

# Glossary of Terms & Index

The Glossary is not a formally adopted part of the Comprehensive Plan and is intended for general guidance only. In the event of a conflict between these definitions and a formal, legal definition established by a City ordinance such as the Zone Regulations, the legal definition shall prevail.

Definitions in this section are drawn from many different sources, including Office of Planning staff and its consultants, the Comprehensive Plan itself, other city plans and planning documents, the DC Zone Regulations, the APA Planners Dictionary, Random House Dictionary, and websites such as [www.dc.gov](http://www.dc.gov), [wikipedia.com](http://wikipedia.com), [dictionary.com](http://dictionary.com), and [reference.com](http://reference.com). Definitions found in these secondary sources have been modified and adapted based on the use of each term in the Comprehensive Plan.

**LIST OF AGENCY ABBREVIATIONS**

ABCB	Alcoholic Beverage Control Board	EOM	Executive Office of the Mayor
ANC	Office of Advisory Neighborhood Commissions	FEMS	Fire and Emergency Services
AOC	Architect of the Capitol	HPRB	Historic Preservation Review Board
AWC	Anacostia Waterfront Corporation	MPD	Metropolitan Police Department
CC	Council of the District of Columbia (DC Council)	MWCOG	Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments
CFA	Commission of Fine Arts	MTA	Maryland Transit Authority
COAH	Commission on Arts and Humanities	NCPC	National Capital Planning Commission
DBID	Downtown Business Improvement District	NCRC	National Capital Revitalization Corporation
DCEMA	DC Emergency Management Agency	NPS	National Park Service
DCEO	DC Energy Office	OA	Office on Aging
DCEP	DC Economic Partnership	OAG	Office of the Attorney General
DCHA	DC Housing Authority	OAPIA	Office of Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs
DCPL	DC Public Library	OCA	Office of the City Administrator
DCPS	DC Public Schools	OCFO	Office of the Chief Financial Officer
DCPSC	DC Public Service Commission	OCTO	Office of the Chief Technology Officer
DCRA	Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs	OHR	Office of Human Rights
DCSEC	DC Sports and Entertainment Commission	OLA	Office of Latino Affairs
DCTC	DC Taxicab Commission	OLBD	Office of Local Business Development
DCWIC	DC Workforce Investment Council	OP	Office of Planning
DDOT	District Department of Transportation	OP-HPO	Historic Preservation Office
DHCD	Department of Housing and Community Development	OPM	Office of Property Management
DHS	Department of Human Services	OTR	Office of Tax and Revenue
DMCFYE	Deputy Mayor for Children, Families, Youth & Elders	OZ	Office of Zoning
DMH	Department of Mental Health	SEO	State Education Office
DMO	Deputy Mayor for Operations	UDC	University of the District of Columbia
DMPED	Deputy Mayor for Planning & Economic Development	USEPA	US Environmental Protection Agency
DMV	Department of Motor Vehicles	USDOT	US Department of Transportation
DOE	Department of the Environment	USFHWA	US Federal Highway Administration
DOES	Department of Employment Services	USFWS	US Fish and Wildlife Service
DOH	Department of Health	VDRPT	VA Department of Rail and Public Transportation
DOS	Department of State	WASA	DC Water and Sewer Authority
DPR	Department of Parks and Recreation	WCTC	Washington Convention and Tourism Corporation
DPW	Department of Public Works	WMATA	Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority
		ZC	Zoning Commission

**LIST OF ACRONYMS**

ADA	Americans With Disabilities Act
ANC	Advisory Neighborhood Commission
BID	Business Improvement District
BRAC	Base Reuse and Closure
BRT	Bus Rapid Transit
BZA	Board of Zoning Adjustments
CBRF	Community Based Residential Facility
CDBG	Community Development Block Grant
CIP	Capital Improvement Program
DCMR	DC Municipal Regulations
DCPCA	DC Primary Care Association
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
EISF	Environmental Impact Screening Form
EMF	Electromagnetic Field
FAA	Federal Aviation Administration
FAR	Floor Area Ratio
FMBZA	Foreign Missions Board of Zoning Adjustment
GIS	Geographic Information System
LEED	Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design
LOS	Level of Service
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSA	Metropolitan Statistical Area
MS4	Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (permit)
NAICS	North American Industry Classification System
NOMA	North of Massachusetts Avenue
NPDES	National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (permit)
PADC	Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation
PILOT	Payment In Lieu of Taxes
PDR	Production, Distribution, and Repair
PUD	Planned Unit Development
SHPO	State Historic Preservation Officer
SNIP	Strategic Neighborhood Investment Program
TOD	Transit-Oriented Development
TMDL	Total Maximum Daily Load
TDR	Transfer of Development Rights
TRT	Technical Review Team
VMT	Vehicle Miles Traveled

## COMPREHENSIVE PLAN TERMS

**60/40 rule:** Federal guideline adopted in 1968 which set a target of retaining 60 percent of the Washington Metropolitan Area’s federal jobs within the District of Columbia.

### A

**Abandoned:** A structure that has been vacated and left to deteriorate to the point where it is no longer habitable.

**Abate (Abatement):** To put an end to; to reduce in intensity or degree.

**Accessory apartment:** A self-contained living unit (with kitchen and bath), either attached to or detached from, and in addition to, the primary residential unit on a single lot. Sometimes called “in-law” unit, “second unit,” or “granny flat”.

**Accommodate:** To change current conditions or to make room for change, without crowding or creating an inconvenience.

**Act 2-144:** The 1978 Council action establishing the foundation for the District of Columbia’s current preservation program. The Act strengthened legal protections for designated historic properties and established the DC Inventory of Historic Sites.

**Action:** A specific step to be taken by District government to implement the policies in the Comprehensive Plan, such as the adoption of a new ordinance or completion of a capital improvement project.

**Activate (the street):** The act of making a street lively by introducing activities that generate foot traffic (cafes, restaurants, live music, etc.) and providing features that are inviting to pedestrians (benches, landscaping, art, etc.).

**Active recreation:** Type of recreation or activity requiring the use of organized play areas such as softball, baseball, football and soccer fields, tennis and basketball courts and various forms of children’s play equipment.

**Adaptive re-use:** A process through which an older building, particularly one with historic value, is rehabilitated or adapted to respond to current market demand for commercial or residential space.

**Addition:** An expansion of the floor area of a structure, usually resulting in a larger building footprint or additional building height and often resulting in additional habitable rooms.

**Adequate:** Sufficient for a specific requirement.

**Adjacent:** Having a common endpoint or border.

**Adverse effect:** Impairment of, or damage to, the environment, human health and safety, or public and private property.

**Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC):** An elected board representing a geographic subarea of the District of Columbia charged with advising on policies and programs affecting traffic, parking, recreation, street improvements, liquor licenses, zoning, economic development, police protection, sanitation and trash collection, and the District’s annual budget. There are 37 ANCs in the District.

**Affordable housing:** Housing that can be rented or purchased by a household with very low, low, or moderate income for less than 30 percent of that household’s gross monthly income. See Housing Element for expanded definition.

**Age in place:** The ability to grow old in one’s own residence, rather than moving to an assisted living or nursing facility, often accomplished by retrofitting the residence to respond to decreased mobility.

**Air rights development:** Development that occurs in the space over a piece of property, structure, or surface feature such as a highway or rail yard.

**Alcoholic beverage control:** Set of oversight activities involving businesses where alcoholic beverages are sold, including investigations, licensing, handling of complaints, keeping of records, and referral of evidence of criminal misconduct.

**Alley:** A narrow public access way running behind buildings and used to provide services to the rear of properties. Alleys in the District are officially designated in the records of the Surveyor of the District of Columbia

**Alley closing:** An official action in which a designated alley is reclassified to enable its conversion to a new use, most often redevelopment with a building.

**Alley dwelling:** A residence accessible only via an alley, rather than from a street. This was a common form of housing in the District in the 19th Century, often used as an indicator of slum conditions in the 1950s and 60s.

**Alteration:** Any change to the interior or exterior of a structure, not necessarily resulting in larger floor area.

**Alternative energy source:** A source of energy other than petroleum products, coal, or nuclear energy.

**Alternative mode of transportation:** Any mode of transportation other than a personal automobile. Such modes include bicycles, buses, light or heavy rail, walking, shuttles, ferries, vanpools, and shared cars, among others.

**Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA):** Federal legislation specifying provisions to be made in the design (or redesign) of buildings, parking, and outdoor areas to remove barriers for persons with disabilities and guaranteeing equal opportunity access in public accommodations, transportation and government services.

**Ambient:** Pertaining to the surrounding area or environment, particularly used to describe background noise levels.

**Amendment:** In the context of the Comprehensive Plan, refers to a formal process initiated by the Mayor and requiring Council approval in which the text of the Plan is changed or the Future Land Use Map is modified.

**Amendment Cycle:** Four-year cycle in which the Comprehensive Plan is reviewed and amended, as prescribed by the Home Rule Act.

**Amenity:** A feature that increases attractiveness and value.

**Anacostia Waterfront Initiative:** Multi-agency program initiated during the administration of Mayor Anthony Williams aimed at improving environmental quality, creating new parks and trails, establishing new communities, and rebuilding infrastructure along both sides of the Anacostia River.

**Apprenticeship:** The act of learning a craft or trade from one who is engaged in it, often through a formal agreement for a specified time period.

**Appropriate:** Suitable to a particular place or condition.

**Approval condition:** A requirement established by District government (including City Commissions) as a pre-requisite for constructing or altering a building or undertaking a development.

**Aquatic:** Pertaining to water, either in the natural or built environment. Aquatic “habitats” include rivers, streams, lakes, ponds, etc. Aquatic “facilities” include swimming pools, boathouses, piers, etc.

**Archaeological:** Relating to material remains of past human life or activities. May refer to Native American remains or to the remains of early American or European settlement.

**Archaeological curation facility:** A structure or space used to store or display archaeological artifacts.

**Architect of the Capitol:** Federal agency responsible for the maintenance, operation, development, and preservation of the US Capitol, congressional office buildings, Supreme Court, US Botanic Garden, and other related facilities.

**Architectural fabric:** *See “urban fabric”*

**Architectural projection:** A feature of a building that extends beyond the main exterior wall, such as a balcony or deck, an awning, or a hanging sign.

**Architecturally sensitive:** Sympathetic to and compatible with existing exterior architectural features, such as building materials, window placement, and rooflines.

**Area element:** A chapter of the District’s Comprehensive Plan focused on one of 10 sub-areas within the City, interpreting citywide policies at a place-specific level.

**Area(s) of strong architectural character:** Term used by the 1984 Comprehensive Plan Urban Design Element used to define areas of high-quality (often historic) architecture, with policies ensuring sensitive infill development.

**Areawide median income:** The median household income for the Washington Metropolitan Area (including suburban Maryland and Virginia), stratified by household size.

**Arterial:** Roadway mainly serving through traffic; takes traffic to and from expressways and freeways with limited access to adjacent properties.

**Arts and cultural facility:** A structure used for the advancement of the performing, visual, or creative arts, such as a theater, an art gallery, an art school, artist housing, a studio, a concert hall, a movie theater, or a museum.

**Arts community:** Informal term used to describe all manner of artists and arts advocates.

**Arts district:** A designated geographic area in which theaters, galleries, studios, and other cultural venues and arts facilities are concentrated, supported, and promoted.

**Arts industry:** Refers to the sector of the economy containing the performing, visual, and creative arts.

**Arts overlay:** A zoning designation that modifies the basic zoning designation within a defined area (see “Arts district” above) to create incentives (or requirements) for arts-related uses.

**Assisted housing:** Any housing in which the monthly rent or mortgage payment is reduced due to a partial government subsidy.

**Assisted living:** A living arrangement in which people with special needs, especially seniors or persons with disabilities, reside in a facility that provides help with everyday tasks such as bathing, dressing, and taking medication.

**At-grade:** The intersection of two streets, or a street and a railroad or other transportation facility, on the ground surface. Contrasted with grade-separated, where one of the two routes is elevated or depressed so that they do not directly intersect.

**At risk (housing):** Housing units receiving a fixed-term public subsidy that is about to expire, potentially displacing residents who cannot pay market-rate rents.

**At risk (youth):** Teens living in an environment where future anti-social or criminal behavior is likely without intervention or the introduction of positive alternatives.

**Attenuation:** The act of lessening the amount, force, magnitude, or value of.

**Auto mall:** A concentration of auto dealerships, usually arranged in a planned fashion on one or more adjoining tracts of land.

**Auto-oriented** (center, shopping, land use, etc.): A form of development that is oriented towards passing auto traffic and presumes people will use cars to travel to and from the site.

**Average household size:** See “household size”

**Axial:** A long straight line along which other activities are organized. Axial *view* refers to a long, straight, horizontal view.

## B

**Back office:** Office space used to house the ancillary and support activities of a business not usually seen by visitors, such as data processing, call centers, and records storage.

**Backward-linked industry:** An industry that supplies goods and services to businesses in one of the core sectors of the city’s economy. For example, a laundry that serves the city’s large hotels, or a caterer that serves large federal clients.

**Background traffic:** Traffic with origins and destinations outside a defined area, but passing through the study area. For instance, trips starting in Arlington, passing through the District, and ending in Silver Spring.

**Balanced transportation system:** A transportation system providing numerous equally attractive choices for the traveler, such as taking a bus, riding a subway, driving, or bicycling.

**Barrier:** (1) A physical obstacle, such as a wall or fence, which bars passage or impedes access; (2) something that restrains or obstructs progress.

**Barrier-free design (also called barrier-free access):** The design of buildings, parks, infrastructure, transit systems, and public spaces in a manner that allows full access by persons with disabilities.

**Base Realignment and Closure:** Federal Department of Defense program in which the US military is periodically reorganized and land assets are redeployed to more efficiently support strategic defense operations.

**Baseline:** The starting condition, against which future conditions can be compared and measured.

**Beautification:** To embellish or enhance with landscaping, art, street and sidewalk improvements, restored natural features, and other physical changes that are visually pleasing.

**Bed and Breakfast:** A private residence, several rooms of which are set aside for overnight guests whose paid accommodations include breakfast.

**Benchmark/benchmarking:** A quantifiable standard against which something can be measured or judged.

**Best Available Control Technology:** Any of a number of state-of-the-art methods used to reduce pollution at the source, such as advanced filtering systems, etc.

**Best practices:** Local technologies, operating methods, procedures and strategies that demonstrate progressive thinking, innovative approaches, and state of the art solutions to address challenges shared by multiple communities.

**Bicycle amenity (Bicycle facility):** A physical feature which facilitates the use of bicycles for transportation, such as bike racks, bike lockers, bike lanes, and signed bike routes.

**Bicycle Master Plan:** A Plan adopted by the District of Columbia which addresses the improvement and expansion of the city’s bicycle route system, and an array of improvements designed to make cycling safer and more practical.

**Bicycle-friendly:** Conducive to travel by bicycle.

**Big box:** A large retail store, usually offering bulk-quantity merchandise at discounted prices, often in an industrial or warehouse-type structure.

**Bike lane:** An on-street separately striped and signed lane for the movement of bicycles.

**Bike path:** An improved off-road bike path that is not part of a roadway (for example, the Capital Crescent Trail).

**Bike route:** A roadway that has been designated as a bike route by signage only. Bicycles move within the traffic or parking lanes.

**Biodiversity:** The diversity of plant and animal species found within a particular environment.

**Bioengineered:** A man-made feature (such as a drainage channel) that has been designed in a way that replicates the equivalent naturally occurring biologic system.

**Blight:** A condition of a site, structure, or area that may cause nearby buildings and/or areas to decline in attractiveness and/or utility.

**Board of Zoning Adjustments:** An independent, quasi-judicial body of the DC Government empowered to grant relief from the strict application of Zoning Regulations (Variances), approve certain uses of land (Special Exceptions), and hear appeals of actions taken by the Zoning Administrator. The Board's five members consist of three Mayoral appointees, a rotating member of the Zoning Commission, and an appointee of the National Capital Planning Commission.

**Boulevard:** A wide multi-lane street of high visual quality, usually with a planted median strip down the center.

**Boundary street:** Refers to Eastern Avenue, Western Avenue, and Southern Avenue; the streets forming the physical edges of the District of Columbia.

**Bow-tie park:** A set of adjoining small triangular-shaped parks and plazas within the L'Enfant Plan area that collectively resemble the shape of bow-tie.

**Branding:** The use of logos, slogans, advertisements, or symbols to promote consumer awareness of a particular place, product, program, or activity.

**Brownfield:** A tract of land that has been developed for industrial purposes, polluted, and then abandoned.

**Buffer:** An area separating two distinct land uses that acts to soften or reduce the effects of one land use on another.

**Buffering:** The act of reducing the effects of one land use on another, usually through landscaping, fencing, architectural design, or distance standards applied in the siting of structures and site activities.

**Built out:** Development of land to its theoretical capacity as permitted under current or proposed planning or zoning designations.

**Bulk trash/bulk waste:** Large items such as old furniture and household appliances.

**Bus rapid transit (BRT):** A form of rapid transit using buses but designed to provide higher capacity and operating efficiency, and faster service than conventional buses. Vehicles are often designed to resemble light-rail vehicles, and may operate in their own travel lanes, with amenities such as stations and platforms.

**Business district:** Any part of the City where the predominant use is commercial or industrial.

**Business infrastructure:** The physical conditions and facilities necessary for businesses to operate efficiently, including the presence of industries that supply essential goods and services (janitorial services, printing, office supplies, etc.)

**Business improvement district:** A special district created by the agreement of local property owners for the purpose of improving infrastructure, promoting economic development, marketing the area, improving its physical appearance and upkeep, enhancing public safety, and programming special events. Operations are typically funded by property owner payments, grants, and local government subsidies.

**Business incubator:** A facility in which new small businesses can locate at reduced costs, sharing common services such as clerical support and reprographics.

## C

**Campus:** The grounds of a school, college, university, academy, hospital, or other large institution.

**Capital Improvement Plan (or Program):** A program administered by a city or county government which schedules the construction of public facilities and infrastructure usually for a minimum of five years in the future, to fit the projected fiscal capability of the local jurisdiction.

**Capital project/capital investment:** A physical improvement that requires the expenditure of local capital dollars; usually excluding operating and maintenance projects.

**Capital Space Initiative:** Joint District/federal initiative working to create a shared planning framework for local and federal open space within the District of Columbia.

**Capitol Hill Planning Area:** Planning area used in the Comprehensive Plan to present data and policies for the area generally lying east of the US Capitol and west of the Anacostia River, north of the SE/SW Freeway, and south of Florida Avenue and Benning Road.

**Capitol Interest Overlay Zone:** A zoning designation applying to a portion of Capitol Hill intended to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the U.S. Capitol complex by regulating use, height, and bulk.

**Carbon monoxide:** A colorless, odorless, poisonous gas produced by automobiles and other machines with internal combustion engines as they burn fossil fuels.

**Career ladder:** Refers to the upward progression of an individual to positions of successively more responsibility and compensation in a given field or profession.

**Career-oriented curriculum:** A school curriculum designed to prepare students for careers in particular professions, such as the performing arts or construction trades.

**Carriage house:** A small building originally designed to house coaches or vehicles and often converted to new uses, such as accessory apartments.

**Carry-out:** A small business where meals or other food products are sold for consumption off-site.

**Car-sharing:** A system where a fleet of cars is owned jointly by the users on a membership basis. The fleet is made available to members on an hourly or daily basis, by reservation.

**Catalytic (site/project):** A site or project that, by virtue of its size or location, has the potential to revitalize and transform the surrounding area.

**Catch basin:** A receptacle located where a street gutter opens into a sewer designed to retain matter that would not readily pass through the sewer such as leaves or debris.

**Census estimate:** An annual statistic released by the US Census based on trends, samples, and demographic indicators rather than the actual decennial counts.

**Center:** A place within a given area that is the focus of activity, human interaction, and commerce for that area.

**Center City Action Agenda:** A strategic plan for the central area of Washington, DC prepared in 2006-07 through a collaborative effort by the public and private sectors. Updates and supersedes the "Downtown Action Agenda."

**Central Business District:** The major employment, shopping, and commercial activity center of a city. For the purposes of the Comprehensive Plan, generally refers to the area north of the National Mall and south of Massachusetts Avenue, between Foggy Bottom and Capitol Hill.

**Central Employment Area:** A legal definition used primarily by the federal government in the location of projects, leasing of space, determination of parking standards, etc. and synonymous with the major concentration of federal and commercial land uses in the core of the District of Columbia.

**Central Washington:** Planning Area developed for use in the Comprehensive Plan; corresponds to the monumental core of the city and the adjoining central business district areas.

**Chancery:** The principal offices used to house the diplomatic functions of another country.

**Channelization:** Diverting water from its natural course into a man-made channel, usually for flood control purposes.

**Character:** A term used to describe the essential qualities of a place.

**Character-defining architectural feature:** An exterior feature of a building, group of buildings, or type of construction that makes it distinct from other buildings. Examples would be turrets and bay windows.

**Characteristic view:** A view that captures the physical features making an area distinct and that provides quick recognition or orientation.

**Chesapeake 2000:** A multi-state, multi-agency agreement aimed at restoring water quality in Chesapeake Bay in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, including measurable objectives for reducing pollution in rivers and streams by 2010.

**Children:** Persons under the age of 18.

**Circulation improvements:** Any change that facilitates the movement of people, principally referring to physical changes (new transit, bike lanes, etc.) rather than programmatic improvements (more frequent bus service, etc.).

**Circulator:** A bus operating on a looped route through a defined area, often connecting residents or visitors to transit, shopping areas, and tourist destinations.

**Citizens Association:** A volunteer organization formed to protect the interest of neighborhood residents and address neighborhood level issues.

**Citizen participation:** The proactive involvement of residents and businesses in community affairs, including long-range planning.



**Citizens Summits:** A series of large town hall meetings convened in Washington, DC in 1999, 2001, 2003, and 2005.

**Citizens task force:** An ad hoc committee of citizens appointed to guide the development of policies on a particular issue of interest.

**City Beautiful:** An American city planning movement of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century that aimed to improve the quality of cities through beautification and monumental grandeur.

**City of Learning:** A philosophical approach to urban planning in which public school capital projects and educational investments and partnerships are used to revitalize inner city neighborhoods.

**Citywide element:** A section of the Comprehensive Plan containing policies that apply to the city as a whole, as opposed to a sub-area.

**Civic architecture:** The design of public buildings and spaces, such as fire stations, libraries, and recreation centers.

**Civic art:** See “public art”

**Civic Association:** A volunteer organization formed to protect the interest of neighborhood residents and address neighborhood level issues. In Washington, DC, historically serving African-American communities.

**Class A office space:** Office space meeting modern corporate needs, usually in multi-story steel-framed buildings less than 30 years old (or in historic buildings that have been completely gutted and refurbished), containing a high level of business amenities.

**Clean City:** Initiative established by the District of Columbia to reduce litter and keep the city clean.

**Clean fuel vehicle:** A hybrid (gas-electric) vehicle or a vehicle powered by a low-emissions energy source.

**Clustering:** The practice of transferring the allowable density on a particular site to one part of the site, thereby allowing more sensitive areas to remain as open space.

**Cogeneration:** A process in which an industrial facility uses its waste energy to produce heat or electricity.

**Co-housing:** A living arrangement that combines private living quarters with common dining and activity areas in a community whose residents share in tasks such as childcare.

**Collector (Street):** Roadway that collects and distributes local traffic between arterial streets and local streets. Also provides access to adjacent properties.

**Co-location:** The practice of siting different services or community facilities in a single place, to create efficiencies and allow the sharing of resources.

**Combined sewer overflow:** A condition in which the combined flow of sanitary sewage and stormwater exceeds the capacity of the conveyance system, thereby causing an overflow into surface water.

**Commemorative works (feature, memorial):** A monument, marker, plaque, statue, or other object erected in a public space that commemorates a person, event, group or significant element of culture or history.

**Commemorative Works Committee:** A 12-member committee appointed by the Mayor and Council of the District of Columbia to review and approve proposals for commemorative works.

**Commercial gentrification:** A phenomenon in which a neighborhood business district experiences rapidly rising commercial rents, an influx of chain stores, and increasing operating costs, thereby threatening the livelihood of small and locally owned businesses.

**Commercial linkage:** The tying of commercial development approval to a fee or requirement for the production of affordable housing (or another community benefit).

**Commercial overlay zone:** A set of zoning standards above and beyond those associated with the base zoning district that are applied to a particular commercial district (often establishing additional use restrictions and development standards).

**Commercial revitalization:** A process which seeks to increase (and often restore) economic activity in a business district, typically achieved through financial assistance to property owners and public investment in physical improvements.

**Commission of Fine Arts:** A 7-member commission established by the US Congress in 1910 to give expert advice to the President and Congress on matters of design and aesthetics relating to the federal interest.

**Commission on Arts and Humanities:** District agency responsible for providing grants, education, and program activities to encourage artistic expression and learning and to promote local artists and arts organizations.

**Commons:** A central public open space used jointly by residents of a community.

**Community-based residential facility:** A residential facility for persons who have a common need for treatment, rehabilitation, assistance, or supervision in their daily living. Includes designated “community residence facilities” and other types of facilities such as emergency shelters and substance abusers homes.

**Community Development Block Grant:** Federal grant program which distributes an annual allocation of funds to cities and counties for housing, capital improvements, and civic improvement.

**Community development corporation:** A non-profit organization incorporated to provide programs and services, and to engage in other activities which support a community, including land development.

**Community equity investment:** A local business enterprise funded by local capital, with proceeds and profits directed back into the community.

**Community facility(ies):** Facility in which public services for residents are provided, including recreational and cultural services, and services for youth and seniors.

**Community garden:** Plot of land, usually publicly or collectively owned, which is used by residents for raising flowers and vegetables.

**Community hygiene:** Pertaining to a community's sanitation and cleanliness.

**Community identity:** The defining qualities of a place; the aspects that make a place memorable and distinct from other places.

**Community park:** A large park serving an area with a one- to two-mile radius, typically including ballfields, swim facilities, a recreation center, natural areas, picnic areas, and a range of organized programs.

**Community planning process:** Any of a broad number of measures used to engage the public in local affairs and inform the public about matters of local importance.

**Community policing:** Approach to law enforcement that emphasizes proactive outreach to the community, including community-based training and education.

**Community residence facility:** A facility that meets the definition of and is licensed as a community residence facility under the Health Care Facilities and Community Residence Facilities Regulations, 22 DCMR.

**Community Services and Facilities:** Element of the Comprehensive Plan covering police, fire, library, emergency medical, and health care services.

**Community standards:** Generally refers to the maintenance and upkeep of a community's physical appearance, especially as it relates to litter collection, removal of abandoned vehicles, exterior appearance of buildings, condition of lawns and front yards, etc.

**Community-based human services:** A model of service delivery which emphasis community-based facilities and the integration of people with special needs into the mainstream.

**Commuter rail:** Rail transit which carries residents of suburban communities to central business districts.

**Commuter tax:** A locally imposed tax on the income of persons working in that jurisdiction but living in another state.

**Compatible, compatibility:** Capable of existing together without significant conflict or ill effects.

**Complementary use:** A land use or activity that benefits from (or fits comfortably with) another use nearby.

**Comprehensive:** Encompassing a broad range of topics and covering a large geographic area.

**Comprehensive Energy Plan:** District Plan mandated by DC Law 3-132 aimed at conserving energy, improving efficiency, and ensuring the reliability and security of the city's energy supply.

**Comprehensive Housing Strategy:** A strategic plan developed by the District of Columbia and a task force of housing experts in 2004-2005 to respond the City's growing affordable housing crisis and affordability gap.

**Comprehensive Plan:** A long-range (20-25 year) plan containing maps and policies to guide the future physical development of a city or county. In DC, consists of "District" elements prepared by the Office of Planning and "Federal" elements prepared by the National Capital Planning Commission.

**Conceptual development project:** A project that exists in concept form only, with no entitlement or approval and no firm start date for construction.

**Concurrent:** Provided at the same time as.

**Condition of approval:** See "approval condition"

**Condominium:** An apartment house, office building, or other multiple-unit complex, the units of which are individually owned, with each owner receiving a recordable deed to the individual unit purchased, including the right to sell or mortgage that unit, and sharing in joint ownership of any common grounds.

**Congestion management:** The coordination of transportation planning, funding, operations, and capital projects in a way that helps traffic flow more smoothly and reduces travel delays.

**Connectivity:** The degree to which one area is connected or joined to another.

**Conservation:** Planned management of a natural or man-made resource to prevent exploitation, destruction or neglect.

**Conservation Area:** See “*Neighborhood Conservation Area*”

**Conservation district:** A geographic area designated by a City to recognize the particular design and architectural qualities of that area and encourage their protection and maintenance for the benefit of the entire city.

**Conservation easement:** A legally enforceable agreement between a landowner and a municipality (or land protection organization) which requires that a property or a portion of a property be conserved as open space.

**Consistent:** Adhering to the same principles, course, form; in agreement with.

**Constraint:** Something that restricts, limits, or regulates.

**Construction and demolition debris:** The waste materials generated by construction, renovation, and demolition activities, such as old concrete, wood, glass, and nails.

**Contaminated site:** Any parcel of land containing soil or groundwater which has been contaminated by past activities and which requires clean-up before re-use.

**Context-sensitive:** The art of creating public works projects, buildings, additions, etc. which sensitively integrates projects into the context of their setting.

**Contributing building (or feature):** A site, structure or feature which adds to the historic association or quality of an area because it was present during the period of significance, relates to the documented significance of the property, possess historic integrity, or is capable or yielding important information about the period, or independently meets National Register criteria.

**Conversion (housing):** Changing the principal use of a home or apartment to another use, such as an office or hotel.

**Co-operative:** A building owned and managed by a corporation in which shares are sold, entitling the shareholders to occupy individual units in the building.

**Core Capacity Study:** Year 2001 study completed by WMATA assessing the current and future capacity of the core of the Metrorail system, and including recommendations for capacity expansion.

**Core industry:** The sector(s) of the economy which employ the greatest percentage of an area’s residents and make the largest contribution to the area’s economy.

**Corporate citizenship:** The contribution that business makes to the social welfare and overall social good of a community.

**Corridor:** Any major transportation route; may also be used to describe land uses along these routes.

**Corridor study:** An evaluation of current and projected traffic conditions along a road or transit line as it passes through several different neighborhoods or communities, including recommendations for improvement.

**Cost-benefit analysis:** The comparison of benefits and costs in decision-making. Dollar values are assigned to benefits and costs in most cost-benefit analyses.

**Cottage industry:** A small-scale industry that can be carried on at home by family members using their own equipment.

**Creative class (creative profession, creative workforce):** A term describing persons in jobs that create new approaches to problem solving, generate new ideas, or create new products. Includes scientists, architects, academics, writers, educators, and media, as well as those in the creative arts.

**Criteria pollutant:** A pollutant used measured by the EPA to determine a region’s compliance with federal air quality standards.

**Cross-town:** In the Comprehensive Plan, generally refers to east-west circulation across the city, particularly travel from neighborhoods west of Rock Creek Park to those east of the Park, and from neighborhoods east of the river to the rest of the city.

**Cultural enterprise zone:** Specific geographic areas which use tax advantages and other incentives to attract and support arts and cultural uses and activities.

**Cultural facility (attraction, amenity, development, use):** Refers to facilities such as museums, galleries, art studios, theaters, art schools, performance venues, etc.

**Cultural organization:** Any organization providing support to the city’s arts community.

**Cultural resource:** An aspect of the landscape which embodies the heritage of past human experience and/or cultural identities. Usually refers to historic structures or places.

**Culvert:** A storm drain crossing beneath a street.

**Cumulative:** Increasing or enlarging by successive addition.

**Cumulative impact:** The combined impact of a series of otherwise independent actions.

**Curb extension:** An angled widening of the sidewalk and narrowing of the pavement along a given road segment, often used to slow down traffic or shorten pedestrian crossings.

**Curbside management:** The management of the portion of a road not used for vehicle travel, including parking spaces, bike lanes, shoulders, and curb cuts. Often synonymous with on-street parking management.

**Curbside parking:** Parking that takes place along a street curb, as opposed to a driveway, parking lot, or garage.

**Cut-through traffic:** Traffic that bypasses major through-streets and instead uses local residential streets to avoid congested intersections.

## D

**Daylighting:** The process of taking a creek or stream that has been diverted into a buried storm drain and restoring it as an open, above-ground waterway.

**DC Apprenticeship Council:** 11-member mayorally-appointed board that assists in formulating apprenticeship policy for the District of Columbia, including rules and regulations, certificates of compliance, program standards, and joint trade committees.

**DC Circulator:** An express bus service connecting Georgetown, Downtown, Union Station, and the Southwest Waterfront, operated through a public-private partnership.

**DC Code:** The official set of laws that govern the operation of the District of Columbia.

**DC Economic Partnership:** A nonprofit organization created to facilitate economic development, retain business and industry, and create business opportunities throughout the District of Columbia.

**DC Inventory of Historic Sites:** The official list of properties that are deemed worthy of recognition and protection for their contribution to the cultural heritage of the city, maintained and periodically updated by the government of the District of Columbia.

**DC Municipal Regulations (DCMR):** A compilation of the rules and regulations issued by District agencies and the Council of the District of Columbia, organized into 31 titles.

**DC Primary Care Association (DCPCA):** A non-profit health action organization comprised of medical providers, health care organizations, and health professionals advocating for the needs of the District's medically vulnerable residents.

**DC Public Schools Master Facilities Plan:** Physical plan addressing the need for new and/or modernized school facilities over a 15-year period and the use of excess school space. Updated periodically in response

to changing conditions and the directives established by the Master Education Plan.

**Decentralization:** The process of redistributing an attribute or service from a single point to multiple scattered sites around a city or region.

**Decibel, dB:** A unit describing the amplitude of sound.

**Deconstruction:** The process of dismantling a structure in a way that enables the component parts to be salvaged and reused.

**Dedicated funding (revenue):** Funding that is reserved or restricted for a particular purpose.

**Defensible space:** A wide range of planning and design strategies that create a sense of ownership of residential space by adjacent residents, thereby reducing crime and vandalism.

**Demand-based pricing strategies:** Any pricing method that uses consumer demand - based on perceived value - as the central element.

**Demolition by neglect:** The destruction of a building through abandonment or lack of maintenance.

**Demonstration project:** A project or action that provides a means for testing and introducing beneficial change.

**Density:** The number of residential dwelling units per acre of land.

**Density bonus:** The allocation of development rights that allow a development to include additional residential units or square footage beyond the maximum otherwise allowed by zoning, usually in exchange for the provision of an amenity at the same site or another location.

**Design capacity:** The average daily volume or flow that a transportation or infrastructure facility is designed to accommodate.

**Design compatibility:** A measure of the degree to which a change to the built environment (i.e., new construction or alteration) blends with and enhances the existing setting.

**Design guidelines:** Provisions guiding the design of buildings that are not mandatory but may be used by Staff, the City's advisory boards and commissions, and others in evaluating projects.

**Design review:** A process used to administer regulations for the exterior design of structures to ensure that such structures are suitable, harmonious, and in keeping with the general appearance, historic character, and/or style of the surrounding area.

**Destination retail:** Retail stores and services that attract visitors from beyond the normal retail trade area, often because of the entertainment value or special amenities provided.

**Development impact:** The net change (to the environment, public services, traffic, etc.) associated with construction of a building or completion of a project.

**Development incentive:** Any measure used to attract development, or a particular land use or activity, to an area, especially allowances for greater floor space or more permissive standards than would normally be allowed.

**Development opportunity site:** Term used in the Land Use Element of the Comprehensive Plan between 1985 and 2005 to describe specific areas of the city with significant opportunities for new development.

**Development review:** The City process for reviewing and approving new buildings, alterations to existing buildings, and subdivisions.

**Dewatering facility:** Water or wastewater treatment facility that squeezes excess water out of sediment and removes suspended solids from liquid slurries.

**Digester:** An apparatus in which substances (sludge, etc.) are softened or disintegrated by moisture, heat, chemical action, or the like.

**Digital infrastructure:** The computers, storage devices, network cabling, switches and operating systems that support telecommunications and the conveyance of digital information.

**Diplomatic overlay zone:** Zoning designation used to indicate areas where international chanceries are permitted, subject to the approval of the Board of Zoning Adjustment (BZA). Height, density, bulk and use requirements are from underlying zone.

**Disabled:** An individual with a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect upon his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. Multiple legal definitions apply, depending on context.

**Disadvantaged community:** A geographic area or group of people whose median income is substantially below the citywide median.

**Discretionary:** A decision left to the discretion of a staff member or a public body (such as the Zoning Commission), contrasted with Ministerial decisions, which are prescribed by law.

**Disinvestment:** The gradual withdrawal of private investment in property or a neighborhood due to lack of investor confidence.

**Displacement:** The gradual loss of long-time residents and businesses, especially renters and small business owners, from their communities as a result of rising rents, market forces, or redevelopment activities.

**Distressed neighborhood:** Term used in a 2002 study by the DC Office of Planning to describe neighborhoods with high concentrations of poverty, crime, negative social conditions, and little or no private investment.

**District:** Belonging to or pertaining to the District of Columbia.

**District Elements:** Portion of the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital prepared by the DC Office of Planning and governing the non-federal portions of the city. Includes Citywide and Area Elements.

**District of Columbia Alternatives Analysis:** A study jointly completed by the DC Department of Transportation and the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority in 2005 aimed at recommending a new, efficient, high quality surface transit network to bridge gaps between Metrorail and Metrobus. The study evaluated transportation alternatives for many corridors in the District and includes a 25-year transit improvement program.

**District Response Plan:** Plan assembled by the DC Emergency Management Agency which provides the framework for government agencies to respond to a natural or manmade disaster in the District. Addresses transportation, fire fighting, mass care, food, communications, law enforcement, and related topics.

**Diversity:** Representing and inclusive of individuals with different racial, gender, age, disability status, sexual orientation, and philosophical backgrounds.

**Downtown:** The civic and commercial center of a City or town. In the District of Columbia, the term usually refers to the area east of 16<sup>th</sup> Street, south of Massachusetts Avenue, and north of Pennsylvania Avenue—this is only a portion of the city's civic and commercial core, however.

**Downtown Action Agenda:** A plan addressing Downtown DC's future development prepared by the DC Office of Planning in 2000. The Agenda sought to refine the vision of a mixed use downtown, establish new direction for growth on downtown's east side, and identify strategic public and private actions to sustain economic momentum.

**Downtown East:** The area generally bounded by Massachusetts Avenue NW on the north, North Capitol Street on the east, Pennsylvania Avenue NW on the south, and 5<sup>th</sup> Street NW on the west.

**Downtown perimeter:** The area generally lying within one or two blocks outside of the Central Employment Area, especially in the Capitol Hill, Shaw, Logan, Dupont Circle, and Foggy Bottom neighborhoods.

**Drive-through business:** A business where clients may complete a transaction by driving up to a window and remaining in their automobiles.

**Dropout rate:** A measurement of the percentage of students who enter high school and drop out prior to graduation.

**Drought-tolerant landscaping:** The use of plants and landscape materials that can survive with little moisture, or which can survive on local precipitation without additional watering.

## E

**Early childhood development center:** A facility for the care, supervision, emotional, and learning development of young children, generally age 5 and under.

**Easement:** The right to use property owned by another for specific purposes, such as access to another piece of property, conveyance of stormwater, or transmission of electricity or gas.

**East of the River:** The portion of the District of Columbia located east of the Anacostia River.

**Economic development:** Refers to any of a number of programs and activities designed to increase wealth, for example the creation of new jobs, establishment of new businesses, improvement of existing businesses, and training of residents to fill local jobs.

**Economically disadvantaged:** Having an impaired ability to compete in the free enterprise system due to diminished capital and credit opportunities as compared to others in the same business area.

**Ecosystem:** An interacting system formed by a biotic community and its physical environment.

**E-cycling:** The recycling of computers and other electronic equipment.

**Educational facility:** Any public or private school, charter school, college or university, continuing education establishment, or other institution where the principal activity is learning and education.

**Efficient:** Performing or functioning in the best possible manner with the least waste of time and effort.

**Effluent:** Waste material (as smoke, liquid industrial refuse, or sewage) discharged into the environment.

**Elderly:** A person who is 65 years of age or older.

**Electromagnetic field:** A field of force around a transmitting high-voltage power line or communication facility that is made up of associated electric and magnetic components, and that results from the motion of an electric charge.

**Embassy:** The facilities that house diplomatic functions. Synonymous with “foreign missions” and including both chanceries (offices) and ambassador’s residences.

**Emergency housing:** See “*emergency shelter*”

**Emergency management:** The set of activities associated with preparing for, responding to, and recovering from a natural or man-made disaster, including a terrorist incident.

**Emergency medical facility:** A facility equipped to handle medical emergencies and traumas, e.g., with an emergency room.

**Emergency preparedness:** The act of planning and preparing for a natural or manmade disaster, such as a hurricane, flood, blizzard, or terrorist attack.

**Emergency Response Plan:** See “*District Response Plan*”

**Emergency shelter:** A facility providing temporary housing for one (1) or more individuals who are otherwise homeless and who are not in need of a long-term sheltered living arrangement, as that arrangement is defined in the Health Care Facilities and Community Residence Regulations, 22 DCMR.

**Emerging neighborhood:** Term developed in 2002 by the DC Office of Planning to describe neighborhoods with moderately positive indicators of health and well being, but which are under-performing relative to their market potential.

**Employed resident:** A permanent resident of the District of Columbia who is employed, regardless of whether their job is located inside or outside of the District.

**Employer-assisted housing:** Housing provided to employees of a company or agency at a reduced cost, or financial assistance provided to employees (loans, grants, etc.) for the purpose of finding housing.

**Employment center:** Relatively large areas of the City dominated by office, government, technology, light industrial, regional retail, and other job-generating land uses.

**Empowerment zone:** A federal designation, applied to defined geographic areas and accompanied by funding commitments and tax advantages, used as a tool for encouraging business growth and creating jobs for local residents.

**Encroachment:** Advancing beyond proper limits. Used to refer to a particular use or activity intruding gradually upon another use, often with detrimental effects.

**Endangered (species):** A species of animal or plant whose prospects for survival and reproduction are in immediate jeopardy from one or more causes.

**Energy audit:** An evaluation of energy consumption, as in a home or business, to determine ways in which energy can be conserved.

**Energy conservation:** Any of a number of measures designed to reduce the amount of energy consumed by a household or business.

**Energy efficiency:** Any measure which reduces heat loss, cooling needs, or energy consumption by alterations to a household or business.

**Energy management plan:** A plan prepared by a District agency providing baseline data on energy consumption and strategies to reduce consumption in the future through various conservation and efficiency measures.

**Energy reliability:** Activities that reduce the likelihood of interruptions in the energy supply or transmission system.

**Energy security:** Minimizing the vulnerability associated with dependence on foreign oil by assuring the security of existing sources while diversifying sources to reduce the impact of future interruptions.

**English basement:** An independent apartment located on the basement level of a row house, with a separate entrance, kitchen, and bathroom facilities, and usually accessed by a stair down from the street level.

**Enhance:** To provide with improved or more pleasing features.

**Enrollment cap:** A numeric limit set on the number of students that may be enrolled in a college or university, imposed to manage the impacts of the institution on the surrounding community.

**Entertainment district:** An area of a city where entertainment-oriented activities and uses are concentrated, including night clubs, bars, restaurants, performance venues, sports facilities, and tourist attractions.

**Environmental assessment:** A preliminary assessment of the likely influence a project may have on the environment, used to determine if more detailed evaluations of environmental impacts are needed.

**Environmental crime:** The violation of a DC law pertaining to environmental quality, including illegal dumping and littering, improper disposal of hazardous materials, discharges into storm drains, etc.

**Environmental hazard:** Any hazard to life, personal safety, or property associated with the natural or built environment, including but not limited to rising sea level, landslides, wildfire, floods, and release of toxic or radioactive materials.

**Environmental health:** Pertaining to the control of environmentally related diseases and the protection of the ecological system of the District of Columbia.

**Environmental Impact Screening Form (EISF):** Form required by DC Public Law 8-36 and administered by DCRA and used to determine if a project is likely to have substantial negative impacts on the community and whether an Environmental Impact Statement is required.

**Environmental Impact Statement (EIS):** A federally-mandated document, prepared pursuant to the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA), that provides decision makers and the public with information about the impacts of a proposed project on the environment, ways these effects may be minimized, and alternatives to the proposed project. Although usually required for projects with federal oversight, the DC Environmental Policy Act of 1989 established requirements for a local version of the EIS.

**Environmental justice:** The practice of redressing inequitable distributions of environmental burdens (pollution, industry, landfills, freeways, etc.) and access to environmental benefits (clean air and water, parks and open space, etc.) in decision-making.

**Environmentally friendly:** Having a lesser impact on the environment than a conventional approach.

**Environmentally sensitive area:** Any area with natural resources that are easily disturbed by human activity.

**Environmentally sustainable:** The management and use of natural resources in a way that ensures these resources are not depleted or degraded and remain available to serve future generations.

**Equity:** (1) The quality of being impartial and fair; (2) the money value of property or an investment.

**Erosion:** The loosening and transport of rock and soil debris by wind, rain, or running water.

**Escarpment:** A steeply sloped area along the edge of a plateau.

**Evacuation route:** A locally-designated route to be used for the evacuation of the civilian population in the event of an emergency.

**Excessive concentration:** The clustering of a particular type of use or activity within a specific area to the point where perceptible and measurable adverse effects on the surrounding properties are experienced.

**Existing land use:** The actual use of property at the time of Comprehensive Plan preparation, in this case 2005-06.

**Existing land use map:** A map showing the actual use of property at a given time, distinguished from the “Future Land Use Map” which shows the uses envisioned in the horizon year of the Plan (2025).

**Expiring Section 8 (subsidies):** The loss of federal subsidy that occurs at the end of the contract period for a project-based HUD Section 8 apartment complex.

**Exterior architectural element:** A feature on the exterior of a building, usually used to describe a characteristic of a façade or roof.

**External roadway cost:** The involuntary social and environmental costs incurred by those who do not use a roadway but who are impacted by it.

**Extremely low income:** Income less than 30 percent of the areawide median.

## F

**Fabric:** The characteristic pattern and texture of land uses, lots, and buildings in a particular area.

**Façade:** The exterior facing walls of a structure, usually used to refer to the street-facing wall or the primary wall.

**Facadism:** The construction of a modern building behind the original front wall of an old building.

**Facilities Master Plan:** See “DC Public Schools Master Facilities Plan”

**Fair housing:** The sale or rental of private housing free of discriminatory practices or policies.

**Fair Housing Act:** Federal legislation adopted in 1968 that prohibits discrimination by direct providers of housing, such as landlords and real estate companies as well as other entities, such as municipalities, banks or other lending institutions and homeowners insurance companies.

**Fair share:** The equitable assignment of regional affordable housing need to the individual local governments within the region.

**Faith institution:** A church, synagogue, mosque, or other house of worship, or the offices, residences, or other facilities belonging to that institution.

**Faith-based community:** Persons employed by, or associated with the leadership of, religious or spiritual institutions.

**False façade:** A structure with an exterior front face designed to create the illusion of a different architectural style or era.

**Family:** A married couple or unrelated couple living together and the children, if any, of either or both spouses; or, a lone parent of any marital status with at least one child living in the same dwelling.

**Family housing:** Housing designed to meet the needs of families, meaning that there are typically three or more bedrooms and “child-friendly” amenities such as yard space or community play facilities.

**Far Northeast and Southeast:** Planning area used in the Comprehensive Plan to present data and policies for neighborhoods east of the Anacostia River and north of Good Hope and Naylor Roads. Most of this area has historically been Ward 7.

**Far Southeast/Southwest:** Planning area used in the Comprehensive Plan to present data and policies for neighborhoods east of the Anacostia River and south of Good Hope and Naylor Roads. Most of this area has historically been Ward 8.

**Federal city:** The portion of the District of Columbia under federal ownership, especially the area around the National Mall, Tidal Basin, and US Capitol.

**Federal Elements:** Portion of the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital prepared by the National Capital Planning Commission and governing the federal portions of the city.

**Federal enclave:** A self-contained federal government use, surrounded by non-federal uses.

**Federal interest:** Broadly used to refer to any issue or action which could impact the efficient operation of the federal government, the conservation of federal resources, or appropriate and orderly future federal development.

**Federal land transfer:** See “land transfer”

**Federal presence:** Pertaining to the direct and indirect effects of the federal government in the city and region.

**Federal reservation:** A tract of land within the District of Columbia historically owned by the federal government and reserved for a particular purpose, including parks and open space.

**Feeder bus:** A bus that connects a neighborhood to a rail transit station, e.g., “feeding” from a local area into the regional transit network.

**Feeder line (or pipe):** A branch line in an infrastructure system, usually distributing a commodity (water, power, etc.) from a larger line or to a smaller line.

**Fiber optics:** Thin filaments of glass that transmit light and carry data from one point to another at the speed of light.



**Financial incentive:** Direct financial assistance (grants, loans, etc) or indirect financial assistance (tax breaks, etc.) provided by local government to encourage certain actions by the private sector.

**Fine-grained:** Characterized by small parcels, relatively small buildings, fine architectural details, and much variation from one property to the next

**Fine particulate matter:** See “*particulate matter*”

**First Source Program:** District program that mandates that all projects funded in whole or in part with District funds, or other funds that the District administers, provide for increased employment opportunities for District residents.

**Fiscal impact:** A measure of the cost for a local government to serve a new development or undertake a particular program, as compared to the revenues that development or program will generate.

**Flag lot:** A property located to the rear of another property, connected to the street by a property line “panhandle” which contains the driveway.

**Fleet maintenance:** The care of vehicles used for transit or public works activities.

**Flood plain:** The relatively flat area adjoining a river, creek, stream, lake, or bay which may be inundated by water following prolonged heavy rain.

**Floor area ratio:** The ratio of gross floor space on a property to the lot area of that property.

**Forecast:** An advance calculation of a future condition using relevant data and statistics.

**Foreign mission:** A facility used in connection with a country’s diplomatic mission in the United States, including chanceries (offices) and ambassador’s residences.

**Foreign Missions Board of Zoning Adjustment (FMBZA):** The DC Board of Zoning Adjustment, augmented by the Executive Director of NCPC; convenes to hear cases relating to foreign missions.

**Form based zoning (form based codes):** A method of regulating development to achieve a specific urban form. Form-based codes focus on the physical dimensions and design of buildings and public spaces, rather than the land uses that occur within those buildings and spaces.

**Fort Circle Parks:** A chain of linear open spaces extending in a circle approximately five miles out from the center of Washington, DC. Initially established as Civil War defense encampments in the 1860s, and subsequently abandoned; now partially preserved as a National Park.

**Forward-linked industry:** An industry that benefits from the output of the core industries in a region; such as a laboratory that benefits from university research, or agricultural processors in a farming area.

**Framework:** A high-level or conceptual planning document that provides the basis for subsequent, more detailed plans for a given area.

**Framework Element:** Chapter of the DC Comprehensive Plan which provides the context for rest of the plan by presenting background data, guiding principles for growth and conservation, and the city’s land use maps.

**Front yard:** The area between the front of a structure (e.g., the portion facing the street) and the street, including portions of the side yard located in front of the structure.

**Functional classification system:** A system of categorizing roads based on the volume of traffic carried, the origins and destinations of that traffic, and the physical characteristics of the roadway.

**Functional open space:** Open space that exists primarily because of another function or activity on the property, such as a cemetery, golf course, or power line corridor.

**Functionally obsolete:** A use or structure whose value is greatly diminished because it is no longer needed or no longer functions the way it did when it was designed.

**Future Land Use Map:** Map showing the intended use of property in the horizon year of the Comprehensive Plan (defined in further detail within the Framework Element).

## G

**Garden apartment:** A low-rise apartment building (or complex of multiple apartment buildings), usually 2-3 stories in height, surrounded by lawns, shrubs, and trees.

**Gated community:** A development or residential area to which with access is controlled by a manned or unmanned gate.

**Gateway:** A point along a roadway at which a motorist or pedestrian gains a sense of having entered the City or a particular part of the City. This impression can be imparted through signs, monuments, landscaping, a change in development character, or a natural feature such as a creek.

**General Management Plan:** A plan developed by the National Park Service to define the long-range vision and set policy, conservation, and improvement programs for National Park properties.

**Generalized:** The mapping of an attribute in a broad manner, not necessarily reflective of what is occurring on each individual property.

**Generalized Policy Map:** A map that characterizes how different parts of the city may change between 2005 and 2025, and also showing the different types of commercial districts that exist in the city.

**Gentrification:** The influx of middle-class or affluent people into neighborhoods in a manner that may displace earlier, usually poorer, residents.

**Geographic information system:** Computer technology in which digitally-recorded map information is analyzed for planning and building purposes.

**Goal:** A general, overall, and ultimate purpose, aim, or end toward which the City will direct effort.

**Golden Triangle:** The portion of the Washington Central Business District generally lying west of 16<sup>th</sup> Street, east of Foggy Bottom/GWU, and south of Dupont Circle.

**Good neighbor agreement:** An enforceable contract which details a set of commitments that an entity is required to make in order to demonstrate its accountability to the community.

**Government center:** A government office building housing a variety of functions and located in a neighborhood setting, often in areas where its presence may help nearby businesses and provide local jobs.

**Graduated fee schedule:** A fee whose unit cost varies depending on the amount consumed or the characteristics of the user.

**Great Street:** A prominent boulevard or avenue, often with historic significance, passing through multiple neighborhoods and typically lined with shops, apartments, and landscaping and accommodating multiple modes of travel (bicycle, bus, car, etc.).

**Great Streets Initiative:** District program that combines transportation, urban design, and economic development actions to transform key District thoroughfares into “great streets” (see above).

**Great weight:** Given serious consideration, and used as an important factor in decision-making.

**Greater Washington:** Generally synonymous with the Washington, DC Metropolitan Statistical Area.

**Green building:** The practice of designing and constructing buildings to increase the efficiency with which they use energy, water, and raw materials, in order to reduce impacts on human health and the environment.

**Green business:** A business that makes an explicit commitment in its operation and conduct to reduce its impact on the environment and minimize its use of non-renewable resources.

**Green collar:** Any job associated with the reduction of pollution and the conservation or restoration of natural resources and the environment.

**Green design:** See “green building”

**Green energy:** Energy derived from renewable sources such as wind and solar.

**Green engineering:** The design of utilities, roads, drainage systems, and other infrastructure in a manner which minimizes environmental impacts.

**Green infrastructure:** The system of parks, gardens, farms, forests, vegetated lands, and other public and private open spaces in a community.

**Green power:** See “green energy”

**Green roof:** A roof that is partially or completely covered with vegetation and soil, planted over a waterproofing membrane.

**Green space:** The portion of a site that is planted with trees, lawns, or shrubs.

**Greenhouse gas:** Gases that contribute to the warming of the atmosphere, including carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, and ozone.

**Greening:** The process of making something more environmentally sustainable; does not necessarily refer to adding trees and vegetation, but may in some cases.

**Greensward:** A large, sweeping lawn area.

**Greenway:** An interconnected area of natural vegetation, often surrounded by urban development.

**Groundwater:** Water under the earth’s surface, often used to supply wells and springs.

**Group home (group housing):** A residence for persons requiring care, assistance, or supervision, often located in a structure built as a one- family dwelling.

**Group quarters:** Living facilities occupied by groups of unrelated individuals, including nursing homes, dormitories, jails, large group homes, barracks, fraternities and sororities, psychiatric hospitals, emergency shelters, etc.

**Growth control:** Any of a series of measures used to control the rate of growth in a community, typically by regulating the number of housing units or the amount of floor space that can be added in a given time period.

**Growth occupation:** A job in a sector of the economy that is growing at a faster rate than the economy as a whole.

**Guest house:** See “bed and breakfast”

**Guiding principle:** A statement of philosophy and basic values about the future of the city that sets the overall tone for the goals, policies, and actions in the Comprehensive Plan.

## H

**Habitat:** The physical location or type of environment, in which a plant or animal lives or occurs.

**Halfway house:** A residence for former criminals, mental patients, or recovering drug or alcohol users that serves as a transitional environment between confinement and the return to society.

**Hardening:** The design or retrofitting of a building to minimize damage in the event of an explosion.

**Hardscape:** The portion of a landscaped area characterized by hard surfaces such as concrete, stone, or brick.

**Harmonious:** In keeping with, or combined in an appropriate and pleasing manner.

**Hazardous building materials:** Refers to lead paint, asbestos, PCBs, fluorescent light tubes, and other materials that were commonly used in construction in the early to mid-1900s but were later discovered to pose potential health hazards.

**Hazardous materials, hazardous substance:** Any substance that, because of its quantity, concentration, or physical characteristics, poses a potential hazard to human health or safety if released into the workplace or environment.

**Hazardous waste:** A discarded solid, liquid, or airborne material that can damage the environment and be harmful to health. Hazardous wastes include heavy metals and toxic chemicals used in industrial products and processes as well as infectious medical wastes and radioactive materials such as spent nuclear fuel rods.

**Health and human services:** Government function dealing with mental and physical health care, welfare and social service programs, child care, youth services, etc.

**Health care facility:** Any facility used for the delivery of health services, including hospitals, clinics, medical offices, rehabilitation centers, and long-term care facilities such as nursing homes.

**Heavy commercial:** A retail commercial use with some of the same characteristics and external impacts as industrial uses, such as noise, dust, vibration, and large open storage areas. Examples would be auto-body shops, auto parts shops, lumber yards, building supply wholesalers, plumbing contractors, etc.

**Heavy industry:** Industry which has a high propensity for adverse off-site impacts, such as noise, vibration, and smoke, and which frequently requires large sites, expansive areas for storage and operation, and direct rail or water access. Examples would include steel mills and petroleum refineries.

**Heavy tree cover:** Areas with 50 percent tree cover or more.

**Height Act of 1910:** 1910 Congressional legislation which related maximum allowable building heights in the District of Columbia to street widths, thereby resulting in Washington's low-rise profile.

**Height limit:** The maximum allowable height of a building, subject to further definition in the Zone regulations.

**Heritage tourism:** A type of tourism oriented around appreciation of the archaeological, historic and cultural heritage of an area.

**Heritage trail:** A designated pedestrian, bicycle, or auto route, usually noted with signs, which links sites of historic significance in a city or neighborhood. May include numbered plaques and markers at points of interest.

**Hierarchy:** In the Comprehensive Plan, used to systematically define the relative function and importance of different types of commercial centers and different categories of streets.

**High-density:** Residential areas characterized by multi-family housing of eight stories or more.

**High growth industry (or occupation):** A sector of the economy that is growing at a substantially faster rate than the economy as a whole, and that is expected to continue to grow in the future.

**High-impact use (commercial, industrial):** A land use or activity which, by its nature, produces noise, odors, vibration, smoke, dust, light, and other impacts which interfere with the quiet enjoyment of adjacent lands.

**High-rise:** A building eight stories or taller.

**High-security use:** A federal building or activity where the risk of break-in or terrorist action is a primary consideration in location, site planning and design.

**Hispanic:** A person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American or other Spanish culture or ancestry regardless of race.

**Historic building/site/structure:** A building/site/structure deemed to be historically significant based on its visual quality, design, history, association, context and/or integrity.

**Historic district:** Area within a city or county formally recognized by the local, state, or federal government for its concentration of historic or notable structures.

**Historic home museum:** A structure formerly used as a residence but converted to a museum, often restored with period pieces and original architectural and interior design details.

**Historic landmark:** A recognized site (including significant trees or other plant life located thereon), building, or structure of historic or cultural significance to the City, in which the broad history of the nation, state, or community is exemplified, or which is identified with historic persons or events, or which embodies the distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type.

**Historic landscape:** The grounds of a historic site or structure, or an undeveloped or natural area that has historic significance because of its landscape design, association with an individual or group, or role in a historic event.

**Historic Plan of Washington:** Refers to the 1791 L'Enfant Plan's system of streets, open spaces, public buildings, and developable blocks.

**Historic preservation:** The preservation of historically significant structures and neighborhoods, often with the intent of restoring or rehabilitating the structures to their former condition.

**Historic preservation community:** Informal term used to describe advocates and active supporters of historic preservation activities in the District of Columbia.

**Historic Preservation Office:** Division of the District of Columbia government, housed within the Office of Planning, responsible for the management of historic properties and the regulation of construction and demolition in historic districts.

**Historic Preservation Plan:** Management tool identifying the steps to be taken during a given time period to protect historic resources, including the responsible parties and funding sources. Preparation required by the National Park Service to establish eligibility for federal funds.

**Historic Preservation Review Board:** Appointed District of Columbia Board responsible for designating and maintaining an inventory of historic districts and landmarks; advising the Mayor on the protection, enhancement, and perpetuation of properties of historical, cultural, and aesthetic merit; and adopting and publishing procedures.

**Historic Preservation Tax Credit:** Income tax incentives given to property owners in exchange for the rehabilitation of historic structures.

**Historic property (also historic structure, resource, or site):** Any building or site that is noteworthy for its significance in local, state or national history or culture, its architecture and design, or its works of art, memorabilia, or artifacts.

**Historically significant:** Consistent with the US Secretary of the Interior's standards for historic significance.

**Historic survey:** A formal process in which the properties in a defined area are catalogued and systematically evaluated for their historic significance and architectural features and integrity.

**Home Again Initiative:** District of Columbia program providing financial assistance to developers who restore scattered site abandoned dwellings, in exchange for setting aside a percentage of the refurbished units for lower income households.

**Home occupation:** Any occupation of a service character taking place within a dwelling unit which is clearly secondary to the main use of the premises as a dwelling unit, and which does not change the character thereof.

**Home-grown business:** A small business started locally and owned locally.

**Home Rule:** Congressional Act passed by Congress in 1973 which established the legislative branch of DC government (including the City Council) and gave the District greater control over municipal affairs.

**Homeless:** The condition and societal category of people who lack fixed housing, usually because they cannot afford a regular, safe and adequate shelter.

**Homeless No More:** A strategic plan released by DC government in 2004 which laid out programs to end homeless in the District of Columbia by 2014.

**Homeless Shelter:** See *"emergency shelter"*

**HOPE VI:** A federal (HUD) program launched in the 1990s which provided funds to replace failing public housing projects with mixed income communities, providing home ownership opportunities and improved design features.

**Horizon year:** The end year of a planning period. Some aspects of the DC Comprehensive Plan use a horizon year of 2025; although the Plan itself does not have an explicit horizon.

**Horizontal skyline:** Term referring to the vast and consistent sweep of low-profile buildings in DC's central business district, contrasted with the more conventional profile of "skyscrapers" in other large American cities.

**Hospitality (industry):** Sector of the economy including hotels, restaurants, entertainment venues, tourist attractions, and services for visitors.

**Hospitality-supply industry:** A business or vendor that provides services or supplies to hotels, restaurants, or other hospitality-related uses.

**Hot spot:** Generally used to describe a site with a known history of violent crime or unlawful activity.

**Hotel:** A place where units are rented on a daily basis and used primarily for transient occupancy.

**Household:** All persons occupying a single dwelling unit, including individuals, families, and groups of unrelated individuals.

**Household hazardous waste:** Waste that is generated in the home that is toxic or hazardous to humans and the environment when discarded, including paint, motor oil, batteries, and household cleaning products.

**Household income:** The combined income of all persons living in a household, regardless of their relationship to one another.

**Household size:** The total number of residents in an area living in “households” divided by the total number of households in that area. Average household size excludes persons in group quarters.

**Housing access:** The ability to find and keep housing, without discrimination.

**Housing affordability:** A measure of a household’s ability to afford housing that consumes 30% of their income or less.

**Housing choice:** The ability of a household to choose the type of unit or location within a city where they can live, rather than have that choice eliminated because of their social and economic status.

**Housing choice voucher:** See “Section 8”

**Housing conservation:** Referring to the maintenance, enhancement, and protection of existing housing units.

**Housing production:** Referring to the creation of new housing units, either through new construction or conversion.

**Housing Production Trust Fund:** A source of public funds for the production and preservation of affordable housing for low- and moderate-income residents, administered by the D.C. Department of Housing and Community Development. Since 2002, the fund has been principally supported by deed recordation and transfer taxes.

**HUBzone:** Federal program providing contracting opportunities for qualified small businesses located in distressed areas.

**Human capital:** The stock of productive skills and technical knowledge embodied in the workforce.

**Human scale:** The establishment of appropriate proportions for building mass and features in relation to pedestrians and/or the surrounding context.

**Hybrid vehicle:** A vehicle that uses two or more distinct power or fuel sources, especially rechargeable energy storage (e.g., an electric battery) and an internal combustion engine (e.g., gasoline).

## I

**Iconic:** A physical feature that leaves such a strong visual imprint that it becomes synonymous with a particular place or city, such as the Empire State Building, the Golden Gate Bridge, or the US Capitol.

**Identity:** The distinctive characteristics of a place; the visual impression left by a place.

**Illegal land use:** A use or activity that was established in violation of the zoning regulations.

**Impact:** The effect or consequence of an action.

**Impact fee:** Fee collected by local government (including school districts and other special districts) to recover the cost of providing services to new development.

**Impervious (surface):** Surface through which water cannot easily penetrate, such as roofs, roads, sidewalks, and paved parking lots.

**Implementation:** Actions, procedures, programs or techniques that carry out policies.

**Important view (or vista):** A long-range view that is emblematic to Washington, DC, e.g., that prominently features federal monuments or important landmarks, or that has recognized historic and aesthetic value to the community.

**Improvement:** Any physical change that enables the various systems of the city (infrastructure, transportation, public services, etc.) to function more efficiently and effectively.

**Inappropriate:** Not suitable or properly fitting in with.

**Ingress:** A reward or bonus offered by the City to encourage the private sector to take an action that would be less likely otherwise.

**Inclusionary housing/Inclusionary zoning:** An ordinance requiring the production of affordable housing units by the private sector—either directly (through construction) or indirectly (through fees)—when market rate housing meeting certain criteria is built.

**Incompatible use:** A use that creates a conflict or nuisance for an adjoining property.

**Inconsistent:** Contradictory to the principles behind, or the standards of, a particular requirement.

**Incubator:** Enterprise that is set up to provide office space, equipment, and sometimes mentoring assistance and capital to new businesses that are just getting started.

**Induced demand:** The phenomenon that causes more of a good or service to be consumed simply because of an increase in supply.

**Industrial (industrial use):** Relating to companies engaged in the manufacture of products or processing of materials.

**Industrial Land Use Study:** A 2005-2006 study commissioned by the DC Office of Planning to assess the demand (and need) for industrially zoned land in the city as a way of informing land use policies and zoning decisions.

**Infill:** Development of individual small vacant lots or leftover vacant properties within areas that are already developed.

**Influent:** Untreated liquid wastes entering a wastewater treatment plant.

**Infrastructure:** In the context of the DC Comp Plan, refers to water, wastewater, drainage, solid waste, and telecommunication facilities. May also include transportation facilities and other installations needed for the functioning of a city.

**Ingress:** An entrance access or point of access.

**In-kind replacement:** In the context of the DC Comp Plan, an assurance that the removal of any publicly assisted housing unit will be matched by the addition of a new publicly assisted housing unit on-site or somewhere else in the city.

**In-lieu payment:** Fee collected from new development to cover the cost of providing or improving a facility off-site, because the small size of the development or its physical characteristics make it infeasible to provide the facility on-site.

**Inner ring suburb:** In the context of the DC Comp Plan, refers to Arlington, Alexandria, Fairfax, Montgomery, and Prince Georges Counties.

**Innovative land use regulation:** A method of regulating land use that responds to contemporary issues and emerging ways of thinking, but that is not yet considered common practice.

**Institutional use:** Property owned and operated by a college, university, hospital, society, religious order, house of worship, foundation, non-profit entity, or

other organization with similar characteristics.

**Institutional housing:** Generally refers to dormitories or other housing owned by an institution and reserved for occupancy by persons affiliated with that institution.

**Institutional open space:** The lawns, quadrangles, landscaped areas, woodlands, athletic fields, and other park-like areas contained within the confines of institutional land uses.

**Integrated pest management:** An ecological approach to landscape maintenance that combines understanding the causes of pest outbreaks, selecting appropriate plant species, monitoring pest populations and life cycles, and minimizing the use of pesticides.

**Intensity:** A measure of the level of activity on a property, expressed in number of units per acre (density) for residential uses and floor area ratio for non-residential uses.

**Intercity rail:** In the context of the Comp Plan, generally refers to Amtrak service.

**Intermodal activity center:** A location where multiple modes of transportation converge for the purpose of transferring from one mode to another, such as a bus terminal over a rail station with an adjoining parking garage.

**Intermodal transfer:** The act of transferring from one mode of transportation to another, such as a ferry to a bus.

**Interstate Commission on the Potomac River:** Commission established by Congress in 1940 to help the District, Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, and Pennsylvania plan for the enhancement, protection, and conservation of the Potomac River.

**Intergovernmental coordination:** Any communication or action between two or more public agencies to achieve common goals and mutual benefits.

**Internally consistent:** A state in which all provisions of a document support one another and do not conflict with or contradict one another.

**Invasive plant species:** A plant which has the ability to thrive and spread outside of its natural range, colonizing a new area and crowding out native species.

## J

**Job:** Includes both full- and part-time activities that individuals perform to receive income, including self-employed and military workers. The number of jobs may exceed the number of workers if people hold more than one job.

**Job linkage:** A requirement linked to the creation of new jobs.

**Jobs-housing balance:** A measure of the number of jobs in a community as compared to the number of employed residents or households.

**Joint development:** Development that is financed and managed collaboratively by the government and another entity, such as a university, a corporation, or a private developer.

**Joint use agreement:** Agreement between two government jurisdictions regarding the shared use of facilities.

**Journey-to-work:** Pertaining to travel between one's home and one's job.

## K

**Kiosk library:** A small cylindrical-shaped structure provided in lieu of a neighborhood library used to dispense library books, but not providing the other functions commonly associated with a library.

**Knowledge-based economy (knowledge economy):** An economy based on the exchange of information, characterized by business clusters such as universities, think-tanks, media and internet companies, and research institutions.

**Knowledge industry:** A business in which the key commodity is information or the management of information.

## L

**Land banking:** The practice of purchasing land with the intent to hold on to it until it is needed for to meet future demand, or is more profitable to sell to others.

**Land transfer:** The transfer of property ownership from one entity to another, often used to describe to the transfer of federally owned properties to the Government of the District of Columbia.

**Land use change area:** Designation used in the Comprehensive Plan to describe a large property expected to change from one land use to another during the next 20 years, especially from government use to residential or commercial use.

**Land use compatibility:** A measure of the degree to which two can uses exist side-by-side without one use adversely impacting the other.

**Land use conflict:** A problem or nuisance resulting from an activity that produces off-site impacts on a more sensitive use (such as a school or residential area) nearby.

**Land Use Element:** Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan containing goals, policies, maps and actions to guide the future development and redevelopment of public and private property.

**Large site:** Generally used to describe a site of 25 acres or more in single ownership.

**Large tract review:** Process used by the Office of Planning to review all developments of three acres or more and all commercial or mixed use developments of 50,000 square feet or more.

**Large-format retail:** Retail stores above a given size threshold (usually around 50,000 square feet), typically occupied by national chains.

**Large-scale development (large-scale office, large-scale retail):** Definition varies depending on context, but typically refers to projects that encompass multiple parcels or buildings, or projects that are larger or taller than the prevailing buildings in the immediate vicinity.

**Lateral:** A water or sewer line that connects an individual building to the main line under the street.

**Lead abatement:** The process of replacing lead pipes or otherwise adapting the drinking water conveyance system in a way that eliminates lead residue from the water supply.

**Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED):** A rating and certification system developed by the US Green Building Council to promote the use of more environmentally sustainable construction methods and materials.

**Leakage:** The loss of potential income and revenue due to consumers traveling to another community to purchase goods or services that could be locally consumed.

**Legacy Plan:** 1997 Plan developed by the National Capital Planning Commission (officially called "Extending the Legacy") which sought to redefine Washington's monumental core and identify 21<sup>st</sup> Century growth areas for national monuments, memorials, and federal installations.

**L'Enfant Plan:** The 1791 Plan for Washington, developed by Pierre L'Enfant and Benjamin Banneker.

**Level of service standard:** A scale of lettered "report card" type grades ("A" through "F") that measures the amount of traffic that a roadway or intersection can accommodate, based on such factors as maneuverability, driver satisfaction, volume to capacity ratio, and delay.

**Leverage:** To use a small initial investment to influence additional investment.

**Lien:** A legal claim made by the City on private property to secure payment of a debt.

**Life safety issue:** An issue relating to the health and safety of building occupants, particularly related to structural stability and code compliance.

**Life-long learning:** A philosophy that one can and should have opportunities to continue learning and gaining knowledge beyond traditional formal primary or higher education (through such means as adult classes, continuing education, career training, etc.)

**Light industrial (light manufacturing):** Any of a variety of manufacturing, assembly, wholesale, distribution, storage, or similar employment activities with minimal off-site impacts.

**Light pollution:** Excessive or obtrusive light created by human activities, impairing views of the natural night sky or causing annoyance to neighbors.

**Light rail:** A form of mass transit that uses electric rail cars, generally operating at-grade and sometimes within existing street rights-of-way. Light rail systems generally have lower capacities and slower speeds than heavy rail systems.

**Linear park:** A long, ribbon-shaped park, typically located along a natural feature such as a river or stream, with a configuration conducive to trails and paths, rather than active recreation.

**Linkage:** In the context of the Comprehensive Plan, either: (1) A density bonus for commercial development prefaced on the provision of affordable housing; (2) A fee or requirement to produce affordable housing attached to the approval of commercial development, in order to mitigate the housing demand generated by job growth.

**Liquid process facility:** A facility that removes contaminants from the liquid portion of sanitary sewage or stormwater runoff.

**Liquor-licensed establishment:** A location at which the sale or consumption of alcoholic beverages is allowed, subject to approval and licensing by the Alcoholic Beverage Regulation Administration. Typically refers to restaurants, night clubs, and bars, but also includes grocery stores, liquor stores, and beverage distributors.

**Live-aboard:** A boat with bathroom and cooking facilities that also serves as a permanent residence.

**Live-work:** A development type designed so that persons may live and work in the same space, often in former commercial or industrial buildings renovated for habitation.

**Living downtown:** Term coined in the 1970s to encourage people to live and recreate (as well as work) downtown, leading to policies promoting downtown housing, shopping, theaters, and entertainment.

**Living wage:** A term referring to the minimum hourly wage necessary for a person to achieve some specific standard of living and afford a specified quantity of housing, food, health care, transportation, and other basic services.

**Local public facility:** Any building used to deliver local government services, such as a police or fire station, a school, a senior center, a library, city hall, or a wastewater treatment plant.

**Local road/street:** A street providing direct access to properties and designed to discourage through traffic.

**Local-serving (business, office, retail):** Economic activities with a primarily local market, such as retail stores and personal services; contrasted to “basic” economic activities such as manufacturing and wholesale trade.

**Long-range planning:** The practice of planning for a community’s future, usually with a time horizon greater than five years. Contrasted with “current planning” which is focused on specific development proposals and mitigating the impacts of construction.

**Long term:** Generally a period of six years or longer.

**Long-term affordability:** A requirement to retain the rent or sales price of affordable housing at a level that continues to be affordable over the long-term. A specific term (30 years, 40 years, life, etc.) is usually prescribed.

**Long-Term Control Plan:** Planning and capital improvement effort initiated by DC-WASA in 1998 with the objective of greatly reducing combined sewage (storm and sanitary) flow into the Anacostia and Potomac Rivers.

**Long-term vacant:** Vacant (unoccupied) for more than two years.

**Lot coverage:** The percentage of a parcel covered by structures.

**Low density commercial:** Commercial development characterized by one and two story buildings, often with off-street surface parking lots.



**Low density residential:** Housing development primarily consisting of single family detached or semi-detached homes.

**Low-flow allocation agreement:** Multi-state agreement signed in 1978 to maintain a minimum flow in the Potomac River and curtail water withdrawal in the event of low water levels.

**Low impact development:** The practice of designing development to reduce the amount of stormwater runoff, usually by absorbing as much rainwater as possible on-site.

**Low income/lower income:** Household income that is less than 80 percent of the area median. Low income thresholds vary depending on the number of persons in the household.

**Low income housing tax credit:** A US Housing and Urban Development (HUD) program which issues tax credits for the acquisition, rehabilitation, or new construction of rental housing targeted to lower-income households.

**Low-end office:** Older, relatively low-cost office space with few amenities and primarily serving the needs of small neighborhood businesses.

**Lower Anacostia/Near Southwest Planning Area:** Planning area used in the Comprehensive Plan to present data and policies for the Southwest Urban Renewal Area (“Southwest”), the South Capitol Street/ballpark area, and the area south of Capitol Hill and along the Anacostia River, including the Navy Yard and Poplar Point.

**Lower Potomac Waterfront:** Refers to the portion of the Potomac waterfront below the mouth of the Tidal Basin.

**Low-rise/low-scale:** Three stories or less.

## M

**Main Street (Program):** District of Columbia version of the National Trust for Historic Preservation’s financial and technical assistance program designed to improve traditional neighborhood business districts by rehabilitating older buildings and promoting economic revitalization.

**Main Street Mixed Use Corridor:** Comprehensive Plan Policy Map designation identifying existing (and proposed) neighborhood shopping streets characterized by ground floor retail and upper floor residential and office uses.

**Major arterial:** See “*principal arterial*”

**Major trip generator:** A use that generates very high volumes of traffic, such as a stadium or shopping mall.

**Management prescription:** A set of operating and maintenance practices prescribed for a natural area to conserve and enhance natural resources.

**Man-made hazard:** Any health or safety hazard caused by human activity, such as soil and groundwater contamination, toxic spills, aircraft accidents, and noise.

**Mansionization:** The gradual replacement of small or modest homes in a neighborhood with much larger and more imposing homes.

**Marginal commercial land:** Commercial use with minimal economic value and few structural improvements, characterized by land values that are substantially greater than the value of property improvements.

**Marine facility:** Any structure used to support marine activities, such as marinas, boathouses, fishing piers, boat fueling stations, boat repair shops, coast guard stations, etc.

**Market-rate (housing):** Housing that is offered for rent or sale at fair market value without any consideration of standards for determining affordability.

**Mass:** The bulk or expanse of a structure, may be measured in cubic feet or yards.

**Master Education Plan:** Plan prepared by DC Public Schools addressing all aspects of school instruction, including curriculum, professional development, grade configuration, partnerships, accountability, and resources.

**Master Facilities Plan (schools):** See “*DC Public Schools Facilities Master Plan*”

**Master Public Facilities Plan/planning program:** District of Columbia initiative intended to coordinate and systematically plan for the development and modernization of public facilities such as police and fire stations, health care clinics, job training centers, and public works shops.

**Matter of right (zoning):** The land uses and development densities and structural dimensions to which a property owner is entitled by zoning, with no additional special permission or approval required.

**Maximum capacity:** The maximum quantity of water or sewer flow that can be handled at any given time. This is typically greater than “design capacity.”

**Maximum lot occupancy:** The maximum area on a lot that may be covered by structures.

**McMillan Commission:** Commission of architects, designers, landscape architects and planners appointed by Senator James McMillan in 1900 to develop an updated master plan for the District of Columbia.

**McMillan Plan:** An architectural design and “city beautiful” plan developed by the McMillan Commission in 1901 which focused on parks, monuments, open spaces, streets, government buildings and the organization of space in Washington’s monumental core.

**Mean:** The number obtained by dividing the sum of a set of quantities by the number of quantities in that set, e.g. the average.

**Median:** 1) The paved or landscaped area on a major roadway that separates traffic moving in opposing directions. 2) The point at which one half of a set is greater and one half is less, such as median income or median rent.

**Medium density commercial:** Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map category used to indicate areas of mid-rise (typically 4-7 story) office and retail development.

**Medium density residential:** Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map category used to indicate areas of mid-rise (typically 4-7 story) apartment development, although may also identify areas with a mix of high-rises and row houses, or high rises surrounded by large open spaces.

**Mental health facility:** A building at which mental health services such as counseling and psychiatric treatment are provided.

**Metropolitan Branch Trail:** Proposed 8-mile multi-use trail that runs from Silver Spring to Union Station, generally following the Metrorail Red Line.

**Mid-century:** Pertaining to the period between 1945 and 1965.

**Mid-City:** Planning area used in the Comprehensive Plan to present data and policies for the area including Adams Morgan, Bloomingdale, Columbia Heights, LeDroit Park, Mount Pleasant, Park View, Pleasant Plains, and other neighborhoods near the geographic center of the District.

**Middle Anacostia Crossings Study:** Planning study conducted in 2004-2005 as part of the Anacostia Waterfront Initiative aimed at evaluating traffic and safety issues and capital improvement options for the portion of the Anacostia River between the 11<sup>th</sup> /12<sup>th</sup> Street Bridges and Reservation 13.

**Middle class:** Term generally used to describe moderate income households, including persons in middle management jobs, skilled laborers, mid-level professionals, etc.

**Mid-rise:** Generally referring to structures that are four to seven stories in height.

**Mid-term:** Generally referring to a period four to six years in the future.

**Minimum density:** Land use regulations that allow development only if the proposed density will be greater than a specific number of units per acre.

**Mini-park:** A small park, less than one acre in size and generally containing a children’s play area.

**Minor arterial:** Official classification assigned to the 173 miles of District roadways that primarily serve short to medium-length trips. Examples include Bladensburg Road, MacArthur Boulevard, and Good Hope Road.

**Mitigate/mitigation:** To ameliorate, alleviate, or avoid to the extent reasonably feasible.

**Mixed density:** An area characterized by a mix of housing types, including single family homes, row houses, low-rise apartments, and mid- or high-rise apartments.

**Mixed income:** Generally refers to housing (or neighborhoods) that includes both affordable units and market-rate units, suitable for a mix of low, moderate, and above-moderate income households.

**Mixed use (development):** A development type in which various uses, such as office, retail, and residential, are combined in a single building or on a single property.

**Mobility:** The ability to move from one place to another, or to transport goods from one place to another.

**Mode:** A means of transportation, such as walking, auto, transit, bike, etc.

**Mode share:** The percentage of total trips using a given mode of transportation, such as bus or auto.

**Moderate density commercial:** Comprehensive Plan Map designation used to show areas of retail, office, and service uses generally three to five stories in height.

**Moderate density neighborhood:** Areas generally characterized by a mix of moderate density residential and moderate density commercial uses, often used to refer to older row house neighborhoods with pedestrian-oriented centers.

**Moderate density residential:** Comprehensive Plan Map designation used to show row house neighborhoods, garden apartment areas, and areas characterized by a mix of single family homes, row houses, and small apartments.

**Moderate income:** Household earning between 81 and 120 percent of the areawide median income.

**Modernist design:** A mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century architectural design movement that departed from tradition and emphasized steel, glass, and cubist forms.

**Modernization:** The refurbishing of an older structure to comply with current codes and standards, replace aging materials and fixtures, and meet current technology needs.

**Monumental core:** The general area encompassing the U.S. Capitol grounds, the National Mall and environs, the Tidal Basin, the Federal Triangle and Northwest Rectangle, the Southwest Federal Center, and East and West Potomac Parks.

**Motor Carrier Management and Threat Assessment Study:** 2004 DDOT report addressing truck operations in the District of Columbia and including recommendations to promote truck safety, improve federal building security, and protect neighborhoods from unnecessary truck traffic.

**Mount Vernon Triangle:** The area generally bounded by New York Avenue on the north, Massachusetts Avenue on the south, and New Jersey Avenue on the east.

**Multi-family:** Generally used to describe residential structures with three or more units, i.e., flats, apartments, and condominiums.

**Multi-modal (boulevard/corridor):** A street which accommodates multiple modes of transportation, such as rail, bus, and streetcar.

**Multi-modal connection:** See *“intermodal transfer”*

**Multi-neighborhood:** Associated with more than one neighborhood.

**Multi-neighborhood center:** Comprehensive Plan Policy Map designation applied to shopping districts drawing from several different neighborhoods (within a one to three mile radius), and typically containing supermarkets, drug stores, service businesses, specialty retail shops, general merchandise stores, restaurants, and similar uses.

**Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4):** Permit program managed by WASA and aimed at the control and monitoring of discharges to the stormwater system.

**Municipal-industrial function (or activity):** A government or quasi-government function that resembles an industrial use in its physical characteristics and operations, such as a bus repair yard or a sewage treatment plant.

**Mudflat:** Area of fine sediment and clay covered by water at high tide and exposed at low tide.

## N

**NAICS code:** North American Industry Classification System, a numerical coding system used to classify all types of business uses in the U.S., Canada, and Mexico. Replaces Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) codes.

**National Capital Framework Plan:** 2007 planning initiative being undertaken by the National Capital Planning Commission to better organize and improve the areas surrounding the National Mall.

**National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC):** Central planning agency for the federal government within the National Capital Region, providing overall planning and guidance for federal lands and buildings in the District, and in portions of Maryland and Virginia.

**National Capital Revitalization Corporation (NCRC):** A public company created in 2001 to spur revitalization and reinvestment in emerging District of Columbia neighborhoods through residential and commercial development.

**National Mall:** The large open lawns and landscaped areas between Constitution Avenue and Independence Avenue on the north and south, the US Capitol on the east, and the Potomac River on the west, and also including the north-south axis including the White House, Ellipse, Washington Monument, and Jefferson Memorial.

**National Mall Third Century Initiative:** Program initiated by the Coalition to Save Our Mall to promote appropriate public uses on the National Mall, encourage stewardship, and conserve the Mall’s historic character.

**National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES):** Federal permitting program to eliminate water pollution by regulating the amount and concentration of pollutants a permit holder is authorized to discharge, and by setting schedules for compliance and requirements for water quality testing and monthly/quarterly reporting.

**National Register of Historic Places** The U.S. government’s official roster of districts, sites, buildings, and objects worthy of preservation, administered by the National Park Service and containing over one million properties nationwide.

**Near Northeast:** Generally refers to areas immediately to the north and east of the U.S. Capitol, including the northern part of Capitol Hill, the eastern part of NoMA, and the area between H Street NE and Florida Avenue.

**Near Northwest:** Planning area used in the Comprehensive Plan to present data and policies for the area including Dupont Circle, Foggy Bottom/West End, Georgetown, Kalorama Triangle, Logan Circle, and Shaw.

**Near Southeast:** Generally refers to the triangle bounded by I-395, South Capitol Street, and the Anacostia River.

**Near Southwest:** Generally refers to the area south of the National Mall, north of the Washington Channel, east of 14<sup>th</sup> Street SW and west of South Capitol (including the Southwest Urban Renewal area and the L'Enfant Plaza area).

**Negative visual character:** Lacking in pleasing aesthetic qualities and characterized by abandoned or poorly maintained buildings, graffiti, vandalized property, litter, poor quality streets and sidewalks, and little or no landscaping.

**Neighborhood:** A part of the City defined by distinct characteristics and boundaries and considered as familiar territory by its residents.

**Neighborhood association:** A volunteer organization comprised of local residents that is dedicated to the protection and enhancement of the quality of life in that neighborhood.

**Neighborhood commercial center/neighborhood business district:** A small retail center or cluster of retail and service businesses with a trade area limited to the immediately surrounding area (up to about a mile), often anchored by a small market or drug store and containing other tenants providing local services like dry cleaning and video rental.

**Neighborhood Conservation Area:** Comprehensive Plan Policy Map category used to describe stable areas with little vacant land and little potential for change. Policies in these areas support maintaining and enhancing existing uses.

**Neighborhood context:** The overall atmosphere and setting associated with a particular neighborhood, defined by the scale and design of its buildings, the appearance of open spaces and vegetation, and the character of its uses.

**Neighborhood Enhancement Area:** Comprehensive Plan Policy Map category used to describe residential areas with a substantial amount of vacant land and potential for infill development. Policies in these areas support reinvestment and infill development that is consistent with the scale and density of existing development.

**Neighborhood identity:** The features that distinguish a neighborhood as a unique place within a City and create a sense of belonging for its residents.

**Neighborhood park:** Small park (usually one to five acres), intended to meet the recreational needs of people living within a one-half mile radius and containing such facilities as playgrounds, tot lots, basketball courts, open lawn areas, and picnic tables.

**Neighborhood planning:** Activity in the Office of Planning that involves preparing plans for individual neighborhoods, neighborhood centers, and large sites; and addressing day to day planning and development issues at the neighborhood level.

**Neighborhood revitalization:** A set of activities aimed at strengthening neighborhoods by creating jobs, assisting local businesses, providing new housing opportunities, and investing in public improvements.

**Neighborhood school:** A public school that primarily serves residents in the immediately surrounding neighborhood; the school generally attended by students living in a particular community.

**Neighborhood-serving (business, office, retail, shopping):** Retail stores, services, or offices which serve the needs of the immediately surrounding area.

**Neighborhood shopping street:** A pedestrian-oriented street lined with small retail shops, restaurants, service businesses and other uses (including upper story housing or offices) generally serving residents of the immediately surrounding area.

**New Communities Initiative:** District of Columbia program designed to improve the quality of life in distressed neighborhoods. The initiative replaces existing affordable housing units in targeted complexes “one-for-one” with new affordable units, and adds market rate housing to cross-subsidize construction. Other features, such as new schools, libraries, parks, and job training programs, are included.

**New community:** Sites specifically targeted through the New Communities Initiative (see above), including Northwest One, Lincoln Heights, and Barry Farm.

**New economy:** Business sector based on communications technology, information exchange, global marketing, and an emphasis on innovation and adaptation to rapid change.

**New markets tax credit:** Federal program enacted in 2000 to spur private reinvestment in lower income communities; provides federal tax incentives to increase the flow of capital to these areas.

**New media:** Broad term that describes new technologies and communication methods in the context of mainstream media (especially relating to the internet, streaming video, and digital communication).

**New town:** A self-contained planned community built “from scratch” and including housing areas, shopping areas, employment areas, parks, and public buildings.

**No net loss:** Policy which requires that any reduction in acreage of a particular use (such as parks or wetlands) be accompanied “in kind” by the creation of new acreage of that use that is equivalent or greater in value.

**Noise abatement:** Any measure that reduces the level of noise in an area, such as sound walls, landscaping, mufflers on noise equipment, limits on aircraft landing and take-off, etc.

**Noise-sensitive use:** Property normally used for sleeping (e.g., homes), or normally used as schools, churches, hospitals or public libraries.

**Non-attainment area:** An area that does not meet EPA standards for air quality.

**Non-compliant:** Not in compliance with City rules and regulations.

**Non-conforming:** A use that was valid when brought into existence but by subsequent regulation becomes no longer valid.

**Non-profit:** Not conducted or maintained for the purpose of making a profit.

**Non-profit recreational facility:** A non-government owned facility providing recreational services to residents at a nominal cost (or for free to disadvantaged youth), such as the Boys and Girls Club or the YMCA.

**Non-renewable resource:** Usually used to describe an energy resource that is not replaced or is replaced only very slowly by natural processes. Primary examples of non-renewable energy resources are fossil fuels such as oil, natural gas, and coal.

**Non-residential use:** Any use other than housing.

**North of Massachusetts Avenue (NoMA):** The area generally bounded by Massachusetts Avenue on the south, New York Avenue on the north, and the Capitol Hill neighborhood on the east (3<sup>rd</sup> Street NE).

**Northeast Gateway:** Generally referring to the area along New York Avenue NE from Florida Avenue to Bladensburg Road, including the Florida Avenue (Capitol City) market.

**Northwest One:** Urban renewal project area located along North Capitol Street between H Street and New York Avenue and including several publicly assisted housing complexes developed in the 1970s.

## O

**Objectionable:** Liable to objection, protest, or disapproval.

**Obsolete:** A use that no longer serves a useful economic function, particularly with regard to the uses around it.

**Office:** A building where professional, administrative, and/or clerical services are carried out.

**Office/flex:** A building designed to be easily adapted for occupancy either as office space or for warehouse/light manufacturing.

**Off-peak:** Occurring outside the peak time period (for traffic or transit, generally refers to the hours between 7 PM - 6 AM and 9:30 AM – 3 PM, but varies).

**Off-street parking:** Parking that is provided outside the right-of-way of a public street, typically in a surface parking lot or parking structure.

**Old Convention Center site:** Site formerly occupied by the Washington Convention Center bounded by 9<sup>th</sup> Street NW, 11<sup>th</sup> Street NW, New York Avenue, and H Street NW.

**Older:** Relative term used to describe structures or neighborhoods that are more than 50 years old but that are not designated as historic.

**One-for-one replacement:** See “in-kind replacement”

**One-stop career center:** Network of District of Columbia facilities operated by the Department of Employment Services which provide career counseling, career planning, resume assistance, direct job placement, classroom and on-the-job training, job bank access, and labor market information for residents.

**Open space:** Any parcel of land which is essentially unimproved, farmed, or devoted to a public or private recreational use.

**Open space network:** A system of open spaces that are physically connected to one another, even though they may serve different purposes and be under multiple ownership.

**Open space zone:** Zoning district created to recognize and protect open space areas, e.g., parks and natural habitat areas.

**Operational issue:** An issue related to the operating procedures of local government, or to immediate needs such as filling potholes or paving roads. Contrasted with “planning issues” which are longer-term and usually broader in scale.

**Out-of-boundary school:** A school other than the one to which students living in a particular location would ordinarily be assigned.

**Outer suburbs:** In the context of the DC Comp Plan, refers to Fauquier, Loudoun, Prince William, and Stafford Counties in Virginia and Anne Arundel, Frederick, St. Mary’s, Calvert, Charles, and Howard Counties in Maryland.

**Outmoded:** No longer current or capable of performing the function for which it was designed.

**Outsourcing:** The practice of contracting out a particular service to another source in order to cut costs; in the context of the Comp Plan, usually refers to the practice of the government contracting with private vendors to provide services formerly provided by the public sector.

**Overconcentration:** See “*excessive concentration*”

**Overcrowded:** Defined by the Census as a housing unit that has more than 1.0 persons per room.

**Overflow traffic:** See “*cut-through traffic*”

**Overlay Zone:** A zoning designation that modifies the basic underlying designation in some specific manner.

**Overzoned:** A property which is zoned in a manner which permits more development than what is appropriate, based on the Comprehensive Plan designation or the character of existing development in the vicinity.

**Ozone:** Gas that forms in the atmosphere, created by a chemical reaction between oxides of nitrogen (NO<sub>x</sub>), and volatile organic compounds (VOC) in the presence of sunlight.

## P

**Parcel:** A unit of land under unified ownership, described in a deed or other legal instrument.

**Park, parkland:** Tract of land set aside for public use, aesthetic enjoyment, recreation, or the conservation of natural resources.

**Park classification:** A system of classifying the City’s parks based on their physical characteristics and role in meeting the city’s recreational needs; used to plan for appropriate facilities and activities in each park.

**Parking management:** Any action designed to address parking problems or conflicts in a neighborhood—not necessarily associated with providing additional spaces.

**Parking maximum:** A limit on the total number of parking spaces that may be provided.

**Parkway:** A meandering thoroughfare lined on both sides by forested open space, and often containing a wooded center median.

**Particulate matter:** Small solid particles and liquid droplets found in the air, posing a potential health concern because they can be inhaled into the respiratory system. Typical sources include crushing or grinding operations, fires, and road dust.

**Passive open space:** Open space that is left in a natural undisturbed state for activities such as hiking, walking, and nature study.

**Passive recreation:** Type of recreation or activity that does not require the use of organized play areas.

**Payment in-lieu of taxes (PILOT):** A payment made to compensate a local government for some or all of the tax revenue it loses because of the nature of the ownership or use of a particular piece of real property.

**Peak hour:** For any given traffic facility or transit mode, the morning and evening 60-minute period during which traffic volumes are highest.

**Pedestrian amenity:** Any improvement developed to improve pedestrian safety and comfort, and create a more pleasant street environment.

**Pedestrian facility:** A sidewalk, crosswalk, bridge, trail or other improvement specifically developed for pedestrian movement.

**Pedestrian obstruction:** A physical obstacle that makes pedestrian movement unsafe or logistically difficult.

**Pedestrian-friendly (design/environment), Pedestrian-oriented (development/shopping/street, storefront, etc):** Form of development that makes the street environment inviting for pedestrians; characterized by special sidewalk pavement, buildings of varied architectural styles, an absence of front yard parking, benches or other amenities, residential porches, low fences, lighting and other amenities.

**Peer city:** In the context of the Comp Plan, refers to Boston, San Francisco, Denver, Portland, Seattle, Baltimore, and other mature (non-Sunbelt) central cities of approximately 550,000 to 800,000 people.

**Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation**

**(PADC):** Entity created by Congress in 1972 to beautify and revitalize Pennsylvania Avenue and restore its prominence as a ceremonial and historic thoroughfare.

**Performance measure (or standard):** Zoning regulations that allow uses based on standards of operation rather than on the particular type of use; may be established to limit noise, air pollution, emissions, odor, glare, vibration, dust, dirt, heat, fire hazards, waste, traffic generation, and visual impact.

**Permanent housing:** Housing that may be occupied indefinitely, with no maximum length of stay.

**Permanent open space:** Land that will never be developed, either because it is in public ownership and dedicated as parkland, or because it contains important natural or scenic qualities and is regulated through local zoning laws.

**Persistent problem area:** Small areas of the city, usually a few blocks in size, identified and mapped by the District of Columbia due to resident concerns about safety, health, blight, and other problems that affect the quality of life.

**Physical incursion:** A structure or feature (including signs, trees, overgrown vegetation) that interferes with an area's historic integrity, views, or visual quality.

**Pipeline:** Any development that has been approved but is not yet occupied, including structures already under construction and structures approved but not yet started.

**Plan Revision Task Force:** The 28-member citizens task force appointed by the Mayor and Council to help guide the 2004-06 update of the DC Comprehensive Plan District Elements.

**Planned unit development:** A large-scale development in which conventional zoning standards (such as setbacks and height limits) are relaxed in order to conserve sensitive areas, promote the creation of public amenities such as parks and plazas, and encourage the mixing of different land uses.

**Planning and development priorities:** A summary of the opinions and issues expressed by community members at the public meetings and workshops held over the course of the Comprehensive Plan update; not necessarily city policy.

**Planning area:** The area covered by the Comprehensive Plan; in this instance all land within the District of Columbia.

**Planning Commission:** A locally-appointed commission that reviews plans and projects for consistency with the Comprehensive Plan, considers amendments to the Plan, and addresses long-range planning issues; does not currently exist in the District of Columbia government.

**Planting strip:** Landscaped strip of land located between the sidewalk and the edge of the curb.

**Plaza:** A broad open area in an urban setting, typically consisting of textured pavement, landscaping, and sculpture, that is open to pedestrians but not to automobiles.

**Pocket park:** Very small landscaped area or plaza in an urban area, providing visual relief, passive recreation (sunbathing, reading, etc.), nature enjoyment, or a public gathering space.

**Podium park:** A park developed on a structure in the air space over a freeway or roadway.

**Policy:** A specific statement of principle that implies clear commitment; a general direction that a governmental agency follows.

**Policy focus areas:** Approximately 60 geographic areas (ranging from a few blocks to several hundred acres) in the District of Columbia that are the subject of detailed policies in the Area Elements of the Comprehensive Plan.

**Poor design identity:** Lacking distinguishing or memorable visual qualities, non-descript.

**Poplar Point:** Crescent-shaped area on the east bank of the Anacostia River located just above the South Capitol Street (Frederick Douglass) Bridge.

**Porous pavement:** Pavement through which water permeates into an underlying stone reservoir, where it is stored for gradual release into the soil below.

**Post-war:** After 1945.

**Potential historic property:** A property which may meet the criteria for official historic designation but which has not yet been formally listed.

**Potentially consistent:** In the context of the Comp Plan, refers to zoning designations that do not inherently conflict with the Future Land Use Map even though they may not identically reflect the use shown. For example, commercial zoning in a "Production, Distribution, Repair" area.

**Potentially inconsistent:** In the context of the Comp Plan, refers to zoning designations that potentially conflict with the Future Land Use Map. For example, multi-family zoning in a low density residential area.

**Poverty level:** The federal poverty level as defined by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development.

**Predominant(ly):** The most common or conspicuous characteristic of an area.

**Premium transit:** Transit which operates at a higher service level than conventional buses, through higher capacity vehicles, more frequent service, faster speeds, and passenger amenities.

**Prescription:** See “*Management prescription*”

**Preservation:** To keep, restore, or maintain intact some feature of the natural or built environment.

**Preservation tax credit:** See “*historic preservation tax credit*”

**Prevailing:** See “*predominant*”

**Pre-zoning:** To identify the zoning designations that are desired for an area before it is under local control.

**Primary care:** The medical care a patient receives upon first contact with the health care system, before referral elsewhere within the system.

**Primary Care Administration:** Division of the District Department of Health responsible for developing new primary care sites, developing systems to monitor the quality of services provided at health care clinics, and assisting in the physical improvement of clinic space.

**Principal arterial:** Multi-lane roadways with very high traffic volumes, providing the backbone of the road system and handling high volumes of commuter as well as local traffic, e.g., New York Avenue, Pennsylvania Ave SE, etc.

**Principle:** A fundamental, primary, and essential statement from which other statements (including goals, policies, and actions) are derived.

**Priority:** A rating that establishes the order of importance or urgency of a particular action.

**Private school:** A school founded, conducted, and maintained by a private group rather than by the government, usually charging tuition.

**Problem land use:** A use or activity that creates real or perceived conflicts for the properties around it.

**Procurement:** In the context of the Comp Plan, usually refers to the obtaining of private goods and services by the federal government, for example, supplies, research and development, and general services.

**Production, distribution, and repair:** Sector of the economy (and also Comp Plan Map designation) which includes light industry, warehousing, distribution facilities, research and development, automotive services, and similar uses.

**Professional and technical services:** Sector of the economy that includes lawyers, engineers, architects, consultants, and other office jobs.

**Proffer:** A method of collecting funds from developers to cover the cost of the capital facility improvements needed to support their projects.

**Progress Report:** Report completed every four years that documents the progress being made in implementing the Land Use Element of the Comprehensive Plan.

**Projections:** Forecasts of future conditions, based on existing conditions, trends, data, expected events, and local policies.

**Project-based Section 8:** See “*Section 8*”

**Prudent avoidance:** A precautionary principle which states that reasonable efforts to minimize potential risks should be taken when the actual magnitude of the risks is unknown; often used with respect to the siting of electric transmission lines and the unknown effects of their electromagnetic fields.

**Public access:** The ability of an individual to easily and freely access a particular location, such as the waterfront or a large tract of federal land.

**Public amenity/public benefit:** Any feature in a new development that is included for the benefit of the general public and not only the persons who live or work in that development.

**Public art:** Sculpture, painting, murals and other forms of artwork that are placed in public spaces or in public view to enrich and add visual interest to the built environment.

**Public charter school:** A public school operated by a group of parents, teachers and/or community members as a semi-autonomous neighborhood school, operating under a contract or “charter” between the members of the group and the local board of education.

**Public facility:** Any facility belonging to the local, state, or federal government or a public entity such as the School District or a public utility.

**Public Facilities Master Plan:** See “*Master Public Facilities Plan*”

**Public housing:** Housing that is built, operated, and owned by the DC Housing Authority and that is typically provided at nominal rent to lower income or special needs households.

**Public market:** A collection of vendors operating in stalls under one roof in a publicly-owned facility, often selling fresh produce, meats, and locally made goods.

**Public realm:** General term referring to the publicly-owned outdoor spaces in a city, including streets, curbs, sidewalks, alleys, planting strips and tree wells, plazas, parks, and the grounds of public buildings.



**Public reservation:** See “*federal reservation*”

**Public space:** Any space owned and maintained by District government and used by the public, particularly streets, alleys, and sidewalks.

**Public space permit:** Permit required by the District Department of Transportation to temporarily or permanently modify or use public space.

**Public triangle:** See “*triangle*”

**Public transit:** Publicly-owned and operated system for the transportation of persons from one location to another, usually along a fixed route. Includes buses, ferries, trains, etc.

**Public works:** Generally refers to water, sewer, drainage, solid waste, and other infrastructure facilities, including the equipment and areas used to maintain and operate these facilities.

**Public/private partnership (or development):** A merging of public and private resources to achieve an end result or product that would be difficult to achieve through public or private activity alone.

**Publicly-assisted housing:** Any housing that operates (or that was constructed) in part through a subsidy from the local or federal government, including public housing, housing owned and operated by non-profits, and private housing where rents are publicly subsidized.

**Publicly-owned:** In the context of the Comp Plan, usually refers to land or buildings owned by District government or expected to be transferred to the District by the federal government.

**PUD amenity:** A feature provided by the developer of a planned unit development (PUD) that provides a benefit not only to the occupants of the PUD but also to the surrounding area or to the City as a whole (for example, a park).

**Pump station (pumping station):** A facility used to pump water or wastewater from one location to another, compensating for gravity and changes in elevation.

## Q

**Quadrant:** One of the four areas into which Washington, DC is divided, defined by the north-south axis along North and South Capitol Streets, and the east-west axis along the National Mall and East Capitol Street.

**Quality job:** A job which pays a living wage or better (see “*living wage.*”)

## R

**Radial (avenue or boulevard):** Extending in a relatively straight line from the center toward the edge.

**Radon:** A chemically inert, radioactive gas produced by the decay of radium: emissions produced by outgassing of rock, brick, etc. are a health hazard.

**Rain garden:** A planted depression that is designed to take all, or as much as possible, of the excess rainwater run-off from a house or other building.

**Rapid bus:** Premium system of bus transportation that is faster than conventional bus service, uses distinctive vehicles, and features amenities such as upgraded bus shelters.

**Rapid transit:** Generally refers to any rail transit system that moves large numbers of passengers around an urban area at a faster speed than would be possible by car or bus.

**Reasonable accommodation:** Any modification or adjustment to a job, an employment practice, or the work environment that makes it possible for a qualified disabled individual to enjoy equal employment opportunities.

**Recent past:** Generally applying to the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s.

**Reciprocal view:** Refers to the view of a particular feature from a vantage point as well as the view of that vantage point from that feature. For instance, the view of the White House from the Jefferson Memorial and vice versa.

**Recreational facility:** A structure or open area improved for recreational purposes, especially on public land. Includes playgrounds, sports fields, tennis courts, recreation centers, swimming pools, stadiums, golf courses, etc.

**Red Book:** The District Department of Transportation’s official standards for the design of roads, highways, and the public rights of way.

**Redevelopment:** To demolish existing buildings; or to increase the overall floor area on an existing property, or both, irrespective of whether a change in land use occurs.

**Redlining:** An illegal discriminatory practice by which banks, insurance companies, etc. refuse or limit loans, mortgages, insurance, etc. within specific geographic areas.

**Redundancies:** Providing multiple ways of moving through a particular area, to ensure continued mobility and access in the event an access route is blocked or a transportation mode is taken out of service.

**Refurbish:** To renovate, clean, and make new again.

**Region (regional):** In the context of the DC Comp Plan, refers to the Washington Metropolitan Statistical Area.

**Regional activity center:** Term used by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments to describe small tightly defined areas of concentrated employment (more than 15,000 jobs) in the Washington metro area, for example, Tysons Corner and Downtown Silver Spring.

**Regional activity cluster:** Term used by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments to describe geographic areas where regional activity centers are clustered, for example the Dulles Toll Road corridor and the I-270 corridor.

**Regional center (regional commercial, regional retail):** A commercial activity center, possibly including housing, of citywide and regional significance. Market area extends throughout the metropolitan area.

**Regional Emergency Coordination Plan:** Plan prepared by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments to coordinate emergency preparedness, communication, and disaster recovery at the regional level.

**Regional Mobility and Accessibility Study:** Regional Transportation Planning Board study which explored the traffic impacts of redistributing regional growth patterns to achieve a better balance between jobs and housing.

**Regulatory reform:** The process of updating regulations and laws to better respond to current issues, needs, and beliefs.

**Rehabilitation:** The preservation and/or improvement of substandard housing or commercial buildings.

**Reimbursement agreement:** A legal tool used to reimburse a developer for a pro-rated share of the cost of public works and utility improvements he or she provides when those improvements will also benefit subsequent developers in the area.

**Reinvestment:** The investment of public and private capital in an area that is already developed.

**Residential:** Land used for single family homes, row houses, apartments, condominiums, and other forms of housing.

**Residential character:** Refers to the physical features associated with a residential area, such as homes, lawns, yards, street trees, low traffic volumes, and limited commercial uses.

**Residential permit parking:** System used to help residents in neighborhoods with high parking demand and limited off-street parking by limiting the long-term use of on-street parking spaces to residents with permits.

**Residential recreation space:** An area on a lot or within a building or other structure that is equipped or landscaped for recreational use by the residents of the building or other structure and is freely accessible to the residents.

**ReStore DC:** District of Columbia program which promotes the revival of neighborhood business districts and small businesses through technical and funding assistance and building the capacity of non-profit neighborhood improvement organizations.

**Restrictive covenant:** A private, binding agreement associated with the transfer or possession of real property stipulating that certain activities will or will not be carried out on that property in the future.

**Retail:** Any building or activity in which commodities are sold directly to consumers.

**Retail Action Agenda:** Study being undertaken by the District of Columbia to evaluate the market for retail goods and services, and develop strategies to capture a larger share of that market in the District and its neighborhoods.

**Retail core:** The portion of Downtown DC that historically housed the city's major retailers, i.e., the area north of Pennsylvania Avenue and south of New York Avenue between 6<sup>th</sup> Street and 15<sup>th</sup> Street, especially F Street NW.

**Revitalization:** To impart new life into, or change in a positive way.

**Ridgeline:** The elongated, high area along the top of a hill.

**Riverwalk:** A paved promenade along the banks of a river used for walking and bicycling.

**Road(way) capacity:** The maximum number of vehicles that can move through an intersection or along a given road segment during a given period of time.

**Roadway pricing:** A method of recovering the cost of maintaining an urban street system (and covering environmental costs) by charging users, usually through the electronic collection of fees from motorists crossing into a given area.

**Rock Creek East:** Planning area used in the Comprehensive Plan to present data and policies for the northern part of the City, including Crestwood, Brightwood, Lamond Riggs, Manor Park, Petworth, Shepherd Park, Takoma Park, and the Armed Forces Retirement Home.

**Rock Creek West:** Planning area used in the Comprehensive Plan to present data and policies for the area west of Rock Creek Park, with the exception of Georgetown/Burleith (which is Near Northwest).

**Roof structure:** A structure added to the top of the original roofline of a building; may provide additional space for habitation, storage, recreation, etc., and may also include mechanical equipment, telecommunication devices, parapets, etc.

**Row houses:** Single family dwellings attached to each other by common walls, generally with similar or identical facades.

**Row house neighborhood:** A residential area where row houses are the predominant housing type.

## S

**Sanitary sewer:** Pipelines beneath city streets used to collect and convey wastewater to a centralized treatment facility.

**Satellite campus:** A second location of a college or university that is physically detached from the main campus.

**Scale:** The relative proportion of different elements of the built environment to one another.

**Scale transition:** The dynamic physical qualities present where larger scale structures adjoin smaller scale structures.

**Scenic resource:** Building and landscape patterns or features which are visually or aesthetically pleasing and which contribute affirmatively to a community.

**School of choice:** The school one would naturally choose to attend.

**Screening:** To mask from view, for instance, with a fence or hedge.

**Section 8:** Federal housing assistance program which includes tenant-based vouchers (used by families to lease a private sector unit at a subsidized rent) and project-based vouchers (apartment complexes where the rent on all units is subsidized).

**Section 106 Review:** Review process designed to ensure that impacts on historic properties are considered and mitigated during federal project planning and execution.

**Sedimentation:** The gradual filling in of a water body with soil sediment washed into the water by rain and streamflow.

**Semi-actuating lights:** Traffic signals that are triggered by motion sensors at particular times.

**Semi-detached home:** A home

(usually two stories) that shares a common wall with another home on one side only.

**Semi-governmental entity:** A local public agency that is not directly governed by the municipal government, such as the DC Public Schools, or the Water and Sewer Authority.

**Seminary:** A special school providing education in theology, religious history, etc., primarily to prepare students for the priesthood or ministry.

**Senior:** A person aged 65 or older.

**Senior housing:** Housing designed and reserved for senior citizens, particularly those of low or moderate income.

**Senior wellness center:** A facility designed for the benefit of senior citizens, including physical and mental health services, social services, meeting and gathering places, and organized programs for seniors.

**Sense of identity/sense of place:** The innate character of an area, as defined by its architecture, visual landmarks and vistas, streets, public spaces, and landscapes.

**Sensitive use:** An activity that is susceptible to adverse impacts from other activities occurring nearby.

**Service business, service organization:** A business in which work is performed for the benefit of another, for instance, a travel agency or an insurance brokerage.

**Setback:** The minimum distance on the interior perimeter of a property line that is required to be kept free of structures, e.g., the required front, rear, and side yards.

**Shall:** That which is obligatory or necessary.

**Shared parking:** Parking facility which serves multiple uses with different peak demand times, such as a movie theater and an office building.

**Should:** A directive to be honored in the absence of countervailing considerations.

**Shopping center:** A group of stores or shops, typically sharing common walls, parking areas, and access points.

**Shopsteading:** The practice of setting up a new business in an abandoned or vacant storefront to save on rent and other operating costs.

**Short-term:** Generally referring to an action to be accomplished in the next one to three years.

**Shuttle:** A bus that travels back and forth at regular intervals over a particular route, especially a short route connecting major destinations to major transportation systems.

**Sidewalk obstruction:** Anything blocking pedestrian movement along a sidewalk.

**Signage:** General term referring to public and private signs and their design attributes.

**Signal timing:** The computerized linking of signalized intersections along a thoroughfare to enable more rapid movement by vehicles.

**Signature bridge:** A bridge that is exceptionally distinctive in its design and appearance, to the point where it becomes a local icon (i.e., the Brooklyn Bridge, the Golden Gate Bridge, etc.).

**Significant (effect or impact):** Having the potential for adverse change on the physical conditions in an area, or the potential to adversely affect the economic or social welfare of a city or a neighborhood.

**Single family attached:** A one-family dwelling unit that shares at least one common wall with an adjacent dwelling.

**Single family detached:** A dwelling unit intended for occupancy by one family that is structurally independent from any other dwelling unit.

**Single room occupancy:** A building that houses people in single rooms, usually with shared bathroom and kitchen facilities, at a low rent and usually located in or near a downtown area.

**Skylining:** The placement of a tall or prominent structure on the top of a hill or ridgeline, thereby altering the ridgeline's appearance when viewed from a distance.

**Sludge:** The residual semi-solid material left from industrial, water treatment, or wastewater treatment processes.

**Small and disadvantaged business:** Generally refers to a business with fewer than 50 employees or a business owned and operated by a lower income individual; formal local and federal definitions may apply.

**Small area plan:** Community-driven planning tool used in the District of Columbia to outline policies, actions, and recommendations for small geographic areas in the city—usually the size of a neighborhood or business district—where particular issues or challenges are present.

**Small business:** A business with 50 employees or less.

**Small diameter water main:** A water main of 12" or less.

**Small group discussion:** A citizen participation technique used during the Comp Plan update in which 20 to 30 stakeholders take part in a two-hour facilitated discussion on a particular topic or issue, such as environmental quality or public school facilities.

**Small, local, and minority business:** Generally refers to a business with fewer than 50 employees, a business with more than 51% ownership by African-American, Asian, or Latino individuals, or a business that is locally based; formal local and federal definitions may apply.

**Small-scale development:** General term used to describe projects on individual lots or sites smaller than an acre in size.

**Smart growth:** Approach to urban development in which natural resources are conserved, urban sprawl is minimized, and growth is channeled into existing communities and neighborhoods where the infrastructure is already in place to support it.

**Smart housing code:** Residential building regulations that encourage energy efficiency, water conservation, the use of recycled materials, and other attributes that conserve natural resources.

**Social infrastructure:** The system of social services, health services, child care and senior care services, and other activities and facilities that support social relationships in a community.

**Soft skills:** The cluster of personality traits, social graces, facility with language, personal habits, friendliness, and manners that characterize successful employees.

**Solid waste:** Domestic (household) and commercial trash, including biodegradable material, recyclable material, inert wastes (i.e., construction debris), and composite waste (plastics, etc.).

**Solid waste transfer facility:** See *"trash transfer facility"*

**Solids processing facility:** Facility used to process and treat sludge at a wastewater treatment facility.

**Source reduction:** Activities which reduce the quantity of solid waste requiring disposal in a landfill.

**Southwest Waterfront:** Refers to the northern shore of the Washington Channel, including the Fish Market and tour boat piers.

**Special exception:** A conditionally permitted use in a particular zone district; that is, a use that is permitted provided certain specific criteria are met.

**Special needs (population):** A subset of the population requiring assistance in the provision of housing or transportation, such as the elderly or disabled.

**Special needs housing:** Housing that is specifically designed to meet the needs of a group for which conventional housing may be unsuitable, and which often contains special design features and services to meet the needs of that group.

**Special status species:** Any plant or animal species identified by the State or federal governments as rare, endangered, or threatened; such species require protection, and conservation due to their rarity, scarcity, or danger of extinction.

**Special streets and places:** Term used in early District of Columbia Comprehensive Plans to describe historically, aesthetically, or ceremonially significant streets, plazas, alleys, public circles, squares, etc.

**Special Treatment Area:** Term used in early District of Columbia Comprehensive Plans to describe specific areas of the city covered by place-based policies that address unique local conditions.

**Specialty shopping:** Type of retail characterized by small high-end shops, boutiques, restaurants, and entertainment venues rather than traditional supermarkets, department stores, pharmacies, etc.

**Spin-off development:** Development that is triggered by (or made feasible by) development on a nearby site, such as a new hotel next to the new convention center.

**Square:** A city block in the District of Columbia; each square has an assigned number corresponding to the official surveyors' map of the city and legal description of each property.

**Stable neighborhood:** Term developed by the Office of Planning in 2002 to describe neighborhoods with ample market-driven private investment and social indicators as high or higher than the citywide average.

**Standards for external effects:** A quantifiable measurement of the impacts a use is permitted to generate, for instance the maximum noise level in decibels.

**Starter housing:** Housing suitable in price and amenities for first-time home buyers.

**State Historic Preservation Officer:** Official within the HPO who administers the national historic preservation program, reviews National Register of Historic Places nominations, maintains data on historic properties, and consults with Federal agencies during Section 106 review.

**State Implementation Plan:** A state plan for complying with the federal Clean Air Act.

**Station area:** The area within a ½-mile radius of a Metro station, including built out areas where no future change is expected and vacant or underutilized properties where additional development could potentially occur.

**Stationary source:** Fixed location from which noise emanates, or from which air or water pollutants are generated.

**Steep slope/steep topography:** A slope where the natural grade exceeds 25 percent.

**Step down (stepping down):** The decreasing in height of a structure as it approaches other structures that are lower in scale.

**Stewardship:** Care of the land and natural environment by persons in a community.

**Storm sewer:** A pipe used to convey stormwater runoff, usually from streets or other non-permeable surfaces, to ditches, creeks, channels, and other drainage systems.

**Stormwater management:** The management of runoff originating from rain.

**Strategic development plan:** See "Small area plan"

**Strategic Neighborhood Investment Program (SNIP):** Program initiated by DC Government in 2002 targeting 12 emerging neighborhoods with a series of coordinated capital improvements (infrastructure, public facilities, streetscape upgrades, etc.) in order to leverage private investment and revitalization.

**Strategic plan:** A short-term (usually 3-5 year) plan containing specific actions and strategies that identify how an organization's resources will be allocated to achieve its mission.

**Stream valley:** The sloping wooded areas along both sides of a stream.

**Stream valley park:** Any of a number of District or federal open space reserves that parallel the tributary streams to Rock Creek and the Anacostia River.

**Street furniture:** Those features associated with a street that are intended to enhance the street's physical character and be used by pedestrians, such as benches, trash receptacles, lights, and newspaper racks.

**Street tree:** Tree planted in median or along sidewalks in the public right-of-way intended to enhance the visual quality of a street, provide shade, absorb pollutants and noise, and provide habitat for urban wildlife.

**Street vending:** The sale of goods, including food, souvenirs, crafts, etc. from a mobile cart set up on the street.

**Street wall:** The portion of a building facing the street; particularly used to describe the "wall" effect created where there are multiple attached buildings along a sidewalk with no side or front yards.

**Streetcar:** A wheeled vehicle that runs on rails, operates within a street right-of-way, and is propelled by electricity.

**Streetscape:** The landscape, infrastructure, and building elements that characterize a particular street or public space.

**Streetscape amenity, streetscape improvement:** Any measure that makes a street or the adjacent sidewalk area more attractive.

**Strivers Section:** A historic district in the vicinity of 19<sup>th</sup> St NW, 16<sup>th</sup> St NW, T Street, and Florida Ave; derives its name from the area's longstanding association with leading individuals and institutions in Washington's African American community.

**Structure:** Something constructed, especially a building or a part of a building, but also including fences, trellises, gazebos, and similar standing features.

**Structural imbalance:** Term describing the fiscal condition present in the District of Columbia, wherein the City's expenditures far exceed its revenues because of the large amount of non-taxable land and the extent of income earned in the City that cannot be locally taxed because workers live in other states.

**Student:** A person enrolled in a school or college; specific legal definitions may apply depending on context (e.g., campus plans).

**Student housing:** Housing explicitly built or acquired for the purpose of accommodating college, university, or boarding school students.

**Subdivision:** The division of land into two or more parcels, or a collection of parcels that was created from the division of a single parcel.

**Subsidized housing:** Housing in which the rent (or sale) price is reduced below the amount that would be charged by the private market as a result of a government subsidy.

**Substandard:** Falling short of a prescribed norm.

**Substantial:** Having considerable and perceptible importance, value, degree, or extent.

**Substation:** A facility in which high voltage electricity is transformed for distribution by a low-voltage network.

**Summit:** A very large, facilitated public meeting at which residents provide input and feedback on important issues.

**Superblock:** A city block that is much larger than a traditional block, created by closing off former through-streets, and redeveloping them with plazas, large buildings, and inward-oriented features.

**Support services/supportive services:** The array of social and human services that are provided to individuals in need, including services for the elderly and disabled, the homeless, the mentally ill, chronically unemployed, etc.

**Supportive housing:** Housing that is designed to include supportive services, as described above, on the premises.

**Surface transit:** Any system of mass transit running at-grade, e.g. not in tunnels or on elevated tracks. Includes buses, streetcars, light rail, etc.

**Surface transportation:** Any system of transportation running at-grade and not below ground; generally refers to the roadway system.

**Surplus (public facility):** A facility that is no longer needed to serve the purpose for which it was designed, and that is now available to be reused for another purpose.

**Surplus land:** Public land that is no longer needed to serve the purpose for which it was acquired, and that is now available to be sold or transferred.

**Substance abuse home:** A community residence facility that offers a sheltered living arrangement, as that arrangement is defined in the Health Care Facilities and Community Residence Facilities Regulations of the District of Columbia, 22 DCMR for one (1) or more individuals diagnosed by a medical doctor as abusers of alcohol, drugs, or other controlled substances.

**Sustainability/sustainable (development):** A philosophy of managing development that merges economic, social, and environmental considerations, and that minimizes the consumption of non-renewable resources.

**Sustainable business:** A business that deliberately operates in a way that minimizes the use of non-renewable resources, limits the environmental impacts of its operations, and invests and grows in a manner that promotes environmental quality and social responsibility.

**Sustainable design:** The practice of designing buildings, landscapes, infrastructure, and communities in a way that reduces impacts on the environment.

**Swing school:** A school that is used temporarily while another school is being remodeled.

## T

**Targeted investment:** Public investment (in public facilities and infrastructure) that is strategically directed to a particular area as a way to leverage private investment or achieve a particular outcome.

**Task force:** An officially appointed group of residents or stakeholders that meet on a regular basis for a limited period of time to provide guidance on a particular issue.

**Tax abatement:** The deferral or partial waiver of taxes (especially property taxes) for a period of time.

**Tax credit:** An amount deducted from net taxable income for persons meeting certain criteria.

**Tax increment financing:** A method of paying for infrastructure improvements that involves issuing bonds to cover capital costs and repaying those bonds with the incremental increase in property tax revenue in the area benefiting from the improvements.

**Teardown:** The replacement of a small home, often in good condition, with a new and much larger home on the same site.

**Technical assistance:** Low-cost (or free) help on technical topics provided by specialized professionals to persons who do not possess such expertise, for example, financial advisors helping small businesses improve their competitiveness.

**Technical Review Team (TRT):** Ad hoc District government committee that convenes annually to evaluate and prioritize the capital improvement requests of DC agencies.

**Technology intensive industry:** A business (or sector of the economy) that is heavily reliant on advanced or cutting-edge technology.

**Technology sector:** Any of a host of industries that develop or apply cutting edge technology, particularly related to the use of computers, electronics, aerospace, biology and pharmaceuticals, robotics, medical and precision instruments, and information and communications management.

**Telecommunications infrastructure:** The physical structures and conduits used to transfer information over long distances, including cell phone and satellite towers, cables, and related facilities.

**Temporary housing:** Typically refers to housing that will only remain in place for a limited period of time, such as trailers or tents used after a natural disaster.

**Tenure:** The status of property ownership; e.g., rental or owner.

**Terrestrial:** Pertaining to land.

**Texture:** The visual image and level of visual detail and complexity created by a set of structures.

**Think-tank:** An institution or organization that conducts public policy research, improves public awareness of policy issues through publications, and influences the government to act upon issues of national importance.

**Threatened (species):** A native species that, although not presently in danger of extinction, is likely to become

endangered in the foreseeable future in the absence of special protection and management efforts.

**Through-traffic:** Traffic with origins and destinations outside a defined area.

**Tidal flat:** A low-lying area of mud and marshy vegetation that is partially or wholly inundated during high tide and partially or wholly exposed during low tide.

**Tiered truck route:** A system of classifying truck routes based on the types of vehicles that may use the route, or the functions and volumes of traffic on the routes.

**TOD overlay:** A set of special zoning regulations which supplement existing zoning regulations around Metro stations, designed to maximize the use of Metro, promote walkability, and discourage driving.

**Topographic bowl:** Term describing the relatively flat low-lying bowl-shaped area extending northward from the Potomac and Anacostia Rivers to the escarpment north of Florida Avenue.

**Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL):** A calculation of the maximum amount of a pollutant that a waterbody can receive and still meet water quality standards, and an allocation of that amount to the pollutant's sources.

**Tour bus facility:** A surface lot, road pullout, garage, or other area where tour buses may be safely parked and where tourists may board or disembark.

**Townhouse:** One in a row of houses, sharing walls in common with adjacent houses on either side.

**Traditional urban street pattern:** Typically refers to a right-angled grid of streets, with sidewalks.

**Traffic calming:** Refers to measures that make permanent, physical changes to streets to slow traffic and/or reduce volumes; also can include education and enforcement measures to promote changes in driver behavior. Typical measures include speed humps, roundabouts, and through-traffic barriers.

**Traffic management:** Any strategy that controls or alters the flow of (usually vehicular) traffic to improve mobility and speed.

**Transfer of development rights:** A method of protecting sensitive land or historic buildings in which the right to develop these properties is transferred to other, less sensitive sites.

**Transfer station (solid waste):** See "trash transfer facility"

**Transfer tax:** A tax collected on the sale of real property.

**Transformation Schools Initiative:** DC Public Schools Initiative launched in the early 2000s which aimed to rapidly and effectively transform 14 DC public schools into high-performing, child-centered, family- and community-focused learning centers.

**Transient accommodation:** Tourist hotels, motels, bed and breakfasts, inns, and other forms of lodging not intended for permanent habitation.

**Transit:** See “public transit”, “rapid transit”

**Transit accessible/transit-served:** Generally refers to sites within one-half mile of a metrorail station, but may also apply to sites along bus or streetcar lines with frequent service.

**Transit oriented development:** Form of development that maximizes investment in transit infrastructure by concentrating higher densities around transit stations and along transit lines; development in such areas is designed to make transit use as convenient as possible.

**Transitional neighborhood:** Term developed by the Office of Planning in 2002 to describe neighborhoods that are revitalizing rapidly, with high paced home sales, fast-rising property values, and a high risk of displacement for residents.

**Transitional housing:** Housing in which the occupants may only remain for a limited period of time, usually provided as a bridge between homeless shelters and permanent housing.

**Transparency:** Characterized by openness and full disclosure of all information.

**Transportation capacity:** The maximum number of people, passengers, or vehicles that a given transportation system can safely accommodate during a given period of time.

**Transportation demand management:** Any of a number of programs that are directed towards decreasing the use of single occupant vehicles and shifting or spreading peak travel periods.

**Transportation efficiency:** The ability of a transportation system to operate as smoothly and effectively as possible, taking into account such considerations as cost, safety, convenience, comfort, and the number of people who benefit.

**Transportation investment:** Any capital expenditure that improves transportation safety, accessibility or mobility.

**Transportation management association:** Non-profit association usually supported by major employers, corporations, and public agencies that works to improve transportation alternatives and assist residents, commuters, and visitors in traveling to and around a particular area.

**Transportation management plan:** A plan that identifies physical improvements to an area’s transportation system, operational and maintenance improvements, and a financial plan to fund necessary expenses.

**Transportation support facility:** Facilities needed to support the transportation infrastructure of a city or region, such as bus garages, salt domes, motor vehicle inspection facilities, impoundment lots, and municipal vehicle maintenance yards.

**Transportation Vision Plan:** The District’s federally mandated state transportation plan, laying out basic transportation policies and investment priorities for the coming years.

**Trash transfer facility (or station):** A warehouse-type facility at which local waste haulers deposit municipal waste for compacting and then dispatching for disposal at landfills.

**Traveler information system:** Automated system in which travelers are given real-time information (via digital screens) about traffic conditions, bus or train arrival times, etc.

**Tree and slope protection overlay zone (or tree and slope protection overlay):** Zoning designation that supplements regular zoning in specific areas characterized by steep slopes and heavy tree cover, with regulations designed to limit tree removal, excessive grading, and erosion.

**Tree bill:** Legislation passed by DC Government in 2002 which strengthened requirements for tree removal on public property.

**Tree box:** A dirt-filled enclosure, usually partially or entirely below ground and located along a city sidewalk, which contains the root system of a street tree.

**Tree canopy:** The cover formed by the leafy upper branches of trees in a forest.

**Triangle/triangle park:** Small publicly-owned, triangular shaped properties formed by the intersection of diagonal and right angled streets and used as parks or open space areas.

**Tributary stream:** A small stream that feeds into one of the District’s major streams, especially Rock Creek.



**Trip:** A single journey or course of travel taken as part of one's daily routine. Each trip has an origin, a destination, and a mode of travel.

**Truck route:** Roadway that has been specifically designated by a locality as being suitable for use by trucks.

**Tuberculation:** The accumulation of small amounts of corroded materials in cast iron water pipes.

## U

**Unbundling:** Separating the package of amenities associated with the purchase of a condominium (parking spaces, storage lockers, club memberships, etc.) into component parts, making each component optional with purchase.

**Under-enrolled:** Having a number of students that is far below capacity.

**Under-performing:** To exhibit a level of performance that is below the standard, or below what is expected.

**Under-represented:** Insufficiently or inadequately represented.

**Underserved:** Population or area that has inadequate access to a particular service or facility.

**Underutilized/underused:** A site or structure which no longer represents the highest and best use of that property based on current market conditions. Underutilized sites are characterized by land values that exceed the value of improvements, or by outmoded or obsolete buildings.

**Undesirable land use:** A use which is negatively perceived by its neighbors or which produces adverse impacts on adjacent properties.

**Undeveloped (land):** Land that contains no structures, improvements, or activities whatsoever, e.g., raw land.

**Unemployment rate:** The percentage of the total labor force that is unemployed but actively seeking employment and is willing to work.

**Unimproved open space:** Land set aside as permanent open space but not altered for recreational or aesthetic enjoyment or some other functional purpose.

**Unmet demand:** The level of demand for a particular commodity or service that is not met because the supply of that commodity or service is insufficient.

**Upland:** The higher ground of a region or area.

**Upper Northeast:** Planning area used in the Comprehensive Plan to present data and policies for most of the northeast quadrant of the City, including neighborhoods east of North Capitol and north of Florida Avenue/Benning Road.

**Upper Potomac waterfront:** Portion of the Potomac waterfront above the mouth of the Tidal Basin.

**Upriver:** Applying to the areas in the direction of the source of the Anacostia or Potomac Rivers.

**Urban design:** The art and science of giving form, in terms of both beauty and function, to selected urban areas or to whole cities; addresses the location, mass, and design of various components of the environment and combines elements of urban planning, architecture, and landscape architecture.

**Urban design improvement:** Any physical change intended to beautify or enhance the character of a street or public space, such as tree planting, landscaping, installation of new signs or markers, façade upgrades, awnings, use of special paving materials, undergrounding of utilities, upgrading of benches, street lights, trash cans, sidewalks, etc.

**Urban fabric:** The characteristic pattern and texture of land uses, lots, and buildings in a city or urban environment.

**Urban forest:** Term used to describe trees along streets, in parks, and in yards throughout the City; collectively, these trees form a canopy that supports wildlife and provides environmental benefits.

**Urban form:** *See "urban fabric"*

**Urban habitat:** Ecological community associated with City parks, street trees, yards, and landscaped areas.

**Urban renewal:** Any of a number of federal and local actions undertaken in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s in which older, blighted urban neighborhoods were cleared and replaced with contemporary development.

**Urban renewal plan:** Officially adopted land use plans for sections of the City covered by Urban Renewal efforts in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, including Shaw, Northwest One, Southwest, etc.

**Urban runoff:** Rainwater which flows across parking lots, lawns, and streets during storms and ultimately is transported (through gutters and storm drains) to local creeks and channels.

**Urban sprawl:** Low density, automobile dependent development located beyond the edge of existing service and employment areas.

**Urban street:** A street abutted by mid- to high-rise development and characterized by active ground floor uses (retail, cafes, etc.), interesting and diverse architecture, and a high level of pedestrian activity.

**US Capitol complex:** The area under the purview of the Architect of the Capitol, including the US Capitol, the congressional office buildings, the Library of Congress buildings, the Supreme Court building, the U. S. Botanic Garden, the Capitol Power Plant, and other nearby facilities.

**US Capitol Master Plan:** Long-range plan updated in 2005-2007 that guides the future use of land and buildings within and adjacent to the US Capitol complex, prepared by the Architect of the Capitol.

**US Capitol Police:** Federal law enforcement agency charged with protecting the US Congress and enforcing traffic regulations throughout the US Capitol complex.

**US Commission of Fine Arts:** See *“Commission of Fine Arts”*

**US Park Police:** Federal law enforcement agency charged with protecting the District’s national parks and monuments, and performing the normal crime prevention, investigation, and apprehension functions of an urban police force on the National Mall and its environs.

**User fee:** A fee charged for the use of a particular service or commodity.

## V

**Vacancy rate:** The percentage of a defined set of housing units (e.g., all rental units, all owner units, all units, etc.) that is unoccupied at any given time.

**Vacant land (or building):** Land that is not covered by a structure; or a building that is not occupied.

**Vector/vector control:** An organism, such as a mosquito or tick, that carries disease-causing microorganisms from one host to another. Vector control refers to the programs for reducing and responding to vector hazards.

**Vehicle miles traveled:** A measure used to estimate automobile use on a daily or annual basis—it incorporates the number of vehicle trips and the lengths of those trips, and expresses the total miles traveled by all vehicles on a given roadway or roadway network.

**Very-low income:** Having an income that is less than 50 percent of the areawide median income.

**View plane:** The set of two-dimensional surfaces that define the edge of an area that is visible from a given location.

**Vision for Growing an Inclusive City:** Document prepared by the DC Office of Planning in 2003 to lay out major issues, challenges, and goals for the city, and to provide a framework for the 2004-2006 Comprehensive Plan Update.

**Visitor services:** Any of a number of businesses that cater to the needs of tourists, including hotels, restaurants, tour companies, visitor information centers, sight-seeing excursions, souvenir shops, etc.

**Visual axis:** A straight-line view from one point toward the horizon.

**Visual quality:** The visual attributes of structures, natural landscapes, and communities.

**Vocational training:** Training required to prepare for a career in a particular trade or industry.

**Voluntary clean-up program:** District of Columbia program providing incentives for the private sector to clean up contaminated sites to remediate environmental damage and put the sites back into productive use.

**Voucher (Housing):** A certificate entitling a tenant to a federal subsidy (paid directly to a landlord) which covers the difference between market rate rent and 30 percent of the tenant’s household income.

## W

**Walkable:** Well suited or adapted to walking, based on such factors as topography, distance, safety, pedestrian amenities, and visual features.

**Ward Plan:** Portion of the 1984-1998 Comprehensive Plan District Elements which set policies for sub-areas of the City; each of the eight ward plans served as a miniature comprehensive plan, addressing each of the citywide element topics at the ward level.

**Washington Metropolitan Area:** Area including the District of Columbia, the Maryland counties of Calvert, Charles, Frederick, Montgomery, and Prince Georges; the Virginia counties of Arlington, Clarke, Fairfax, Fauquier, Loudoun, Prince William, Stafford, Spotsylvania, and Warren; the independent Virginia cities within this area (including Alexandria), and Jefferson County, West Virginia.

**Waste diversion:** The practice of routing solid waste away from landfills by recycling, reducing consumption, composting, etc.

**Wasteload allocation:** The amount of runoff an individual user may discharge into the stormwater system, based on a cumulative “cap” for the waterway as a whole.

**Wastewater:** Water that has been used for washing, flushing, manufacturing, etc. and so contains waste products; i.e., sewage.

**Water quality:** Pertaining to the physical, biological, chemical, and aesthetic characteristics of water.

**Water storage facility:** A tank or reservoir used for the storage of drinking water.

**Water taxi:** A small commuter boat used to carry passengers from one point to another along a riverfront.

**Water trail:** A marked and signed area within a river intended for use by canoes, kayaks, etc.

**Waterfront:** The parts of the District that abut the Anacostia or Potomac Rivers, in some cases referring to the shoreline itself and in other cases referring to the city blocks and neighborhoods along the rivers.

**Watershed:** The land area that ultimately drains into a particular waterway.

**Wayfinding (signage):** Signs, maps, or graphics that are intended to convey location and orient and direct travelers (usually pedestrians).

**Wetland:** A lowland area, such as a marsh, that is saturated with moisture all or part of the year. Standards for defining wetland boundaries consider hydrology, vegetation, and soil conditions.

**Wetland buffer (or setback):** An area adjacent to a wetland that is preserved as open space in order to protect the health and ecology of the wetland itself.

**White goods:** Large household appliances such as refrigerators and stoves.

**Workforce development:** The various programs and initiatives aimed at improving the job skills of the District’s residents, and helping residents find and keep good quality jobs.

**Workforce housing:** Housing that is affordable to persons who are gainfully employed in professions that do not pay a sufficient wage to afford market rate housing, including teachers, fire-fighters, day care workers, nurses, etc.

**Workforce Investment Council:** Committee comprised of the Mayor, two Council members, key agency heads, and business representatives charged with implementing the 1998 Workforce Investment Act and improving the effectiveness of DC’s job training and employment programs.

**Workforce preparedness:** See “workforce development”

**Wrap-around services:** A model of providing social services that looks comprehensively at the needs of families and individuals, striving to deliver health care, education, child care, mental health, job training, and other human services in a coordinated, centralized manner (often from a single location).

## Y

**Youth residential care home:** Facility providing safe, hygienic, sheltered living arrangements for one or more individuals less than 18 years of age, not related by blood, adoption, or marriage to the operator of the facility, who are ambulatory and able to perform the activities of daily living with minimal assistance.

## Z

**Zone district:** A portion of the community designated by the local zoning regulations for certain types of land uses, such as single family homes or neighborhood commercial uses.

**Zone map (zoning map):** Map that depicts the division of the City into districts or “zones” in which different uses are allowed and different buildings and lot size restrictions apply.

**Zoning (zoning regulations):** A set of locally-adopted regulations which implement the Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map and policies, establish the range of allowable uses in defined geographic areas of a community (districts), set the standards for development in each district, and define the process for gaining approval to develop land or change land uses.

**Zoning Commission:** An independent, five-member, quasi-judicial body in the District of Columbia, created by the Zoning Act of 1920 and charged with preparing, adopting and subsequently amending the DC Zoning Regulations and Map.

**Zoning incentive:** Usually refers to allowance for additional floor area (or waiver of another zoning standard) in exchange for the provision of a public amenity.

**Zoning overlay:** See “overlay zone”

**Zoning relief:** The granting of an administrative exception from zoning standards, in recognition of a property’s physical characteristics and in order to enable the use of property.



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