

# Glossary

## A

***Accessory Residential Unit:*** A secondary house or apartment that shares the building lot of a larger, principal residential structure.

***Active Adult Retirement Communities:*** Primarily residential communities offering housing types and neighborhoods tailored to the specific interests and desires of older adults. These communities offer an independent living environment with houses often designed to reduce maintenance requirements and cater to specific interests of the older adult home buying market. Restricted to adults above a certain age, these communities offer amenities and services tailored to this age group and cater to older adults seeking a living environment among others who share similar interests. Active adult dwelling units may also be found in age-targeted communities where they commingle with traditional family housing.

***Adaptive Reuse:*** The repurposing of an existing structure in order to accommodate new uses while preserving the structure. This often involves improving existing buildings to allow for modern design and building program preferences.

***Adverse Effect:*** Any negative consequence resulting from a change in the type or intensity of land use, which may include one or more of the following:

- impairment of the quality of natural, environmental, and heritage resources;
- injury or damage to property or to plant or animal life;
- harm or material discomfort to any person;
- impairment of the safety of any person;
- rendering any property or plant or animal life unfit for use by man;
- loss of enjoyment of normal use of property; or
- interference with the normal conduct of business.

***Affordability Gap:*** The difference between the cost of housing and the amount households can afford to pay.

***Affordable:*** When not used in the context of specific programs and policies (e.g., Affordable Dwelling Unit), a general descriptor for housing requiring no more than 30 percent of a household's income.

***Affordable Dwelling Unit (ADU):*** A dwelling unit for rent or for sale that is locally restricted for occupancy by households whose income falls between 30 and 70 percent of the Area Median Income (AMI). Typically ADUs are offered at a below-market rate.

***Agriculture:*** Any land use that produces livestock or plant materials to be used for food or fiber for human or animal consumption. Examples include activities that produce cattle,

sheep, hogs, horses or other livestock; activities that produce grains such as wheat, barley and corn; fruit and vegetable production and tree or timber production.

***Agricultural Soils:*** Productive soils that include both Prime Agricultural Soils (Class I) and Secondary Cropland (Class II) that are essential for growing plants and crops, raising livestock, and supporting ecosystems.

***Agricultural Supportive Business:*** Uses that provide either direct or indirect services to agricultural, silvicultural, horticultural, equine, and/or animal husbandry activities. These uses include farm machinery sales, rental, and repair services; veterinary services; blacksmithing; agricultural product storage and processing; feed and seed supply; and similar uses.

***Agricultural and Forestal District:*** Districts that landowners voluntarily enter into, subject to Board of Supervisors approval, that limit the use and development of property for a specified term to protect agricultural and forest lands.

***Agritourism:*** A commercial enterprise that links agricultural production and/or processing with tourism in order to attract visitors to a farm, ranch, or other agricultural business for the purposes of entertaining and/or educating the visitors and generating income for the farm, ranch, or business owner.

***Airport Noise Impact Area:*** Areas that have been determined to be impacted by noise caused by airport operations (i.e., aircraft noise impact areas), as depicted on the Airport Noise Impact Area map (see Chapter 3 for the ANIA map and relevant policy guidance).

***Apartment/Residential Condo:*** A building, or portion thereof, designed for occupancy by three or more households living independently of each other. (See also, ***Multifamily Residential***)

***Aquifer:*** A geologic formation or structure that transmits underground water in sufficient quantity to supply pumping wells or springs.

***Archaeological Site:*** The physical remains of any area of human activity greater than fifty years of age for which a boundary can be established, including but not limited to domestic/habitation sites, industrial sites, burial sites, earthworks, mounds, quarries, canals and roads.

***Archaeological Survey:*** The scientific archaeological investigation of a known or potential archaeological resource as defined by the Virginia Department of Historic Resources' Guidelines for Archaeological Investigations in Virginia. See also, ***Historic Resources Survey***.

***Area Median Income (AMI):*** The middle household income in a specific metropolitan area; half of households of a particular size have incomes higher and half have incomes lower. AMI is used to determine eligibility for housing programs.

**Arterial Road:** Generally, a publicly owned and maintained road, designed with restricted access and primarily intended to carry through traffic at 45 to 55 miles per hour.

## B

**Bedrock:** Rock formation that underlies surface materials such as soil.

**Best Management Practices (BMP):** Structural, operational, or procedural practices that are generally accepted as the most effective and practical means for reducing the amount of non-point source (NPS) water pollution to a level compatible with established water quality goals.

**Buffer:** An undeveloped or relatively undeveloped land area that lies between two land uses and is intended to screen the view, limit noise exposure, or otherwise mitigate the impacts of one use on another. A buffer may include trees, plants, or structural measures to further shield one use from the other.

**Built Environment:** Human-made surroundings that provide the setting in which people live, work, learn, and play on a day-to-day basis, and how they are interrelated as a complete and connected system in relationship to human activity. The built environment includes uses such as buildings and structures, parks, utilities and communication infrastructure, roads, paths, transportation infrastructure, streetscapes, signage, man-made landscapes, and open space.

**By-Right Uses:** Uses or structures that are allowed under the regulations of a particular zoning district classification without the need for legislative approval by the Board of Supervisors.

## C

**Canopy:** The upper branches of a stand of trees; the tallest trees in a forested area.

**Capital Facility Proffer:** An in-cash or in-kind (land or improvement) contribution, consistent with County policies and service needs, that is intended to mitigate the capital facility impacts of a development and is voluntarily agreed to by a property owner as a condition of a rezoning.

**Capital Facility Standards:** Standards developed to guide the development of new capital facilities such as schools, parks, libraries, roads, and other public facilities. They include the types and quantities of capital facilities needed, the typical square footage of each type of facility, the amount of acreage required (for building, parking, utilities, etc.), and the demographic or geographic factors by which a new facility is warranted.

**Capital Improvement Program (CIP):** The County's annual plan for future capital project expenditures. This plan spells out the funding for capital facilities, including schools, libraries, and parks, that the County plans to finance over a six-year period.

**Capital Intensity Factor (CIF):** The dollar amount of the capital facilities impact, measured by unit type or unit characteristics and according to a development project's geographic location, which is calculated using the County's capital facility standards and demographic inputs.

**Capital Needs Assessment (CNA):** Assessment that identifies the type and number of capital facilities that will be needed to serve the public over a ten-year planning period and maintain the County's desired levels of services.

**Central System:** The water and/or sewer (wastewater) utility network serving Loudoun Water's eastern service area, as shown in the Water/Sewer Service Area Map.

**Champion Tree:** Any tree deemed largest of its species and listed on either the Virginia Big Tree Registry (maintained jointly by the Virginia Forestry Association, Virginia Department of Forestry, and Virginia Tech College of Natural Resources) or the National Register of Big Trees (maintained by American Forests). A champion tree may be a National Champion, a State Champion, or both.

**Civic Uses:** Public or quasi-public uses in residential or business areas that are accessible to the public and primarily serve as gathering or meeting areas for the immediate community. Civic uses may be public buildings; defined space in residential, commercial, or mixed-use buildings; or outdoor space constructed to accommodate gatherings of the community. They can be the settings where celebrations are held, where social and economic exchanges take place, where friends run into each other, and where cultures mix. Such uses typically include churches, schools, libraries, community centers, amphitheaters, and property owner association meeting space or club houses. See also, **Community Uses** and **Cultural Uses**.

**Cluster Development:** A residential development pattern that features the grouping of units on smaller lots with the intention of retaining a significant area of the site as open space or farmland. See also, **Clustered Residential Subdivision**.

**Clustered Residential Subdivision:** A development or subdivision option permitted in certain zoning districts that features the grouping of building units on smaller lots within a portion or portions of the site, with the intention of retaining a significant area of the land as a contiguous tract of unbuilt open land. Clustering is both visual and spatial, with the dwellings scaled and sited to maintain coherent relationships to each other and the surrounding landscape. The open space may serve to preserve environmentally sensitive areas while catering to active or passive recreational, agricultural, forestal, or rural economy uses.

**Collector Road:** A road into which local roads funnel and that, in turn, carries traffic to an arterial road. Ideally a collector road would have few private entrances accessing it directly.

**Commercial Core:** An identifiable center or focal point of a community. Typically a commercial area that may include parks, public facilities, or civic uses and is located to enable convenient access to most of the community.

**Commercial Use:** Any wholesale, retail, or service business activity established to carry on trade for profit.

**Community System:** A shared water supply and/or sewer (wastewater) system operated and/or owned by Loudoun Water or a private entity as defined by Chapter 10.1 or 10.2 of Title 56 of the Code of Virginia that is designed to serve small scale development, including cluster developments, where permitted by the Zoning Ordinance. See also, *Shared Water and Sewer System*.

**Community Plans:** Specific, detailed land use plans that Loudoun County adopts for various areas of the County.

**Community Uses:** Gathering places for the surrounding community or general public, such as plazas, playgrounds, pocket parks, gardens, public art, and amphitheaters. See also, *Civic Uses* and *Open Space*.

**Compatible:** Describes an existing or committed land use or activity that can coexist with a neighboring use/activity or uses/activities, without generating one or more off-site *Adverse Effects*.

**Comprehensive Plan:** The general plan for the County and its supporting components, including the Countywide Transportation Plan. Every County in Virginia must have a Comprehensive Plan, which spells out policies for future development in order to ensure orderly growth and the protection of the public health and welfare. The Comprehensive Plan may consist of a number of components, such as community plans, strategic plans, service plans, and specific land use related resolutions of the Board of Supervisors.

**Conference Center:** A large building that is designed to hold conventions, conferences, or other large events where individuals and groups gather to promote and share common interests.

**Conservation Design:** A land development approach that conserves the environmental, natural, and heritage elements of a site while providing for development at full density on the remainder of the site.

**Conservation Easement:** A voluntary legal agreement between a property owner and a land trust or government agency that places permanent restrictions on a property, which may relinquish certain development rights and/or require the preservation of farmland, and/or natural, environmental, and heritage resources on a property in perpetuity. The easement is recorded in the land records and the property owner retains ownership of the property and all rights and privileges for its use, except for the uses restricted under the easement.

**Contiguous:** Touching, abutting, and/or adjoining at the border, or immediately across the street.

**Continuum of Housing:** A variety of housing types, sizes, and prices, —both for rental and homeownership —that meets the needs of Loudoun's current and future citizens.

County resources will be focused on unmet housing needs of households with incomes up to 100% AMI.

***Contractor Services:*** A business establishment specializing in the installation and servicing of such items as air conditioners, electrical equipment, flooring, heating, painting, plumbing, roofing, tiling, and ventilation; the planting and maintenance of gardens, grounds and yards, such as landscape contractors and lawn maintenance services; and construction and demolition services.

***Contractor with Outdoor Storage:*** A contractor services use that includes outdoor storage of materials, goods, and/or vehicles related to the service.

***Contractor without Outdoor Storage:*** A contractor services use that does not include outdoor storage of materials, goods, and/or vehicles related to the service.

***Cost-burdened Household:*** A household that spends 30 percent or more of their income on housing (gross rent or mortgage).

***Cultural Landscape:*** 1. “The combined works of nature and of man [that] are illustrative of the evolution of human society and settlement over time, under the influence of physical constraints and/or opportunities presented by their natural environment and of successive social, economic, and cultural forces, both external and internal” (UNESCO/ICOMOS Expert Group, World Heritage Convention Operation Guidelines, February 1995) or 2. “A geographic area, including both cultural and natural resources and the wildlife or domestic animals therein, associated with a historic event, activity, or person or exhibiting other cultural or aesthetic values” (National Park Service).

***Cultural Uses:*** Uses that provide access to or interpretation of the history, customs, arts and social interactions of a particular nation, people, or other social group. May include such uses as monuments, museums and art galleries, visual and performing arts venues, historical sites, or cultural landscapes. See also, ***Civic Uses***.

## D

***Data Centers:*** A facility composed of a large group of networked computer servers, typically used by organizations for the remote storage, processing, or transmission of large amounts of digital data.

***Density:*** The amount of development permitted per acre of land. It may be expressed in terms of dwelling units per acre or as a percentage or portion of building ***floor area ratio (FAR)***.

***Department of Transportation and Capital Infrastructure (DTCI):*** County department that oversees roadway planning, local transportation projects and transit functions, as well as capital planning, funding, design and construction management.

***Design Guideline:*** A set of recommendations towards good practice in design.

***Design Standard:*** A set of rules to implement design items with generally accepted and uniform procedures, dimensions, or materials, which may be administered through a regulatory process.

***Development:*** The act of building, or the existence of, structures for human habitation, business uses, or other human activity, including houses, stores, schools, offices and roads.

***Diabase:*** A fine- to medium-grained dark-colored igneous rock, which is a good source for crushed stone for road and building construction.

***Dillon Rule:*** The rule adopted by the Virginia General Assembly that limits the legislative powers of local government in Virginia to those powers that have been specifically and expressly granted to them by the General Assembly.

***District Energy Systems:*** Networks of hot and cold water pipes, typically buried underground, that are used to efficiently heat and cool buildings using less energy than if the individual buildings were to each have their own boilers, chillers, or cooling towers.

***Drainfield:*** Soil absorption trench fed by underground pipes for dispersion of the liquid portion of sewage from a *septic system*.

***Duplex:*** A residential building that has separate but complete facilities to accommodate two households, either as adjacent or stacked units. See also, ***Single-Family Attached Residential***.

## E

***Easement:*** An interest in land owned by another that entitles its holder to a specific and limited use.

***Easement, Open Space (Scenic, Conservation):*** An easement that removes or limits the right to develop land. “Eased” is used as an adjective applied to land with such open space restrictions.

***Eco-districts:*** A neighborhood committed to sustainability with empowered people, green buildings, and smart infrastructure. The establishment of eco-districts is a comprehensive strategy to accelerate sustainable development at the neighborhood scale by integrating building and infrastructure projects with community and individual action. Can be used as part of a public/private partnership.

***Economic Development:*** Efforts that seek to improve the economic well-being and quality of life for a community by creating and/or retaining jobs and supporting or growing incomes and expanding the tax base.

***Ecosystem:*** A complex network of biological communities and their interaction with their physical environment.

**Enabling Legislation:** Legislation passed by the Virginia General Assembly that authorizes a locality to carry out some particular program or that grants certain specific powers to those localities. Local governments may not enact ordinances without enabling legislation. See also, **Dillon Rule**.

**Entertainment Commercial:** Commercial uses that are devoted to entertainment including cinema, television, radio, games, theatre, and music.

**Equine Facilities:** Facilities for the purposes of accommodating, training, or competing equids, especially horses, to include barns, stables, or riding halls and may include commercial operations such as boarding stables, livery yards, or livery stables. Larger facilities may include complementary services such as riding schools, farriers, veterinarians, tack shops, or equipment repair.

**Erosion:** The wearing away and removal of soil or rock by natural means such as wind or water.

**Exemplary Natural Communities:** The most outstanding and viable occurrences of common natural community types, based on size, condition, and landscape context and all examples of rare natural community types, as defined by the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, Division of Natural Heritage.

**Extremely Low-Income Household:** A household with an annual income at or below 30 percent of the Area Median Income (AMI).

## F

**Facilities Standards Manual:** An adopted document that sets out design and construction standards for site development improvements implemented through subdivisions and site plans, to include infrastructure required for water/sewer service access (e.g. roads and streets), and environmental design (e.g. soils and geotechnical review, tree planting and conservation, erosion and sediment control).

**Fiscal:** Of or relating to public revenues, public expenditures, public debt, and public financial matters.

**Fleet and Equipment Sales and Service:** Any sales, leasing, parts, and service operation that specializes in new and used truck and trailer equipment.

**Flex Space:** A category of building that generally includes a compatible mix of warehouses, light manufacturing, and related accessory uses. These facilities are typically used for product production and service and the storage and distribution of goods.

**Floodplain:** A low, usually flat terrain on either side of a river or stream that is normally dry but submerged at times of high water, and where accumulations of silt and sand are deposited away from the main channel.

***Floodplain, Major:*** The floodplain created by flooding from a stream that drains greater than 640 acres.

***Floodplain, Minor:*** The floodplain created by flooding from a stream that drains less than 640 acres but greater than 100 acres.

***Floor Area Ratio (FAR):*** The enclosed gross floor area of buildings on a given lot divided by the total area of the lot. See also, ***Density***.

***Forest:*** A plant community predominantly consisting of trees and other woody vegetation of at least 10 acres in which 50 percent of the tree canopy coverage exceeds 25 feet in height and one that currently has or will result in 85 percent crown closure within ten years. A forest is further defined as forming an ecosystem that provides food, water, and shelter for various plant and wildlife habitats.

## G

***General and Heavy Manufacturing and Assembly:*** Industrial uses involving the manufacture and/or assembly of goods or materials on a large scale.

***Greenbelt:*** Any largely undeveloped area or an area of low-density development consisting of entirely or primarily heavily vegetated open space surrounding a developed area or separating one area from another to create a visual separation.

***Greenfield Development:*** Development that occurs on undeveloped land.

***Greyfield Development:*** Development on real estate that has been previously developed and used but has become obsolescent or substantially underutilized. Examples of greyfield sites may include abandoned commercial, industrial, or public properties or underutilized older commercial centers that no longer attract investment.

***Groundwater:*** The supply of freshwater beneath the ground surface in a saturated zone that forms a natural reservoir for potable water. Groundwater is a major source of water supply for western Loudoun County.

***Groundwater Recharge:*** Undeveloped or sparsely developed area where groundwater can be replenished by rainfall.

***Growth Boundary:*** The limit of central water and sewer (wastewater) utility service marking the separation of distinctly different land uses and densities.

***Growth Management:*** The process of guiding development in the direction that is most efficient, and fiscally and environmentally sound.

## H

**Habitat:** The place or environment where animals or plants naturally or normally live and grow.

**Heritage Resource:** Those resources, both human and natural, created by activities from the past that remain to inform present and future societies of the past.

**Heritage Trees:** Any tree that has been individually recognized by the local governing body for its association with a historic event, person, structure, or landscape. The historic significance may be at the local, state, regional, or national level.

**Historic District (County Designated):** A zoning district overlaid on an existing zoning district that applies additional architectural and design controls to the regulations of the base district. A Historic Site District (HS) comprises a single historic property and its related structures, while a Historic and Cultural Conservation District (HCC) comprises a multiple properties related in some way to each other.

**Historic District Review Committee (HDRC):** A committee of citizens appointed by the Board of Supervisors and empowered to approve or deny the issuance of Certificates of Appropriateness for any construction, reconstruction, renovation or restoration activity in a County-designated Historic District.

**Historic Landmarks:** A site designated by national, state, or local officials as a historic landmark. The term is primarily used to refer to National Historic Landmarks.

**Historic Property:** Building, site, district, object, or structure evaluated as historically significant inclusive of their historic setting.

**Historic Resources Survey:** A survey locating and identifying properties within a specific geographic area and documenting them to an established standard as defined by the Virginia Department of Historic Resources' Guidelines for Conducting Historic Resources Survey in Virginia. The survey involves collecting and organizing data from field investigations and gathering data from historical research, interviews, and planning studies. See also, *Archaeological Survey*.

**Historic Site:** An architectural, engineering or archaeological area, structure, object, or landscape that has historic significance to the region, locality, community, or nation.

**Homeowners Association (HOA)/Property Owners Association (POA):** A private association consisting of homeowners or property owners organized for the purpose of overseeing the enforcement of covenants or deed restrictions that apply to a group of homes, lots, or buildings. Covenants and deed restrictions may govern such things as the maintenance and use of homes, buildings, private streets, and common areas, such as pools, playgrounds, landscaping, and parking lots.

**Hotel:** An establishment providing accommodations, meals, and other services for travelers and tourists.

**Hotel, Full Service:** Mid-priced, upscale, and/or luxury hotel providing restaurant, lounge facilities, exercise facilities, meeting space, room service, and bell service.

↓

**Impermeable or Impervious:** Describes any material or surface that prevents the absorption of water into the ground.

**Indigenous Vegetation:** Existing plant communities or species that occur naturally to a specified region or area, and that are descendants of plants that existed prior to the land being developed or cultivated. Also referred to as native vegetation.

**Industrial Uses:** Nonresidential and noncommercial employment uses such as warehousing, mining, milling, and manufacturing. Industrial uses are characterized by varying degrees of outside storage or activity, types of equipment use, and potential compatibility issues with surrounding uses.

**Infill Development:** Establishment of a new use on a site that may be undeveloped or underutilized but is located in an area of established, stable development where roads, water, sewer, and general services are available or planned. Infill sites are often small (less than 25 acres), and their development should complement or complete a larger development area.

**Infrastructure:** Utilities such as water/sewer, electrical, gas, communication, internet and transportation, which provide services and support necessary to the function of the built environment.

**Institutional Uses:** Land uses developed to help serve a community's social, educational, health, cultural, and recreational needs, including government offices and facilities; public or private health facilities; recreational uses; educational uses such as schools, training centers, and universities; libraries; camps; or similar facilities.

**Intensity:** Physical measures of the scope and scale of land use, including building height, bulk, and coverage. The most common measurement of intensity is **Floor Area Ratio (FAR)**. See also, **Density**.

**Interim Use:** Land use that does not require substantial infrastructure and construction investment and that by design or investment can be expected to be removed and the site redeveloped based on future market trends or can easily be adapted and augmented with future land uses. Examples may include community gardens, playgrounds, park-and-ride lots, and farmer's markets.

**Invasive Plant Species:** Any plant species that is not native to the region and causes or is likely to cause economic, health-related, or environmental harm.

J-L

***Joint Land Management Area (JLMA):*** The County area surrounding an incorporated town intended to accommodate future town growth.

***Karst:*** Refers to terrain characterized by the solution of bedrock that allows underground drainage and generates distinctive land forms and features such as sinkholes, pinnacled rock, and caves. Much of the County's limestone geology area is considered karst.

***Land Trust:*** A public and/or private organization with the authority to buy, accept donations, hold, and/or sell interests in real property for the purpose of land and/or building preservation.

***Large Lot Residential:*** Single-family detached homes built on large lots that provide low density living opportunities.

***Ldn:*** Day-Night Average Sound Level. The energy-average level of sound, in decibels, for 24 hours adjusted to include a 10 decibel penalty for noise exposures during night-time hours (10:00 pm to 6:00 am).

***Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED):*** A green building certification program developed by the U.S. Green Building Council that includes a set of rating systems for the design, construction, operation, and maintenance of green buildings, homes and neighborhoods aimed at being environmentally responsible and using resources efficiently.

***Light Pollution:*** Unnatural brightening of the night sky caused by street lights and other man-made sources, which has a disruptive effect on natural cycles and inhibits the observation of stars and planets.

***Light Production:*** Production uses that are likely to result in fewer adverse impacts on their surroundings than heavy industries. Often located in industrial parks, flex space, or in conjunction with large mixed-use development; such uses may include manufacture and distribution of scientific products and/or precision instruments. In mixed-use communities, outdoor storage will not be permitted, and buildings should be designed and scaled compatibly with non-industrial uses.

***Limestone Geology:*** Geologic formation that is highly water soluble and is characterized by numerous underground caves and surface sink holes; it is a natural groundwater aquifer and good water supply source. Limestone geology consists of various small rocks cemented together with a carbonate matrix. In appearance, it is very similar to concrete. See also, ***Karst.***

***Live/Work Units:*** A single unit consisting of both a commercial/office and residential component, often occupied by the same tenant (e.g. studio, loft or one bedroom).

***Local Road:*** A public, state-owned, and state-maintained road designed for direct access to individual lots.

***Low Impact Development (LID):*** Land planning and engineering design approach to manage stormwater through sustainable systems and practices that use or mimic natural processes that result in the infiltration, evapotranspiration, or use of stormwater in order to protect water quality and associated aquatic habitat.

***Low-Income Household:*** A household with an annual income between 50 and 80 percent of the Area Median Income (AMI).

## M

***Medical Center:*** An aggregation of health care facilities whose day-to-day operation is supplemented by the close proximity or collocation of other health care facilities or healthcare-related businesses.

***Metrorail Service Districts:*** Tax districts adopted by the Board of Supervisors intended to help fund construction costs associated with Metrorail operations; also known as *Metrorail tax districts*.

***Micro-Grid Energy Systems:*** Stand-alone electrical systems consisting of multiple generating sources and defined loads that can operate independently from the primary utility grid. They provide a reliable, efficient solution to unexpected power loss, effectively balancing spikes in energy demand, optimizing energy usage for more reliable power, reducing operating costs and carbon emissions.

***Micro Unit:*** A one-room, self-contained living space designed to accommodate a sitting space, sleeping space, bathroom, and kitchenette. Residents may have access to a communal kitchen, bathroom, patio and gardens. Units are generally 50 to 350 square feet in size.

***Millennial:*** A person reaching young adulthood in the early 21st century, born between 1981 and 1996.

***Missing Middle:*** The mix of small scale single-family units, accessory dwelling units, and limited multifamily units with a lower perceived density, intended to increase diversity and affordability of housing types in a manner sensitive to the scale and context of existing neighborhood surroundings.

***Mitigation (environmental):*** Methods used to alleviate or lessen the impact of development. Examples include planting of new forests to replace those that have been removed; creation of new wetlands to replace those destroyed by development. Mitigation is sometimes done in a different area than that previously occupied by the replaced forest, wetland, etc., but this practice is not encouraged.

***Moderate-Income Household:*** A household with an annual income between 80 and 100 percent of the Area Median Income (AMI).

***Moderately Steep Slopes:*** Surface formation with a vertical incline of 15 percent to 25 percent, a sufficient steepness to cause problems such as erosion or increased flooding when land is disturbed. See also ***Steep Slopes***.

***Months of Supply:*** A measure of how many months would be needed to sell all of the existing home sales inventory available at the current rate of demand, calculated by dividing current inventory by current sales. This is an indicator for supply in the home sales market.

***Mountainside Areas:*** Areas associated with the County’s mountain features, categorized based on weighted criteria as defined in the Loudoun County Interpretive Guide to the Use of Soils Maps, and defined by the following:

- Elevation: Above 700 feet mean sea level for the Short Hill and Blue Ridge Mountains and 550 feet for the Catoctin, Hogback, and Bull Run Mountains;
- Soils: Associated with mountainsides that affect groundwater recharge, slippage potential, and suitability for onsite sewage disposal systems;
- Slopes: Moderately steep slopes (15 to 25 percent) and steep slopes (greater than 25 percent); and
- Forests: The quality and extent of tree cover, woodlands, and forests.

***Multifamily Residential:*** A classification of housing where separate housing units are contained within one building or several buildings within one complex. See also, ***Apartment/Residential Condo***.

***Municipal System:*** Water and/or sewer (wastewater) utility network owned or operated by an incorporated Town.

## N

***National Register of Historic Places:*** The official Federal list of districts, sites, buildings, structures, landscapes, and objects significant in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering and/or culture. These places contribute to an understanding of the historical and cultural foundations of the United States.

***Natural Heritage Resources:*** Those resources that include rare, threatened, and/or endangered plant and animal species; exemplary natural communities, habitats, and ecosystems; and other natural features of the County.

***Noise-Sensitive Use:*** A use for which quiet is integral to its function and/or the safety of residents, customers, and other users, including housing, hotels, nursing homes, schools, churches, hospitals, day care centers, libraries, and other similar uses.

***Non-Point Source (NPS) Water Pollution:*** Diffuse water pollution that results when stormwater and other land runoff picks up pollutants and deposits them into a stream or other water body. NPS pollution cannot be traced to a specific source and/or point of entry.

O

**Office:** Uses such as administrative, professional, bureaucratic, or clerical services. Examples include but are not limited to law practices, accounting firms, clinics, real estate services, and other similar businesses.

**Old Growth Forest:** Also referred to as Ancient Forest. A forest that is ecologically mature and has been subject to negligible disturbance. Ecological maturity is typically defined when tree species reach the later stages of their life cycle, reflecting in significant amounts of the upper stratum or overstory in the mature (old) growth phases.

**100-foot Minimum Stream Buffer:** Minimum stream buffer providing a minimum filtration area to ensure the maintenance of water quality and the integrity of the river and stream corridor. The buffer is measured from the ordinary high water mark landward on both sides of the stream when the 100-year floodplain and adjacent steep slopes do not extend beyond either bank by 100 feet.

**On-Site or Individual Water and Wastewater Systems:** A system that serves a single user; commonly well and septic systems.

**Open Space:** Any essentially unimproved parcel or area of land or water that is designated for public or private use or enjoyment. See also, **Community Uses**. There are three types of open space defined in this plan, as follows:

**Open Space, Active Recreation:** Areas dedicated to leisure-time activities, usually of a formal nature and often performed with others, requiring equipment and taking place at prescribed sites or fields. Examples include ballfields, tennis or basketball courts, swimming pools, tot lots, golf courses, dog parks, and other areas for recreational sports and games. See also, **Recreation, Active**

**Open Space, Natural:** Land left in a mostly undeveloped state. Examples include forests, meadows, hedgerows, and wetlands.

**Open Space, Passive Recreation:** Areas for activities that involve less energetic activities such as walking, sitting, picnicking, card games or table games. Examples include trails (hiking, biking, walking, or equestrian), picnic, community gardens, camping, hunting, or fishing areas. Passive recreation uses have fewer potential impacts on the site and on surrounding land uses. See also, **Recreation, Passive**

**Open Space Preservation Program:** A program that seeks to balance the loss of open space to new development with the provision of easements or funds towards the purchase of publicly accessible and useable open space, to the extent permitted by Code of Virginia Section 15.2-2303.4.

**Outdoor Manufacturing:** Manufacturing in an outside area that is not enclosed or covered in any way that would obstruct the natural air flow.

**Outdoor Storage:** The outside storage of goods, material, vehicles, mechanical equipment, and any other equipment associated with the principal use of a building.

**Overlay Zoning District:** A zoning district superimposed on another, often used to apply additional standards for the purpose of protecting particular natural or cultural features or avoiding or mitigating potential adverse effects.

P

**Parks and Recreation:** Resources and services provided for the purposes of leisure, entertainment, and recreational pursuits. Such resources and services are non-commercial public spaces and facilities like parks, nature preserves, open space areas, greenways, trails, and built structures for sport, recreation, or arts programs.

**Performance Standards:** A set of regulatory criteria or limits relating to certain characteristics that a particular use or process may not exceed.

**Permeable:** Describes materials that permit water to enter the ground by virtue of their porous nature or by large spaces in the material. See also, *Pervious*.

**Perpetuity:** A state of something that is continuing or enduring forever. In planning, a limitation on property that is not destructible by the persons who hold an interest in the property, is said to be held in perpetuity.

**Pervious:** Describes materials that permit water to enter the ground by virtue of their porous nature or by large spaces in the material. See also, *Permeable*.

**Physiographic:** Pertaining to physical geography.

**Planning Commission:** The body of citizens appointed by the Board of Supervisors and empowered to prepare the Comprehensive Plan and to provide guidance on proposed land use changes for conformance with the Comprehensive Plan and other applicable land development policies and regulations. Every locality in the Commonwealth of Virginia is required to create a local planning commission in accordance with Section 15.2-2210 of the Code of Virginia.

**Pollution Management Program:** Program to help prevent water quality degradation and restore the health of lakes, rivers, streams and estuaries by promoting and funding measures to reduce and prevent nonpoint source pollution. Such programs may include watershed planning efforts, stream and wetland restoration and protection, and education and outreach.

**Prime Farmland** (as defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture): Land that has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops and is available for these uses. It can be cultivated land, pastureland, forestland, or other land, but it is not urban or built-up land or water areas.

***Proffer:*** A voluntary commitment from a landowner or developer to mitigate or eliminate the impact of new development on neighboring properties and the County. Such commitments may include the construction of certain improvements, contributions intended to mitigate development impacts, or assurances to develop property subject to specified conditions. See also, ***Capital Facility Proffer.***

***Property Assessed Clean Energy Program (PACE):*** A mechanism for financing energy efficiency and renewable energy improvements on private property created by the U.S. Department of Energy. PACE programs allow a property owner to finance the up-front cost of energy or other eligible improvements on a property and then pay the costs back over time through a voluntary assessment. The unique characteristic of PACE assessments is that the assessment is attached to the property rather than an individual.

***Public Facilities:*** Public works supplied, owned, managed, and/or maintained generally by a government organization or public authority. Examples include public roads, schools, water and sewer facilities, community centers, fire and rescue stations, public parks and recreation facilities, and libraries.

***Public Utilities (public water and sewer):*** A central or municipal water supply and/or sewer (wastewater) system.

***Pump-and-Haul:*** A sewage disposal method in which a sewage holding tank is pumped out on a regular basis and the raw sewage is transported by vehicle to an authorized treatment plant.

***Purchasing Power:*** An estimate of the amount of money a household can affordably spend to purchase a home, measured as household income multiplied by three.

## Q-R

***Quadruplex:*** A residential building that has separate but complete facilities to accommodate four households as adjacent and/or stacked units. See also, ***Single-Family Attached Residential.***

***Quality Development:*** Unique and functional community design components that promote high quality of life, enrich areas, create distinctive visual character, and ensure a pedestrian-friendly environment.

***Quality of Life:*** The standard of health, comfort, and happiness experienced by an individual or group.

***Quarry:*** A place, typically a large, deep pit, from which stone or other materials are or have been extracted.

***Questionable Soil:*** Where the classification, strength, or compressibility of the soil are in doubt or where a load-bearing value superior to that specified in the International Building Code is claimed.

***Real Property:*** Land and any immobile buildings or structures attached to the land.

***Recreation, Active:*** A type of open space featuring areas dedicated to leisure-time activities, usually of a formal nature and often performed with others, requiring equipment and taking place at prescribed sites or fields. Examples include ballfields, tennis or basketball courts, swimming pools, tot lots, golf courses, and other areas for recreational sports and games. See also, ***Open Space, Active Recreation***.

***Recreation, Passive:*** A type of open space featuring areas for activities that involve less energetic activities such as walking, sitting, picnicking, card games or table games. Examples include trails (hiking, biking, walking, or equestrian), picnic, camping, hunting, or fishing areas. Passive recreation uses have fewer potential impacts on the site and on surrounding land uses. See also, ***Open Space, Passive Recreation***.

***Redevelopment:*** The rehabilitation, removal and replacement, or adaptive reuse of existing structures or uses. This includes any development project that significantly modifies an existing developed site resulting in changes to its design, use, and/or intensity. Projects may involve razing existing structures and constructing completely new buildings and may require mitigation or remediation of the impacts of previous uses.

***Reinvestment:*** Reestablishing the economic and social vitality of an area through a combination of targeted efforts and investments that may be coordinated with redevelopment, infill, and adaptive reuse projects.

***Research and Development:*** Any use related to the invention, discovery, study, experimentation, evaluation, identification, verification, design preparation, or production of products, new technologies, techniques, or processes. Research and development functions would include repair, storage, sale, and resale of materials, goods, and products relating to the research and development use.

***Retail and Service Commercial:*** Uses primarily engaging in service business activity and/or the commercial retail sale, rental, or leasing of new or used products to the general public. See also, ***services***.

***Rezoning:*** A change in zoning district applicable to a given parcel or group of parcels of land.

***Ridgeline:*** A ground line located at the highest elevation of a drainage divide for the major watersheds mapped by the County or other prominent mountain ridges visible from the public right-of-way as identified during the land development process.

***Right-to-farm Act:*** A State Act that offers protection to farmers against nuisance suits. Localities are prevented from enforcing nuisance ordinances that would disrupt normal farm practices.

***Riparian:*** An area of land contiguous to a stream, river, lake or wetland that contains vegetation that, due to the presence of water, is distinctly different from the vegetation of adjacent areas.

***Riparian Forest:*** A strip of land along a river or stream where forest and vegetation help to protect water quality, filter pollutants, regulate water temperature, enhance aquatic and wildlife habitats, and provide aesthetic value to the river or stream. Also called a riparian forest buffer when part of a larger stream buffer.

***River and Stream Corridor Resources (RSCRs):*** Certain water resources and associated land areas, specifically:

- Rivers and streams draining 100 acres or more.
- Floodplains (including major and minor).
- Adjacent steep slopes (slope 25 percent or greater, starting within 50 feet of streams and floodplains, extending no farther than 100 feet beyond the originating stream or floodplain).
- 50-foot Management Buffer surrounding the floodplains and adjacent steep slopes.
- Wetlands, forests, historic and cultural resources, and archaeological sites that fall within the area of one or more of the above elements.

***Rural Character:*** A term broadly applied to the appearance and experience associated with natural and man-made environments, comprising any combination of agricultural, forestal, environmental, scenic, historic and/or cultural elements that define a rural setting or landscape.

***Rural Economy:*** A collection of traditional and non-traditional rural business uses that are dependent on the rural land base for its agricultural productivity, scenic quality, and rural character to sustain business activities. Rural economy uses include but are not limited to agriculture; crop and livestock production; forestry; horticulture and specialty farm products; farm markets and wayside stands; the equine industry; orchards; vineyards; farm wineries; cideries and breweries; farm restaurants; hospitality services such as bed and breakfasts, country inns, banquet/event facilities, and rural resorts; and private camps and parks.

***Rural/Heritage Tourism:*** A range of attractions and activities that take place in rural/heritage areas, including the range of ***agritourism*** uses, equestrian events, agricultural and cultural fairs and festivals, village historic sites, farm wineries, farm breweries, and rural hospitality uses.

## S

### ***Scenic Highway/Virginia Byway:***

- ***National Scenic Byway:*** A road located within a protected corridor and having recreational, historic or scenic interest.
- ***Virginia Byway:*** A road or part of a road having high aesthetic or cultural value or leading to an area of significant historical, national or recreational interest. Designation by Virginia Department of Transportation on recommendation of

the Commission on Outdoor Recreation with approval of local Board of Supervisors. Designation does not imply any particular protection of the roadway from development or structural improvements.

***Scenic River*** : A river or section or portion of a river that has been designated by an act of the Virginia General Assembly pursuant to Section 10.1-400 of the Code of Virginia and that possesses superior natural and scenic beauty, fish and wildlife, and historic, recreational, geologic, cultural and other assets.

***Self-Sustaining Communities***: Communities planned, built, or modified to be economically, environmentally, and socially healthy and resilient.

***Septic System***: Subsurface sewage disposal system that uses the natural absorption of soil to treat wastewater. The common use is to serve one dwelling, but could be designed to serve several homes. ***Drainfield*** refers to this soil absorption trench fed by pipes from the dwelling.

***Services***: Establishments primarily engaged in providing assistance, as opposed to products, to individuals, business, industry, government, and other enterprises, including hotels and other lodging places; personal, business, repair, and amusement services; health, legal, engineering, and other professional services; educational services; membership organizations; and other miscellaneous services.

***Setback***: The distance from a property line to a structure or use such as parking, governed by the Zoning Ordinance, covenants, easements, proffers, and/or conditions at the time of legislative approval.

***Severely Cost-burdened Household***: A household that spends 50 percent or more of their income on housing (gross rent or mortgage).

***Shared Water and Sewer Systems***: Water and/or sewage (wastewater) treatment systems that are designed to serve individual users or a number of residences such as a cluster located outside the central service area of eastern Loudoun. See also, ***Community System***.

***Silviculture***: The art and science of controlling the establishment, growth, composition, health, and quality of forests and woodlands.

***Single-Family Attached Residential***: A classification of housing featuring two or more attached similar dwelling units sharing common walls, ceilings, or floors and where each unit has its own external entrance. See also, ***Duplex***, ***Triplex***, ***Quadruplex***, and ***Townhouse***.

***Single-Family Detached Residential***: A classification of housing containing one dwelling unit designed for one family and located on a single lot.

***Site Plan***: A plan, to scale, showing proposed uses and structures for a parcel of land, prepared in accordance with the Zoning Ordinance and Facilities Standards Manual. It includes such information as location of lot lines, streets, buildings, parking areas, landscaping, utility lines and topographic information.

***Small Area Plan:*** Element of the Comprehensive Plan establishing areas, as authorized under Code of Virginia Section 15.2-2303.4, that are exempt from the proffer legislation provisions established by Code of Virginia Section 15.2-2303.4.

***Small Lot Single-Family Attached Residential:*** Single-family attached homes in various configurations including one-to-four residential units in buildings that resemble single-family detached homes, semi-detached units, and more conventional duplexes and townhouses with smaller floor areas to encourage density and housing diversity.

***Small Lot Single-Family Detached Residential:*** Single-family detached homes built on lots that are smaller than typically allowed in single-family zoning districts served by central or municipal utilities to encourage density and housing diversity. Such lots generally range from 5,000 to 7,000 square feet in area with corresponding lot widths of 50 to 70 feet.

***Special Activities:*** Larger scale destination uses or activities that include such uses as professional sports stadiums, conference facilities, event venues, and theme parks.

***Special Needs Population:*** A population group whose members may require specialized services or accommodations, including low income residents (incomes below the 30 percent AMI), elderly residents requiring congregate care, disabled residents, and the homeless.

***Special Taxing District:*** A geographical area wherein landowners are levied a special assessment in order to provide a desired or necessary amenity or facility mutually beneficial to the landowners of the district.

***Specimen Tree:*** Any tree that has been individually recognized by the local governing body for its special status. A tree may receive this designation by virtue of its outstanding size and quality for its particular species, especially if it represents a locally significant native species. Trees associated with the character of a community, trees that are relatively rare in an area, whether native or not, may also be awarded this status. The category also includes other locally significant trees that are significant on account of their great age or are especially renowned for their aesthetic or community value. The function of a tree in a landscape may be sufficient to justify special status such as a landmark pair of trees that frame an entrance and/or serve as natural gateways to historic sites, towns, or villages.

***Sports Arena/Training Facility:*** An enclosed area, often circular or oval-shaped, designed to showcase theatre, musical performances, or sporting events. It is composed of a large open space surrounded on most or all sides by seating for spectators, and may be covered by a roof.

***Steep Slopes:*** Surface formation with a vertical incline greater than 25 percent, a sufficient steepness to cause problems such as erosion or increased flooding when land is disturbed. See also ***Moderately Steep Slopes.***

***Stormwater Runoff:*** The portion of the total precipitation that does not sink into the soil but instead flows across the ground or other surface and eventually reaches a watercourse.

***Stream Buffer:*** A minimum area of land directly adjacent to and on either side of a river or stream. The primary purpose of the stream buffer is to provide adequate filtration of pollutants and improve water quality. Defined as part of the ***River and Stream Corridor Resources***.

***Stream Corridors:*** Alternate terminology for ***River and Stream Corridor Resources***.

***Subdivision:*** The division of a parcel of land into two or more new parcels. The process of subdividing is regulated by the Zoning Ordinance and the Land Subdivision and Development Ordinance.

***Subordinate Lot:*** A lot created pursuant to the Principal/Subordinate Subdivision Option of the Zoning Ordinance, which enables a property to be further divided into one or more smaller lots as identified in the Zoning Ordinance.

***Sustainable Site Design:*** A development approach intended to create and sustain a high quality of community values and environmental responsibility in design and construction of buildings, infrastructure, transport, and landscape. The construction methods employed should ensure that each step of the building process is focused on eliminating unnecessary site disruption (e.g., excessive grading, blasting, clearing) and resource degradation (e.g., stream siltation, groundwater contamination, air-quality loss). The strategies can harness features such as ventilating breezes, solar gain, and microclimates, and can mitigate unfavorable features such as cold, moist air drainage; desiccating winds; and increased stormwater runoff. The building process should be strategically charted in stages to avoid unnecessary site disruption, and to achieve an orderly construction sequence from site clearing to site finish. Such a strategy reduces costs and damage to the site. It requires close coordination between all sub-contractors.

## T

***Technical Assistance:*** Assistance provided by specialists in the form of sharing information and expertise, instruction, skills training, transmission of working knowledge, and consulting services and may also involve the transfer of technical data.

***Technology Zone:*** Designated areas where local jurisdictions may grant tax incentives and provide certain regulatory flexibility to encourage new and expanding technology businesses.

***Tourism Zone:*** Designated areas wherein local jurisdictions may grant tax incentives and provide certain regulatory flexibility for tourism-related development projects.

***Townhouse:*** A classification of housing where a series of three or more attached similar dwelling units are located on separately-owned lots separated by common walls and where each unit has its own external entrance. See also, ***Single-Family Attached Residential***.

***Traffic Calming:*** Measures designed to reduce the speed of motor vehicles, alter driver behavior, and improve conditions for non-motorized street users and may include both

physical (e.g., raised crosswalk, traffic circle, speed bumps) and non-physical measures (community education and enforcement).

***Transit:*** A shared mode of transportation that operates on a fixed route and fixed schedule and is available to all who pay the fare, including bus services, light rail, and heavy rail.

***Transit Oriented Development (TOD):*** Mixed-use neighborhoods designed to encourage and leverage transit ridership to create vibrant, complete communities. TODs often feature a rail or bus station at their center, surrounded by relatively high-density development decreasing in density as distance from the core increases. TOD neighborhoods encourage cycling and walking to maximize transit usage, feature streets with high levels of connectivity and traffic calming, and limit the land area dedicated to vehicular parking.

***Transit Station:*** Structures housing both passengers and transportation systems' operations and equipment.

***Transit Stop:*** A location along the street or transit line that has simple facilities like signage and shelters.

***Tree Stand:*** A plant community predominantly consisting of trees and other woody vegetation sufficiently uniform in species composition, age, arrangement and condition: an area to be distinguishable as a group from the forest or other growth in the adjoining area.

***Triplex:*** A residential building that has separate but complete facilities to accommodate three households as adjacent and/or stacked units. See also, ***Single-Family Attached Residential.***

## U

***Understory:*** Low trees and large shrubs located below the canopy in a wooded area.

***Universal Design:*** The simple design of both products and the built environment to be useable by people of all ages and abilities, and which promotes the ability for people to age in place.

***Unmet Housing Needs:*** The lack of housing options for households earning up to 100% of the Washington Metropolitan Area Median Income (AMI).

***Unstable Soils:*** Soils that because of their composition and unique landscape position have a higher than normal potential for erosion, particularly during periods of high rainfall.

***Use-Value Taxation:*** A program authorized by the state and implemented by localities at their option in which qualifying agricultural, forestal, and open space land is taxed at its use value rather than at its market value for development. Sometimes referred to as “land use taxation.”

## V-Z

***Vacancy rate:*** The proportion of rental units that are available for rent or otherwise unoccupied. When used in the context of rental housing units, vacancy rate is an indicator of supply in the home rental market.

***Very Low-Income Household:*** A household with an annual income between 30 and 50 percent of the Area Median Income (AMI).

***Vision Zero:*** A strategy to eliminate all traffic fatalities and severe injuries, while increasing safe, healthy, equitable mobility for all.

***Warehousing:*** A land use involving the storage of goods that will be sold or distributed later.

***Watershed:*** All of the land area that drains water to a specific point such as a stream, river, lake, or bay. Watershed areas are defined by topography and vary in size from small local drainage areas to large river basins. Large watersheds are composed of multiple smaller watersheds. In Loudoun County, watersheds have been defined and mapped most often at one of two sizes for use in water resource and hydrologic studies. At the larger of the two sizes, the county is divided into 17 watersheds.

***Wellhead Protection Plan:*** A plan identifying and protecting the land area where subsurface water flows to public drinking water supply wells in order to protect groundwater from potential contaminants.

***Wetlands:*** Vegetated areas where plants are rooted in water or water-saturated soil, or that regularly tolerate flooding for extensive time periods. Includes but is not limited to swamps and marshes. Many wetlands do not appear wet at all times.

***Zoning District:*** A classification of land as designated by the Zoning Ordinance and depicted on the Zoning Map that prescribes applicable land use requirements and building and development standards.

***Zoning Ordinance:*** A local ordinance enabled by Section 15.2-2280 of the Code of Virginia that implements a locality's comprehensive plan by prescribing land use requirements and building and development standards.