

GLOSSARY

The glossary provides definitions of words, terms and land use designations 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. The definitions in this document are working definitions that are subject to additions, deletions, and refinement before updates are proposed to the Comprehensive Plan.

GENERAL TERMS

Accessory Dwelling Unit — A subordinate dwelling unit attached or detached to a single family structure. The unit may not be subdivided or otherwise segregated in ownership from the primary residence structure.

Active Recreation Facilities— Facilities for structured or unstructured outdoor and indoor recreation activities such as sports fields, play areas, golf courses, marinas, waterfront, swimming pools, skating rinks, outdoor theaters, gyms, meeting space, or game rooms.

Affordable Housing — Housing that is affordable to a family that earns up to 80 percent of the area median income, adjusted for family size. See: Low-income Housing, Very Low-income Housing and Moderate-income Housing.

Area Median Income – The annual household income for the Seattle-Bellevue Metro Area as published on approximately 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 very-low, low and moderate income families on the Eastside.

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 Facilities —An improvements that accommodates or encourages bicycling. Some examples include commuter bicycle parking, bike racks, and various types of bicycle lanes and shared use 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 Master 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 Master Plan, that depicts a plan for a complete network of bicycle routes serving the entire community and compatible with 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.

Capital Investment Program Plan (CIP) — 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.

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 within a neighborhood and provides connections to minor or major arterials. Collectors 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 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 – A street that provides appropriate accommodation for multiple modes of travel, including vehicles, pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and persons of all abilities, 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 – Countywide Centers are 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 BelRed, Crossroads, Eastgate, Factoria and Wilburton-East Main. The boundaries differ from Neighborhood Areas by the same name and can be found in Map LU-X.

Countywide Planning Policies — The countywide growth management policy plan required by the state Growth Management Act (GMA) 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.

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.

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 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 a buffer area immediately adjacent to the critical area.

Critical Areas Report — A special study conducted in association with a proposed project in a Critical Area Overlay District to determine the long term effects of the project on the habitat features on or near the subject site, and to determine a range of development options to protect the environment equal to or better than the prescriptive regulations.

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.

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. The Downtown also provides a location for high-density, residential development. Downtown Bellevue is designated a Regional Growth Center in VISION 2040 and an Urban Center in the Countywide Planning Policies.

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

Eastside Rail Corridor (ERC) – 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.

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

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

Equestrian Overlay Area— A designated area of the city intended to preserve an existing equestrian community. An Equestrian Overlay Area lends support for maintaining an equestrian supportive environment. It provides a framework for making land use and capital investment decisions regarding the type and location of transportation or trail facilities, or the location of arterial crossings leading to regional facilities, consistent with existing subarea and comprehensive plan land use policies. An Equestrian Overlay Area encourages the ability to safely circulate within equestrian neighborhoods, access to regional/community trails or equestrian facilities, and signage to alert residents, newcomers, and travelers to the community’s character. Additionally, an Equestrian Overlay Area seeks to promote community, encourage environmentally sound horse keeping, and sustain the area’s historical character.

Equestrian System — A network of horse trails serving portions of the community and compatible with regional and interjurisdictional needs.

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.

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.)

Functions and Values — Functions are the ecological things that critical areas do and can 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 goods and services provided by critical areas.

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 Infrastructure – The natural systems, including streams, wetlands, trees, soil and other environmental features that help the city function environmentally.

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.

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 operating on a fixed guideway, dedicated right-of-way, or freeway/ express facility, designed to carry a large number of riders at higher speeds 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.

High-rise Building – See massing diagrams in the Future Land Use Map key.

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

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.

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.

Large Woody Debris (LWD) — Tree branches, stumps, and logs that fall naturally into streams or are strategically placed in them to improve or restore the functions and values of the stream segment. Most naturally occurring LWD in streams is derived from trees growing in the riparian corridor.

Level of Service (LOS) — The term used to denote different operating conditions when accommodating various levels of use. For traffic conditions, LOS is represented on a scale ranging from LOS A, which represents free flowing conditions, to LOS F, which represents conditions with excessive delay.

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 access to abutting land uses and carry local traffic to 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 family that earns less than 50 percent of the area median income, adjusted for family size.

Low-rise Building — See massing diagrams in the Future Land Use Map key.

Major Arterial – A street that provides efficient direct routes for long-distance auto travel within the region. Streets connecting freeway interchanges to major concentrations of commercial activities are classified as major arterials. Traffic on major arterials is given preference at intersections, and some access control may be exercised in order to maintain the capacity to carry high volumes of traffic.

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.

Mid-rise Building – See massing diagrams in the Future Land Use Map key.

Minor Arterial – A street that provides connections between major arterials and concentrations of residential and commercial activities. The amount of through traffic is less, and there is more service to abutting land uses. Traffic flow is given preference over lesser streets.

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

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 multiple modes of transportation including bus, light rail, pedestrian, and/or bicycle.

Mobility Option — The ability of a person traveling within the city or the region to choose one or more of several means of transport, including automobiles, public transit, walking, bicycling, and ridesharing.

Moderate-income Housing — Housing that is affordable to a family that earns between 50 percent and 80 percent of the area median income, adjusted for family size.

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 walking, bicycling, riding transit, driving, and freight mobility as means of transportation and incorporating connections among modes.

Nonmotorized Transportation —A mobility option that does not require a motor.

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 for active and/or passive recreational uses. Includes parkland, wildlife corridors, natural areas, and greenways. May also include school lands and private land permanently reserved as undeveloped.

Passive Recreation — Outdoor recreation which does not require significant facilities, such as walking, picnicking, viewing, and environmental education activities.

Pedestrian Corridor —A corridor that is primarily for exclusive pedestrian use in the alignment of NE 6th Street between 102nd Avenue NE and 112th Avenue NE in the Downtown. Pedestrian-oriented frontage, plazas, street arcades, and other amenities are to be located along the corridor.

Pedestrian Crossing — Locations of designated pedestrian street crossings other than at intersections. Potential locations are identified on the Pedestrian System Plan Map for further study to determine if, and what type of, improved pedestrian crossing can be built.

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

Pedestrian System Plan Map — In the Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan, a map that depicts a complete 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 Master Plan.

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 development permit that allows more flexibility in site development than a standard subdivision. A PUD may contain features such as variety in the type, design, and arrangement of structures; a mix of land uses; conservation of natural land features; and efficient use of open space.

Potential Annexation Area (PAA)— A line 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.

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.

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 privately- or publicly-owned vehicles, including carpools and vanpools.

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

Semi-public — Those portions of private development that connect with public spaces and are used incidentally by the public.

Sensitive Area — See Critical Area.

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.

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 family, except where a valid accessory dwelling unit registration has been approved.

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

Steep Slopes — Hillsides with a slope of 15 percent grade or more as defined in the Land Use Code.

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.

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

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.

Transit-supportive Design — Physical development characteristics that encourage transit use.

Transit-oriented development (TOD) — Development that is within one-half mile from and oriented toward a transit station that provides frequent, reliable service. TOD optimizes transit use through a compact mix of housing, retail and office uses and a walkable, pedestrian-oriented character.

Transportation 2040 – An action plan produced by the Puget Sound Regional Council for transportation in the Central Puget Sound Region.

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.

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 family that earns less than 30 percent of the area median income, adjusted for family size.

Village — A contained community that includes housing along with commercial and office uses serving local needs. Mixed-use structures and developments are encouraged, but not mandatory.

VISION 2040 – The 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.”