

Glossary

GLOSSARY

The glossary provides definitions of words and terms that are used in a particular way in the Comprehensive Plan. Some terms may also be defined by the Land Use Code or other regulations. Where definitions are provided in the Land Use Code, the Land Use Code definitions take precedence for the purpose of the Code's application. All definitions for the Shoreline Management Element are listed at the end of the glossary.

GENERAL TERMS

Accessory Dwelling Unit — A subordinate dwelling unit attached or detached to a single-family structure, duplex, triplex, townhome or other housing unit.

Active (Nonmotorized) Transportation — Personal mobility that includes fully human-powered mobility options such as walking and bicycling, and may include electric bicycles, scooters and other similarly-powered personal mobility devices.

Affordable Housing — Housing that is reserved for a household that earns up to 80 percent of the area median income, adjusted for household size; to be considered "affordable," the monthly housing costs, including utilities other than telephone, must not exceed thirty percent of the household's income. See: Extremely Low-Income Housing, Very Low-Income Housing, Low-Income Housing and Moderate-Income Housing.

Area Median Income — The annual household income for the Seattle-Bellevue Metropolitan Area as published on an annual basis by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

A Regional Coalition for Housing (ARCH) — A public interlocal agency whose members include Bellevue, King County and other cities in east King County, formed to preserve and increase the supply of housing for extremely low-, very low-, low- and moderate-income households on the Eastside.

Behavioral Health — Generally refers to mental health and substance use disorders, life stressors and crises and stress-related physical symptoms. Behavioral health care refers to the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of those conditions.

Best Available Science (BAS) — Current scientific information used in the process to designate, protect or restore critical areas, that is derived from a valid scientific process as defined by WAC 365-195-900 through 925, now or as hereafter amended.

Bicycle Facility — An improvement that accommodates or encourages riding a bicycle. Some examples include bicycle parking and various types of on-street bicycle lanes and off-street multipurpose paths.

Bicycle Route — A route specifically designed and designated for bicycle travel, whether exclusively for bicyclists or to be shared with other transportation modes. Refer to the Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan for the various types of bicycle facilities that may be employed to create a bicycle route.

Bicycle System Plan Map — A map in the Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan, that depicts the plan for a complete and connected network of bicycle routes serving the entire community that is compatible with and connected to regional and interjurisdictional facilities.

Bioengineering — The use of living plants in combination with non-living plants and inorganic materials in the reconstruction, stabilization and introduction of morphological and vegetative features particularly in streams or along shorelines.

Biophilic Design — Design approach that promotes connection between humans and nature within the built environment.

Capital Investment Program (CIP) Plan — Bellevue’s six-year financing and implementation plan for capital projects.

Capital Project/Improvement — Major construction, acquisition or renovation activities that add value to a government’s fixed assets or which significantly increase the useful life of such assets.

Circular Economy — A model of resource production and consumption in which products and materials are kept in circulation for as long as possible through sharing, leasing, reuse, repair, refurbishment and recycling (including composting). A circular economy is one in which businesses and institutions are able to capture value, including cost savings, at multiple points within this continued circulation.

Clustering (Development) — A development design technique that places buildings on the part of a site that is least sensitive to impacts from development while preserving the natural features and functions on the remainder of the site.

Collector Arterial — A street that is two or three lanes that collects (or distributes) traffic from (or to) local streets within a neighborhood and provides connections to minor or major arterials. Collector arterials serve neighborhood traffic and also provide access to abutting land uses. They do not carry much through traffic and are designated to be compatible with residential neighborhoods and local commercial areas.

Commute Trip — A trip taken on any mode of travel by a worker from a worker’s home to a worksite with a regularly scheduled arrival time of 6:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. inclusive on weekdays.

Commute Trip Reduction Act — State legislation enacted in 1991 and incorporated into the Washington Clean Air Act. The law establishes goals for the reduction of commute trip vehicle miles by the employees of large employers.

Complete Street — An arterial street that provides context-appropriate facilities for people of all abilities to travel using their choice of mode, including vehicles, active transportation modes and transit, while promoting safe operation for all users.

Comprehensive Plan — The city’s long range plan prepared following the requirements of the Washington Growth Management Act, containing policies to guide local actions regarding land use, transportation, housing, capital facilities and economic development in ways that will accommodate at least the adopted 20-year targets for housing and employment growth.

Consolidated Plan — Consolidated Housing and Community Development Plans. Document that reviews current and future trends taking place in the community regarding housing and human services and outlines strategies to address needs.

Countywide Centers — Geographic areas identified by King County as areas of focus for transportation funds. The requirements for these centers are outlined in the King County Countywide Planning Policies. The Countywide Centers in Bellevue are in BelRed, Crossroads, Eastgate, Factoria and Wilburton and East Main. The boundaries differ from Neighborhood Areas by the same name and can be found in [Map LU-3](#).

Countywide Planning Policies — The countywide growth management policy plan required by the state Growth Management Act that promotes regional cooperation and specifies the roles and responsibilities of cities and the county. The King County Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs) are developed by the Growth Management Planning Council, a council of representatives of cities and King County, consistent with the Regional Growth Strategy of the Puget Sound Regional Council.

Critical Areas — Areas required to be protected under the Growth Management Act, RCW 36.70A, including the following areas and ecosystems: (a) wetlands; (b) areas with a critical recharging effect on aquifers used for potable water; (c) fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas; (d) frequently flooded areas; and (e) geologically hazardous areas. (See Bellevue’s Land Use Code for current regulatory definition.)

Critical Area Functions and Values — Critical areas provide ecological functions that include biochemical, hydrological and food web and habitat processes at a variety of temporal and spatial scales. The economic or social roles provided by critical areas are also functions. Values are societal perceptions regarding the benefits provided by critical areas.

Critical Areas Overlay District — An area that includes designated critical areas together with adjacent land, within which special provisions apply to protect and restore the natural environment. The Critical Area Overlay District is comprised of the critical area and an area adjacent to the critical area that acts as a buffer or setback to protect the critical area.

Cultural Competence — A set of congruent behaviors, attitudes and policies that come together in a system or agency that enable effective interactions in a cross-cultural framework.

Cultural Landscape — Elements of history and conservation that include architecture and physical cultural resources as well as locations and practices with meaning to specific native or immigrant cultures.

Culturally Modified Tree — A tree that has been modified by native people as a sign post or modified to support native technologies and cultural practices.

Daylighting (stream) — An action to excavate and restore a piped stream channel to an open (non-piped) natural condition.

Development — All structures and other modifications of the natural landscape above or below ground or water. Please note that a different definition of “Development” exists for implementation of the provisions of the Shoreline Management Act within the Shoreline Overlay District.

Developed Environment — Artificially created fixed elements, such as buildings, structures and surfaces, that together create the physical character of the area.

Disability — Disability, according to the social model, is a condition that arises when the physical, sensory, cognitive or psychological differences of an individual interact with societal structures, norms and environments that are not designed for their inclusion or success. It emphasizes that disability is not solely a consequence of a person’s condition. It is shaped by individuals and systems that place value on people’s bodies and minds based on societally constructed ideas of normalcy, intelligence and excellence and is also shaped by the extent to which society removes or constructs barriers, promotes or denies inclusion and fosters or denies equal opportunities for those with disabilities.

Disparity — A situation in which one group is systematically faring worse than another for reasons that are not due to the group’s needs, eligibility or preferences.

District Energy — District energy systems heat and/or cool multiple buildings using thermal energy produced by a central source (or sources), typically using hot and/or chilled water, which then flows through a network of insulated pipes to provide hot water, space heating, and/or air conditioning to connected buildings.

Diversity — People of all cultures, languages, classes, races, ethnic backgrounds, disabilities, ages, religions, genders, sexual orientations and other diversity-related factors. At the root of this definition is an acknowledgement that differences exist between any two people.

Downtown — Bellevue’s primary center of retail, commercial and service activities as well as for high-density, residential development. Downtown Bellevue is designated a Regional Growth Center in VISION 2050 and an Urban Center in the Countywide Planning Policies.

Eastside — A geographic area that includes the King County communities east of Lake Washington.

Eastrail — The former Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) rail corridor in King County between Renton and Woodinville. The corridor is owned by multiple agencies and jurisdictions for multiple regional purposes including recreation, transportation and utilities infrastructure.

Economic Cluster — Clusters are geographic concentrations of interconnected companies and institutions in a particular field. Clusters allow firms to benefit as if they had greater scale or as if they had joined with others without sacrificing flexibility.

Ecosystem — The interacting and dynamic community of living organisms and the physical environment in a defined geographic area.

Embodied Carbon — The greenhouse gas emissions associated with all stages of a product’s life, including extraction, production, transport, installation, maintenance and disposal.

Emergency Housing — Indoor accommodation for individuals or families who are homeless or at imminent risk of becoming homeless that is intended to address their basic health, food, clothing and personal hygiene needs.

Environmentally Sensitive Design — Environmentally sensitive design helps to balance community needs, budgetary limitations and natural ecosystems functions. Solutions seek to avoid and/or minimize impacts to the environment, while simultaneously enhancing the quality of human life.

Environmental Racism — Racial discrimination in environmental policy-making and enforcement of regulations and laws, the deliberate targeting of communities of color for toxic waste facilities, the official sanctioning of the presence of life threatening poisons and pollutants for communities of color and the history of excluding people of color from leadership of the environmental movement.

Environmental Stewardship — The responsible use and protection of the natural environment through conservation and sustainable practices.

Equipment Support Facility — A support facility is a freestanding structure, other than a building, specifically designed and constructed to support a wireless communication antenna array.

Equity — Equity means that a person’s identity (White, female, disabled, etc.) does not predict personal and social outcomes like income or health. Equitable outcomes are outcomes that are not related to a person’s identity.

Equity Lens — Looking at positive and negative outcomes from a program, activity or policy and analyzing whether different groups experience outcomes differently regardless of intent.

Essential Public Facility (EPF) — Any facility meeting the definition of Essential Public Facility set forth in RCW 36.70A.200(1), now or as hereafter amended, any facility identified on the statewide list maintained by the Office of Financial Management as required pursuant to RCW 36.70A.200(4), now or as hereafter amended, and any facility identified on the countywide list of essential public facilities.

Extremely Low-income Housing — Housing that is affordable to a household that earns less than 30 percent of the area median income, adjusted for household size. (See also [Low-income Housing](#) and [Very Low-income Housing](#)).

Fair Housing Act — The act that prohibits discrimination by housing providers based on race or color, religion, sex, national origin, familial status or disability in 42 U.S.C. 3601.

Faith-based Organization — An organization that meets the federally protected practice of a recognized religious assembly, school or institution that owns or controls real property including land and permanent and temporary buildings.

Fish Passage Barrier — An artificial structure in a stream channel such as a culvert or a dam, or a natural feature such as a waterfall, that precludes the upstream or downstream movement of fish.

Floodplain — The land area susceptible to being inundated by a flood having a 1 percent chance of occurring in any given year, also referred to as a 100-year floodplain and frequently flooded areas.

Floor Area Ratio (FAR) — The gross floor area of all buildings on a lot divided by the lot area, expressed most often as a decimal. For example, 0.50 indicates that the floor area of a building equals 50 percent of the total lot area. (See Bellevue's Land Use Code for the regulatory use of FAR, which excludes some specific areas.)

Frequent Transit Network (FTN) — Bus and light rail that serves a stop or station at least every 15 minutes between 6am and 6pm.

Geologically Hazardous Areas — See ["Critical Areas."](#)

Grand Connection — A corridor that is primarily intended for active transportation use between Meydenbauer Bay Park and Eastrail. It is located along segments of Main Street, 102nd Avenue NE, through the Downtown Park, on Bellevue Way NE, and in the alignment of NE 6th Street between Bellevue Way NE and 112th Avenue NE in the Downtown and extending to Eastrail. Within Downtown and Wilburton, pedestrian-oriented frontages, plazas, street arcades, and other amenities are to be located along the corridor. (See [Map PA-3](#)).

Green Building — A general term that encompasses a wide range of innovative building construction and site development techniques that are intended to reduce adverse environmental impacts and improve long-term sustainability relative to traditional construction.

Green Building Certification — A set of standards that establish that a building is constructed and operated in a way that benefits the natural environment.

Green Infrastructure — The natural systems, including streams, wetlands, trees, soil and other environmental features that help a city function environmentally. Engineered stormwater management solutions can be considered green infrastructure when they mimic natural systems and provide multiple benefits such as aesthetic improvements, recreational space and/or natural habitat in addition to flow control and water quality treatment.

Greenway — An open space connector linking parks, natural reserves, cultural features, or historic sites with each other and with populated areas. A greenway may be established along a natural corridor such as stream or ridgeline, on undeveloped land through neighborhoods, overland along a railroad right-of-way, scenic road or other route, or any other course for pedestrian or bicycle passage.

Grid Harmonization — Building systems that are responsive to energy grid capacity and stability, using a variety of technologies and design approaches such as reducing energy demand through efficiency, on-site electricity generation and storage and two-way metering that allows real-time electricity demand management amongst multiple buildings (load shedding and shifting).

Growth Management Act (GMA) — State legislation (RCW 36.70A) enacted in 1990, and later amended, requiring counties and cities to create cooperative regional strategies to manage growth and to adopt local comprehensive plans and regulations to implement these strategies.

Habitat — The environment in which a population or individual lives and includes not only the place where a species is found but also the particular characteristics of the place that make it well suited to meet the life cycle needs of that species.

High-capacity Transit (HCT) — Various types of transit systems that operate on a fixed guideway, dedicated right-of-way or freeway/express facility, designed to carry a large number of riders at higher speeds and with fewer stops than conventional transit. HCT may include a mix of commuter rail, light rail, express bus services and facilities and/or other high capacity transit technologies, plus other associated transit improvements that tie local/regional transit services to each other and to other travel modes.

Highrise Building — See illustrations in the Future Land Use Map Key.

High-occupancy Vehicle (HOV) — A vehicle containing two or more occupants including carpools, vanpools and transit vehicles.

High-occupancy Toll (HOT) — Use of electronic tolling and variable pricing to manage demand in lanes reserved for high-occupancy vehicles that access these lanes for free and single-occupant vehicles that pay a toll.

Historically Marginalized Communities — see [Marginalized Communities](#).

Historically Underserved Communities — see [Underserved Communities](#).

Homelessness — Broadly speaking, homelessness is the situation of an individual, family or community that lacks stable, safe, permanent, appropriate housing, or the immediate means and ability of acquiring it.

Housing for Unique Needs — Housing that meets the needs of populations with specialized requirements such as senior housing or housing for people with disabilities.

Hydrology — Scientific study of the properties, distribution and effects of water on the Earth's surface, in the soil and underlying rocks and in the atmosphere.

Impervious Surface — A hard surface that prevents or slows the infiltration of water into the soil.

Incentives (Non-Regulatory) — Provisions offered by the city to encourage a private property owner to conduct voluntary improvement projects.

Incentives (Regulatory) — Regulatory relief or options offered by the city to reduce the adverse economic impact to a property owner from complying with regulations intended to protect the functions and values of critical areas.

Infill — Sites within developed areas that have been bypassed and now can be “filled in.”

In-kind Mitigation — A replacement of the lost functions and values of critical areas with characteristics and functions that closely approximate those adversely impacted by development or redevelopment.

Integrated Design Process — A collaborative method for designing buildings which emphasizes the development of a holistic design. Integrated design processes require multidisciplinary collaboration, including key stakeholders and design professionals, from conception to completion and involve a “whole building design” approach in which a building is viewed as an interdependent system, as opposed to an accumulation of its separate components (site, structure, systems and use). The goal of looking at all the systems together to is make sure they work in harmony rather than in conflict with each other. Projects utilizing an integrated design process approach undertake systems analysis during early design phases and integrated design workshop(s) at multiple stages of the project’s development.

Invasive Weed — Plant species that become easily established in disturbed conditions that reproduce readily and that often take over a site to the exclusion of indigenous species.

Level of Service (LOS) — A term used to denote the operating conditions or performance of a mode of travel.

LGBTQIA2S+ — Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning, Intersex, Asexual and Two-Spirit (Indigenous people who express their gender or sexual identities as different from others). The plus at the end is inclusive of people who use other terms to express their unique gender identity, gender expression or sexual orientation.

Life Cycle Cost Analysis — A tool to determine the most cost-effective option among different competing alternatives to purchase, own, operate, maintain and, finally, dispose of an object or process, when each is equally appropriate to be implemented on technical grounds.

Local Street — A street designed primarily to provide vehicle and active transportation access to abutting land uses and to carry local traffic to/from collector arterials. This classification includes both local and neighborhood collector streets as described in the City’s Development Standards.

Low Impact Development — A stormwater and land use management strategy that strives to mimic pre-disturbance hydrologic processes of infiltration, filtration, storage, evaporation and transpiration by emphasizing conservation, use of on-site natural features, site planning and distributed stormwater management practices that are integrated into a project design.

Low-income Housing — Housing that is affordable to a household that earns between 50 and 80 percent of the area median income, adjusted for household size. (see also [Extremely Low-income Housing](#) and [Very Low-income Housing](#)).

Lowrise Building — See illustrations in the Future Land Use Map Key.

Major Arterial — A street that provides a direct route for long-distance vehicles and active transportation travel within the city and often with connections to neighboring jurisdictions. Streets that connect freeway interchanges to major concentrations of commercial activities are typically classified as major arterials.

Marginalized Communities — Communities that have been systemically excluded from local government and community decisions and have faced systemic disadvantages and discrimination due to their identity, including Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC), LGBTQIA2S+ individuals, immigrants and refugees, individuals with limited English proficiency, households with low incomes and people with disabilities. These communities often experience limited access to resources, opportunities and equitable services, leading to disparities in areas such as housing, education, employment and healthcare.

Materials Management — An approach to using and reusing resources most efficiently and sustainably throughout their lifecycles. It seeks to minimize materials used and all associated environmental impacts.

Micromobility — A mode of active transportation that is designed for use by a single individual (or, occasionally, a few people as in a tandem bike or a bike with a child's seat) and is small in size such as a bicycle or kickscooter.

Middle scale housing — Housing such as duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, townhomes, small apartment buildings, cottage housing and courtyard apartments that fills the gap between single unit detached homes and large apartment buildings.

Midrise Building — See illustrations in the Future Land Use Map Key.

Minor Arterial — A street that provides a vehicle and active transportation connection between major arterials and concentrations of residential and commercial activities.

Mitigation — Methods used to compensate for adverse impacts to critical areas.

Mixed Use Areas — Areas of the city where a mix of uses, including commercial and residential uses, is allowed.

Mixed Use Centers — Areas of the city that are both major commercial centers and centers for substantial future residential growth, focused around existing or planned high capacity transit. Mixed Use Centers may have the same or different boundaries than neighborhoods.

Mixed-use Development — A building or buildings constructed as a single project that contains more than one use, typically including housing plus retail and office uses.

Mobility Hub — An area with access to and convenient connections between multiple modes of transportation including bus or light rail and active transportation modes.

Mobility Options — The ability of a person traveling within the city or the region to choose one or more of several means of transport, including modes such as a private vehicle, public transit, active transportation and rideshare.

Moderate-Income Housing — Housing that is affordable to a household that earns between 80 percent and 100 percent of the area median income, adjusted for household size.

Mountains to Sound Greenway — A regional trail located along the I-90 corridor that is designed for active transportation use.

Multicounty Planning Policies — The regional planning document for Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC).

Multifamily Dwelling — A building designed to house two or more families living independently of each other.

Multimodal — The consideration of active transportation, riding transit, driving and freight mobility as means of transportation and incorporating connections among modes.

Neighborhood Area — The city is divided into 16 Neighborhood Areas for planning purposes (see [Map NH-1](#)).

Neighborhood Center — A small commercial or mixed-use area in a location that is otherwise primarily residential. Neighborhood Centers are often anchored by grocery stores and often meet the daily needs of local residents (see [Map LU-2](#)).

Net-positive Development — Development where the amount of energy produced from renewable energy sources is greater than the amount of energy consumed.

Net-zero Carbon Emissions — A system where the amount of carbon emissions produced is off-set but the amount of carbon removed from the atmosphere.

Net-zero Development — Development where the amount of greenhouse gas emissions produced is as close to zero as possible, and any remaining emissions are removed from the atmosphere.

Net-zero Waste — A system where the amount of waste produced is off-set by the amount of waste consumed in the system.

Nonmotorized Transportation — See [Active Transportation](#).

Nonprofit organizations — Organizations that operate for a public benefit as defined in 26 USC 501.

Noxious Weed — Plants that are not indigenous to the area, that grow unchecked by natural predators and that generally outcompete indigenous species for moisture and nutrients. The King County Noxious Weed Control Board maintains a list of noxious weeds.

Open Space — Land that is undeveloped or lightly developed and is set aside for uses such as conservation and parks.

Pedestrian Corridor — See [Grand Connection](#).

Pedestrian Crossing — A designated street crossing other than at an intersection that is designed and intended to support active transportation. Potential locations are identified in the Mobility Implementation Plan for further study to determine if, and what type of, improved pedestrian crossing should be built.

Pedestrian-friendly Design — Physical development characteristics that promote pedestrian activity and may be incorporated into private development and rights-of-way.

Pedestrian System Plan Map — In the Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan, a map that depicts a complete and connected network of pedestrian facilities that serve the entire community and are compatible with regional and inter-jurisdictional facilities. Pedestrian facility types are defined and described in the Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan.

Performance Standards — Benchmarks or requirements for facilities such as buildings or transportation infrastructure that are set internally in documents such as the Transportation Design Manual or externally, such as in a green building certification program.

Person Throughput — A measure of the number of people that can move along a street. Person throughput may be documented for a specific period of time (as in people per hour), or using a specific mode of travel (as in transit passengers per hour). Person throughput may also refer to the planning-level capacity of the system (as in a bus lane that may accommodate up to a certain number of riders per hour).

Personal Services — Services involving the care of a person or of a person's apparel, such as laundry and dry cleaning services, beauty shops, barber shops, shoe repair shops and tailors.

Piped Stream — A segment of a stream that flows under property through a pipe.

Planned Unit Development (PUD) — A discretionary land use application that allows flexibility for development proposals in the type, design and arrangement of structures; a mix of land uses; conservation of natural features; and efficient use of open space.

Potential Annexation Area (PAA) — An area within the Urban Growth Area and outside the city's existing southern and eastern boundaries to which the city may eventually expand through annexation.

Prescriptive Regulations — Development regulations that provide specific standards.

Private Partners — Organizations that work with the city to achieve public benefits. These organizations may be nonprofit organizations or other non-governmental organizations.

Public Property — Property owned by a public entity such as the City of Bellevue, King County or the State of Washington. This property belongs to the public at large rather than an individual or a company. Some examples are streets, libraries, many parks, public schools and community centers and sidewalks.

Publicly Accessible — Open to the general public for passage, recreation or shopping.

Qualifying Properties — Multifamily property that is owned by faith-based or non-profit housing entities; or surplus property owned by public entities; or single-family property that is owned by faith-based entities.

Region — An area which in its largest sense generally includes King, Pierce, Snohomish and Kitsap Counties. It may also be limited to a smaller area. If so, this is generally noted in the context of the policy.

Regional Growth Center — Regional Growth Centers are areas identified by Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) as areas of focus for transportation funds. The requirements of Regional Growth Centers can be found in the Multicounty Planning Policies. Bellevue has one Regional Growth Center, Downtown.

Resilience Hub — Community-serving facility augmented to support residents and coordinate resource distribution and services before, during and after a hazard event.

Restore — To reestablish ecological processes, structures, functions and biotic and abiotic linkages that lead to the recovery of an ecosystem that has been degraded, damaged or destroyed. Restoration, as used in the Comprehensive Plan, does not mandate a return to pre-development conditions.

Ridesharing — Travel by more than one person in a privately- or publicly-owned vehicle, including a carpool and vanpool.

Salmonid — A member of the fish family salmonidae, which includes salmon, trout, dolly varden, char and white fish.

Scenic Character — The distinctive features in a landscape that contribute to its sense of place and the image people hold of the area.

Secure Community Transition Facility — Defined in the RCW 71.09.020 as a residential facility for persons civilly committed and conditionally released to a less restrictive alternative than a total confinement facility where an individual has total supervision and treatment. A secure community transition facility has supervision and security and either provides or ensures the provision of sex offender treatment services.

Sensitive Area — See "[Critical Areas.](#)"

Sensitive Use — Land uses for which the occupants are more susceptible to the adverse effects of exposure to air pollution. Examples include residential areas, hospitals and medical facilities, schools, day care facilities, senior and assisted living facilities and recreational areas.

Short-term Rentals — A dwelling unit, or part of a dwelling unit, rented for fewer than 30 consecutive nights that is not a hotel or motel or bed and breakfast.

Significant Tree — A tree that has attained proportions as defined in the Land Use Code, for which protections from cutting may apply.

Single Family Dwelling — A building containing but one kitchen, designed for and occupied exclusively by one household, except where a valid accessory dwelling unit registration has been approved.

Single-occupant Vehicle (SOV) — A vehicle containing one occupant.

Social Cost of Carbon — An estimate of the cost, in dollars, of the damage done by each additional ton of greenhouse gas emissions (CO₂ equivalent). Also used to estimate the benefit of a given action taken to reduce a ton of emissions.

Steep Slopes — See “[Critical Areas](#).”

Stormwater — Precipitation that does not infiltrate into the soil or evaporate, but flows over the surface into a stormwater drainage system or directly to a surface water body.

Street Classification — The classification of city streets according to their function. These classifications relate to established development standards upon which street improvements are based. Street classifications include major arterial, minor arterial, collector arterial and local street.

Streetscape — The design and appearance of streets, sidewalks and the frontage of bordering development including landscaping, street furniture, signs, etc.

Subarea — A geographic subdivision of the city with its own character and development focus. Subareas have been used for planning purposes and are the basis for the Subarea Plans in Volume 2. As the plans are updated, they are amended to be consistent with the Neighborhood Area boundaries.

Substantially Impacted — A water body is ‘substantially impacted’ by a given source or activity when it causes that water body to exceed established water quality standards (e.g. turbidity and/or nutrients such as nitrogen).

Superblock — Typical 600-foot block established by the Downtown street grid.

Supportive and Transitional Housing — A residential facility intended to house individuals and families experiencing homelessness, or at imminent risk of homelessness and paired with on-site or off-site supportive services designed to maintain long-term or permanent tenancy, or transition the residents to other living arrangements, if appropriate.

Sustainable — A dynamic environment in which an ecosystem and its inhabitants are in ecological balance by maintaining the health and flow of resources needed to support them in perpetuity.

Third Places — Places that people go to when they are neither home nor at work that are seen as spaces to provide connection and build community. They can occur informally in any publicly- or privately-owned place as long as it is known to the community as a safe and welcoming space.

Transit-supportive Design — Physical development characteristics of buildings and active transportation facilities that encourage transit use.

Transit-oriented Development (TOD) —

Development that is within one-half mile walking distance from and oriented toward a transit station that provides frequent, reliable service. TOD supports transit use through a compact mix of housing, retail and office uses and a walkable, pedestrian-oriented character.

Transportation 2050 — An action plan produced by the Puget Sound Regional Council for transportation in the Central Puget Sound Region.

Underserved Communities – Communities that have been systemically underserved due to their identity, including but not limited to Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC), LGBTQIA2S+ individuals, immigrants and refugees, individuals with limited English proficiency, households with low incomes and people with disabilities. The lack of service has often resulted in limited access to resources, opportunities and equitable services, leading to disparities in areas such as housing, education, employment and healthcare.

Universal Design — A system of design that helps ensure that buildings and public spaces are accessible to people with or without disabilities and regardless of age or ability.

Urban Center — Areas designated by the Countywide Planning Policies located on existing or planned transit corridors where there will be higher levels of residential density and employment intensity that support regional land use and transportation goals.

Very Low-income Housing — Housing that is affordable to a household that earns between 30 and 50 percent of the area median income, adjusted for household size. (see also [Extremely Low-income Housing](#) and [Low-income Housing](#)).

VISION 2050 — PSRC’s regional growth strategy for King, Pierce, Snohomish and Kitsap counties.

Watershed — A geographic region within which water drains into a particular river, stream or body of water. Watersheds can be as large as those identified and numbered by the State of Washington Water Resource Inventory Areas (WRIAs) as defined in Chapter 173-500 WAC.

Wetlands — See [“Critical Areas.”](#)

Zero Waste — The conservation of all resources by means of responsible production, consumption, reuse and recovery of products, packaging and materials without burning and with no discharges to land, water or air that threaten the environment or human health.

SHORELINE MASTER PROGRAM DEFINITIONS

Boat Launching Facility — A facility used for launching boats by auto or hand including ramps and other devices, along with adequate parking and maneuvering space.

Breakwater — Protective structure usually built offshore for the purpose of protecting the shoreline or harbor areas from wave action.

Bulkhead — A wall or embankment used for holding back earth.

Dredging — Removal of earth from the bottom of a body of water usually for the purpose of deepening a navigational channel or obtaining bottom materials.

Enclosed Overwater Structure — A structure extending on or over the surface of the water which has one or more walls with or without a roof.

Facilities in Common — Facilities jointly used by a specific group of property owners.

Groin — A barrier-type structure extending from the backshore into the water across the beach. The purpose of a groin is to interrupt sediment movement along the shore.

Inland Shoreline Areas — Shoreline areas other than Lake Washington and Lake Sammamish and their associated wetlands which include all other wetlands, smaller lakes and streams covered by the Shorelines Management Act.

Jetty — An artificial barrier used to change the natural littoral drift to protect inlet entrances from clogging by excessive sediment.

Landfill — Creation or maintenance of beach or creation of dry upland area by the deposition of sand, soil, gravel, or other materials into shoreline areas.

Marina — A facility providing for the rental or public use of moorages for pleasure craft and which may include accessory facilities such as sales, rentals and servicing of these craft.

Moorage — Any device or structure used to secure a vessel for temporary anchorage, but which is not attached to the vessel (such as a pier or buoy).

Pier — A general term including docks and similar structures consisting of a fixed or floating platform extending from the shore over the water.

Public Access — A means of physical approach to and along the shoreline available to the general public. Public access may also include visual approach (views).

Shoreline — The water, submerged lands and uplands of Lake Washington, Lake Sammamish and Phantom Lake as well as the wetland areas associated with these lakes.

Shoreline Activity — Activities include, but are not limited to, fishing, swimming, boating, dredging, fish spawning and wildlife nesting. Not all activities necessarily require a shoreline location.

Shoreline Development — A use consisting of the construction or exterior alteration of structures, dredging, drilling, dumping, filling, removal of any sand, gravel or minerals, bulkheading, driving of piling, placing of obstructions, or any other project of a permanent or temporary nature on the shoreline.

Shoreline Use — The commitment of land or water surface to a given purpose or activity. Examples of shoreline uses include, but are not limited to, residential units, parks, marinas, open space, office buildings, ports, restaurants, wildlife preserves, factories, or even non-use. Not all uses, however, are necessarily reasonable or appropriate for a shoreline location.

Shoreline Wetlands — Land extending landward to 200 feet in all directions as measured on a horizontal plane from ordinary high water mark and all marshes, bogs, swamps, floodways, deltas and floodplains designated by the Department of Ecology as wetland areas.

Water-dependent — A use or portion of a use which cannot exist in any other location and is dependent on the water by reason of the intrinsic nature of its operations. Examples of these uses may include marinas that provide moorage, access, fuel, boat repair and boat launch facilities.

Water-enjoyment Uses — A recreational or similar use facilitating the general public's access to the shoreline as a primary characteristic of the use; or, a use that provides and assures for recreational use or aesthetic enjoyment of the shoreline for a substantial number of people as a general characteristic of the use through the use's location, design and operation. These uses may include public access, parks (with waterfront access) and scientific/ecological reserves.

Water-related — A use or portion of a use which is not intrinsically dependent on a waterfront location but whose operation cannot occur economically without a shoreline location. Some examples of these uses are support facilities for swimming and boating activities.