopted ordinance setting forth the regulations governing, and the location and phasing of all proposed uses and improvements to be included in the development.

Planning Commission A body consisting of fourteen members, created by the City Council and County Board of Commissioners in compliance with State statutes, which advises both governing bodies about matters related to planning.

Policy A specific statement of principle or of guiding actions which implies clear commitment but is not mandatory. A general direction that a governmental agency sets to follow, in order to meet its goals and objectives before undertaking an action program. (See “Program.”)

Pollution, Non-Point Sources for pollution that are difficult to define and usually cover broad areas of land, such as agricultural land with fertilizers which are carried from the land by runoff, or automobiles.

Pollution, Point 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.

Program	An action, activity, or strategy carried out in response to adopted policy to achieve a specific goal or objective. Policies and programs establish the “who,” “how” and “when” for carrying out the “what” and “where” of goals and objectives with new development to the users of the infrastructure on the basis of projected use.
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Q

R

Recreation, Active	Leisure activities usually of an organized nature, often performed with others and often requiring equipment, taking place at prescribed places, sites, or fields.
Recreation, Passive	Recreational activities that do not require a developed site. This includes such activities as hiking, horseback riding, and picnicking.
Recycle	The process of extraction and re-use of materials from waste products.
Redevelop	To demolish existing buildings; or to increase the overall floor area existing on a property; or both; irrespective of whether a change occurs in land use.
Regional	Pertaining to activities or economies at a scale greater than that of a single jurisdiction, and affecting a broad homogeneous area.
Regional Park	A park, typically 150-500 acres in size, focusing on activities and natural features not included in most other types of parks and often based on a specific scenic or recreational opportunity.
Regional Service Node	A commercial development that contains one or two full-line department stores and occupies 300,000 to 900,000 gross leasable area. The usual site size is 10 to 60 acres. The typical regional shopping center has a larger market area smaller than a community shopping center.
Rental Housing	Developments or housing units designed, constructed, and marketed for tenant (renter) occupancy. Developments or housing units in this category shall include, but not be limited to, those funded by governmental entities and programs, non-profit corporations and groups, public or private lending institutions, and public housing agencies.
Residential	Land designated for buildings consisting only of dwelling units.
Residential Development	Any development that is comprised in whole or in part of dwelling units designed for long-term human habitation.
Residential, Multiple Family	Usually three or more dwelling units on a single site, which may be in the same or separate buildings.
Residential, Single-family	A single dwelling unit on a building site.
Rezoning	An amendment to the map and/or text of a zoning ordinance to effect a change in the nature, density, or intensity of uses allowed in a zoning district and/or on a designated parcel or land area.
Rideshare	A travel mode other than driving alone, such as buses, rail transit, carpools, and vanpools.

Ridgeline	A line connecting the highest points along a ridge and separating drainage basins or small-scale drainage systems from one another.
Right-of-way	A strip of land acquired by reservation, dedication, prescription or condemnation and intended to be occupied by a street, trail, or public utility.
Runoff	Water from precipitation that flows off a property.
Rural Village	A location in the Rural Tier that is appropriate for a small-scale concentration of retail and commercial land uses and community services.

S

Sanitary Sewer	A system of subterranean conduits which carries refuse liquids or waste matter to a plant where the sewage is treated.
School Type	Schools in the same categories of education, i.e., elementary (grades K-5), middle schools (grades 6-9), and high schools (grades 9-12).
Section 8 Existing Rental Assistance	A Federal program that provides direct rental assistance in the form of vouchers or certificates to low-income families who are unable to afford market-rate rents.
Septic System	A sewage-treatment system that includes a settling tank through which liquid sewage flows and in which solid sewage settles and is decomposed by bacteria in the absence of oxygen. Septic systems are often used for individual-home waste disposal where an urban sewer system is not available.
Setback	The minimum distance between a property line and a building or structure.
Shopping Center	A group of retail businesses developed under a uniform development scheme and served by common off-street parking.
Sign	Any words, lettering, parts of letters, figures, numerals, phrases, sentences, emblems, devices, structures, designs, trade names, or trade marks by which anything is made know such as are used to designate an individual, a firm, an association, a corporation, a profession, a business, or a commodity or produces, which are legible from any public street or adjacent property and used to attract attention. This definition includes a structure or the face on which a sign message is displayed. This definition shall not include "trade dress," i.e., architectural features identified with a product or business, as s sign.
Single-Family	A house designed for, or occupied exclusively by, one family. Not to include manufactured housing.
Site	A parcel of land used or intended for one use or a group of uses and having frontage on a public or an approved private street. A lot. (See "Lot.")
Slope	Land gradient described as the vertical rise divided by the horizontal run, and expressed in percent.
Smart Growth	Land use and transportation planning and design that emphasizes compact, walkable urban centers and promotes transit-oriented, walkable and bicycle-friendly urban design.

Solid Waste	General category that includes organic wastes, paper products, metals, glass, plastics, cloth, brick, rock, soil, leather, rubber, yard wastes, and wood.
Special Flood Hazard Area	Land in the floodplain subject to a one percent or greater chance of being flooded in any given year based on current conditions hydrology.
Special Needs Housing	Shelter for persons with physical and mental disabilities, such as severe mental illness, developmental disabilities, alcohol and drug addiction, physical disabilities, HIV/AIDS, or the frail elderly. This type of housing may include single-family homes, apartments for independent living, shared apartment living, single room occupancy (SRO) housing, group homes, and transitional housing.
Standards	A rule or measure establishing a level of quality or quantity that must be complied with or satisfied. Requirements in a zoning ordinance that govern building and development as distinguished from use restrictions. For example, site-design regulations such as lot area, height limit, frontage, landscaping, and floor area ratio.
Station Area Plans	Plans to direct growth and redevelopment for each designated regional transit station that enhance each area's characteristics, reflect the area's focus, and foster distinctive and attractive places.
Storm Water Runoff	Surplus surface water generated by rainfall that does not seep into the earth but flows overland to flowing or stagnant bodies of water.
Strip Commercial	Characterized as linear in arrangement, but associated with it are high volume traffic generating uses, separate vehicular entrances and exits for each use on the street, no defined pedestrian path, space onsite for parking and loading activities, and a cluttered appearance from an abundance of signs.
Strip Development	A development pattern characterized by a series of commercial or residential land uses generally one lot deep along a road or highway, with each use usually requiring a separate access road. Or a string of houses and/or businesses, each with direct access to the roadway.
Student Generation Multipliers	The calculation of the number of students anticipated to be generated by various types of residential development. Separate multipliers should be employed for each type of school.
Subdivisions	All divisions of a tract or parcel of land into two or more lots, building sites, or other divisions for the purpose of sale or building development (whether immediate or future) or any division of land involving the dedication of a new street or a change in existing streets.
Subsidized Housing	Any housing development(s) or housing unit(s) intended to provide shelter for low-income households, the elderly and/or other special needs populations, that is funded wholly or in part by HUD, the North Carolina Housing Finance Agency (NCHFA), Durham County, the City of Durham or the Durham Housing Authority (DHA). The source of funding, for purposes of this policy, can include grants, loans, tax credits or tax exempt bonds.

Suburban Transit Support Area

A location in the Suburban Tier that lies along a possible future regional transit line and is appropriate for moderately high density development in a transit-supportive design.

T

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

Assistance and work opportunities provided by the United States Department of Health and Human Services to needy families by granting states federal funds and wide flexibility to develop and implement their own welfare programs. This program replaces the former Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) and Job Opportunities and Basic Skills Training (JOBS) programs, ending the federal entitlement to assistance.

Total Building Capacity

The sum of all building capacities of all schools of each type within the Durham Public School System.

Townhouse

A one-family dwelling in a row of at least three such units in which each unit has its own front and rear access to the outside, no unit is located over another unit, and each unit is separated from any other unit by one or more common and fire-resistant walls.

Traffic Model

A mathematical representation of traffic movement within an area or region based on observed relationships between the kind and intensity of development in specific areas. Many traffic models operate on the theory that trips are produced by persons living in residential areas and are attracted by various non-residential land uses.

Transfer of Development Rights (TDR)

A program which can relocate potential development from areas where proposed land use or environmental impacts are considered undesirable (the “donor” site) to another (“receiver”) site chosen on the basis of its ability to accommodate additional units of development beyond that for which it was zoned, with minimal environmental, social, and aesthetic impacts.

Transit-Oriented Development

Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) refers development with higher density, mixed-use development that is located in or around transit facilities (train stations, bus stations, etc.). Typically, a TOD neighborhood has a center with a rail or bus station, surrounded by relatively high-density development, with progressively lower-density spreading outwards.

Transit, Public

A system of regularly-scheduled buses and/or trains available to the public on a fee-per ride basis. Also called “Mass Transit.”

Transitional Housing

Temporary housing provided for homeless individuals or families.

Transportation Demand Management (TDM)

A strategy for reducing demand on the road system by reducing the number of vehicles using the roadways and/or increasing the number of persons per vehicle. TDM attempts to reduce the number of persons who drive alone on the roadway during the commute period and to increase the number in carpools, vanpools, buses and trains, walking, and biking TDM can be an element of TSM.

Transportation Systems Management (TSM)

A comprehensive strategy developed to address the problems caused by additional development, increasing trips, and a shortfall in transportation capacity. Transportation Systems Management focuses on more efficiently utilizing existing highway and transit systems rather than expanding them. TSM measures are characterized by their low cost and quick implementation time frame, such as computerized traffic signals, metered freeway ramps, and one-way streets.

Trees, Street

Trees strategically planted—usually in parkway strips, medians, or along streets—to enhance the visual quality of a street.

Trip Generation

The dynamics that account for people making trips in automobiles or by means of public transportation. Trip generation is the basis for estimating the level of use for a transportation system and the impact of additional development or transportation facilities on an existing, local transportation system.

U

Urban Design

The attempt to give form, in terms of both beauty and function, to selected urban areas or to whole cities. Urban design is concerned with the location, mass, and design of various urban components and combines elements of urban planning, architecture, and landscape architecture.

Urban Growth Area

Those portions of Durham, Orange, and Wake Counties indicated in the Comprehensive Plan which are expected to receive urban services and to develop an urban character over the next 20 to 30 years and are not within the Rural Tier.

Urban Sprawl

Suburban development or uses which are located in predominantly rural areas, or rural areas interspersed with generally low-intensity or low density suburban uses, characterized by one or more of the following conditions: (a) the premature or poorly planned conversion of rural lands to other uses; (b) the creation of suburban development or uses that are not functionally related to land uses that predominate the adjacent area; or (c) the creation of areas of suburban development or uses that fail to maximize the use of existing or planned public facilities.

Use

The purpose for which a building, structure, or area of land may be arranged or occupied or the activity conducted or proposed in a building, structure, or on an area of land.

V

Vacant

Lands or buildings that are not actively used for any purpose.

Vehicle-Miles Traveled (VMT)

A key measure of overall street and highway use. Reducing vehicle miles traveled is often a major objective in efforts to reduce vehicular congestion and achieve regional air quality goals.

Very Low-income Household

A household with an annual income usually no greater than 50 percent of the area median family income adjusted by household size.

Volume-to-Capacity Ratio (V/C) A measure of the operating capacity of a roadway or intersection, in terms of the number of vehicles passing through, divided by the number of vehicles that theoretically could pass through when the roadway or intersection is operating at its designed capacity.

W

Warehousing Use A use engaged in storage, wholesale, and distribution of manufactured products, supplies, and equipment, excluding bulk storage of materials which are inflammable or explosive or which present hazards or conditions commonly recognized as offensive.

Watercourse Natural or once natural flowing (perennially or intermittently) water including rivers, streams, and creeks. Includes natural waterways that have been channelized, but does not include manmade channels, ditches, and underground drainage and sewage systems.

Watershed All of the land area draining to a particular point on a water course or to a water body.

Wetland An area that is inundated or saturated by surface water or ground water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and under normal circumstances does support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions, commonly as hydrophytic vegetation, as defined by responsible State or Federal agencies.

Working Lands An identified parcel of land actively devoted to agriculture and/or forestry.

X

Y

Z

Zero Lot Line A detached dwelling unit positioned on one property line without any setback.

Zone, Overlay A special purpose zone, which is superimposed over the regular zoning map. Overlay zones are used for a variety of purposes, such as airport compatibility, floodplain or wetlands protection, historic designation, or special parking regulations.

Zoning The division of a city or county by legislative regulations into areas, or zones, which specify allowable uses for real property and size restrictions for buildings within these areas; a program that implements policies of the Comprehensive Plan.

Zoning District A designated section of the city or county for which prescribed land use requirements and building and development standards are uniform.

Zoning, Exclusionary Development regulations that result in the exclusion of low- and moderate income and/or minority families from a community.

Zoning, Incentive

The awarding of bonus credits to a development in the form of allowing more intensive use of land if public benefits-such as preservation of greater than the minimum required open space, provision for low- and moderate-income housing, or plans for public plazas and courts at ground level-are included in a project.

Zoning, Inclusionary

Regulations that increase housing choice by providing the opportunity to construct more diverse and economical housing to meet the needs of low- and moderate-income families. Often such regulations require a minimum percentage of housing for low- and moderate-income households in new housing developments and in conversions of apartments to condominiums.

Planning Acronyms

APF	Adequate public facilities
BMP.....	Best management practices
BOA	Board of Adjustment
CAMPO.....	Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization
CBD	Central business district
CDBG	Community Development Block Grant
DATA	Durham Area Transit Authority
dB.....	Decibels
DCHC MPO	Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization
DOST	Durham Open Space and Trails Commission
DU	Dwelling unit
DWQ.....	Division of Water Quality
EMC.....	Environmental Management Commission
FAR.....	Floor area ratio
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FIRM.....	Flood Insurance Rate Map
FLUM.....	Future Land Use Map
FTA	Federal Transit Authority
gpdc	gallons per capita per day (raw water demand)
GMI	Gross monthly income
HOV.....	High occupancy vehicle
HUD.....	US Department of Housing and Urban Development
JCCPC	Joint City-County Planning Committee
LOS	Level of service
MGD	Million gallons per day
MPH	Miles per hour
MSRI.....	Million Solar Roofs Initiative
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NCDOT	North Carolina Department of Transportation
OWASA.....	Orange Water and Sewer Authority
PUD	Planned unit development
PDR.....	Planned density residential
ROW	Right-of-way
SEPA	State Environmental Policy Act
SFHA	Special Flood Hazard Area

SRO.....	Single room occupancy
STSA	Suburban Transit Support Area
TAC.....	Transportation Advisory Commission
TAZ.....	Traffic analysis zone
TCC.....	Technical Coordinating Committee
TEA 21	Transportation Enhancement Act for the 21 st Century
TIA.....	Traffic impact analysis
TIP	Transportation Improvement Program
TDM	Travel demand management
TDR.....	Transfer of development rights
TSM.....	Transportation system management
TTA.....	Triangle Transit Authority
UGA.....	Urban growth area
UDO.....	Unified development ordinance
USDOT.....	United States Department of Transportation
VMT.....	Vehicle miles traveled
VOCs.....	Volatile organic compounds
WRF.....	Water Reclamation Facility (or wastewater treatment plant)

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